

Do Photographs Prove the NS Extermination of the Jews?

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1. Introduction

Photographs played a central role in the arsenal with which Allied war propaganda slandered the enemy in World War One, as Ferdinand Avenarius has shown with numerous examples.¹ Retouching techniques were admittedly quite crude in those days, and the falsifications were thus easy for a critical examiner to detect. However, such highly skilled souls were few and far between and, more importantly, not at all welcome in the agitated atmosphere of the First World War. Today people shake their heads in astonishment that even drawings and caricatures of contemporaries, crudely drawn and easily recognizable as such, were accepted as sterling truth. But do we really have any cause for such a condescending attitude?

Alain Jaubert has shown that dictatorships in particular have a strong inclination for manipulating photos or producing posed and even completely faked photographs.² Jaubert deals primarily with the self-portrayal of rulers by means of altered and 'improved' photographs and, unfortunately, all but dispenses with the interesting aspect of wartime propaganda – as well as the propaganda engaged in by democratic nations, which rarely exhibit any greater scruples in this matter than dictatorships. Great Britain no doubt leads this crowd.

One of Jaubert's examples warrants a closer look here. On page 78 of his book he reproduces a photograph that shows the abuse of English prisoners-of-war in France by French civilians at the time of German occupation during the Second World War. Jaubert interprets this as a photo made up by the German occupation troops. However, he provides no evidence to support his claim. Since the Allies also launched massive air raids on French cities, resulting in heavy losses of life among the civilian population,³ it certainly is not inconceivable that the French might have vented some anger on Allied prisoners-of-war, especially in light of the fact that a considerable part of the French population collaborated with the Germans, partly out of opportunism, partly out of conviction. But the Allied bombing of French targets as well as the war-time collaboration with the Germans are taboos in today's French society. Therefore – is the photograph Jaubert shows really posed, or is his interpretation incorrect because in his opinion that which *must not be cannot be*?

2. Techniques of Falsifying Photographs, and Their Detection

We distinguish between three kinds of forgery, as follows:

1. *Genuine and unretouched photographs are given false captions.* This is not actually a falsification of the photos *per se*, but rather a false account of what is shown. However, this has ever been one of the most effective methods of deception, since after all the photo itself is genuine and the misleading caption can often be exposed only if what the picture actually does show can be proved

¹ F. Avenarius, *Das Bild als Verleumder*, Callwey, Munich 1916; F. Avenarius, *Das Bild als Narr*, *ibid.*, 1918; cf. U. Walendy, *Historische Tatsachen* No. 22: "Alliierte Kriegspropaganda 1914-1919", Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1984, cited in the following as *HT*.

² A. Jaubert, *Fotos, die lügen*, Athenäum, Frankfurt/Main 1989.

³ Cf. the introduction to A. Grosser, *Ermordung der Menschheit*, Hanser, Munich 1990, p. 9; a detailed survey about Allied air raids against non-German cities cf. M. Czesany, *Europa im Bombenkrieg 1939-1945*, Leopold Stocker, Vienna 1998.

by means of reliable sources. In some cases, though, details in a photograph can suffice to prove that the alleged content is false – for example, when the location, persons or objects appearing in the photo cannot be reconciled with what the caption claims.

2. *Genuine photos are altered as to their details.* This entails, first, targeting only specific sections of a photo in order to remove such parts as would refute the false, alleged message the photo is to convey. A second variation involves the addition or insertion of a genuine – changed or unchanged – portion of a photo into another photo, which in turn may also be genuine or faked, resulting in an alteration of the overall message the photo conveys. Alteration of the genuine portion is then usually confined to a change in the faces shown, or to making undesired parts of the photo unrecognizable. Up until the late 1970s and early 1980s this was done by hand, by artistically changing or supplementing enlargements of the photo. Falsifications of this type are usually easy for the practiced eye to detect, since shadows, perspective, and realistic depictions are rarely rendered perfectly. There are cases, however, where such changes are made with brilliant precision, and cases where those changes are deliberately made difficult to prove by out-of-focus photographing of the altered copy.

Today, advanced computer technology allows for the almost limitless manipulation of photo documents, and changes are no longer provable. Modern computer systems can perform perfect manipulations of shadows and distortions of perspective as well as of natural colors and shapes on existing photographs that are scanned into a computer. For this reason, any picture relating to controversial historical topics and published for the first time nowadays must be strictly rejected as evidence. Only proof that the physical material of the corresponding original negative or transparency dates from pre-computer days restores a photo to its status as historical document.

3. *Complete forgery.* If an alleged documentary photograph consists of a photographed drawing, or if it has been assembled from parts of other photos, this represents a complete forgery. The dividing line between altered photos and complete forgeries is by its very nature a fluid one. Like retouched photographs, such forgeries may be exposed through the detection of inconsistencies in the way shadows are cast, in perspective, shape and color, line direction, as well as by a proof of the impossibility of certain combinations of persons, objects and locations shown.

Thanks to modern computer technology, the considerations set out in 2. also apply to the evidential value of recent documentary photographs.

3. Photographs Regarding the Persecution of the Jews in the Third Reich

In light of the dubious circumstances under which witness testimony, confessions and affidavits, but also documents of all kinds attesting to the National Socialist persecution of the Jews came and continue to come about and which the present volume points out time and again, can one really assume without any critical second thoughts that all the photographs about the National Socialist persecution of the Jews which have been shown to us in recent years are genuine? Or would it not be more prudent to proceed with caution, and to subject each of these photos to critical examination?

In fact there has been only one monograph to date which deals with the actual or alleged documentary photographs of the National Socialist persecution of the Jews.⁴ A. Jaubert² does not discuss

⁴ U. Walendy, *Bild- "Dokumente" für die Geschichtsschreibung?*, Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1973; cf. also U. Walendy, *Europa in Flammen*, v. II, *ibid.*, 1967, documentary appendix, and U. Walendy, *The Journal of Historical Review (JHR)* 1(1) (1980) pp. 59-67 (online: vho.org/GB/Journals/JHR/1/1/Walendy59-67.html); regarding manipulated photographs and films see also U. Walendy, "Immer neue Bildfälschungen", part 1 & 2, *HT* 63 & 64, Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1994/1995; S. Egel, "Verordnete Einheitsmeinung" part 1 & 2; Vrij Historisch Onderzoek, Berchem 1997.

this subject, perhaps because he does not consider it politically opportune to do so. G. Frey⁵ touches on this topic, but in my opinion he does not give it as much attention as it deserves. Aside from these examples, any discussion by the establishment's historians of the authenticity of such documentary photographs has been confined to polemics and to criminal charges against doubters and critics until recently, but has changed in 1996/97, as we shall see.

This was indeed an alarming state of affairs, since in this age of illustrated magazines and television, photographs have a powerful pedagogic influence on the people, and faked photos therefore have a propagandistic and even incendiary effect that can hardly be overestimated. This is particularly so in the context of the National Socialist persecution of the Jews, as this is a topic for which the vast majority of the people have by now acquired a sort of Pavlovian response, a ritualistic consternation that renders any critical assessment of the evidence presented virtually impossible.

In the following, some pictures that are offered over and over again as proof of actual or presumed events of the National Socialist persecution of the Jews will be discussed and critically analyzed. Due to the limited space available, this discussion cannot be anything near comprehensive, neither with respect to the number of photos requiring analysis nor in terms of the scope of each analysis. A comprehensive critique of the well-known photographs on this topic, which would go beyond my previous work,⁶ needs yet to be compiled.

3.1. Mis-Captioned Photographs

It is often difficult to prove that a photograph shows what the caption claims it shows. One generally has only eyewitness testimony as corroboration, namely that of the photographer on the one hand and, on the other, that of people who witnessed the event and perhaps appear in the photo. The location depicted on the photo helps to determine the place and sometimes the time that a picture was taken. The presence, in the photo, of well-known personalities whose participation in the event is verifiable can go a long way towards facilitating identification. If, however, a photo shows only people whose identity cannot be ascertained, and if the background of the photo shows nothing unique or characteristic that would permit the picture to be spatially and perhaps also temporally fixed, then one is truly at the mercy of the photographer and his statements. If even the photographer is unknown, and all the evidence one has depends on witnesses and hearsay, then such photographs are all but worthless as historical documents, since anyone is free to make any unverifiable claims he wants to as regards the alleged content.

In fact, both the persons shown as well as the originators of the photos are completely unknown for all the pictures reproduced in the following. This is a condition that applies to almost all so-called photographs pertaining to the murder of the Jews. Actually this in itself ought to be reason enough to dispense with 'photo documents' altogether, except where all or most data about the photo (taken by whom and when) and the items shown (persons, locations) can be verified by external evidence. But let us take a look at some examples anyhow.

Our *first photo* (next page) shows two shrunk heads which the American troops allegedly found on liberating the camp Buchenwald. These and other medical specimens are said to be parts of the bodies of deceased inmates. Lampshades, book bindings and bookmarks of tattooed human skin, as well as two shrunken heads, caused a particular sensation. Aside from the general Nuremberg indictment, these served as the primary evidence in the trials of Ilse Koch, the wife of the former

⁵ G. Frey (ed.), *Vorsicht Fälschung*, FZ-Verlag, Munich 1991, pp. 246-267.

⁶ Aside from the works cited previously (note 4), reference is also made in this context to the many individual examples which have been published time and again in the various issues of *Historische Tatsachen*, Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1975-1997.

Commandant of Buchenwald. She was said to select living inmates on the basis of their tattoos, and to have them killed in order to have various commodities manufactured from their skins.

According to a statement of the American General Clay, the alleged lampshades from human skin were in fact made of goat hide.⁷ In his detailed study of the matter, A. L. Smith found that the objects which the U.S. Commission had identified as consisting of human skin disappeared without a trace after being sent to the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg.⁸ All the objects discovered later were either of imitation leather or animal hide, fabric or pasteboard. In 1973, the U.S.

National Archives discovered two books which allegedly were bound in human skin. In 1982, a forensic analysis of this suede leads to the conclusion that it was the skin of a big animal.⁹

The charges brought against Ilse Koch later, before a German court, were based solely on the untrustworthy testimony of the professional witnesses from Dachau trials, which Manfred Köhler has already discussed in the present volume. Amid the atmosphere of hysteria, “*propaganda and mass suggestion*”¹⁰ prevailing at the time, Ilse Koch – who had previously been sentenced to life imprisonment by the Americans in Dachau, but had eventually been pardoned – was again sentenced to life imprisonment by a German court, and later committed suicide. The two shrunken heads that were submitted in evidence turned out to be of South American origin, and bore the inventory control number of a German anthropological museum.¹¹ They, too, have disappeared without leaving any traces.

Arthur L. Smith suggests that there had been a medical student from the University of Jena in the concentration camp Buchenwald, who had written his dissertation on the relationship between skin tattoos and crime. In this context, use may possibly have been made of tattooed skin, albeit taken from inmates who had already died.¹² Since the taking of organs or tissue from deceased persons is neither unusual nor reprehensible when done for medical and educational purposes and with the consent of the deceased or their relatives, the question is whether and in what context the skin was taken. In any case, mis-captioned photographs and lies are attributed to the objects in the Buchenwald case and elsewhere.



Illustration 1: Shrunken heads, from R. Neumann, *Hitler – Aufstieg und Untergang des Dritten Reichs*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 1961, p. 183.

⁷ A. L. Smith, *Die "Hexe von Buchenwald"*, Böhlau, Cologne 1983, p. 227.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 103, 138, 153, 164; U. Walendy, *HT* No. 43, 1990, pp. 15ff.; G. Frey, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp. 200ff., 211; A. Mohler, *Der Nasenring*, Heitz & Höffkes, Essen 1989, pp. 133ff.

⁹ Cf. David Irving, “*Menschenhäute*”, *Vierteljahresshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 3(2) (1999), pp. 214ff. (online: vho.org/VffG/1999/2/Irving214-216.html); English: online at fpp.co.uk/Auschwitz/documents/controversies/humanskin.

¹⁰ A. L. Smith, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 138.

¹¹ Perhaps they belonged to the *Naturkundliches Museum* in Weimar near Buchenwald, which does no longer exist. Its exhibits now belong at least partly to the *Naturkundemuseum* in Gotha. Personal communication of Peter Lange. Helmut Rehm remembers from the media coverage of those years that it turned out that these heads had an inventory number of the *Anthropologisches Museum* of Berlin Dahlem, personal communication. It certainly is worth exploring the Koch files to find out where these heads really came from – and where they are now.

¹² A. L. Smith, *op. cit.* (note 7), pp. 127f.

According to Bergschicker, *illustration 2* shows the victims butchered by the Ukrainian nationalist battalion *Nachtigall*, whose political officer allegedly was Theodor Oberländer.¹³ In his book *Der rote Rufmord*, Kurt Ziesel proved that this campaign against the then Federal Minister was based on a false caption.¹⁴ The photo in fact shows victims of the Soviet NKVD, which liquidated enemies of the regime *en masse* before the Red Army retreated in 1941. This case is not an isolated one. It is common practice to blame heaps of dead bodies on some putative culprit, and since the Germans have been conditioned to be credulous and ever



Illustration 2: Allegedly these are victims of a massacre perpetrated by the battalion *Nachtigall*. From H. Bergschicker, *Der zweite Weltkrieg*, Berlin: Deutscher Militärverlag, 1968.

ready to make overhasty declarations of guilt, they are the favored target. *Illustration 3* shows a similar example, which was reprinted in the May 21, 1945, issue of the American magazine *Life*, among others. The photo allegedly shows dead slave laborers from the concentration camp Nordhausen. In its commentary the magazine suggested that these inmates died of starvation, overwork, and beatings. In fact, however, M. Broszat and others have determined that these dead concentration camp inmates were victims of an Allied air raid against the Nordhausen camp.¹⁵

Illustration 4 (next page) allegedly shows victims of mass murder in Auschwitz.¹⁶ The bodies are actually those of inmates who had succumbed to typhus in the concentration camp Bergen-Belsen. To date no similar photos have been found of Auschwitz or other sites of alleged mass exterminations. The deliberate misrepresentation of victims of starvation, typhus, supply shortages of all kinds, and unhygienic conditions in the camps of the Third Reich towards the end of the war is thus probably done out of sheer necessity, due to the painful lack of other, real pictures.

It was no doubt the case that the hellish conditions prevailing in the western camps gave the uninformed western Allied observers the impression that mass killings had been carried out deliberately in these

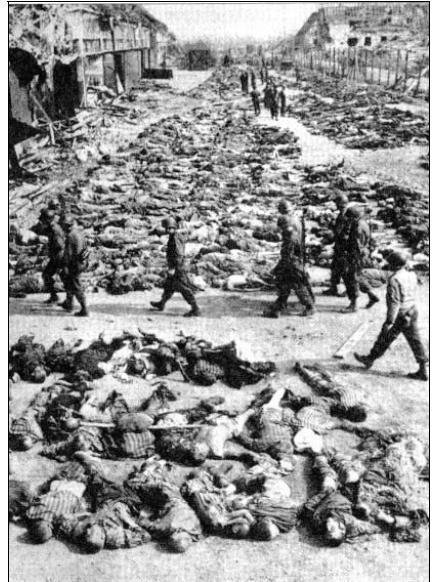


Illustration 3: The photo reproduced in the American magazine *Life* of May 21, 1945, showing the "bodies of almost 3,000 slave laborers in Nordhausen".

¹³ H. Bergschicker, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg*, Deutscher Militärverlag, Berlin (East) 1964, p. 150.

¹⁴ K. Ziesel, *Der rote Rufmord*, Schlichtenmayer, Tübingen 1961, pp. 78ff.; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-"Dokumente"...*, *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 3ff.

¹⁵ M. Broszat, *Studien zur Geschichte der Konzentrationslager*, Schriftenreihe der Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte, No. 21, Stuttgart 1970, pp. 194f.; cf. U. Walendy, *HT* No. 34, 1988, p. 37.

¹⁶ From a 1979 issue of *Quick*, cited as per G. Frey, *op. cit.* (note 5), p. 259, who does not give a precise date.

camps, so that the corresponding initial Allied reports may be understandable enough. In truth, however, these conditions were the result of external circumstances such as, for example, the evacuation of camps near the Front, whose inmates were (foolishly enough) transferred into the national interior at this time on Himmler's orders;¹⁷ the total overcrowding resulting from this measure for the remaining camps, as well as the break-down of sanitary, medical and food supply lines to the camps due to the collapse of the infrastructure of the Third Reich which was being bombed to death at this time, combined to give rise to the horrific conditions in the camps.

Norbert Frei comments on the reaction of the western Allies when they arrived in the concentration camps:¹⁸

"The shock at what they discovered infrequently led to factually incorrect conclusions, some of which were to prove rather persistent. Paradoxically enough, they could also give rise to politically and historically correct conclusions."

By "*historically correct conclusions*" he probably means those allegations of mass extermination that have been disproved for the western camps but are said to be correct for the alleged extermination camps in the East. As for the "*politically [...] correct conclusions*", these probably relate to the desirable effects that mis-captioning such photos has in terms of 'public education'.¹⁹

The fact that the conditions for example in the concentration camp Dachau were actually not too bad prior to the winter of 1944 can be seen from the published diary of a former internee who was imprisoned in Dachau from November 1942 to June 1945.²⁰ In contrast to this, and according to the published diary of a former German soldier, the conditions under which German soldiers were imprisoned by the US Army in Dachau after the war were much more severe,²¹ and this time deliberately so, in order to harm as many Germans as possible.²²



Illustration 4: Photo of typhus victims, taken following the British occupation of the concentration camp Bergen-Belsen and published as "victims of Auschwitz" in various periodicals, e.g., *Quick* in 1979.

¹⁷ Cf. A. Rückerl, *NS-Prozesse*, C. F. Müller, Karlsruhe 1972, pp. 122ff.

¹⁸ Cf. N. Frei, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte (VfZ)* 35 (1987) pp. 385-401, here p. 400.

¹⁹ Two further examples of incorrect captions: M. Weber, "The Warsaw Ghetto Boy", *JHR* 14(2) (1994) pp. 6f.; "Inaccurate Time Magazine Photo Caption Defames Ukrainians", *JHR* 14(2) (1994) p. 8.

²⁰ A. Haulot, "Lagertagebuch. Januar 1943 – Juni 1945", in *Dachauer Hefte*, 1(1) (1985), pp. 129-203.

²¹ G. Naumann, *Bestiegt und "befreit". Ein Tagebuch hinter Stacheldraht in Deutschland 1945-1947*, Druffel, Leoni am Starnberger See 1984. A comparison of both books was compiled by I. Weckert, "Zweimal Dachau", *Sleipnir* 3(2) (1997), pp. 14-27 (online: vho.org/D/Sleipnir/RauWe3_2.html). Because of this article that issue of *Sleipnir* was confiscated and the publisher prosecuted, cf. *VfZ* 2(1) (1998), pp. 22-36 (online: vho.org/VffG/1998/1/Toepfer1.html).

²² Cf. J. Bacque, *Other Losses*, Stoddart, Toronto 1989; J. Bacque, *Crimes and Mercies*, Little, Brown & Co., Toronto 1996.

3.2. Doctored Photos

Photo 5a has been repeatedly presented as proof of inhumane deportations of Jews into ghettos and extermination camps,²³ and has also been broadcast as such on German television.²⁴ The photo archives of the Federal Railway Administration in Hamburg, however, reveal what this picture really shows. It is a freight train crowded with German refugees bound for the Ruhr region, standing in the Hamburg train station in 1946. The unretouched original photo, *illustration 5b*, hangs in the Hamburg Main Station.²⁵ This photo shows, on the left, double-decker passenger carriages on their way to Lübeck, and on the right, parts of the Main Station buildings. Both of these elements would have allowed for the photo location to be identified as the Hamburg Main Station, and both were retouched or cut out in the doctored version. This is by no means to say that there were no deportations of Jews into ghettos or concentration camps, and it is also not meant to suggest that these transports took place only in comfortable passenger trains, although this certainly was the case particularly in the early stage of the deportations and especially as

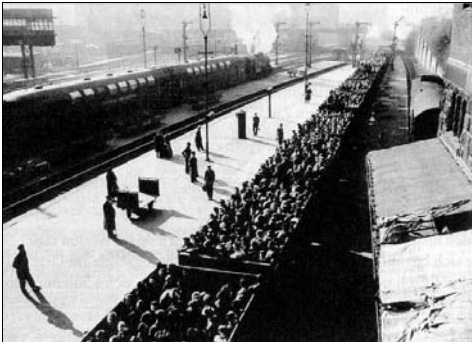


Illustration 5b: The original photo of the Federal Railway Administration. Its caption: "Freight trains full of refugees, 1946. Crowded freight train bound for the Ruhr region. Background, double-decker train to Lübeck."



Illustration 5a: Retouched photograph, captioned "transports into ghettos and extermination camps"; in H. Eschwege, *Kennzeichen J*, Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, 1981.

transports from western Europe are concerned.²⁶ The exposure of this forgery is only meant to urge a more skeptical approach to alleged documentary photographs.

Illustration 6 (next page) allegedly shows a pyre with Jews killed by the Germans in the Estonia camp Klooga.²⁷ What is remarkable here, for one, is that some of the bodies stacked between the wooden beams are wearing their hats (top left). This would be possible only if the 'Nazi thugs' had glued the caps onto the heads of these corpses – or if the people lying there were not dead at all, and had put their caps on

²³ H. Eschwege (ed.), *Kennzeichen "J"*, Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften, Berlin (East) 1981, p. 185; cf. p. 173.

²⁴ *Der Tod ist ein Meister aus Deutschland*, part 3, May 2, 1990; cf. E. Gauss, *Vorlesungen über Zeitgeschichte*, Gräbert, Tübingen 1993, pp. 144f. (online: vho.org/D/vuez/v2.html).

²⁵ Published as such in *Hamburger Abendblatt*, Oct. 21, 1981, p. 4; cf. G. Frey, *op. cit.* (note 5), p. 258; U. Walendy, *HT* No. 13, 1982, p. 16.

²⁶ Some of the best known eyewitness accounts regarding these comfortable passenger trains for deported Jews on their way to eastern camps can be seen in C. Lanzmann's documentation film *Shoah*.

²⁷ Downloaded from: www.nizkor.org/ftp.cgi/orgs/german/einsatzgruppen/images/eg-06.jpg; source given: George St. George, *The Road To Baby-Yar*, Spearman, London 1967, pp. 64f.

by themselves after getting into the position shown. The latter possibility is supported by the fact that the people depicted in this photo show not even the slightest sign of rigor mortis: their limbs are perfectly adjusted to their new position on the pyre; see for example the arms of the man at bottom left, or the arm of the man at top right. In fact, what we have here is not only a mis-captioned photo, but one that probably has also been



Illustration 6: Allegedly corpses of murdered Jews to be burned on a pyre.²⁷

cropped. Off towards the side, a photo of the same scenery, but a different perspective, shows people in Soviet uniforms, and their smug grins at this posed scene are clearly visible. There exist at least seven different photos of this scene, all off them showing men with hats, but without any sign of rigor mortis, as J. Kuras has shown.²⁸

Illustration group 7 really needs no further comment.²⁹ Depending on which version one looks at, it is alleged to show the Munich Jew Dr. S(p)iegel (or, alternatively, A. Schwartz) who asked the police for protection in 1933 but was instead supplied with a poster, deprived of shoes, socks and trousers, and paraded through the city center. Other sources claim that this is a scene from the so-called Reichskristallnacht, *i.e.*, from the night of November 9, 1938 (since when is there broad daylight at night?). Since violent assaults against Jews hardly ever occurred before the so-called Reichskristallnacht, – even if Allied propaganda suggested this³⁰ – the allegations about an origin of this picture prior to this date seems rather unlikely.

Despite intensive research it has not yet been possible to learn the true identity of this man. It was determined that in 1979 a Jew known as Dr. Michael Siegel, holder of the *Bundesverdienstkreuz* (the Order of the Federal Republic of Germany), passed away at his home in Peru, but no one has yet been able to provide the public with a photo of him.³¹



Illustration Group 7: three examples of a broad variation.

²⁸ J. Kuras, “Gestellte sowjetische Scheiterhaufen-Bilder”, *VffG* 3(3) (1999) (online: who.org/VffG/1999/3/Kuras3.html).

²⁹ For even more versions of this photo and the many individual sources, cf. U. Walendy, *HT* No. 34, 1988, pp. 38ff.; U. Walendy, *HT* No. 38, 1989, pp. 31ff.

³⁰ The German historian A. Schickel published a fine article about the hysteria and false propaganda by western media in the early years of the NS-Government in Germany: “Notizen zur Zeit”, in *Freiheitliche Akademie der FPÖ* (ed.), *Freiheit und Verantwortung*, Jahrbuch, publ. by ed., Vienna 1995; cf. “The Jews under the Nazis: Public Perception and Reality”, in Anglo-Hebrew Publishing (ed.), *Holocaust Denial: New Nazi Lie or New Inquisition?*, InfoText, 93c Venner Road, Sydenham, London SE26 5HU, n.d., pp. 17-22.

³¹ U. Walendy, *HT* No. 38, pp. 31ff.

The photos on which the picture is based have obviously been greatly retouched, which is revealed not only by the ever-changing text on the poster but also by the surreal and out-of-focus lower half of Mr. S(p)iegel/Schwartz.

Illustration 8 is an interesting caricature that looks astonishingly like *illustration group 7*; it had already been published in 1935, but it was not claimed to be based on a real photograph.³² The photos shown in *illustration group 7*, on the other hand, were published one by one after the war. This begs the interesting question: what came first, the cartoon or the photo? Could it possibly be a complete fake? Grounds enough for speculation.

According to the news magazine *Spiegel*, *illustrations 9a and b* show a concentration camp guard with his victims in Buchenwald. The inmates are said to have their hands tied and be hanged from trees.³³ Whereas *illustration 9a* looks like a photo at the first glance, the intensive contrast and the patchy and flat nature of many parts of *illustration 9b* makes it probable that this is a drawing. Look for example at the belt and pistol of the SS man, his collar and boots, or the shades of the jacket of the prisoner lying on the earth, and note especially the edge of the remarkably shapeless face of the SS man: it has a black line which must have been drawn in.

I can only urge everyone to try this for himself: go to a gym, suspend yourself from wall bars with your arms up and back, and try to keep your knees bent. I compliment you on your well-toned stomach muscles if you can hold this pose for more than a minute. Incidentally, the string with which the supposed inmates are tied to the trees appears to be amazingly strong. It cannot be rope, as ropes would be thick enough to be visible on a photo. Thus, this would seem to be a photomontage, if not a complete fake, *i.e.*, a painting. Eventually an official German authority admitted in

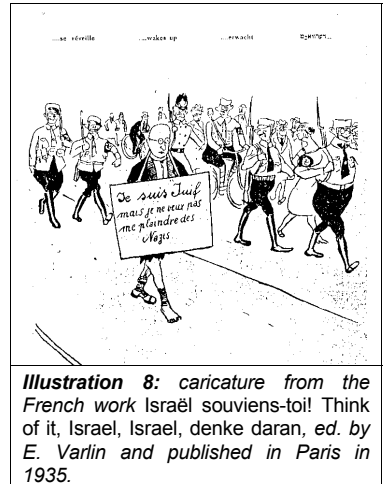


Illustration 8: caricature from the French work *Israël souviens-toi!* Think of it, Israel, Israel, denke daran!, ed. by E. Varlin and published in Paris in 1935.



Illustration 9 (a,b): The photo at left was published in the news magazine *Spiegel* (42/1966) with the caption, "Perfect slave system in the SS-state"; at right we see a variation on this theme, captioned "SS-sadists 'prescribe' 'tree-hanging'", reproduced in H. Eschwege, *op. cit.* (Note 23), p. 266.

³² E. Varlin, *Israël souviens toi! Think of it, Israel! Israel denke daran!*, E. Varlin Edition, Paris 1935; cf. U. Walendy, *HT* No. 34, 1988, p. 38.

³³ *Der Spiegel* No. 40, Oct. 10, 1966, p. 101; cf. H. Eschwege, *op. cit.* (note 23), p. 266.

1996 that these pictures were made by a former east German, *i.e.*, communist film producer DEFA in 1958.³⁴

In early 1994, *illustrations 10 (a, b, c)* took on modern-day significance in Germany when a girl in Halle drew a swastika on herself and proceeded to lead the media, the public prosecutors and the entire left-wing German-guilt clique by the nose, in the process giving rise to massive demonstrations protesting against ‘the right-wing radicals’.³⁵

Her idea of blaming right-wingers for (invented) criminal drawings was nothing new, as one can see from the ever-changing Stars of David on the heads and forehead of the three anonymous Jews anonymously photographed here before a completely neutral background.³⁶ Photomontage or painting?

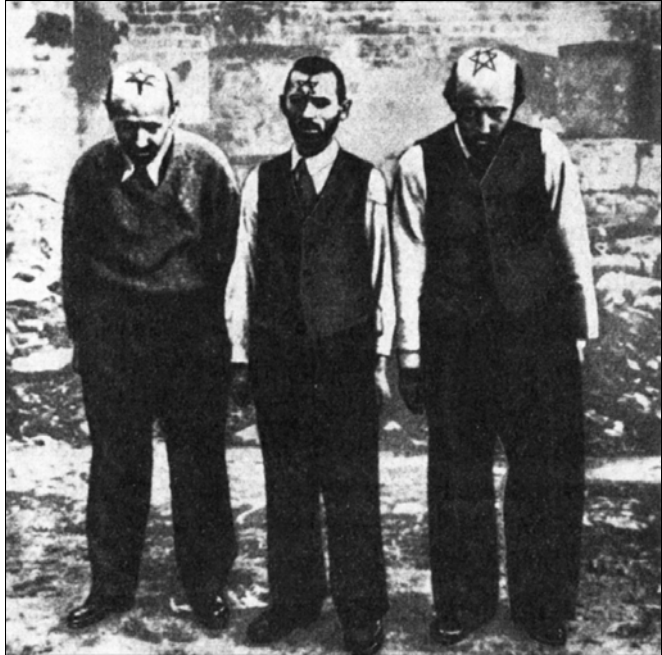


Illustration 10 (a): Captioned “SS-men cut stars into Jews’ skin”, this picture appeared in *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, pub. in Frankfurt/Main by the Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw, 1960, p. 42.



Illustration 10 (b,c): left: detail, published in R. Neumann, *Hitler – Aufstieg und Untergang des Dritten Reichs* (op. cit. Note 36); note that the ‘stars’ have moved; right: the same picture as shown in T. Kotarbinski, *Meczenstwo walka, zagłada żydów W Polsce 1939-1945*, Warsaw 1960, Picture No. 38; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-“Dokumente”* ..., op. cit. (note 4), pp. 28f.

³⁴ W. Ayaß, D. Krause-Vilmar, “Mit Argumente gegen die Holocaust-Leugung”, in *Polis*, Schriftenreihe der Hessischen Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, Wiesbaden 1996, p. 22f.; referring to H. Obenaus, “Das Foto vom Baumhängen – ein Bild geht um die Welt”, in Stiftung Topographie des Terrors Berlin (ed.), *Gedenkstätten-Rundbrief* no. 68, Berlin, October 1995, pp. 3-8.

³⁵ Cf. *Welt am Sonntag*, Jan. 16, 1994, p. 1.

³⁶ Ill. a): R. Neumann, *Hitler – Aufstieg und Untergang des Dritten Reiches*, Desch, Munich 1961, p. 151; Ill. b): Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warsaw [Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw], *Faschismus, Getto, Massenmord*, Röderberg, Frankfurt/Main 1960, p. 42; R. Neumann, H. Koppel, *The Pictorial History of the Third Reich*, Bantam Books, New York 1962, p. 148; Ill. c): T. Kotarbinski, *Meczenstwo walka, zagłada żydów W Polsce 1939-1945*, Warsaw 1960, Picture No. 38; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-“Dokumente”* ..., op. cit. (note 4), pp. 28f.



Illustration 11: from R. Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral*.



Illustration 12: from V. Berdych, *Mauthausen*.

According to R. Schnabel, *illustration 11* shows living inmates sitting near dead ones in concentration camp Mauthausen.³⁷ *illustration 12* is a genuine photo, a portion of which is very similar to part of *illustration 11*. It shows ill inmates sunning themselves in the Russian area of concentration camp Mauthausen.³⁸ The inmates shown correspond almost perfectly. What is noteworthy about *illustration 11* is, first of all, its lack of focus compared with the original, which makes any falsification difficult to detect. Also, it is clear that the barracks in the background at left have been completely redrawn, just as the entire right-hand portion of the picture was added. The barracks at right have a crooked window, and their shadow extends in the wrong direction.

Illustration 13 allegedly shows the open-air cremation of victims of mass gassing in crematorium V in Birkenau, as photographed from a window of crematorium V.³⁹ And in fact the fence in the background and the forest beyond do approximate the site as it was at that time. One of the air pho-



Illustration 13: Shown as Document 57 by Pressac, also in the German edition *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, Munich: Piper, 1994.

³⁷ R. Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral*, Röderberg, Frankfurt/Main 1957, p. 332.

³⁸ V. Berdych, *Mauthausen*, Nase Vojsko, Prague 1959, Photo Appendix No. 50; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild- "Dokumente" ...*, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 36f.

³⁹ Internationale Föderation der Widerstandskämpfer (ed.), *Die SS-Henker und ihre Opfer*, self-pub., Vienna 1965, p. 17; J.-C. Pressac, *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation of the Gas Chambers*, Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1989, pp. 422, 424; J.-C. Pressac, *Les Crématoires d'Auschwitz, la Machinerie du meurtre de masse*, Éditions de CNRS, Paris 1993, Doc. 57; G. Schoenberner, *Der gelbe Stern*, Rütten und Loening, Hamburg 1960, p. 162.

tos available today also shows some traces of smoke at the location in question.⁴⁰ It is thus possible that this picture is based on a genuine photo. Some details of *illustration 13*, however, give grounds for suspicion. There is, for example, the figure standing in the left background, appearing as little more than an outline and leaning on a stick. Since all the other figures in this picture are brightly illuminated by the sun, this inexplicably dark and shapeless figure does not fit in. The shapes of the alleged corpses are also strange, especially those enlarged in *illustration 14*. Presumably, therefore, the desired ‘truth’ was given a boost here by adding bodies and workers to turn a real fire into a cremation scene. But even if the picture were genuine: what does it show? Are the bodies shown those of victims of gassing or of a typhus epidemic? Anyway, the fact that the smoke wallows along ground level shows that there is no height to a pyre and air photos show no pits.⁴¹ Thus it might be that this photo simply shows the burning of lice infested clothes of inmates who died of typhus.

Illustration Group 15 (a, b, c; next page) is

said to document the execution of Polish Jews at the edge of an open grave.⁴² Sometimes the shooting soldier is wearing glasses, sometimes he is not; sometimes his collar patch has white edges, sometimes not. Especially in *illustration 15c* he looks as though he was cut out and pasted in. There are white outlines around his uniform, and he lacks a shadow. The men at the transition into the background also look cut-and-pasted. Try to match their legs to their bodies! This is possibly a photomontage at best, but definitely, at least, a forgery with drawn-in sections. Again, this does not prove that the Germans did not shoot people, especially partisans, after they were condemned to death, and buried them in mass graves. This certainly happened and has been documented by the Germans themselves, since this was neither illegal nor unusual during time of war.



Illustration 14: An enlargement of illustration 13, in G. Schoenberner, *op. cit.* (Note 39), p. 162. The left arm of the man stepping over the supposed bodies is far too long and seems to have two elbows. What is more, the bodies lying on the ground are not only in very poor focus but also anatomically impossible.

⁴⁰ Photo of May 31, 1944, Ref. No. RG 373 Can D 1508, exp. 3055.

⁴¹ Cf. the contribution of J.C. Ball in this volume.

⁴² Ill. a): R. Schnabel, *op. cit.* (note 37), p. 397; Ill. b): H.-A. Jacobsen and H. Dollinger (eds.), *Der Zweite Weltkrieg in Bildern und Dokumenten*, v. I, Desch, Munich 1952, p. 100; *Der Spiegel* No. 51/1966, p. 86; Ill. c): M. Dor, R. Ferdemann, *Das Gesicht unseres Jahrhunderts*, Econ, Düsseldorf 1960, p. 168; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-“Dokumente”*..., *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 40ff.



Illustration Group 15: Presumably showing the execution of a polish Jew at open mass grave.



Illustration 16a: From *history1900s.about.com/education/history1900s/library/holocaust/bleinsatz6.htm*.

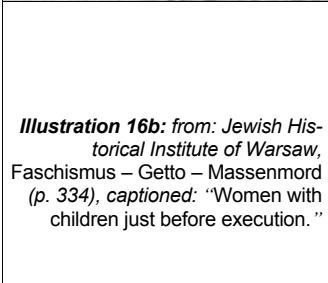


Illustration 16b: from: *Jewish Historical Institute of Warsaw, Faschismus – Getto – Massenmord (p. 334)*, captioned: "Women with children just before execution."



Illustration 16c: from: *S. Einstein, Eichmann – Chefbuchhalter des Todes, Frankfurt/Main, 1961, p. 202.*





Illustration Group 17: left, from G. Schoenberner, *Der gelbe Stern*, captioned “Mass execution in Li-jepaja”; right, from S. Einstein, *Eichmann – Chefbuchhalter des Todes*.

3.3. Total Fabrications

Illustration Group 16 (previous page) allegedly shows naked inmates lined up outside the gas chambers of Treblinka.⁴³ From *illustration 16a* to *c* the quality sinks dramatically due to increased retouching, provided that these pictures are based on a photo. Neither the photographer nor the location is documented, and it remains a mystery how one can possibly claim that this is an execution. It could as well be that *illustration 16c* is the original picture, i.e., a drawing or montage, and that the others were adopted from it by refining this painting.

The same goes for *Group 17*, purported to show naked inmates prior to mass execution in Latvia. It speaks for itself that several versions of these pictures exist.⁴⁴ The left one especially cannot be called a photo. At the best, it is a painting based on a photo. Compare the two women in the background who appear to have been drawn in.

Illustration Group 18 (next page) is said to show mountains of shoes collected from inmates murdered in Auschwitz – or in Majdanek, depending on whose version one chooses.⁴⁵ The fuzzy background and the unrealistic, drawing-like appearance of the shoes in these pictures (especially the right version), which are alike as to the shoes shown but very different in every other respect, again suggest that this is nothing more than a drawing.

The public is often shown heaps of shoes, eyeglasses, shaving brushes, wedding rings or similar artifacts as proof of the extermination of the Jews. From a logical point of view, this evidence is just about as conclusive as the claim that the great piles of used clothing which are collected in Germany each year, for example by the Red Cross, prove that the Red Cross exterminates the German people while collecting the clothing. In fact it seems to have been largely forgotten today that due to the chronic shortage of raw materials, virtually everything was collected and recycled under the Third Reich, especially during the war. What is it to say, therefore, that the occasional genuine photo may

⁴³ Ill. a): taken from the internet: history1900s.about.com/education/history1900s/library/holocaust/bleinsatz6.htm. G. Schoenberner reproduces it in slightly worse quality, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 163, with the caption: “The photographer of these women entering the gas chamber with their children in their arms is unknown.”; Ill. b): Jüdisches Historisches Institut Warsaw (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 36), p. 334; Ill. c): S. Einstein, *Eichmann – Chefbuchhalter des Todes*, Röderberg, Frankfurt/Main 1961, p. 202; A. Donat (ed.), *The Death Camp Treblinka*, Holocaust Library, New York 1979, pp. 260f.; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-“Dokumente”*..., *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 14ff.

⁴⁴ Ill. a): S. Einstein, *op. cit.* (note 43), p. 200; Ill. b): *Der Spiegel* No. 53/1966, p. 48; G. Schoenberner, *op. cit.* (note 39), p. 97; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-“Dokumente”*..., *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 18ff.

⁴⁵ Ill. a): R. Schnabel, *op. cit.* (note 37), p. 244; Ill. b): C. Simonov, *The Lublin Extermination Camp*, Foreign Languages Publication House, Moscow 1944, p. 12; cf. U. Walendy, *Bild-“Dokumente”*..., *op. cit.* (note 4), pp. 70f.

not simply show the results of such collection drives?⁴⁶ It is not even out of the question that such items were collected by the Allies for purposes of precisely this sort of propaganda photo.⁴⁷

This kind of ‘evidence’, which in any case is utterly unsuited to prove claims of mass murder, has a particularly tragic aspect, in that for some strange reason such collections of objects impress the average viewer as especially convincing, and ensure a fundamental feeling of consternation, as was revealed by the movie *Todesmühlen*, which was shown to the German people after the war and which contained scenes of this sort.⁴⁸

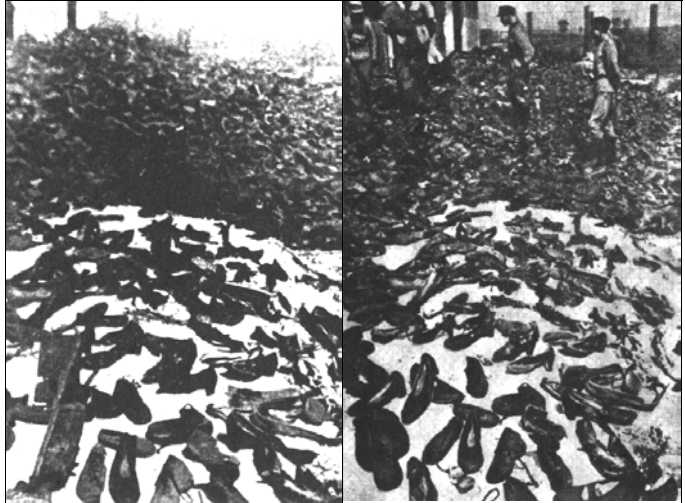


Illustration Group 18: left, from R. Schnabel, *Macht ohne Moral*, captioned: “Thousands of shoes from murdered inmates in Auschwitz”; right, from C. Simonov, *The Lublin Extermination Camp*.

3.4. Movies

Shortly after the end of the war, the Americans showed this movie (*Todesmühlen*) to the German civilian population as well as to the many hundreds of thousands of German prisoners-of-war. It allegedly showed the atrocities committed in the concentration camps, and was meant to initiate the reeducation of the German people. The authenticity of the movie by no means went uncontested. For example, B. S. Chamberlin reports occasional disturbances during the screenings, but the protests were nipped in the bud, at times violently, by the deeply affected remainder of the audience.⁴⁸ According to contemporaneous reports, what prompted the criticism was that the (probably authentic) photos and film clips of the conditions prevailing in the German concentration camps at the end of the war were supplemented with scenes showing the mountains of dead Germans from bombed German cities, and emaciated German internees in the camps of “automatic arrest” – which, however, were passed off by the victors as victims of German concentration camps.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Cf. U. Walendy, *HT* No. 31, 1987, p. 33.

⁴⁷ E. Gauss, *op. cit.* (note 24), p. 21, postulates that the shoes displayed in the Auschwitz Museum had not belonged to inmates, but to the people living in the vicinity, who turned them in there after the War.

⁴⁸ B. S. Chamberlin, “*Todesmühlen. Ein Versuch zur Massen-‘Umerziehung’ im besetzten Deutschland 1945-1946*”, *VfZ* 29 (1981) pp. 420-436, here p. 432.

⁴⁹ Egon F.C. Harder, a German war veteran, told Germar Rudolf about that. Unfortunately, no written witness account about this has come to our attention yet. *Die Unabhängigen Nachrichten* No. 11 (1986), p. 11, reports that the Allies had incorporated German photos of the great heaps of dead bodies resulting from the Allied terror-bombing of Dresden into their film *Todesmühlen*, presenting these pictures as evidence for the mass murder in the concentration camps.

Since Chamberlin reports that the Occupation Authorities had trouble finding enough material to put the movie together,⁵⁰ it is by no means inconceivable that this was the last resort. Unfortunately these charges were never recorded in writing and documented, so that it is perforce difficult to investigate the matter today, particularly as the only generation of witnesses is gradually dying out.

A complete forgery of a film that has meanwhile been proven as such was shown by the Americans during the IMT trials. It was the cinematic record of the alleged discovery of gold teeth from murdered Jews in the Reichsbank in Frankfurt.⁵¹ During the trial and in the course of the later investigations, however, it turned out that the Americans had staged this scene from beginning to end.⁵² Where the alleged gold fillings came from and where they went is no less a mystery than is the fate of the human skins allegedly discovered in the concentration camp Buchenwald.

A more complicated matter, on the other hand, is that of the film which the Americans also showed during the IMT trials and which, like *Todesmühlen*, was also claimed to show the alleged atrocities in the concentration camps. Aside from presenting the false claim that inmates were gassed in the showers of Dachau, this movie also showed the infamous shrunken heads and the supposed artifacts made from human skins, as well as many inmates who had died of malnutrition and typhus; the movie commentary, however, was misleading.

The film that the Soviets made of the liberation of the Auschwitz camp but did not release until the mid-1980s is also liberally sprinkled with fake scenes. For example, the film shows the head of an inmate whose torso was allegedly burned on a pyre, while the head stares into the camera, eyes full of horror. If the torso had really been consumed by the fire, the head would not possibly have retained its full shock of hair, and the eyes would at least have clouded, if not burst, from the heat.



Illustration 19: Scene from the movie *Schindler's List*.

What strikes me as odd in this context is that no Soviet film of alleged atrocities committed by the Americans in Korea or Vietnam would ever be accepted as the truth by the western nations without a prior, thorough critical analysis, yet this film and others like it that incriminate the Third Reich are used without any second thoughts as educational material in western schools.

Feature films such as *Holocaust*, *Shoah* and *Schindler's List* are in a completely different category. They naturally have no evidential value whatsoever, but their psychological impact on the masses is immense and powerful.⁵³ Even though the establishment historians' assessment of the movie *Holocaust* – namely, that it is factually untenable – applies equally to the other movies as well, they are nevertheless gladly received for the welcome effect they have on “public education and opinion steering”!⁵⁴

⁵⁰ B. S. Chamberlin, *op. cit.* (note 48), pp. 425f.

⁵¹ International Military Tribunal, *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, IMT, Nuremberg 1947, v. XIII, pp. 169ff.

⁵² Cf. H. Springer, *Das Schwert auf der Waage*, Vowinkel, Heidelberg 1953, pp. 178f.; P. Kleist, *Aufbruch und Sturz des Dritten Reiches*, Schütz, Göttingen 1968, p. 346; U. Walendy, *HT* No. 43, 1990, pp. 12ff.

⁵³ Regarding “*Holocaust*” cf. T. Ernst, *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 31(34) (1981) pp. 3-22, and P. Malina, *Zeitgeschichte* (ZG) (Vienna) 7 (1979/80) pp. 169-191; regarding “*Shoah*” cf. G. Botz, *ZG* 14 (1986/87) pp. 259-265; R. Faurisson, *JHR* 8(1) (1988) pp. 85-92 (online: vho.org/GB/Journals/JHR/8/1/Faurisson85-92.html).

⁵⁴ Cf. M. Broszat, *VfZ* 27 (1979) pp. 285-298; P. Dusek, *ZG* 6 (1978/79) pp. 266-273.

The Plaszow concentration camp

Illustration 20: The camp in the movie: rebuilt following eyewitness accounts. It is surrounded by a steep hill, thus it cannot be viewed from outside. The camp's inmates were shot by commander Göth from the balcony of his house. His house is built on top of the hill, above the inmates' huts.

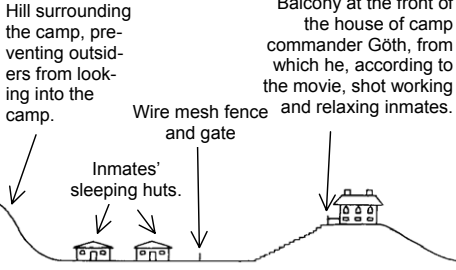
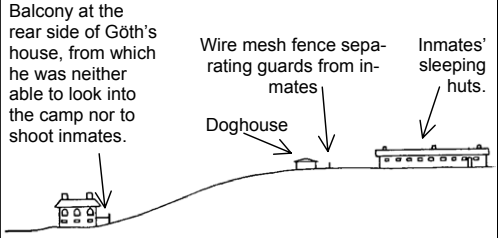


Illustration 21: The camp according to air photos from 1944: the camp, situated on top of a hill, could be viewed in from three surrounding villages through a wire mesh fence. Since Göth's house was on the bottom of the hill, he could not look into the camp and thus was unable to shoot inmates from his balcony.



One example shall suffice to demonstrate the historically unacceptable nature of such movies. *Illustration 19* shows a scene from *Schindler's List* where Camp Commandant Göth, standing on the balcony of his house, takes random potshots at the inmates of the Plaszow Camp. Air photos from that time, however, reveal that the Commandant's house was located at the foot of a hill, while the camp itself was on top of that hill (*illustration 21*).⁵⁵ The scene shown in the movie, which would have required a configuration of house and camp such as shown in *illustration 20*, was thus impossible, if only for geographical reasons. And this is certainly not Steven Spielberg's sole forgery.

Schindler's List, which is based on a novel going back to historical events,⁵⁶ was deliberately filmed in black-and-white and with unsteady camera work in order to convey to the audience the false im-

⁵⁵ From air photos, National Archives, Washington DC, nos.: DT RL 751, Krakow, May 3, 1944; TuGx 895 A SK, exp. 382f., October 1944; J. C. Ball, *Schindler's List – Exposed as Lies and Hate*, Samisdat Publishers, Toronto 1994.

⁵⁶ T. Keneally, *Schindlers Ark*, Hodder & Stoughton, London 1982; simultaneously: *Schindlers List*, Simon & Schuster, New York 1982. Keneally states that he has spent two years with research on surviving Jews worldwide. Interesting regarding the first printing of the second edition, published 1993, is a passage on the copyright page: "This book is work of fiction. Names, places, and incidents are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental." The Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data registered this book as "fiction" (print codes 7 9 10 8 6 and 5 7 9 10 8 6). Whereas in later reprints of this second edition this passage disappears (print code 9 10 8 only whitened, later on even these empty lines were deleted: code 13 15 17 19 20 18 16 14 12), it obviously took somewhat longer, until even the cataloging information ("fiction") are removed from the book (code 15 17 19 20 18 16). In view of the fuss about Steven Spielberg's movie, it apparently was no longer opportune to categorize Keneally's book as a fiction, basing only marginally on true facts. But one should keep in mind that this above quoted passage may just have been a juridical maneuver of security in order to block approaching claims.

At the beginning of Thomas Keneally's novel entitled *Towards Asmara*, we can read: "Thomas Keneally began writing in 1964. His novels include [...] SCHINDLER'S ARK (which won the 1982 Booker Prize and has sold more copies than any other Booker prize-winner before or since)." The book was first issued in 1989 but copyrighted in 1988. This was written in 1990 on the Coronet edition (Hodder & Stoughton) of *Towards Asmara*, long before the 1982 novel was turned into a movie by Spielberg, renamed *Schindler's List*, and presented to the world audience (by the Ford Company, among others) as non-fiction, which it is not. Keneally has developed a technique of borrowing from facts to create fiction. In this book on the Erythrean guerillas, written after the author actually went to Erythrea and Sudan, he insists on disclaiming the reality of his portraits. He says: "They merely stand as the authors poor simulacra for those folk." (p. 11) The expression is good and could be extended far out beyond Keneally's figures, POOR SIMULACRA... (The last paragraph was copied from: *Le temps irréparable*, abbc.com/aaargh/fran/revu/T197/T1971001.html)

pression that the film is a documentary; contributors to the movie have freely admitted this.⁵⁷ This clearly shows the intentions of the film-makers and of those who take school classes and even entire schools to see this movie, and not only in Germany and Austria. What is particularly perfidious about this film is that whenever German soldiers or SS-men give orders, yell and scream and engage in any kind of violence, this is not shown in English or in whichever other language the film is dubbed, but in German. In this way the entire world is made to feel that German is the language of cruel subhumans. And the German viewing public is the only one not to notice this, because in Germany, *Schindler's List* is dubbed entirely in German. In this way, underhanded psychological tricks incite the peoples of the world against the Germans, their language and their culture, and the Germans themselves never even notice what is going on.

Besides of this, Spielberg is hiding the fact that the commander from Plaszow concentration camp was prosecuted by the SS:⁵⁸

"Individual criminal acts – in these cases having broad implications – included: the assumption of a license to kill by commandants and subordinates concealed through falsification of medical death certificates.

Arbitrary conduct, chicanery, unlawful corporal punishments, acts of brutality and sadism, liquidation of no-longer-convenient accomplices, theft and black-market profiteering.

All of these offenses were committed both alone by prisoners as well as by personnel of the SS, most however in conspiracy between SS personnel with Kapos (Jewish concentration camp guards).

The intervention of SS jurisdiction in the concentration camps commenced with the initiation of my investigations in July 1943 and lasted until the conclusion of the war. It could not have started sooner, because there were no suspicions in this regard.

Arrested were the commandants of Buchenwald, Lublin, Warschau, Herzogenbosch, Krakau-Plaszow."

Spielberg certainly wished to conceal these investigations and punishment of perpetrators from his gullible movie audience since he was and is *not* interested in an historically accurate film, but rather in molding public opinion to accept the establishment Holocaust ideology. Audiences may be gullible and dumb, but Spielberg is a deceiver and denier of historical reality.

4. Propaganda With Pictures: The Anti-Wehrmacht Exhibition

Since 1995 a traveling exhibition has been moving through Germany and Austria professing to show the crimes of the Wehrmacht, primarily by means of pictures.⁵⁹ This exhibition was sponsored by the multimillionaire Jan Philipp Reemtsma, who ever since the late 1960s has been a major source of funding for the leftist extremist and anarchist scene in Germany. The exhibition was put together by Johannes Heer, a former Communist who even today makes no bones about his sympathies for the leftist extremist scene. Essentially, the exhibition as a whole came into being through the contributions and support of people who have distinguished themselves by their leftist ideological blindness ever since the radical leftist student revolts of the late 1960s – as journalist Rüdiger Prose (once himself a member of these circles) pointed out.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *Film & TV Kameramann* No. 2/1994, pp. 24ff., esp. the statement of chief cameraman J. Kaminski, p. 27.

⁵⁸ Affidavit SS-65 by SS Judge Konrad Morgen, *IMT*, vol. 42, p. 556.

⁵⁹ Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (ed.), *Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944*, (War of Extermination. The Crimes of the Wehrmacht, 1941 to 1945) Hamburger Edition, Hamburg 1996; English: Hamburg Institute for Social Research (ed.), *The German Army and Genocide: Crimes Against War Prisoners, Jews, and Other Civilians, 1939-1944*, The New Press, New York 1999.

⁶⁰ Rüdiger Prose, *Wider den Mißbrauch der Geschichte deutscher Soldaten zu politischen Zwecken*, Von Hase & Köhler, Mainz 1996; Prose, *Vom Marsch durch die Institutionen zum Krieg gegen die Wehrmacht*, *ibid.*, 1997.

On the whole, therefore, this exhibition represents a continuation of Communist and left-wing extremist disinformation whose goal it is to destroy the historical roots of the German identity while strengthening the political and cultural hegemony of its perpetrators. By forcing the political moderates to repeatedly affirm their own opposition to the “Nazi” crimes – because one would automatically make oneself suspect of Fascist leanings by doing otherwise – these leftist extremists circles attain a degree of opinion leadership and moral authority which they were unable to achieve in past decades due to the massive human rights violations committed by the left-wing extremist regimes of the Eastern Bloc.

As political scientist Professor Knütter pointed out, the goal behind this concept is to break up the former values system and thus to create an ideological vacuum, in which Socialist, anarchist and Communist teachings of salvation will ultimately find fertile ground. This process, he states, is augmented by the parallel process of replacing the German people with a multicultural mixture, devoid of any identity but full of revolutionary potential due to the inevitable conflicts and the concomitant social and economic problems.⁶¹

Now this political background must certainly not be used as an excuse to dismiss the photos shown by the exhibitors as pure propaganda. Several academic investigations of the question of how this exhibition was put together by von Reemtsma and Heer have shown that most (218 of a total of 314) of the pictures, which originated primarily in archives in Moscow and Minsk, are devoid of any information as to their source.⁶² In other words, there is no clue as to who took the pictures when and where, and what exactly they show. It is interesting to note, by the way, that the pictures presented as evidence for National Socialist crimes were generally taken from books or archives of the nations belonging to the then-Communist Eastern Bloc, which always had a massive vested interest in the exaggeration and exploitation of (actual or merely alleged) National Socialist crimes.⁶³ W. Strauß has shown that the originator of many known photos was Yevgeny Ananievich Khaldei, the

“[...] most highly decorated army photographer of the news agency TASS [...], working, as of June 1941, not directly at the front but in the hinterland or the re-captured areas; a celebrated star reporter of the personality cult who after 1945 was rewarded for bravery and skill by being commissioned to portray those in power in the Soviet Union, including Stalin.

Khaldei's brilliant touch consisted of introducing altered photos into the Soviet and international public as original snapshots, and of collecting rubles and Stalin Prizes for it.”⁶⁴

It is a telling point that such pictures devoid of any information as to their source are uncritically displayed by the exhibitors, and that these exhibitors have not shown themselves willing to change their methods even after massive public criticism of this shortcoming.

Germany's second-largest weekly magazine, *Focus*, repeatedly attacked the exhibition for mis-captioning the pictures displayed, and charged those responsible with falsifications and lies, since after all they had alleged that one picture actually showing Jews getting undressed for a bath was

⁶¹ Hans-Helmuth Knütter, *Die Faschismus-Keule*, Ullstein, Frankfurt/Main 1993.

⁶² Wolf Stoecker, “*Fälschung und Agitation. Kritische Bemerkungen zur Ausstellung 'Vernichtungskrieg, Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944.*”, in Joachim F. Weber (ed.), *Armee im Kreuzfeuer*, Universitas, Munich 1997 (online: vho.org/D/aik/aik.html).

⁶³ Cf. also the authors quoted in this chapter: Bergschicker, *East Berlin*; Eschwege, *East Berlin*; Jüd. Hist. Museum, Warsaw; Kotarbinski, Warsaw; Simonov, Moscow; many of the books quoted in this chapter – many of them by decidedly leftist-radical authors, and published by far-leftist or even communist publishers – come from these sources: Neumann, Desch; Schnabel, Röderberg; Schoenberner; Rütten & Löning; Jacobsen & Dollinger, Desch; Dor & Federmann, Forum (Vienna); Einstein, Röderberg.

⁶⁴ W. Strauß, “*Es war einmal ein Fotograf*”, *Staatsbriefe* 8(11-12) (1997), pp. 6f. (online: vho.org/D/Staatsbriefe/Strauss2_8_11_12.html)

the “*scene of a mass execution*”, had touted another picture whose contents were unclear as a “*Wehrmacht crime*”, and had refused to correct these misrepresentations even after their error had been proved.⁶⁵ The interesting thing about the first case is that the exhibitors had taken the false caption from a book⁶⁶ whose co-editor is Willy Dreßen, today the Head of the Central Office of the Provincial Judicial Administrations in Ludwigsburg, a man who is also in charge of the prosecution of alleged National Socialist crimes. Even though Dreßen, who had already been working in the Central Office at the time of the book’s publication, should have been aware of the actual events, he supported the mis-captioning. Admittedly this comes as no surprise to those ‘in the know’, since after all the ideological ties between the professional ‘Nazi hunters’ in the Central Office and the radical left-wing, professional anti-Fascists have always been close.

Let us examine only one picture in more detail which is publicly paraded time and again as proof of the crimes of the Wehrmacht. *Illustration 22* shows the execution of partisans in front of the cemetery wall of the Serbian village Pančewo. This picture is also displayed as part of the anti-Wehrmacht exhibition. This execution was even filmed by a German war reporter. The film was shown on German television in April 1997 as proof of the crimes committed by the Wehrmacht.⁶⁸ Now it is already unlikely that the military officials in charge would have allowed a reporter to document a war crime openly and in such detail (and the same, of course, goes for all such documents). What the anti-Wehrmacht exhibition as well as the television broadcast hushed up, however, is the fact that the picture actually shows the enforcement of a verdict passed by a regular German court-martial against partisans who had been sentenced to death for murderous attacks on German soldiers. Therefore, under the martial law in effect both in those days *and today*, this execution is not a crime, but rather a permissible judicial means of war. The event is admittedly cruel, but after all that is the central characteristic of any war. Hence, the crime is not to be sought in the execution, but in the reasons that led to that war.

In Germany the debate about the anti-Wehrmacht exhibition, clearly conducted with left-wing extremist aims, has resulted not only in exposing the network of leftist ideologists in Germany who have virtually monopolized the historiography of the Third Reich for themselves.⁶⁹ Another consequence has been that contemporary historians are prepared, for the first time in over 50 years, to critically analyze and question the authenticity of documents that purport to prove alleged National Socialist crimes. In this context, special mention must go to Professor Dr. Klaus Sojka who has subjected the pictures of Reemtsma’s exhibit to a detailed and devastating critique by supplementing these pictures with many others and analyzing them comprehensively from the perspective of document criticism.⁶⁹ Prof. Franz W. Seidler has set a sort of counterpoint to this entire debate by publishing the only recently rediscovered files of



Illustration 22: Execution of partisans in Pančewo (Serbia), falsely portrayed as a crime.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Focus*, No. 16 & 17/1997, 6/1998.

⁶⁶ E. Klee, W. Dreßen, V. Rieß (ed.), “*Schöne Zeiten*”, *Judenmord aus der Sicht der Täter und Gaffer*, S. Fischer, Frankfurt/Main 1988, p. 77.

⁶⁷ Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung (ed.), *op. cit.* (note 59), p. 30.

⁶⁸ *Focus-TV*, Pro7, 13.4.1997; cf. *Abendzeitung* (Munich), 4.4.1997.

⁶⁹ Klaus Sojka (ed.), *Die Wahrheit über die Wehrmacht. Reemtsmas Fälschungen widerlegt*, FZ-Verlag, Munich 1998, pp. 90f. To date this book is the scientific high point in the debate over alleged photo documentation of German crimes, and is therefore a must for anyone interested in the topic.

the Wehrmacht War Crimes Bureau⁷⁰ which documented, with great care and in detail, the crimes that were committed against German soldiers during the eastern campaign:

“This book is a response to the exhibition ‘War of Extermination. The Crimes of the Wehrmacht, 1941 to 1945’ [...].

Unlike the anti-Wehrmacht exhibition, this documentation of Soviet wartime atrocities leaves no room for fabrications, misleading text and arbitrary allegations. – All events are documented. – Information regarding places and dates is unequivocal. – The pictures are not private photos, but legal and medical evidence. – The text documents have not been altered. – Most documents are supported by further evidence which researchers can examine. – The wording of the text documents can be verified in the Federal Archives / Military Archives in Freiburg under shelf mark RW 2/v.147-v.152.”⁷¹



Illustration 23: Russian cannibalism of captured German soldiers in autumn 1941: “Disemboweled corpses in Camp 2 of Stalag 305”. Photo document re. Case 304, F. W. Seidler, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

Indeed some of the crimes described are enough to make a reader’s blood run cold; for example, the many photos documenting cases of Russian cannibalism of German soldiers, cf. *illustration 23*. It takes such documentation to really drive home the point what a dirty war the barbaric attitude of Stalin and his comrades forced the Germans to fight.⁷²

A particularly interesting reply was made by the young historian Walter Post, whose account reveals revisionist tendencies in many respects, and concludes in a sort of bottom-line:

“In an essay in the book accompanying the exhibition ‘War of Extermination. The Crimes of the Wehrmacht’, Alfred Streim [Public Prosecutor with the Central Office of Provincial Justice Administrations in Ludwigsburg] stated that ever since the Central Office was established in 1958, some 3,000 preliminary proceedings have been instituted in the Federal Republic of Germany against members of the Wehrmacht – in other words, 3,000 Wehrmacht soldiers were suspected of having participated in National Socialist or war crimes.

If one considers that approximately 18 million men and women belonged to the Wehrmacht, then 3,000 accused constitute 0.017% of the entire personnel. Even if one assumes, absolutely hypothetically, that there was a very high 90% rate of unreported or undetected cases, and thus a total of 30,000 potential suspects, this still amounts to only 0.17%. Incidentally, of the 3,000 preliminary proceedings in the Federal Republic of Germany, only two(!) have resulted in a conviction. In the former German Democratic Republic there has been a total of eight convictions of former members of the Wehrmacht.

Thus, quantitative studies also show that the legend of the ‘decent Wehrmacht’ is not necessarily a legend.”⁷³

⁷⁰ Cf. A.M. de Zayas, *Die Wehrmachtsuntersuchungsstelle*, 4th ed., Ullstein, Frankfurt/Main/Berlin 1984.

⁷¹ Franz W. Seidler, *Verbrechen an der Wehrmacht*, Pour le Mérite, Selent 1998, pp. 5f.

⁷² Cf. also J. Hoffmann, *Stalin’s War of Extermination 1941 – 1945*, Theses & Dissertations Press, Capshaw, AL, 2001.

⁷³ W. Post, “Die Wehrmacht im Zweiten Weltkrieg. Armee zwischen Regime und totemem Krieg”, in Joachim F. Weber (ed.), *op.cit.* (note 62) (online: vho.org/D/aik/Post.html)

Finally, in late 1999, shortly before this exhibition was to go to America, it was temporarily canceled, after three scholars proved in detailed studies that most of the pictures were mis-captioned, only 10% of them (allegedly) showing crimes. Some of the exhibits actually show victims of mass murder committed by the Soviet NKVD.⁷⁴ Consequently, Johannes Heer lost his position as head of this exhibition, and some of the most renowned German historians recommended phasing it out without replacement.⁷⁵ In a thorough study, Walter Post demonstrated recently that this exhibition is not just trying to substantiate the ‘right’ hypothesis (*“War of Extermination. The Crimes of the Wehrmacht”*) with some wrong photos, as some historians assert, but rather that the hypothesis itself is massively flawed.⁷⁶

These writings seem to have broken a spell that has paralyzed German historiography for more than 50 years and prevented historians from fulfilling their foremost duty, namely to subject their sources to critical analysis. All in all, therefore, and speaking not only from an academic perspective, Reemtsma’s exhibition has turned out to be a disaster that would be hard to surpass.

5. Addendum

Time and again, some major newspapers or other media reveal forgeries, for example the photomontage of the allegedly burning synagogue in Berlin-Oranienburger Straße. This photo is one of the most widely spread pictures regarding the 1938 November pogroms in Germany against the Jews. There is no doubt that arson against several synagogues in Germany did occur at that time, but since obviously no really good photo could be presented for this, it was decided by unknown people short time after the war to manipulate a photo, taken in 1948, of the well known synagogue in Berlin-Oranienburger Straße. Already in 1990, the author Heinz Knobloch claimed to have proved this fabrication,⁷⁷ but he could not tell who the culprit was. It remained so until 1998 when a certain Kurt Wernicke revealed the culprit. According to information he obtained from a former exhibition expert, the original photo was probably manipulated by Klaus Wittkugel, a former expert for photomontages (*illustration 24*).⁷⁸



Illustration 24: Large: The fabrication; small: The original from 1948

⁷⁴ Bogdan Musial, “Bilder einer Ausstellung. Kritische Anmerkungen zur Wanderausstellung ‘Vernichtungskrieg. Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941-1944’”, *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 47(4) (1999), pp. 563-591; cf. Bogdan Musial, “Konterrevolutionäre Elemente sind zu erschießen”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Oct. 30, 1999, p. 11; Krisztián Ungváry, “Echte Bilder - problematische Aussagen”, *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht*, 50(10), (1999), pp. 584-595; cf. Krisztián Ungváry, “Reemtsmas Legenden”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nov. 5, 1999, p. 41; Dieter Schmidt-Neuhaus, “Die Tarnopol-Stellwand der Wanderausstellung ‘Vernichtungskrieg – Verbrechen der Wehrmacht 1941 bis 1944’”, *ibid.*, pp. 596-603.

⁷⁵ E.g., Klaus Hildebrandt, Hans-Peter Schwarz, Lothar Gall, cf. “Kritiker fordern engültige Schließung”, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Nov. 6, 1999, p. 4; Ralf Georg Reuth, “Endgültiges Aus für Reemtsma-Schau?”, *Welt am Sonntag*, Nov. 7, 1999, p. 14.

⁷⁶ Walter Post, *Die verleumdete Armee*, Pour le Mérite, Selent 1999.

⁷⁷ Heinz Knobloch, *Der beherzte Reviervorsteher. Ungewöhnliche Zivilcourage am Hackeschen Markt*, Morgenbuch-Verlag, Berlin 1990.

⁷⁸ *Berliner Morgenpost*, Oct. 10, 1998, p. 9.

In 1999, the Simon Wiesenthal Center published *illustration 25b*. on their website with the following caption:⁷⁹

»As these prisoners were being processed for slave labor, many of their friends and families were being gassed and burned in the ovens in the crematoria. The smoke can be seen in the background.«

No smoke can be seen on the original photo, which was taken in Birkenau concentration camp in spring 1944 (*illustration 25a*).⁸⁰ Apparently, Holocaust propagandists, second generation, can accomplish with current computer software technology what their predecessors could only imagine. With a little ‘photoshop’ help, any document can be made to conform to whatever an ‘eyewitness’ wants it to. In this case, the smoking chimneys. (Un)Fortunately they chose a fence post instead of a chimney as a source for the drawn-in ‘smoke’.



Illustration 25a and b: Left the original, right the forgery of the Simon Wiesenthal Center: Smoke coming out of a fence post.

No thorough research is being done regarding the question: Are these photographs allegedly proving the National Socialist persecution of the Jews authentic? After 55 years, this question goes unanswered and will continue to remain so in light of the fact that scholars who are doing such research are being persecuted. Nevertheless some fabrications are revealed more or less incidentally: is that not reason enough to be more than a skeptic regarding the authenticity of these photos all together?

6. Instead of a Conclusion: Some Lesser Known but Genuine Photos

Finally, it should be noted that it is well documented and widely accepted that US soldiers made souvenirs from bones of killed Japanese soldiers (*illustration 26*, next page), a crime they apparently were proud of and a crime that was never proven to have been committed by German soldiers.⁸¹

Illustration Group 27 (page 267) shows victims of the Holocaust of German civilians in the residential sections of German cities that were deliberately bombed by the Allies.⁸² Altogether, some one million innocent Germans, mostly children, women and elderly people, died like this as a result

⁷⁹ <http://motic.wiesenthal.com/gallery/pg22/pg0/pg22035.html>; cf. *VffG* 3(2) (1999), p. 240. We have saved the entire page at vho.org/News/D/SWCForgery.html, should the SWC remove it.

⁸⁰ S. Klarsfeld, *The Auschwitz Album*, Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, New York 1978, no. 165.

⁸¹ John W. Dower, *War without Mercy*, Pantheon Books, New York 1986; cf. E.L. Jones, *The Atlantic Monthly*, Februar 1946, pp. 48-53, here pp. 49f.; cf. U. Walendy, *Historische Tatsachen*, no. 68: “US-Amerikanische Kriegsverbrechen” (US-American War Crimes), Verlag für Volkstum und Zeitgeschichtsforschung, Vlotho 1995) and more recently: *Alliierte Kriegsverbrechen und Verbrechen gegen die Menschlichkeit* (Allied War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity), 2nd ed., Arndt, Kiel 1997.

⁸² Morale Division, U. S. Strategic Bombing Survey, Medical Branch Report, *The Effect of Bombing on Health and Medical Care in Germany*, War Department, Washington, D.C., 1945, pp. 17, 21, 23. We are grateful to F. P. Berg for providing this reference.

of Allied terror-bombing in Germany.⁸³ There is a world of difference between these photos and those of emaciated victims of starvation and typhus in German concentration camps.

As Prof. Robert Faurisson put it in 1992,⁸⁴ the main difference between the victims of German POW and concentration camps and the German victims of Allied air raids and the post-war atrocities committed by Allied forces and authorities of the liberated nations is that the prisoners in German camps *died mainly because of the collapse of the German infrastructure due to the war*, whereas the Germans were *killed en masse* by the Allied and the ‘liberated’ nations, *i.e.*, the Serbs, the Czechs, and the Poles. Thus, the real Holocaust happened in German cities during the war and all over Germany after the war.



Arizona war worker writes her Navy boyfriend a thank-you note for the Jap skull he sent her

Illustration 26: Life magazine, May 22, 1944, p. 34f.: “Picture of the week. When he said good bye two years ago to Natalie Nicker-son, 20, a war worker of Phoenix, Ariz., a big, handsome Navy lieutenant promised her a Jap. Last week Natalie received a human skull, autographed by her lieutenant and 13 friends, and inscribed: ‘This is a good Jap – a dead one picked up on the New Guinea beach.’ Natalie, surprised at the gift, named it Tojo. The armed forces disapprove strongly of this sort of thing”.

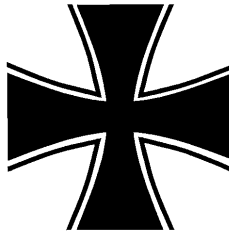
Disapprove? Punishing Americans for war crimes would have been more appropriate!

⁸³ Cf. D. Irving, *Und Deutschlands Städte starben nicht*, Weltbild Verlag, Augsburg 1989, p. 373; cf. M. Czesany, *Europa im Bombenkrieg 1939-1945*, Leopold Stocker, Vienna 1998.

⁸⁴ R. Faurisson, “La leçon des photographie”, *Révue d’Histoire Révisionniste*, no. 6. May 1992, p. 62-68.



Illustration Group 27: German civilian victims of Allied bombing attacks. Payload dropped; 2,767,000 tons. Only a few cases of roughly one million German Holocaust victims. One tends to forget that the fate of the normal Germans, soldiers and civilians, was sometimes even worse than that of the hundreds of inmates in POW and concentration camps.



1939 – 1945

