

## **Gabriel Paulus**

*Student at University of Vienna*

### ***“The fate of the Austrian Jews on the territory of the occupied Soviet Union”***

Honorable guests, ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Gabriel Paulus and I am currently a student at the Vienna Faculty of Law. Last year, I was serving as a volunteer at the Russian Research and Educational Holocaust Center in Moscow.

At a very young age I first heard from my grandfather about how most of his schoolmates were deported during the Shoah. Later, when I developed a very fond interest in history and politics, I wanted to know more about the deepest hour of European history. Therefore when I was 16 I decided to go the Russian Holocaust Center one year and research about these happenings. Currently I am studying Law at the University of Vienna and I am continuing to read about the Jewish genocide. This is still a very actual and sensible topic, especially in the political discourse in many countries. But even more, the course of events and circumstances that led to this unimaginable injustice of ethnic cleansing in a for that time highly developed country are a warning signal to the modern world. We must understand the mistakes in history to avoid them in future.

I already talked about this issue more than one year ago at the conference of the Holocaust center in Moscow and raised the issue in Vienna at a conference in the Russian cultural center. Thus I am thankful to share my ideas with you in this very special and historic place.

Being Austrian and European, I regard the Holocaust as the darkest side in our history. And it is a shared tragedy with the countries of the former Soviet Union. Not only were many Austrians amongst the executioners in Eastern Europe, but also the fates of most Austrian Jews found their saddening ending on occupied Soviet territory. This is exactly what my work intends to uncover:

Many people in Austria do know about camps like Mauthausen and Auschwitz, but are not informed about the deportations to the occupied Soviet territories. In fact, Maly Trostinec, despite being the place with most Austrian victims of the Shoah, has not received the just amount of attention in Europe. The same is valid for the camps around Riga.

I also put a great emphasis on the prehistory of the actual deportations. For me the most intriguing part about studying the Shoah is to analyze, how it could actually come so far. How it is possible that people are deported from the middle of a city without causing strong resistance. Understanding the political dynamics of these times is particularly crucial in the modern world. Many voices reiterate, that something comparable to the Holocaust shall never repeat. But in order to give these words a concrete seriousness, we need to be aware, which factors and which developments in society actually enable similar dynamics. Especially in times where individuals are forming to masses to follow a certain ideology or to make political claims of which consequences they are not aware, the alarm clocks should ring. Even today many demand “easy solutions” for complex problems, especially economically deprived people that try to explain their hardship for blaming “the financial elite” or the Jews. In Post-World War Germany, latent antisemitism developed into collective violence, and the idea to deport Jews to a “reserve” to the East resulted in the more feasible solution of genocide.

In a next step, I examined where the actual killings took place. Due to prisoners often being transferred from one camp to another, it was not always clear to find out the places, where Austrian Jews have been imprisoned. My main source was the online archive of the DÖW, the Austrian documentation of resistance. On the basis of their materials I found the numbers of deportation transports of Jews to Lithuania, Latvia and Belarus. Most of the deported were killed soon after their arrival, mostly not in concentration camps but in mere killing sites. The number of survivors is therefore absolutely minimal.

Since the eye witnesses get less and less every year, we are unable to keep the memory alive. But it is the duty of my generation to keep the main message alive.

Thank you for your attention!

**Drozhzhina Olga,**

*M.A. student of the Moscow State Pedagogical University*

*(Moscow, Russia)*

**«The role of literature in the form of memory of Holocaust»**

Good day! My name is Olga Drozhzhina. I am studying foreign literature in the context of culture. I am very happy to be here in headquarters of UNESCO. It'll be an honour for me to present you one of aspects of my research work. I would like to tell you about the role of literature in the form of memory of Holocaust. It is about study of Holocaust reflection in the literature which is actually connected with the problem of memory forming about this tragedy.

I have studied the theme of Holocaust in foreign literature for some years. Art always was as human reaction for different sociohistorical processes in the world.

Literature is one of the most popular and powerful art forms. That is why it is difficult to overestimate its influence on memory culture of Holocaust.

Literature of Holocaust has a special place in modern cultural-historical situation. Thanks to Judgment at Nuremberg some documents and evidence about the cataclysm of the Second World War were collected but they were published only after some years and, unfortunately, they didn't become property of the masses. However wide audience has got a chance to recognize the size of offences completed by Nazis precisely because the pieces of writing about the Holocaust which were written in the wake of this awful tragedy.

It is known that all people who wrote about Holocaust had an issue with impossibility of writing about that is difficult to describe. Also, it was a question that was confused how to reflect the passed events in the literature without corruption and personal emotions.

Every art form, every style showed Holocaust in its own way pointing out at one or another details. I have tried to divide literature of Holocaust into periods to form historical memory of this tragedy. To my mind, it can be seen some periods with the literary specialities and criteria of authorship.

Now, let's talk about these periods which I emphasise.

The first is.

1) Literature of Holocaust as special line was born in the first half of ghetto and death camps. These works were created by prisoned poets who wrote in the Yiddish language (for example: Jacob Glatstein, Itzhak Katzenelson, Abraham Sutzkever).

Together with it in the Soviet Union it was been prepared "The Black Book" in Russian by Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman which wasn't published in USSR. But fragments of this book were appeared in Russian and Yiddish languages so far in 1944-1945. It is necessary to make a point to "The Treblinka Hell" by Vasily Grossman of 1945.

2) The second period is 1945-1960. In this period autobiographical fictions were appeared, memoirs and dairies were published which are like effort of the writers to recognise the great madness which was burst into human history. Such pieces of writing usually describe concentration camp in details daily routine, means of survival, soul state, moral collapse which of the prisoners suffer (Primo Levi "If This is a Man" and Victor Frankl "Nevertheless, Say "Yes" to Life: A Psychologist Experiences the Concentration Camp" published in 1947). This

year in summer the world has known about “The Dairy of Anna Frank”. After a short time, we can find memoirs of not only victims but and executioners who tried to find excuses for their actions in these revelations (“Commandant of Auschwitz” by Rudolf Hoess 1951).

In the second period the book of Italian writer Primo Levi played a special role. Actually, this piece of writing became the first which showed issues of Holocaust in the public. But it became widely known only in the end of fifties when it was translated in many languages. At the same time autobiographic story “Night” by Elie Wiesel was published. After it the theme of Holocaust gradually began to penetrate with the art and reflected in it. In this period we can find novels and stories written not only witnesses (for example: “Death is My Trade” by French writer Robert Merle, “Babi Yar: A Document in the Form of a Novel” by soviet writer Anatoly Kuznetsov), but contemporaries and descendants (Styron, Spiegelman, Schlink) whose works are referred to the third period of the end seventies and the beginning the twenty first century.

Now, let’s talk about the third period.

3) At this time the second generation— descendants and children of survived began to write about Holocaust. This period is movement from personal and emotional literature to the fictions in which writers tried to show passed events at the most truly and honestly way to understand how the Human can allow it. For this reason, it is often chosen the format of novel which is based on documents and evidences. It is important to say that the central character is crimes commiter, executioner. For example, the novel “Sophie’s Choice” by American writer William Styron (1979) is effort to find out why the people have built such camps for people as well as how it is possible to agree to be the chief of death factory. The novel “The Reader” by German writer Bernhard Schlink opens so important issue as the guilt of nazi crimes and level of recognizing of their responsibility for it.

The second and very important tendency of modern literature about Holocaust is the image of child (character/ narrator) whose naive positions of innocent and forced witness or victim of Holocaust only emphasizes horror of all that’s happening.

In the works of this period we can often see the efforts of child to understand his parents’ fate (for example, let’s remember the novel “See Under: Love” by Israeli writer David Grossman 1986). In this context character-child shouldn’t mislead, the author, as rule, addresses to the adult audience. The graphical novel “Maus” by Art Spiegelman won Pulitzer Prize didn’t become exception and nontraditional variant of Holocaust presentation. This work has become for so long classics among the works about Holocaust. This text possibly indicates that comics is one of the some suitable variants to tell about something that is difficult to understand. The comics includes as verbal as visible narration.

The image of child in Holocaust literature is very important because not only adults suffer from ordeals but unfortunately children grappled with them. Fascism doesn’t admit the age limit.

Relatively recently it was published the novel “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas” by Irish writer John Boyne in which the reader looks at concentration camp as nine-aged boys Bruno and Shmuel.

So, it can be stated that Holocaust literature became new separated genre which has its own characters, traits and symbols. In literature of Holocaust first of all is important two characters. They are executioner and victim. It is often that the narrator is victim. Holocaust

literature has its own history, development and big number of genres which can allow study this theme all around.

In the period of Nazism the world has seen the potential of human severity that allows to suppose that something like that can be happened. That is why it is necessary to prevent new tragedy through the art. The history lessons must study the future generations and art, especially literature, plays the most important role. It can choose something from experience of the past that is impossible to keep in the simple document. The fiction literature can express all tragedy of this historical event. Reading about hurts of characters can feel hurts of real people. Finally, I would like to say that historical memory will not forget either awful crimes nor heroism of the past.

Thank you for your attention!

**Victoria Shestakova**

*M.A. student of Saint Petersburg State University*

*(Saint Petersburg, Russia)*

**«Italian cinema as a vector for research of cultural memory of Holocaust in Italy»**

Good day! I am Victoria Shestakova. I live in Saint Petersburg and study at the master's degree of Saint Petersburg state university on "Jurisprudence" and "Culture and art of Italy". I am very glad to be here and it's great honor for me to introduce the results of my scientific research in the headquarters of UNESCO. Theme of my research is: Italian cinema as a vector for research of cultural memory of Holocaust in Italy.

After entering the war, government of Italy opened about 50 concentration camps, where mostly political prisoners were held, which included the Jews. The arrest of Italian Jews began almost immediately after the capitulation of Italy in October 1943. This happened in all major Italian cities under German control, albeit with limited success. The arrested Jews were taken to transit camps in Borgo San Dalmazzo, Fossoli and Bolzano, and from there to Auschwitz. However, the Risiera di San Sabba concentration camp in Trieste also functioned as an extermination camp.

I have always believed that art is a kind of reflection of various historical events that can show a different perspective on what is happening. Cinema perfectly copes with this task, sometimes highlighting even the most terrible episodes of history, which may be less affected by other arts or sciences. The topic of the Holocaust in Italy hasn't been studied enough, which becomes a big omission for a comprehensive study of not only the mechanisms of the Shoah, but also the fate of people. The space dedicated to the Italian experience is infinitesimal in the Holocaust museums in Jerusalem and Washington. At the same time, there are enough films about the Holocaust in Italy to carry out a cultural-historical analysis, to identify the characteristics of the problem, using the example of Italian cinema, and to consider cinema as a source of cultural memory formation, since for most people visual language of films are more understandable than scientific research.

In total complexity, film directors do not often choose the Holocaust in Italy, but from 1950 to the present, about 20 films on this topic were shot in Italy. One of them was the film "The Garden of Finzi Contini" (1970), where the story of one family develops in a climate of deep denial of the facts of the threat to the Italian Jewish bourgeoisie, and human infantilism and lack of understanding of future changes lead to the collapse of the whole family. The film "Falling Skies" (2000) is based on the autobiographical novel of Lorenza Matszetti and tells about the massacre of the Einstein family in 1944, when German SS soldiers killed the wife and daughter of Robert Einstein, and he committed suicide a few days later. Of course, it's impossible to get around side of such a well-known tragicomedy, as "Life is Beautiful" (1997), where the Holocaust theme is revealed through a seemingly completely unusual side - children's play. Humor, constant concern for the mental and physical condition of the child, an explanation of horror from the position of common sense, optimism even in the most extreme situations - everything that makes "Life is Beautiful" is a unique creation of art.

The peculiarity of the Italian cinema about the Holocaust is that films more express the everyday part of life; the terrible details come to the fore at the end of the plot. However, the association of the Holocaust with Italy is not so familiar to the public, because other images have

taken root in people's minds: Germany, death camps, Jews. Accordingly, the images of Italian Jews do not have a stereotypical identification, film characters are not always perceived as typical. Although the overall Italian flavor plays directors at hand and the audience is shifting ideas about the Holocaust, and not the gap pattern.

Cinema is a good material for studying people's ideas about history, their mentality, common culture and the formation of sociocultural identity, acting as a kind of transmission channel of the national idea. The above-mentioned examples, as well as the general situation with the preservation of the memory of the Holocaust in Italy, make this question very relevant in the framework of further historical and cultural studies.

Thank you for your attention!

**Vlasov Evgenii,**

*student of the Kostroma State University  
(Kostroma, Russia)*

***“The recognition of the problem of Holocaust by Russian students, the results of sociological survey in Kostroma”***

Good afternoon! My name is Eugene Vlasov, I live in Kostroma. I am a second-year student at Kostroma State University to get a bachelor degree in History. I am very happy, that I have this opportunity of speaking to you. I want to express my gratitude to all those who helped me in my research. The topic of my presentation is The recognition of the problem of Holocaust by Russian students, the results of sociological survey in Kostroma.

Researching the Holocaust, I often found articles, which claim that victims of the Holocaust were not more than 1 mln people. I was also shocked that several of my peers don't know, what the Holocaust is. Little attention is given to the upbringing of moral values in the minds of the young generation in the educational institutions. Meanwhile, if we don't remember the Holocaust, don't analyze its mistakes, the tragedy will happen again.

The opportunity to actualize the problem of spirituality is appearing in people's especially young people's minds using the example of the fates of people, who survived the Holocaust.

As a result, the real history of Jewish people tragedy (6 million people were eliminated only because they were different) leaves young people indifferent.

The results of a sociological survey that was conducted in Kostroma State University in May-June 2018 among the students of first and second years from different faculties represent this fact. 96 students at the age of 18-23 participated in the questionnaire. It consisted of 13 questions, 8 of which were historical and demanded the knowledge of certain events in history and other 5 questions required a full detailed response and students' personal position.

According to the survey, we can't claim that modern youth doesn't really know what the Holocaust is. The majority of definitions that students gave, was right or close enough to the truth. But we should admit that many students believe that only Germans annihilated Jewish population though it's not true.

Judging by the answers to the following questions about the reasons of this phenomenon, its main dates and events we can say that students' knowledge about the Holocaust is superficial. Many respondents do not know how a person's belonging to the Jewish people was determined, some students believe that it was done by intuition or that all people were considered to be Jews, except for German citizens. Nevertheless, some students supposed that Jews were distinguished by their appearance, religious belief and surnames, and Germans also used existing documentation according to which whole Jewish families were found and all those who were related to them in different ways.

79% of survey participants do not realize the magnitude of the Holocaust and could not even give an approximate figures of killed people. 7% believe that these data have not been preserved and have not reached our days. According to the results of research published in various sources, although, it is known that the number of victims of the Holocaust varies from 5 to 6 million people.

When students were asked about the current increase of anti-Semitism and the influence of the media on this process, 37% of them refrained from responding, 21% believe that the media does not play a role in the growth of such attitudes. Considering by the obtained results we came to the conclusion that students do not know the very concept of "anti-Semitism" and, more over they are not aware of its growing strength in a modern society.

As for the questions which were presented in the form of a test and which required the precise answers, the majority of students gave correct answers, but, in our opinion, it happened due to guessing or obviousness of the correct answer on the presented options in the test.

Thus, after analyzing all the answers received, we came to the conclusion that the Holocaust is familiar to students in Kostroma, but only superficially. Their perceptions of the Holocaust are limited to well-known facts, but they do not know the true causes and extent of the Holocaust, and they have never heard of the denial of the Holocaust and the spread of anti-Semitism in the modern society.

Therefore, in the process of education, it is necessary to create conditions that will help students to show their value, spiritual and moral attitudes in specific research activities. In particular, the basis of our project is to meet people who have endured the tragic events of the Holocaust in their lives, remember the horrors of the brutal destruction of their loved ones. The living stories of these people, which reflected the pain and empathy of the tragedy of an entire nation, help students become real participants in those distant events. Through the dialogue during the interviewing process, young people learn to understand the other person, as well as the historical event about which they have already received the abstract knowledge. Understanding and empathizing with a living person, telling the real events of their own lives, young people bring up responsibility in themselves, realizing their involvement in the distant past history, the present moment, and the future in which their life will continue.

**Sudeikina Angelina,**

*Student of the Saratov State Law Academy*

*(Saratov, Russia)*

***“Russian Federation criminal liability for the distortion of the Holocaust history”***

Good day! My name is Angelina Sudeikina and I am a student of Saratov state law Academy. It is a great honour for me to speak here today and to present my study on «Russian Federation criminal liability for the distortion of the Holocaust history».

Why do I think of the six million victims of the Holocaust as a legal fact? Because in Russia criminal prosecution for Holocaust denial is possible only in case of proof of denial of the facts established by the verdict of the Nuremberg Tribunal. The denial of such facts constitutes an unequivocal disagreement with any of the factual positions reflected in the Verdict. It should not be confused with private opinion expressed, for example, during a scientific discussion: doubt implies a different interpretation of a fact, but not its denial. This is important for determining the conditions of liability under Russian criminal law.

Is the number of six million victims a legal fact? Definitely, Yes. Discussions are under way on the exact number of deaths in the Holocaust. For example, the National memorial to the Holocaust (Shoah) and Heroism «Yad Vashem» in Jerusalem there is documented evidence of four million of victims. But for me, as a lawyer, the official estimate of the number of victims reflected in the Verdict is important. In the text of the Verdict there is a figure of six or about six million.

Thus, this fact is established by the verdict of the Nuremberg Tribunal. According to the Russian legislation, such facts are not subject to any doubt, and in 2014 criminal liability for denial of such facts and approval of such crimes was introduced.

I would like to draw your attention to one verdict of the Russian court. It is noteworthy that this is the first court verdict in Russian practice for denying the number of Holocaust victims. The young man publicly denied the fact of 6 million victims. His act was that he made repost an article that questioned the number of victims of the Holocaust. He actively supported this opinion with detailed comments on his social network page. It should be noted that he was not a scientist-historian. This is a person who adheres to anti-Semitic ideology, which is confirmed by his numerous posts in social networks. This case was considered by a professional judge in the Perm regional court with the participation of jurors. It is important that the judge confirmed the charge, but the public in the face of the Internet community, and in the face of jurors acquitted the defendant. As a result, the defendant was charged with inciting hatred or enmity, and for denying the Holocaust, he was acquitted. The sentence was appealed to the criminal collegium of the Supreme court of the Russian Federation. The appeal was not satisfied and the verdict remained unchanged. The situation is explained by the fact that the General population in Russia is far from understanding the tragedy of the Holocaust. This precedent once again shows the lack of enlightenment of Russian society. A society in which no family was spared by the Nazi regime. A society in which there is no understanding and awareness of the tragedy affecting the Jewish people.

The above case draws attention to its contradictions.

On the legal side, the crime was definitely committed. At the same time, the social component had such a decisive impact that the defendant was acquitted. It is also terrible that he used this to confirm his anti-Semitic position, which the society, without knowing it, supported. However, he was convicted under the article «Incitement of hatred or enmity» for his anti-Semitic propaganda.

This situation exposes the problem of awareness of the Holocaust, which must be addressed by complex systemic activities supported at the state level. The absence of such a solution may lead to an increase in the number of such ambiguous court sentences generated by society's distorted understanding of history. From this it follows that the problem is not in legal formulations, it is much deeper – in the human consciousness.

Thank you for your attention!