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In the years 1940-1945, over a million people died in the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp, of which 90 percent were Jews

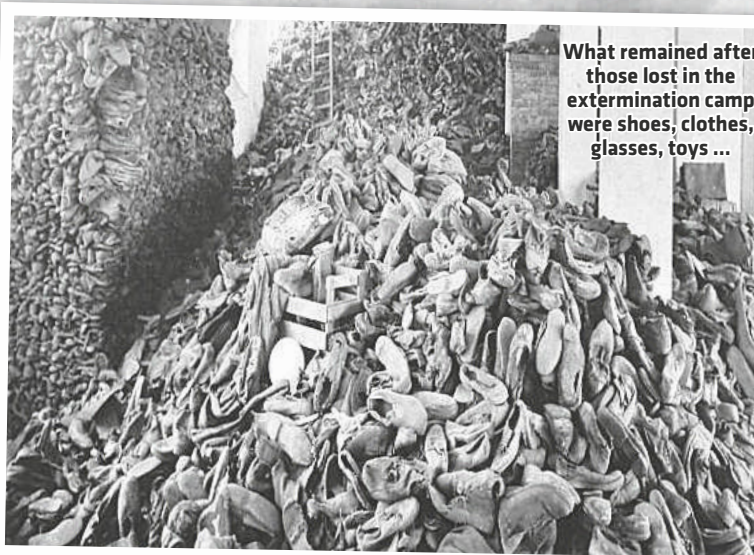
**They are incalculable because the true number of victims of Oświęcim is unknown so far. They are anonymous because most of their documents ended up in the fire. For the countless victims of organized genocide, a special, more effective way of killing has been devised: the death chamber - as this monstrous way of murdering people used to be called.**

The smoke smelled sweet. The burnt „corpses”, as the dead prisoners were called in this dehumanized place, smelled like fried chicken, „because you know, it’s sizzling fat ...” - said one of those who survived hell after the war. The most brutal people controlled motion and stillness in there. KL Auschwitz (the camp in Oświęcim) was an extermination camp. And if it were not for the fact that it could not keep up with the transformation of living people into ashes, all those who entered the gate of death with the „comforting” inscription „Arbeit Macht Frei” would have died in it. However, due to the inefficiency of the most used methods of extermination, except for the atomic bomb, some witnesses survived after the camp. They barely had the strength to speak,

but they told the story. In order to describe it in one word, it was necessary to invent something much stronger than bestiality or barbarism: extermination, shoah. These words appear in the mind of everyone who has visited Auschwitz and who noticed a little pigtail among the tuft of gassed hair. It’s really hard to believe that it was „people who did this to other people.”

### Industrial scale

The scale of the murder was industrial. A switch here, barracks there, death chambers, sorting rooms, then a crematorium. Elsewhere they were processing the corpse into soap. They produced vats with human heads as waste to be incinerated or pitted. The killing in KL Auschwitz proceeded



in two ways: from transport straight to the furnace, and in the absence of Zyklon-B to dig a pit over which they will stand, a shot will be fired, they will fall, and other prisoners will bury them. Before that, they would see chopped heads and stumps in the pits nearby, but they would not have time to discover their mystery. They will go to death quickly. They won’t hear about making soap out of people. Over 130,000 people were imprisoned in Oświęcim. At the same time, further transports were accepted and the most exhausted people were executed. This was done with a shot to the head - to the tip or to the temple. They were also hit to death with whips, with which

the SS men constantly paraded. Sometimes it took just a few strokes of a leather whip to whip the rest of a prisoner’s life.

### The humanity of the service

There was even a rebellion in Auschwitz of the so-called Sonderkommando (crematoria servants), due to, euphemistically speaking, the type of occupation into which they were forced. The idea was to extract teeth from gassed bodies before they were burnt. They were removing hidden valuables from intimate places, which was especially disgusting and degrading for the dead. It was unbearable in the long run, especially when shouting SS men stood over the heads of the prisoners.

## THE INFAMOUS STATISTIC

Historians estimate that from 1 to 1.5 million people died in Auschwitz. Most of them, that is about 1-1.35 million, were Jews, and nearly 75,000 were Polish. But these are just numbers, statistics, and bookkeeping. Behind each individual out of these millions, there is a real human being, adult or child, screaming in pain, despair, or silent in terror.

The ashes from the crematoria were thrown into the pits, as were the uncremated bodies of the dead and the remains of soap production, such as heads, arms, and legs. Documents recording the extermination process were carefully kept: archives and files. Name lists of Jews who went straight to the „bathhouse” were stored too. They were destroyed before the liberation of the camp, which made the families look for their loved ones for decades in the hope that they had survived the war.

Things torn from Jews, torn from their bodies, as well as hair for mattresses, rings with broken fingers, and products that plunged the non-humanistic actions of the Nazis, such as haberdashery made of human skin, were transported deep into the Reich. Interestingly, the latter became the most desired gifts among the Nazi notables there. A “Jew” wallet for the wife of one or another Obersturmführer, it was something!