

20. East-West European Memorial Meeting in Krzyżowa

29 March - 1 April 2023, International Meeting Place Krzyżowa/Kreisau

Postwar and postcommunist debates on Uprise, Protest and resistance and its remembrance in East- and Western European Museums and Memorials

The event was hosted by the following organisations:

- Krzyżowa Foundation for Mutual Understanding in Europe, Krzyżowa (Dominik Kretschmann)
- Foundation Remembrance, Responsibility and Future, Berlin (Agnieszka Pustola)
- Federal Foundation for the Reappraisal of the SED Dictatorship, Berlin (Amélie zu Eulenburg)
- Evangelical Academy Berlin (Jacqueline Boysen)
- Remembrance and Future Centre, Wrocław (Marek Szajda)

Introductory lecture by Dr. Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska "Remembering protests in Polish cultural memory" (German Historical Institute Warsaw)

In her lecture, **Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska** dealt with the question of how the memory of protest in all its different forms becomes part of cultural memory or history. According to Maurice Halbwachs, individual memory is formed in the narrative, i.e. in the social framework of the individual. Dr. Saryusz-Wolska distinguished between two forms of imprinting in the social framework: premediation (according to Richard Grusin) and remediation. In the case of premediation, the example of Poland shows that the school canon is very inflexible and has remained almost unchanged for decades. In Germany, on the other hand, there is a federal school structure that uses a more flexible canon. Remediation describes the interplay between different cultural (also international) influences. Based on the project "Remembering Hope: The Cultural Memory of Protest in Europe" (Ann Rigney), Dr. Saryusz-Wolska noted that not only protest but also its memory follows a limited repertoire of means/strategies. Despite the universality of protest forms, however, each culture has its own colouring of memory. Polish protest memory, for example, is firmly anchored in the cultural canon by means of (mostly violent) uprisings, with the protagonists being primarily men. Finally, Dr. Saryusz-Wolska went into the term memory activism, here she refers to the active shaping of memory through protest and thus a change in cultural memory. For memory itself is variable and alive despite or because of all social and cultural conditioning.

Introductory lecture by Prof. Dr Claudia Weber "Resistance: Concept and reflections on tyranny". (European University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder))

Claudia Weber first traced a terminological approach to the concept of resistance and delineated three approaches. According to this, resistance could be understood - firstly, with reference to the dictionary definition - as resisting and opposing as opposed to withdrawing. Secondly, political resistance in particular - with reference to Christopher Daase - can be understood as inherently relational. According to this, resistance develops when a discrepancy is perceived between the rulers and a promise of order that has not been kept. In a third reading, resistance can be defined as social

action directed against a perceived illegitimate exercise of power. Acts of resistance are then manifestations and maintenance of personal dignity and occur as acts of restoration of an order perverted by the rulers.

In the second part of her lecture, Weber dealt with Iris Därmann's concept of resistance, according to which there are always possibilities for action even in spaces of violence, even if these take place clandestinely or under the mask of obedience. Evading is also considered a form of resistance. Such a radically expanded interpretation of the concept of resistance, however, tends - according to Weber - towards arbitrariness and softens the context of meaning. She contrasts this view with Heinrich Popitz's definition of "violence as a form of asserting power". According to this, violence is an everyman's resource - an anthropological constellation - because people are always fundamentally open to injury and powerful to inflict injury. If violence is conceptualised in this way, then the concept of resistance shows that there can be no absolute enforcement of the totalitarian claim to power, since even absolute rulers always remain open to injury.

Panel I: Protest, Resistance - Nazi Period

Peter Steinbach (German Resistance Memorial Center, Berlin) spoke in his lecture about why the Kreisau Circle is important for the study of resistance. For him, Kreisau is to be seen as a place of the past where one can reflect on history and civilised coexistence. What united all members of the group was the belief that people can only live together if they are already prepared to deal with each other's ways of thinking, no matter how controversial the views. Through compromise and acceptance of other ideas, a way of thinking was to be developed that would not only bring about reform, but would absolutely replace National Socialism. Legal order would only serve to protect the weak and not to oppress them. Steinbach appeals to our present-day attitude towards injustice, saying it is important to be outraged and to act.

Raphael Utz (Imre Kertész Kolleg Jena) dedicated his lecture to the uprising in Sobibór in 1943 and the cinematic implementation of the topic in the Russian feature film "Sobibór" (2018). The Sobibór extermination camp had the purpose of murdering as many Jewish men, women and children as possible as part of "Aktion Reinhardt"; during its existence (1942-1943), a total of about 180,000 people died. The killing machinery included work detachments of civilian Jewish forced labourers and Soviet prisoners of war. On 14 October 1943 there came finally an uprising, led by the head of an existing resistance network with local knowledge (Leon Felhendler) and a Red Army officer with military understanding (Alexander Petscherski). Of around 500 who fled, only 50 survived the end of the war. The prisoners who were recaptured and left behind were killed and the camp was razed to the ground. Today Sobibór is part of the Majdanek memorial. In 2018, the Russian feature film "Sobibór" (directed by Konstantin Chabenski) will be released, but it does not attempt to reconstruct the authentic Sobibór, but plays with well-known Holocaust iconography. The focus is on the Russian-speaking protagonists/insurgents and side scenes peppered with scenes of violence (the killing of the SS men), while the extermination of 180,000 people is only told in passing. As a result, other images stick with the viewer. Stalin as the guiding force and anti-Semitic associations are further vehicles of an official Russian historical policy. Instead of an examination of the Sobibór extermination camp, a historical action blockbuster touts a heroism that is primarily focused on the present. This is also

where the omission of the Soviet prisoners of war, who do not fit into the heroic picture, comes in. Officer Pecherski was later also a victim of Stalinism and is excluded from commemoration by the Russian side.

Andrea Genest (Ravensbrück Memorial) recalled in her lecture the "smuggled finds from Ravensbrück concentration camp" as a form of resistance. The Ravensbrück concentration camp (1939-45) was a women's concentration camp where about 120,000 women, about one third of them Polish, were imprisoned. Ravensbrück mainly commemorates those who resisted (especially Polish women), women who were deported after the Warsaw Uprising and victims of pseudo-medical experiments. Other groups of victims such as so-called "asocials" or prostitutes are not remembered. The prisoner narrative becomes narrower and narrower because the contemporary witnesses do not want to talk about the horrors they experienced but about their will to survive, so it is easier to fit into the prevailing narrative. In 1976, the GDR State Security unearthed the so-called "smuggling find", which contained 37 poems, 14 letters, shooting lists, an overview of the medical experiments, drawings and carvings that give an insight into everyday life in the camp. The MfS evaluated the find and considered handing the contents over to Poland. However, this never happened; only later were there publications in Poland and by the referent.

Panel II: Protest, Resistance - Postwar Communism period

Rainer Klemke (berlinHistory.app) presented the live ticker of the app on 17 June 1953. Starting on 7 June, one can read daily about the development of events up to the 70th anniversary of the East German uprising of 1953 and its consequences. In his lecture, he referred to the causes of the uprising, which ranged from the expropriations from 1945 to the restrictive policy of the SED to implement a socialist state and an increased flight movement of farmers and others to food shortages, price increases and an increase in labour standards.

Gábor Danyi (European Network Remembrance and Solidarity, Warsaw) spoke about the memory of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956. After the euphoria from 23 October, the bloody suppression by the Soviet army followed on 4 November. In the period that followed, there was no public remembrance of the uprising; all commemoration was suppressed and repressed into the private sphere. Instead, the narrative of counterrevolution prevailed. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and Hungary's independence, 23 October was declared a public holiday. Until 2006, plural memory prevailed, oriented towards the contemporary witnesses. With the extinction of the contemporary witnesses, the memory narratives also changed and communicative memory shifted to cultural memory. Since 2006, the 1956 uprising has been used as a political weapon. And since 2010, the culture of remembrance has taken a new direction: now the nationalist idea prevails and there is an equalisation of totalitarianisms (e.g. "House of Terror"). The focus is now on victimhood and martyrdom. Private research institutions are nationalised and the culture of remembrance is thus appropriated by the politics of remembrance.

Petr Blazek (Ústavu pro studium totalitních režimů, Prague) spoke in his lecture about the impact of the Prague Spring in 1968 and the crisis of the communist regime in the 1980s. He has a problem with the name "Prague Spring", as the reform attempts under Alexander Dubček were supported nationwide and lasted until the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops on 21 August 1968. An important role was played by personnel changes within the communist party in the CSSR, which was dominated above all by intellectuals who were able to mobilise the population. In contrast to the 1980s, in 1968 many still had personal memories of the 1st Republic and the reforms were limited to the country. After the suppression of the reform movement, there was a mass purge of the communist party and millions of members left. Civil society initially retreated into the church space before being channelled into mass organisations by means of targeted campaigns from the Soviet Union. Overall, the Soviet Union tried to prevent new associations and oppositions from being founded.

Panel III: Protest, Resistance - Western Europe

In her presentation, **Christiane Weber** (Arolsen Archives, Germany) gave a brief insight into the work of the archives of the International Tracing System (ITS), which was founded by the Allies in Bad Arolsen (Hesse) after the Second World War to centrally record all documents from the concentration camps and on forced labour. To date, some 30 million original documents from 17.5 million people have been archived. Since June 2019, a large part of the documents have been available online and a free request to the archive is possible at any time. The documents are assigned to the respective persons, making subject-specific searches more difficult. Nevertheless, there are also so-called special collections, for example on the topic of resistance in the concentration camps and ghettos. The collection consists of Gestapo documents, which also show the persecution measures.

Her colleague **Hanna Lehun** presented the collection of Ukrainian documents in the Arolsen Archive. These documents mainly deal with the topic of forced labour and come from the Nazi administrations, from the Soviet Union and from the Ukrainian national movement. However, post-war documents in the form of contemporary witness accounts are also part of this collection. Due to Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine since February last year, many archives have been deliberately destroyed by the Russian army and numerous documents have been lost. Local documents are also used for the persecution of individuals. For the Ukrainian archives, digitisation is a top priority in order to save the documents and their contents from destruction.

Almudena Cruz Yabar (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) was connected online and presented the several phases of resistance against Franco's regime (1936 - 1977). During the civil war and in the immediate post-war period, the regime under Franco murdered hundreds of thousands of political prisoners and buried them in anonymous mass graves. By the end of the Second World War, there were various resistance movements: a Democratic Alliance, exiles in Mexico, Communist Party in Spain. But all movements were unsuccessful. In 1947, Franco declared Spain a monarchy and himself regent for life. In the post-war period, almost all diplomatic relations with fascist Spain were severed before the Cold War all but ended Spain's isolation in the West. But before that, the early 1950s saw increased protests in Spanish society, caused in part by rising living costs. In 1956, students protested at the University of Madrid, led by sons of high officials. As a new actor, the Catholic Church

supported Franco's regime and brought about economic liberalisation. Spain remained an authoritarian dictatorship but left the population largely alone, increasing prosperity was established. With the founding of ETA and increasing actions in the 1960s, repression increased again. Any opposition movement was immediately fought to ensure Franco's sole claim to power. Only after Franco's death in 1975 did a reform process begin and Spain was transformed into a parliamentary monarchy in a few years.

Aida Recheda (Director of the National Museum of Resistance and Freedom - Fortress of Peniche, Portugal) gave an insight into the work of the new National Museum in Peniche, which focuses on the theme of civil disobedience, protest and resistance in 20th century Portugal. The fortress was a prison for political prisoners between 1934-1974 and was closed after the democratic revolution against the dictator Oliveira Salazar (dictatorship 1926-1974). The dictatorship was characterised by censorship, repression and the political police (PIDE). Unlike Spain, there was no death penalty in Portugal, so there are no mass graves. The colonial war that began in 1961 was the beginning of the end of the regime. The war of independence in the colonies developed into the Portuguese Revolution, which deposed the dictatorial regime on 25 April 1974. All political prisoners were released and their memories and documents are collected by the museum. There was resistance in all strata of society (student resistance, resistance of intellectuals and artists, women's resistance, independence war in the colonies). However, the vast majority of the resistance was made up of the communists. The museum is scheduled to open on the 50th anniversary of the revolution in 2024.

Panel IV: Bildungsarbeit und Forschung (Ausstellungen und Dokumentation, Archive)

Alexandra Skorvid (Memorial.cz, gulag.cz, Prague) presented her work for memorial.cz and gulag.cz. Memorial was founded in 1998 as an NGO in Russia to research the Soviet camp system during the Soviet Union. At the end of 2021, the Russian organisation was dissolved by court order, and a year later it received the Nobel Peace Prize. On the website www.memsearch.org, digital copies of Memorial can be viewed in an online database. Since 2016, there is also an offshoot of Memorial in the Czech Republic. Gulag.cz was founded in 2009 and (similar to Memorial) investigates the phenomenon of Soviet gulags with a focus on a reference to European history (e.g. project: European Memory of the Gulag - interactive textbook for schools in Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Germany, publication 2023). Other projects include the documentary series "The Czechs and the Great Terror" and the exhibition "Sandarmokh - where the trees have faces". On www.gulag.online a virtual museum shows a standardised 3D Gulag model based on research in the former camps. In the future, archival work is to be intensified and cooperation established with Ukrainian archives.

Peter Éric de Chassey (National Institute of Art History, Paris) presented the exhibition "Images en lutte" (Engl: Struggle of Images), which opened in 2018 at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, on the visual culture of the extreme left in France in 1968-1974. The exhibition focused on the relationship between visual art and politics, against the background of understanding artworks as models for thought. The art school and the state as sponsors decided to link the exhibition to the anniversary year of 1968, as the school was an important site of the unrest of 1968. The exhibition was spatially

focused on France and lived from the interaction with the artists. The exhibition was also able to draw on visual materials confiscated by the police at the time. Peter Éric de Chassey defines the following criteria of the exhibition: 1. political history of the visual, not visual history of the political; 2. objects and images do not serve as illustrations, but are themselves actors; 3. no visual materials are excluded; 4. art shows the political intention of the artist; 5. thematic blocks are oriented towards the events of the time; 6. presentation in the form that corresponds to the object (e.g. books lying down); 7. no descriptive texts: visual materials should speak for themselves and give room for interpretation. Students from the art academy supervised a library integrated into the exhibition and guided visitors through the exhibition. Overall, the exhibition received good reviews and served as a model for further exhibitions and publications. There was hardly any response from the art academy itself. A planned presentation of the exhibition in China failed due to censorship. In the discussion, the focus was on the "agency of images" (acting as actors on the viewers).

Weronika Wiese (Documentation and Exhibition Centre of the Germans in Poland + Research Centre for the Germans in Poland, Opole) gave an insight into the treatment of the German minority in Poland after 1945. After the end of the Second World War, German culture was suppressed in the People's Republic of Poland. Officially, all Germans had been resettled after 1945, but in fact many remained in Poland. After 1989 and the collapse of the communist regime in Poland, the German minority founded institutions to cultivate their culture publicly again. In 2015, the Research Centre for the Germans in Poland began its work, and in 2022 the Documentation Centre finally opened with its approximately 740sqm of exhibition space. The construction of the centre was financed by Germany and Poland and supervised by a Polish-German team of historians. Opole was chosen as the location because most Germans live here. However, the centre does not only want to address the German minority, but also the majority society in order to enter into an intercultural dialogue. The exhibition focuses on the history and activity of the Germans in Poland from the Middle Ages to the present day, but there are also temporary exhibitions on other topics and minorities. The open archive can be used by appointment. Partner organisations include the Haus Schlesien in Königswinter and the Upper Silesian Museum in Ratlingen.

Panel V: Art, Online Campaign, Digital Projects

Magdalena Musilova (Education for Equality and Ecology - EDEQEC, Slovakia) presented her Slovak NGO, which currently consists of five members. With their project "Remembrance of women and members of various minorities who participated in the Slovak national uprising" they want to diversify the participants in the Slovak uprising (29.8.1944), as - contrary to the common reception of the uprising - there were also brave and heroic women and other active minorities. Another aim of the project is to draw attention to the heavy deforestation in the Slovak forests. This plays a role in this context because the fighters of that time hid in the forests. In their project they work together with two historians and a forest expert and offer guided tours through the forests. A campaign aims to inform the public about the project and the historical events. The project was concluded with a conference.

Maria Molenda and Maciej Walasek (Fundacja Nomina Rosae, Poland) presented their web project "War-time Nowy Sącz", which uses a digital map, photos, eyewitness accounts and other documents to present the history of the population of Nowy Sącz under German occupation during World War II. Background texts and didactic material complement the presentation of the historical documents. The content is artistically implemented in short films. All contents are linked via the digital map, so that on-site use is supported on the basis of the location. The map is available at www.wojennysacz.pl. As part of the process of establishing the project as a part of the city's history, the focus was also increased on the fate of the Jewish population.

Andrzej Jerie (Ośrodek "Pamięć i przyszłość", Poland) presented the documentary film "Bitwa Wroclawska" (Battle of Wrocław), which was released in 2016. The subject of the film is the street battle in Wrocław during the largest street rally in Poland on 31.8.1982, with 70,000-100,000 participants, out of a population of 700,000. Officially, there was only one fatality (gunshot wound), but an iconic photo shows a person being run over by a military vehicle. Research in archives revealed more fatalities. The protagonist of the film took part in the demonstration himself as a 14-year-old and wrote a diary about it, which was integrated into the film through animation. In the film, contemporary witnesses are confronted with events/people instead of a classical reporting by contemporary witnesses or historians. None of the perpetrators at the time wanted to speak in front of the camera. The film shows only a small event in the context of Poland's history under martial law, but was well received by the public. The title even spread into historiography and is now representative of the events of the day. However, there is no public culture of remembrance of the events in the form of a memorial. The film was shown in cinemas and at festivals, currently it is only available as a DVD.

Discussion: 20th anniversary of Krzyżowa - and beyond

- The panel participants - **Annemarie Franke, Andrea Genest, Magdalena Saryusz-Wolska and Adam Kerpel-Fronius** - under the moderation of **Robert Żurek** reflected on the past twenty years of the memorial seminar and expressed ideas about the possibilities for the future development of the format. All agreed that Kreisau as a historical place and meeting place has a special atmosphere and that the memorial seminar offered a protected space for dialogue and the breaking down of intercultural barriers from the very beginning. The role of Ludwig Mehlhorn, whose exhibition "Living in Truth" can still be seen today in Kreisau Palace, was particularly highlighted in the initiation of the seminar. From the very beginning, Kreisau was intended to be a place where practitioners of the emerging memorial landscape could come together and promote dialogue between West and East Germany and between Western and Eastern Europe. The idea was to react to the perceived development that the same academic personalities were discussing remembrance and memorial work without fully involving those working in practice. In Kreisau, therefore, the practitioners themselves were to have their say, exchange ideas and network. It soon became clear that the Western

European perspective should be more strongly included. At the same time, it became apparent that an exchange in the thematic breadth is not always easy.

- Both the panelists and the guests in the audience suggested various impulses for the future set-up of the seminar and possible discussions on content:
- - A more in-depth discussion of the challenges and consequences of digitalisation and multimedia in memorial work would be desirable. More thought should be given to the consequences of the digital turn. The numerous digital projects presented during the seminar testify to this need.
- - Thought should be given to how to revitalise the vibrancy of history education, especially in light of the end of contemporary witnessing. It should also not be lost sight of the fact that national narratives of remembrance differ and that a uniform commemoration is not possible.
- - It would also be relevant to deal more intensively with the political upheavals taking place, for example, a discussion of the caesuras of 2014 (start of the war against Ukraine, EU enlargement round). More thought should also be given to the issues of flight and migration.
- - The character of the encounters - personal exchange between practitioners of memorial work, educational mediators and scholars in a protected space - should be maintained at all costs.
- - History arouses great public and media interest in view of the current upheaval. It should be reflected whether historians have actually correctly assessed the developments.
- - Following the concept of "slow science", the possibility of a "slow memory" should be considered. In the course of this, the seminar could benefit from presenting a smaller number of projects overall, but discussing them more deeply and intensively in plenary. In this way, the founding idea of an in-depth exchange between practitioners of memory work could be taken up again.
- - The focus should not only be on dictatorships, but also on the crises of democracy. At the same time, however, the tension between democracy and dictatorship, between civil courage and conformity, and between dignity and undignity should be explored. Particularly in memorial sites, there is a permanent confrontation with these complex issues as well as with the question of "why". The history of Kreisau points to the need to develop an attitude and to react to the threats to democratic legal systems.
- - How can the dichotomisation into perpetrators and victims and the narrative division into heroes and perpetrators be adequately countered? How can reality be better reflected in its multi-layeredness and complexity?

Panel VI Revolution and Transformation- The Memory of the Success (and Failure?)

Irmgard Zündorf (Leibniz Centre for Contemporary History Research Potsdam) presented the feasibility study for the "Forum Opposition and Resistance 1945-1990", which was to examine the possibilities and options for establishing a central place for the educational and scientific examination of the thematic complex of "opposition and resistance". The forum should focus primarily on three tasks: 1) to provide comprehensive information and education about the various and diverse forms of resistance and opposition in the SBZ/GDR; 2) to stimulate an appreciative discussion of the goals and orientations as well as the associated risks of the oppositional and resistant actors; 3) to sensitise people to the challenges of the present.

The four pillars of the concept for the forum include:

- Exhibition area:

- o Permanent exhibition with a thematic, non-chronological approach to the topic of opposition and resistance; temporary and travelling exhibitions; foyer presentation.

- o Media guide: multilingual and adapted to different target groups, offering individual access, e.g. short overview tour in easy language, discovery tour for children, two-hour tour

- o Basic thematic structure should include: People's Uprising 17 June 1953, Peaceful Revolution 1989, examples of oppositional and resistant behaviour from the regions etc.

- Dialogue workshop:

- o Should serve as a place for encounters and discussion, from which a wide range of educational offers can develop e.g. guided tours, workshops, events etc.

- o Offers should be aimed at experts as well as casual visitors and multipliers from home and abroad.

- knowledge repository:

- o Mainly consisting of the archive of the GDR opposition of the Robert Havemann Society e.V., which is to be continuously expanded through the acquisition of further archive materials.

- o Expanded by media stations, special library, archive database and additional digital offerings

- a research college:

- o Research on the opposition and resistance in Germany and beyond with in-house and external scholars.

- o Fellowship programme

The feasibility study was presented to the cultural committee of the Bundestag and received positively. The idea so far is to build the forum on the site of the "Stasi Headquarters. Campus for Democracy".

Nataliia Ivchyk presented the diverse work of the Rivne-based NGO Center for Studies of Memory Policy and Public History (Mnemonics Ukraine) and in particular the Memory Paths project. The organisation is a voluntary and independent association whose goal is, on the one hand, to conduct scientific studies on memory policy and public history and, on the other hand, to develop and promote inclusive models in the field of memory policy in Ukraine. The NGO was founded in 2016 on the initiative of local historians.

The centre's activities include the construction of memorial signs and the development of modern didactic materials for educational work in and out of school on the topic of Ukraine's multicultural history. In addition, informal event formats - summer schools, workshops, trainings, excursions and seminars - will be implemented. On the other hand, academic formats - conferences, round tables, publications, translations - are organised. Last but not least, the organisation is committed to

inclusive memory practices in urban spaces. In its activities, the centre works together with educational mediators, multipliers, pupils and media representatives.

In addition to numerous other successfully implemented projects in recent years, the "Memory Paths" project was presented in particular. This project consists of five components:

- Series of lectures:

- o Conducted in spring and summer 2021 on the events and memories of World War II in Volhynia from the perspective of different groups of victims, including prisoners of war, Roma, Volhynian Czechs, Eastern workers.

- Podcast series:

- o Implemented with leading Ukrainian experts on the topic of the memory of World War II in Volhynia.

- Interactive map:

- o Continually added to and expanded, presenting the symbolic space of Rivne. Memorial signs commemorating the victims of the Second World War in the city are presented on the map.

- Graphic Novel:

- o The historical graphic novel "Ornitophobia" addresses the traumatic events of the Second World War and the Holocaust in Volhynia. It was created by director and screenwriter Artem Vyshnevskyi and artist Yuliia Antonova.

- Summer School:

- o The summer school could not yet be realised due to the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. Two project phases are planned here: First, the participants are to be introduced to the theoretical foundations of remembrance policy and familiarised with different forms of commemoration. With the knowledge thus acquired, the participants are to carry out research projects in their respective places of residence, with the Mnemonics staff assisting them in an advisory capacity.

Vytautas Jurkus and Vytautas Petrikenas presented the Museum and Memorial IX. Fort Kaunas and their work there. The facilities occupy a total area of 50 hectares and have a permanent exhibition and temporary exhibitions. The two scientists gave an insight into the history of the site. The IX Fort was built shortly before the outbreak of the First World War on the orders of the Russian Tsar and was intended - Kaunas belonged to the Russian Tsarist Empire at that time - to serve the defence of the western borders. During the interwar period and Lithuania's independence, the building complex - Kaunas being the capital during this time - housed the IX Fort prison. When Lithuania was occupied by the USSR, the NKVD used the IX Fort and deported many political prisoners from here to Siberia. After the occupation of Lithuania by the German Wehrmacht in the summer of 1941, the SS used the building complex as a collection camp for Jews and as a place of execution. Between June 1941 and

summer 1944, more than 50,000 people were murdered in the IX Fort by SS members and collaborators. The victims were mainly Jews from the Kaunas ghetto. After the Second World War, the fort was used as a food warehouse for a few years. From 1958, the first exhibition was opened at the site, and excavation work was carried out at the execution sites from 1960 onwards. In 1984, the realisation of a memorial complex took place. A 32-metre-high statue by the sculptor Alfonsas Ambraziūnas was inaugurated, dedicated to the victims of fascism.

Reconstruction work will continue on the memorial site until the end of 2023. In addition, part of the permanent exhibition has been redesigned in recent years.

Final discussion:

- The seminar ended with a feedback round in which the participants expressed their impressions of the implementation of the conference as well as impulses and suggestions for the coming memorial meetings in the plenary:
 - - There was unanimous praise for the special atmosphere and charisma of the location, the internationality of the seminar, the variety of topics and the great opportunity for exchange and networking.
 - - The technical implementation of the seminar was criticised. They asked for the use of a functioning beamer and for an improvement of the visual and sound conditions. Due to the brightness in the seminar room, the presentations were not recognisable. The integration of cloud or dashboard services should also be included in the future. Potential for improvement was also seen in hybrid participation. In this way, the conference could be made more participatory and inclusive.
 - - In addition, the wish was expressed for more discussion space and a deeper exchange of content. It would also have been desirable if the compilation of the conference programme had been better thematically bundled. This gave the impression of a thematically loose collection of lectures.
 - - It would also have been desirable for Russia's constructed view of Ukraine to have been taken up and addressed much more strongly in the course of the seminar. Especially in view of the fact that Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine hovered over all the discussions, activities and project ideas of the meeting.
- Suggested topics for the next memorial seminars included questions:
- ○ How do we look at the history that has become a lived reality since 2014 and especially since 24 February 2022? At this point, a very special thank you was extended to the colleagues from Ukraine who repeatedly led the discussions from history to the present.
 - ○ How does memorial work react to these new realities and how do memorials deal with them? What and how can those active in remembrance work do to respond appropriately to these changes?
 - ○ How can the images of remembrance, as discussed during the memorial seminar, be better carried into the majority society and how can disinformation be better countered?

- o How can younger generations be better involved in the discussions that occupy the memorial seminar so that a constructive intergenerational exchange also emerges?