

AUSCHWITZ AND ROLE OF MEDIA

SAMRIDHI GOSWAMI¹

SAHIL KHAN²

ABSTRACT

Alarmed by the social media about the Antisemitism during the anniversary of Auschwitz, the younger generations are not aware of it and lack knowledge regarding the Nazi genocide. The survivor of Auschwitz used social media to share their experience and give hate speeches regarding mass murders and their past in Auschwitz. Auschwitz the largest concentration and extermination camp was the idea of Hitler. The all manner of pain experiments and atrocities held on Jews and other people were part of an experiment by Nazis, they wanted to make a balance by killing the Jews and every person belongs to Jews. The media has an important part in this nowadays and during World War II.

The present research paper discusses the issues regarding Auschwitz's and the Nazi's experiments and every detail regarding the mass murders and atrocities that had happened there by Nazi's. After that the second issue talks about the role of allied powers and the liberation of Jews and the last issue which raises the media role in the World War II and how did media spread the awareness in the citizens.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the current times, the only association left with the term 'Auschwitz' is with genocide and The Holocaust. Auschwitz-Birkenau acted as the largest concentration camp in Europe to conduct mass murder in Nazi-ruled Germany. This extermination camp is located near the industrial town of Oswiecim in Southern Poland. There were three camps in Auschwitz: a prison camp, an extermination camp, and a labor camp. Auschwitz was the most baleful camp of the Nazi concentration camps. The two main ways of mass murder were: mass shootings where the captives were made to dig up graves, stand over them, and were shot right into the graves; gas chambers

¹ B.A. LL.B (Hons.), GLA University, Mathura

² B.Com. LL.B, GLA University, Mathura

where the chambers were filled with captive people and poisonous gas was released, the bodies later were burned.³

Auschwitz became the symbolic site for the 'final solution of the Jewish question. Between the years 1939 and 1945, over 1.1 million to 1.5 million people were killed at this concentration camp out of which almost 90 percent were Jews and around 19 thousand were 'Roma' who were being held captive at the camp until they were shoved into the gas chambers to be gassed in July 1944.⁴

Only a couple hundred people had a relatively fortunate life as they survived The Holocaust after the liberation by the Allied Powers. The world did not know about Auschwitz-Birkenau until the liberation and the media has been playing the role since the liberation, in keeping Forces.

Media is a necessary thing everywhere nowadays, there are conditions in media that should be followed as there are factors in media that there will be information the first factor and then the other factor is that there will be a device or platform for the delivery of that news or information. There is the source of information's for people which could be different in nature, and different types of media, the most popular media used by viewers is social media. Media has a great impact on people, it has tendency to influence the citizens and media is obliged to provide the unbiased news and maintain the transparency.

If we talk about what was used in World War II, so we can tell that the government used radio broadcasters, which played a crucial role in that time, as it made aware people of the situation of war also there were restrictions on war which were supposed to be followed by the citizens of the war nation.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the present paper, we have used the derived methodology and the data or information we have used in our paper is taken from different sources present on the internet and from the existing data points, then we have created new data through transformation, in our own words.

³ Unknown author, *Introduction to Holocaust*, THE HOLOCAUST ENCYCLOPEDIA (Oct. 8, 2022, 10.29 AM), <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust>.

⁴ Unkown author *Auschwitz*, BRITANNICA (Oct. 8, 2022, 10.35 AM), <https://www.britannica.com/place/Auschwitz>.

III. AUSCHWITZ

Auschwitz Nazi Germany's largest concentration camp and extermination camp which was situated in Poland. And Auschwitz was divided into three camps: a prison, an extermination camp, and a slave-Labour camp. The Auschwitz idea of Nazi's has become the final solution, a virtual synonym for the holocaust, and between 1 to 1.5 million people died at Auschwitz, 90% of whom were Jews.

The Nazis operated the camp between 1940 and 1945. The idea behind this whole plan of Auschwitz of Himmler head of the ss army the site in 1940 on the recommendation of Rudolf Franz Hoss. The young able-bodied were sent to work, young children, and their mothers, and the old and infirm were sent directly to the gas chambers. A thousand prisoners were also selected by the camp doctor for medical experiments such as sterilization, uterine injection, and experiments involving the killing of twins, freezing experiments, experiments with poisons

After the war, hundreds of Nazi officials and SS soldiers would be tried for war crimes in connection with the abomination committed at Auschwitz. Hoss was arrested by Allied military police in 1946, and in the supporting year, a Polish tribunal sentenced him to death by hanging.

The first people to be gassed were a group of polish and soviet prisoners in 1941. After that October 1941 work began on Auschwitz II, where a huge concentration camp and extermination complex includes 300 prisoner barracks in which prisoners were gassed to death.⁵

Twins, were sent to Auschwitz when they were 6 years old, they said they took them to twins block and there were so many twins their twin's sister said all manner of painful, experiments, and because of these experiments lots of women could never have children⁶

Over 800 prisoners tried to escape Auschwitz many people tried to escape but many people try and fail 42% approx. Many Medical experiments were common.

IV. AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP TODAY

Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum describes the concentration camp of Auschwitz the museum was created by a group of prisoners headed by Tadeusz Borowski. It is a single death camp on the UNESCO World Heritage site. It recognizes millions of visitors each year. In 2019, thousands of people from across the globe visited Auschwitz. Auschwitz Concentration Camp stands as a

⁵ Thomas Henry Elkins, John N. Tuppen, *Allied Powers*, BRITANNICA (Oct. 8, 2022, 10.55 AM), <https://www.britannica.com/event/Treaty-of-London>.

⁶ Unknown author, *Germany-The era of partition*, BRITANNICA (Oct. 8, 2022, 11.10 AM), <https://www.britannica.com/place/Germany/The-era-of-partition>.

prompting of the horrors inflicted on millions of people. Museums represent hate and discrimination.

There were different types of experiments held on the victims, such as bone, muscle, and nerve experiments held on prisoners to study bone, muscle, and nerve regeneration. There are bones, muscles, and nerves used to remove without anaesthesia. These experiments amounted to permanent disabilities to prisoners. There was freezing experiments, and head injury experiments and poisonous experiments, and other experiments such as, they used to burn the prisoners with phosphorus to see the changes in their bodies, also used to stitch the female parts, to see what changes this act of experiment will cause the changes in the female bodies. These things are very horrifying if we try to feel the pain of victims. Auschwitz will be always remembered as man's slaughter house. The women prisoners raped by the Nazi's, and in one chamber 20 to 30 people were used to gassed in one time. The inhumanity of Nazi's is unexplainable.

V. ROLE OF ALLIED POWERS IN WORLD WAR II

In order to understand the role of Allied powers in World War II and the Liberation of Jews, we must know about that how and why the 'Allied powers' came into existence.

As we know, World War II was fought between two significant sets of countries. The two groups were later known as Allied Powers and Axis Powers. The Allied powers were formed to protect one group of nations from the other, it was a defense tactic. By the United Nations Declaration of January 1st, 1942, the Allied Powers of World War II were formed, to oppose the Axis Powers and defend themselves, and control their aggression. However, the Allies were rarely described by 'United Nations' during the war. Initially, the Allied powers were Great Britain, The United States, China, and the Soviet Union. The chief of the Allied Powers were Franklin Roosevelt from the US, Winston Churchill from Great Britain, and Joseph Stalin from the Soviet Union. When the war began on September the 1st of 1939, the Allies also consisted of commonwealth states such as British India, and later were joined by the autonomous protectorate such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Norway, Ethiopia, Brazil, Poland, Luxembourg, Panama, and Yugoslavia.

Several other countries such as, the Netherlands, Belgium, Greece, and Yugoslavia joined the Allied Powers after the invasion of North Europe by Germany began.

Post the collusion of Soviet Union and Germany and invasion of Poland, remaining non-aligned in the Allied-Axis conflict, Soviet Union became a part of the Allied Powers in the year 1941 post German invasion.

Before officially becoming a part of Allied Powers in December 1941, the United States supplied war money and other material post Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. China followed the United States and officially joined the Allied Powers in 1941 as China and Japan has been at war since the Marco Polo Bridge incident of 1937. The leaders of the major countries like the US, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain were responsible to investigate the matters of allied plan of action and correlation between the United Kingdom and the United States were close.

The four great nations including China were called the 'trusteeship of the powerful' and were later known as the 'Allied Big Four' in the United Nations Declaration and were later named as 'The Four Policemen'.

The link between the original Allied Powers in the World War I was the 1914 Treaty of London.

The Allied powers proceeded towards Germany and across Europe in the years 1944 till 1945, they came across several concentration camps, death camps with gas chambers, mass graves. Auschwitz-Birkenau was the largest concentration camp in Nazi Germany. The situation of Jews and other captives was horrifying. The Soviet forces played a key role in the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp complex on 27th January 1945. The Nazis coerced a large number of captives to march toward western Germany which was called the 'death march.

The Allied forces (Soviet forces), upon entering the camp found more than six thousand scrawny captives alive. The Allied forces came as a light of hope for those prisoners.

The United States leader, President Roosevelt asked the soldiers to click as many photographs of the horrific site as possible so that the future generation does not forget about the horrors of the Holocaust and about the atrocities on Jews as well as on other prisoners.

After the death of Hitler in May of 1945, the sovereign power of the country was passed on to the Allied powers. Germany suffered many bombing campaigns and ground battles as well. It is estimated that almost one-fourth of the country's habitation was knocked down. The economy crumbled as there was no industrialization and transportation. Inflation was rising, decreasing the value of the currency, there was shortage of food which led to malnutrition of the citizens. There

were millions of homeless refugees and millions of internally displaced persons. The end of the war is remembered as 'zero hour', it was the lowest point from which the only way was upwards; the country hit rock bottom. The Allied powers were in an agreement of removing all the traces of Nazism from Germany. Several Nazi leaders were tried and were convicted and given death sentences. However, there were several former Nazis who survived and claimed their offices again.

A lot of the survivors of the Holocaust have come forward in the past years to share their horrific experiences in the death camps. Germany has come a long way since World War II, it has made significant endeavors to remember the victims and, in some way, rectify the horrors of the Holocaust.

VI. INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON AUSCHWITZ

The media plays a very crucial role in society as an information medium. It is a mass communication whose motive is to provide information regarding politics and policies of the government, about the gadgets and media have a strong influence over the point of view of society. Media provide unbiased opinions to the viewers and every type of media needs content others are mediums or we can say devices for the delivery of information.

If we talk about the World War II situation that how did media participate and was involved in the war to provide necessary information then we say that during that time, Radio broadcasts were used by the government to keep the citizens informed about the war situation, what is happening during the war, war restrictions imposed by the government and wartime programs also about efforts taken by the government.⁷

Through this government used encourage the citizens to provide emotional support. There were multiple outlets and radio stations. The radios were the cheapest source of entertainment during that time also the easy availability and accessibility of radio to the largest number of citizens⁸.

As we all know that digital formats or we can say that digital platforms play a vital role in society. The information provided by the digital platform influence people around the world. People believe

⁷ AP, *Holocaust survivors across world harness social media to spread message*, BS, (Oct. 8, 2022, 11.13 AM), https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/holocaust-survivors-across-world-harness-social-media-to-spread-message-121040800266_1.html.

⁸ Unknown author, *Life in Nazi-controlled Europe*, THE WIENER HOLOCAUST LIBRARY, (Oct. 8, 2022, 11.34 AM), <https://www.theholocaustexplained.org/life-in-nazi-occupied-europe/controlling-everyday-life/media/>.

what the media provides is their medium of information. And media increasingly becoming important as a source of remembrance.

The Auschwitz remembrance and selfies went viral on social media with the hashtag holocaust and Auschwitz and tik-toks trends such as holocaust challenges.

Nowadays people do not understand the struggle behind any story or accident and it is very easier than said. These types of trends on social media are very alarming to the live witnesses of the incidents, in the case of Auschwitz, there are several live witnesses of Auschwitz and the Holocaust, who have been part of this horror, and these trends can agitate and traumatize to these witnesses about their past, not less than a death experience. Photography at Auschwitz's concentration and extermination camp, the soldier captured the horror scenes of Auschwitz, the black and white pictures of victims, and the concentration camps areas. And if we talk about today Auschwitz serves different purposes, the railway tracks, etc.

Now it is hard to believe that the mass murders and man slaughter happened in Auschwitz camps, the selfies went viral on the Instagram of Auschwitz and selfies remind people that what disaster happened there. A survivor recalled their traumas through these hashtags and pictures.

After the end of World War II, the general of the army in the US issued an order document of center camp, the crime scenes should be captured as a photograph, as an evidentiary that what Nazis did back in time. These photos will prove the atrocities held on the victims of Auschwitz. The number of witnesses decreasing year by year, and what will happen if there will be no more live witnesses of these live slaughters through media and other digital platforms, the survivors shared their stories and experience of their nightmares which they get when they recall the extermination and concentration camps incident. And almost two third of the young generation does not aware that six million Jews were mass murdered during the holocaust.⁹

If we talk about shared experiences, there was a twin sister who had survived Auschwitz and, in their interview, they both told that there were different blocks. And there was twin's block where both the sisters were sent. There were so many twins there in the block. Several and lethal experiments used held to held on them told in their interview. The Nazi did so many twin experiments. And every manner of a painful experiment tried on them. And due to these experiments

⁹ Unknown author, *Entertainment industry during World War II*, WIKIPEDIA, (Oct. 8, 2022, 12.08 PM), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Entertainment_industry_during_World_War_II.

on women, a lot of them cannot get pregnant in their life. Media played a crucial role in this as half of the population did not know about this and of course, still people were not aware of Auschwitz but due to media people started knowing about what had happened there. Through these interviews and the several posts, hashtags and the challenges regarding the holocaust and Auschwitz, this incident of horror came to cross the people.¹⁰

VII. CONCLUSION:

Auschwitz will always remember as a man's slaughter and the evidence of horrifying event and the symbol of pain and suffering of the victims who died in the experiments and in gas chambers. This is the unimaginable pain one could ever imagine that had happened to victims. People who had survived the Auschwitz are still in nightmare, and unable to overcome, and there was the crucial role of media during the World War II, through different radiobroadcasts, it was the only medium for the information. We can say the only support system to citizens under war. If talk about now these things providing the evidence of Auschwitz to people. Every picture and information are given on social media. And there were trends regarding the Auschwitz, hashtags and TikTok challenges which again highlighted the atrocities and horror happened back then. And if we talk about awareness about Auschwitz, people not aware about it but today if anyone want to know about Auschwitz and holocaust, they can easily search information, data, and evident pictures regarding it on internet, internet has a crucial impact on media now days, it enhances the delivery of news everywhere and anywhere. And role of allied powers, they are formed to help the nations from the other nation during the time of emergency. It is a defense technique for the protection used in World War II also formed during the World War II.

¹⁰ Unknown author, *Types of Media*, MENTALHELP.NET, (Oct. 9, 2022, 10.09 AM), <https://www.mentalhelp.net/internet/types-of-media/>.