

MANUELA VALLETTI GHEZZI

Displaced person I 57633
Desire not to die

*A displaced person
to Mauthausen and Gusen
and his persevering struggle for the life.*

English translation by Antonio Siclari

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My dad and Billy - Milan 1997

*Dedicated to my nephew Emanuele
and to the students like him,
because they know and don't forget
the horrors of the Nazism*

To the readers

This book tells of a man that was deported to the Nazi concentration camps in Mauthausen and Gusen when he was only twenty-three years old. His faith, his courage and the desperate desire not to die took him back home after 18 hellish months. That man was my father.

So many times I proposed to my dad to write of his tragic experience, I would have gladly helped him, he always refused to do it: at the beginning, remembering what happened to him, it made him suffer so much and when he felt ready about telling his experience, he decided to do it with the students and personally, he was sure that only so he could make the young people sharing of all the horrors that he had lived.

In 1975, immediately after having retired, he tried to sensitize the youth about the horrors of the Nazism, and this got his mission and he kept on giving his lectures in the schools until his health allowed him. The meetings with the students were always exciting and profitable, at the end of his story the young people harassed him with questions, their thirst of knowing was my dad's greatest satisfaction, and the confirmation that the young people had understood and would not have forgotten anymore.

My father died on 23rd July 2007, after having fought his more difficulty and painful battle, the one against Alzheimer's disease. My dad was really a special person, he had not common human and moral qualities and I, who have loved and esteemed him very much, I could not allow that by his death the beautiful relationship that linked him to the young people was broken, and even that his tragic experience died with him. I have collected how much I have found in his "untidy" drawers by the illness: the text of the lecture that he gave every year in the Milanese schools and that I typed, the photos that he never wanted to show me when I was too young to understand, and the notes that he wrote himself with determination and then traced, when he realized that he could not remember anymore. Then, I have looked for in the memories of my children that listened to their grandfather telling in their schools his ordeal, to

have confirmations and enrich the story with all the possible details, I read up consulting the sites on the deportation that are on the web and I have finally thought about writing a book that could continue the engagement of my father toward the young people and that could make him remember.

This book with its precious content, also photographic, is addressed to the students, to their teachers and all those people that will want to know the tragic experience of a man that didn't feel like dying when twenty-three years old and that fought hopelessly to come back home, he did all he could for his companions of imprisonment and, at the end, he also could forgive.

At the end of my dad's story, you will also find the moving thoughts that the students of the institute Artemisia Gentileschi in Milan dedicated him after one of his lectures: his simple way to tell, his humanity and positiveness towards the life, excited so strong emotions in the boys that wanted to note them on a diary that subsequently they handed to him.

It is me the baby that my father desired so much to know when he was deported and I have perhaps had the merit, unconsciously, to give him a strong motivation to come back home. During the years he has always told our first meeting with big emotion, the same emotion that I feel now in writing this text for him.

I wish the earnings of the sale of this book could be devolved to the ANED - Foundation Memory of the Deportation Onlus in Milan - it is a little tangible sign to express my gratitude for the job that they do because the displaced persons, the men like my father, are not forgotten. I wish that the book could get a useful tool for the teachers when they will face with their students the theme of the deportation. My father would be very happy of it.

I thank Giovanna Ghezzi for the realization of the cover.

I TELL YOU MY DEPORTATION

© Ferdinando Valletti

(Lecture given in the meetings with the student-bodies of the secondary and high schools in Milan to sensitize the boys on the crimes of the Nazism)

Dear boys and girls,

I am here with you because I have welcomed with pleasure the invitation of your kind teacher and the National association Displaced Men to speak to you about the horrors of the Nazism; I will do it using simple and clear words so that you can deeply understand what has happened to me and million of innocent people. I will tell you about the tragedy of the extermination camps, starting from my personal story, because I am sure that, in this way, I will be able to acquaint you with my emotions, my suffering and a hope that has never abandoned me: coming back home. I bear witness with difficulty and omitting the bloodiest aspects of my imprisonment. For years I didn't want to speak, or better, I could not speak about what happened to me, so much was the horror that I had seen and the pain that I had felt.

My name is Ferdinando Valletti, I was born in Verona in 1921 and I arrived in Milan in 1938 to attend the Alfa Romeo School. In that factory, which has been the pride of our town, I have almost been working for forty years, I had been engaged as Art Master and I have finished my career as executive of the logistic sector.

Those were difficult years, the Fascism reigned and Italy would have been dragged only in a tragic war few years later. Despite this, in November 1943 I got married, I was only 23 years and my bride was 22; the house where I lived with my mother, in Via Mola, was razed to the ground by a bomb and we moved to an attractive small villa in Via Ajraghi, not too far from the Alfa Romeo. I brought my wife in that house.

I was a young man with ideals and desire of liberty, for this, when in February 1944 I was approached by a group of activists that asked me to help and organize the strike on 1st March (against the Nazi)

inside the Alfa Romeo¹, I accepted with enthusiasm and I did it without thinking too much about what could happen to me. When one is 23, one cannot even imagine that a person that you call “friend” can betray you and instead this is really what happened. The same individuals that involved me in the organization of the strike, they sold me to the Fascists first and to the Nazi then, to save their skin. I have always known the name of whom had reported me, but I have never thought about avenging. Having come back home had repaid me of everything: when you have seen in face the death every day for 18 months, coming back to a normal life it is the only thing that you desire.

The evening on 2nd March, they rang the bell of my house, I went down to open the gate, wearing my slippers, and I didn't imagine what it would have happened to me. There were three persons in front of me that I had never seen, they told that I should have followed them just to give some information, I asked to reassure my wife and my mother, they granted it to me, I followed them. I didn't see my family anymore up to August 1945.

I was summarily questioned in a police station by the “Muti mugs”² that had captured me, I moved then to St. Vittore where I found other

¹ On 1st March 1944 the workers of the factories of the regions of Italy, occupied by the Germans, went on strike: for a week the Italian trade stops and the production for the Germans is suffering. The focal point of the big movement of struggle is the towns of Turin and Milan, where the worker condition is at the end of the survival. Hitler immediately threatens a hard repression: it needs to deport the 20% of the strikers and place them at Himmler's disposal for the work service. But the struggle doesn't stop: the organization of the strike gets the support of the CLNAI and to the economic claims, the political ones immediately support against the war and the neo-fascism occupation. Despite the arrests and the deportations of thousand of workers, the strike actually lasts till 8th March, when the work starts again, according to the directions given by the Committee of interregional unrest. During the general strike, 1 million and 200.000 workers have stopped working. It was, in Europe, the first and only big general strike under the dictatorship of neo-fascist occupation and it marked the Italian specificity in the context of the European Resistance: the organic presence, close to the partisan formations, of the social struggle and particularly of the factory. (A.N.P.I.)

² Ettore Muti became the main hero of Mussolini's régime (revived in northern Italy with help from Nazi Germany, as the Italian Social Republic). His name was given to one of the most feared Black Brigades units. (Wikipedia.org)

people shut like me that were involved in the strikes of March 1 and avowedly antifascist. The following day for all of us from Germany the order of deportation arrived. On 4th March, I was taken with others displaced men to the Central Station in Milan, we travelled on two not very big trucks and we stopped in the undergrounds of the station at Platform 21³; to each of us a number of register was assigned, mine was “57633”. We let us get on two railway convoy⁴, each one containing fifty people, in reality they were cattle cars closed on the outside by big padlocks and with the windows with the barbed wire, they didn't give us any water and food either, and we travelled on that train for two nights stopping a pair of times, I could not say where they happened. We were directed to Innsbruck, but in reality I had not any idea of where they would have taken me. My biggest worry during the trip, it was to advise my family. For this reason I let some cards fall from the cracks of the railway wagon in every station, where the convoy stopped: I wrote that I was to be deported and that I didn't know my destination. When I came back in Italy, I learn that some of those cards had been delivered by some good heart people.

Once in Innsbruck, we were consigned to a group of soldiers and after a march of two kilometres we reached the hamlet of Reichenau and we were accommodated in a little clearing concentration camp, surrounded by high and snowy mountains.

There were Vignolle and Nespoli of the Alfa Romeo with me, and then the lawyer Sergio Dragoni, the judge Franco Ferrante* and Enzo Ferrari, I didn't know them at that time, after our common experience we became brothers. We remained packed into a hut without doing anything for few days, the cold was unbearable and I started wondering what my fate would have been. In the afternoon on 12th March, they informed us that we would have left, always with cattle

³ Milan central railway station's notorious Platform 21, which witnessed the deportation of hundreds of persons in 1943-45, will host the city's first Holocaust memorial.

⁴ It was the transport number 33 to Innsbruck first and Mauthausen then, the displaced persons were one hundred and their register numbers were from 57539 to 57638 - see image in the photographic report

cars, for other camps (unknown destination). For me and other companions, the doors of the Mauthausen KZ opened.

Late in the afternoon on 13th March 1944, we arrived in proximity to the camp of Mauthausen where we met the first real SS, they were the ones that had the Totenkopf, the death's head in their caps; their attitude didn't promise anything good, they welcomed us with shouts and insults and with the growl of the dogs that they held on the leash. They lined us five persons each line and they started along an uphill road; it was made with dirt floor and because of the rain that incessantly fell down, it turned into mud. We had with us a young man without of a leg to which they had removed the crutches, we alternated to bring him on their shoulders. The run almost lasted an hour. They finally made us stop in front of an almost medieval construction; it was the lager of Mauthausen. On the front entry doors a big and gilded eagle towered with the spreading wings that were the emblem of the Third Reich⁵. Inside the fortitude, they can see some big constructions and a writing that was a sneer for the one that really in that place would have been destined to hard labours becoming "Hitler's slave", the writing showed: "Arbeit macht frei" that in Italian means "Job makes free".

Once we were inside the camp, we were bereft of anything: watches, money, precious things, with the false promise of foodstuffs, then in the showers department they undressed us, they required our personal particulars, they shaved us all over the body with a strip on the head 4-5 centimetres width, from the nape to the forehead.

They made walk naked toward another hut where they gave some underpants and shirt and a pair of old wood clogs, everything had to be done in hurry and beating us. They put a nameplate on my wrist tied up with the iron thread with my number. I was started to the quarantine in the hut 16, I was with other companions of

⁵ During the Third Reich different extermination camps were set up, in which million of people of religion or Jewish origin died, besides gypsies, Jehovah's witnesses, homosexuals, handicapped persons and opponents of the Nazism. Inside these camps, the prisoners, still considered useful, were used in particularly heavy works. The bad hygienic conditions, with a poor feeding caused shortly the inability and therefore the "uselessness" with consequent killing of the displaced persons, they killed them by gas chambers or by shooting or other methods.

imprisonment just arrived, we were checked by criminal jailers on behalf of the SS, the Kapòs.

In the following days they gave me a striped white and blue jacket, on the left part of the breast they made me sew a strip of cloth on which, beside a red triangle with the initial I, my number 57633 was marked, a number that would have accompanied me for all through my imprisonment. I should always have remembered and learnt it as soon as possible to articulate it in German language. Ferrante helped me to do it, he spoke well German and he often served as interpreter.

The Lager of Mauthausen was located in Austria at around 20 east kilometres of Linz and it was opened in 1938, it remained under the command of Franz Ziereis up to the arrival of the Americans. That awful place also had the sinister “qualification” of extermination camp (KZ initials means in fact Konzentrationslager) it was composed by 32 blocks, in other words huts made of wood, 24 were for the prisoners, other huts were used for the quarantine and for the accommodation of the sick person.

They estimate that the displaced people in that camp, one of the most terrible Nazi lagers, have been 200.000, around 100.000 of them died for the inhuman conditions of detention and work. The displaced Italians were more than 8.000. I shared my period of imprisonment in Mauthausen with Franco Ferrante, a judge from Milan, with Aldo Carpi*, the famous painter and manager of the academy of Fine Arts of Brera that then was transferred with me to Gusen, and with Enzo Ferrari, the builder of the Ferrari, they succeeded in coming back home also.

When we Italians arrived, we found displaced persons of different nationalities, we immediately familiarized with the Russian, they were heartily people and it was easy to get along well with them. It was not so simple with displaced people of other nationalities that felt for Italians a kind of hate because they held them fascist. They could not understand that who was deported could not be fascist.

We began our permanence in the lager among an infinity of physical and psychic atrocities that we were forced to suffer. I was accommodated in the block 14, where there were not any camp beds with mattresses, but naked ground, I was put only nearby to other

displaced persons, we were leant one close to the other, they gave us the order to sleep: "Put you down" and we threw ourselves on the ground and we found ourselves got stuck the one in the others without chance to move, the SS often trampled on us just not to allow us to move. Sleeping in this way was really painful and inhuman. In the hut 14 I knew the professor Aldo Carpi, the famous painter to whom we owe the book "Diario di Gusen"; with him I shared also the imprisonment, in the camp of Gusen, exactly. We suffered all the types of injustices: we often were waken for a frozen shower used instead to test our resistance to the cold, "the parachutist's wall" was instead an endless precipice, where the SS, to have a good time, made the displaced persons line up one behind the other and the last one had to give a kick to person in front of him and so on, up to hurtle down... and then there was the exhausting hard labour in the notorious stone quarry "Wienergraben" that had steep walls, precipices without grips.

In the morning, the call was at five o'clock, after that we were taken to work to the quarry and we remained for twelve, thirteen hours there. To access to the quarry one had to cross 186 steep stairs made of stones of different dimensions that sadly got known as "the death's stairs": on that accursed flight of steps it is calculated that, during the years, a million people died.

We also took on our shoulders rocks of 50 kilograms and we proceeded in single file among the hilarity of our jailers that betted on who of us would have fallen under the weight of the rock dragging in the fall the other companions too.

At noon, the bell of the so-called "ration" rang, and one had to run, we had bowl tied to our trousers with an iron chain, dirty and rusted. The food was a watery soup with something inside, peels of potatoes; some leaf of cabbage there was not anything else.

In short, the methods that were used for eliminating the prisoners were these ones:

* the gas chamber

- * the mobile gas chambers - through a truck with the exhaust pipe turned inside the back vain of the vehicle that transited along the journey between Mauthausen and Gusen
- * mass shooting
- * medical experiments
- * hanging
- * fulguration by contact with the barber wire that delimited the camp
- * starvation - every week more than 2.000 prisoners starved

After 10 months of stay in Mauthausen, in the month of December, I was transferred to the undercamp of Gunsen with other displaced persons of different nationalities. We crossed the road walking for 7 kilometres without being able to stop.

Gusen was born as undercamp of Mauthausen in March 1940, but in the course of few years it took a higher number of displaced persons of the principal camp. The Commando of Gusen was composed by three separated camps: Gusen 1, where they took me and other Italians, Gusen 2, where the prisoners were treated even in more inhuman way, and Gusen 3 that was a small camp of human refusals. Gusen became the most terrible concentration camp of the European history; the average period of survival of displaced persons was calculated in 4 months.

The lager was formed by around 30 huts and two constructions done with the stone extracted from the quarry. In reality there were no great infrastructures. The life conditions for us displaced people were worse than in Mauthausen, the work was very harder. At Gusen 1 camp, one worked to the stone quarry, at Gusen 2 one worked to the construction of the galleries that would have been used for assembling parts of airplanes for the German army instead. Gusen 3 seemed destined to the construction of material for the house building. Truth was that at Gusen one literally died by work and cold.

I found a place in the hut A.

The lack of vitamins had provoked in many of us the dysentery; we tried to hide the sick from the Kapòs, but once discovered, many of my companions were thrown in the crematory ovens still alive. The huts were infested of bugs and the water was often polluted, my body

felt the effect of the privations, but I tried to withstand, I minded well from complaining or saying that I was badly because I feared to be eliminated, I had seen many of my companions going to the infirmary to be taken care of and not come back anymore. When I was freed by the Americans I weighed 39 kilograms, I had reached Mauthausen that I weighed at least 70.

I spent my Christmas as displaced person in Gusen and that day was terrible, there was an air alarm and they made us put all in the trenches around the camp, we remained in the middle of the snow for hours. I strove to think about something beautiful and reassuring to busy my mind, the Christmas days spent with my family recurred, first in Verona with my mother's relations and all my cousins, in joy and to warm, then with my family, I had so much desire to see my wife again, my mother and to know my child that would already have had to be born. I thought that it was very sad that my darlings believed me dead while I was being there instead, turned into a skeleton but living, and I was fighting hopelessly to come back home. I tried to taste the heat of a hug, the sweetness of a caress, a cup of warm milk with a piece of bread and meanwhile I didn't feel my hands and feet by the cold. Finally at 4 o'clock the siren of the stopped alarm and I went in the hut A again. I knew that in some block it was made a small Christmas tree, but we were not free to go out of our huts and so I didn't see it. At dusk the nostalgia turned into physical pain, one can hear some Christmas songs in different languages coming from every part of the camp, they were like desperate complains, I hid my face under the cover and I cried. Christmas had passed by and I started wondering how many days I could withstand more.

The day after, I voluntarily gave some wounds to my feet in order to reach the Revier, a kind of infirmary, they held me only for a day there, and then I was sent back to the quarry that was always my principal occupation. With my companions, I picked up blocks of stone to load them on the carts of a small train, we moved there under the rain and in the mud and, for some of us, those more weakened, the work was hard. In that hell there was also the professor Carpi; he was sick and tired, he often risked to end under

the small truck of that train and I did my best in order that didn't happen, I watched him and I literally took him away, seizing him by his arm every time that I saw him in danger. Borghi worked with me too, another displaced person of the Alfa Romeo that has not succeeded unfortunately to come back home. When he finished our shift I, and other displaced persons, was arm in arm with the professor Carpi and we helped him to walk in line with the others, once we were forced to leave him because we had been caught and the poor Carpi skidded and he was beaten, but he continued without turning, he could do it. Later, the professor Carpi got the request from the SS to paint pictures for them, he accepted and he got a little more food.

I had a help from the Providence too. One day happened that the SS had organized a football match among them in a camp not too far the huts and a player was missing, they asked to us, displaced people, if there was someone good to play football, I plucked up courage, I came forward and I tried to explain that I had played in the Milan team, it was the truth, even if I had played only a pair of games. They told me to show them as I could play, and I had to resort to all my energies not to disappoint them. I had understood that this could be an occasion to go out alive from the lager and also to help my companions of imprisonment, I could perhaps save them too. The SS were satisfied of what I had done and, sometimes, when someone of them was missing, they came to look for me to complete the team. I had borne it in mind what was happening me, I had striven to learn German language and this helped me very much because I started working in the kitchens as attendant and I could have so some food more, food that I shared with my companions in the evening, when I reached them to spend the night.

I risked very much: I hid the peels of potatoes and other vegetables, which were the refuses of the kitchen, between the plant of my foot and the clog, in this way I could get the search over before going back in the hut, then I distributed what I had stolen to whom needed more.

I realize that it can sound disconcerting that in an extermination camp there were SS that had a good time playing football while the

displaced persons died. But this was the reality and I had grabbed on this reality with all my strengths in order to come back home.

In April 1945 they started rumours going round about some possible change, they told us that the camp had to demobilize and the SS, more nervous than usual, and they did nothing but burn dead bodies: the air was unbreathable for the typical pungent odour that came from the crematory ovens. The uncertainty of those days made me and my companions fall into despondency, also because strengths were abandoning us, we didn't understand what was happening, but we feared the worst. I remember to have prayed all night long and have asked to my Guardian angel not to abandon me and give me courage at all events.

On 22nd April, hundreds of displaced people, the most sick and invalid, were killed by the gas Zyklon-B in a hut turned into gas chamber, we feared that in the following days we would have died the same way too.

On 5th May, it was Saturday and the SS silently went away, the camp was unguarded and we didn't know what to think and do. At noon we heard a tank, a prisoner got on the roof of a hut to see what was happening, at that time a burst of machine gun fire arrived. They were the last SS that escaped toward the Tyrol. At five o'clock in the afternoon the front door of the camp opened, a tank and a jeep came in, they were American soldiers of the 11th Armored Division. The tank turned around the camp and then it went out for going to Mauthausen. The remained soldiers looked around and they were dismayed: at the edges of the camp there were mountains of dead bodies. Some of the prisoners, not understanding what was happening or fearing the arrival of other jailers, they tried to hide themselves; other displaced persons, above all Russian, they started sacking the camp and the larders; a kind of lynching burst for the one who had collaborated with the SS that the American soldiers were not, for the time being, able to control. Later on they arrived some Austrian watches and the Americans organized, they rationed the provisions and tried to reassure us, they took care of us and told us that they would have helped us to come back home. Then they started to bury the dead persons.

I understood that the moment was difficult and I offered to help to control the camp, some displaced persons tried to leave with their own legs but being weak, they came back after little time. I convinced my friends to eat little food: in our conditions, after that fast, the stomach and the intestine were not used to work anymore, and it would have been fatal.

I put one of them, the most serious, on a baby carriage that would have allowed me to transport him and we went out of the camp, we arranged ourselves just outside the enclosure, we were anxious to taste a little of freedom and it didn't seem true we could do it. Around the country was very nice and freedom gave a different image of everything that surrounded us.

I knew later that we had been alive by a miracle, an order from Berlin had decreed just for that day the killing of all the displaced persons of the KZ-Lagers of Gusen I and II included the civil population of St. Georgen in Gusen. The inhabitants of St. Georgen and the displaced persons of the KZs, according to this order, would have had to be evacuated by a fictitious air alarm and sent to the assembly shops of the reactors of the fighters, and then they would have made them explode.

The commander of the factory of airplanes by the order to murder a so big mass of people, he found the way of intercepting the Americans to ask an urgent intervention for the liberation of the lager. It seems that it has been a displaced person to get the contact with the liberators, and so on 5th May 1945, in the north part of the town district of St. Georgen, an American tank pushed as far as the Lungitzer-Strasse and through the square of the market of St. Georgen, setting free the KZ-Lagers of Gusen I and II: later it followed immediately the liberation of the Fortitude of Mauthausen.

The American contingent individualized those of us that needed treatments and they offered to grant them to the First health division to take care of them. Many of us accepted, we were not under the conditions to come back home by our own legs. I remained with the Americans for 3 months, I followed them in the liberation of the other camps and I was granted then to the Red Cross in Geneva for the repatriation. I was treated and recovered my strength, the

imprisonment and the difficulties gave me some pulmonary infiltrations, but I got off. I immediately told my family that I was alive and that soon I would have come back.

For the American soldiers that have freed us first, then treated and finally took us back home, I express my endless gratitude, I owe to them my life.

I came back in Italy in August 1945 with another Alfa Romeo worker, Marco Vignolle, the whole quarter where I lived went down in the street to celebrate us, my wife hugged Marco by mistake, then she recognized me and took me to see a very beautiful child that was 10 months and that didn't know her dad yet. As soon as she saw me, the child burst into tears, and looking at her, I wept for joy.

After other treatments and one period in a sanatorium on the lake of Como, I returned to everyday life close to my family, I found my job again at the Alfa Romeo and I started planning my future.

Here it is my story.

You will wonder how I went out of that hell. The only things that helped me to survive, they were the faith and the love for my family. I have never surrendered, I have always had in my heart the certainty that I would have succeeded in coming back home to know the child that my wife expected and see my mother that had only me, I have always had so much faith in the providence and the desire to fight for living never abandoned me.

I have been lucky and I got it. They allowed me to see my darlings again and for this I thank to the Lord, but the lagers have remained inside of me and they hurt even today. My strong character allowed me to bury everything, but in some moments, especially by spending of the years, the memories suddenly resurface with their more dreadful details. I have not forgotten and I will never forget the horrors that I have lived, the so many companions of imprisonment that I have lost and the inhuman experience that I have shared with other innocent men, as well as I will never forget who has helped me to come back home.

It is important that you boys understand the value of the freedom and the danger of the dictatorships, any matrix they are, it is extremely important that you know that if you now have the chance to study, to

travel, to play sport, in short to be free, you owe it to young people that like us, in the dark years of the fascism and the Nazism, have believed in the freedom and in the value of the man. Remember that paying honour to the fallen for the freedom is a civil and moral engagement for every new generation, a tribute to whom has given the life because today we can be free. Only knowing the past it will be possible to realize a future of peace, so I beg you not to forget what I have told you. Don't allow that what I have lived can happen again in any part of the world. You, young people, are the hope of the human race, you are also my hope.

Before finishing I want to remember with so much affection, the professor Carpi, illustrious painter and Manager of the Academy of Brera in Milan, who has mentioned me in his book "Diary of Gusen"⁶ for having helped him in they quarry and in other occasions, all of my companions that didn't do it and they will remain in my heart forever.

I will answer gladly now to your questions...

⁶ <<I got already stupid by the illness, and then I could not walk; and there was Ferdinando Valletti, other worker, a good young man here from Milan that, every time I was in danger to remain under some stones, he shouted me: "Professor, professor" and he ran to seize me by my arm, and he threw me far away. Another time that good boy has torn me from the rails, while I was being about to end under the train. Valletti was a Borghi's friend, an Alfa Romeo worker; he saved. Then, when the work was over, I was really tired, I could not stand it anymore, I had my hands and my feet tortured, my legs didn't hold me up. Then Valletti and another of my companions took me arm in arm and helped me to walk lined up with the others. »

From *The Diary of Gusen* by Aldo Carpi

Our emotions made words

from the diary of the students of the institute Gentileschi in Milan

The reaction of some boys of the College ARTEMISIA GENTILESCHI in Milan - II Year of the Tourist address in the section "M" - to the testimony of Ferdinando Valletti.

The day 9th June 1997, in our school, we have had the opportunity to listen to the direct testimony of Mr. Valletti about his experience in the lagers from the moment of his arrest in Milan, to his deportation to Mauthausen first and then to Gusen, till the liberation of the camp and this coming back home.

Touched by the story of our guest, we have wanted to testify our touched share with reflections and thoughts sprung in us during the meeting and we have collected them in a diary that we have handed him. This is our way of saying thanks!

Dear Mr. Valletti,

... despite the horrors of the past, a lot of nations still fight bloody wars, the nuclear weapons are a constant danger and everything seems so precarious. We have to learn from the past and never forget how much of ugly happened if one wants to improve this world. I have also understood all this thanks to you, Mr. Valletti that, by your testimony has opened my mind.

Daniele

... I wanted to write you a thought that goes out from my heart to express the emotions born by the meeting on Monday. I have been struck by your story, I didn't imagine that you had suffered so many offences and, even you had wanted to forgive who, by my eyes, other is not but a beast. It seemed to see in you, that day, Christ in the Cross that said "Father, forgive them because they don't know what

they do". I want to say so that you are good and humble like the Christ. Thank you for having given us your experience.

Paolo

... I don't know how to thank you to have come and tell us your story. I have learned a lot from you: the generosity, the real friendship, the forgiveness... but also and above all the perseverance and the determination in pursuing your own ideal and the ability to keep yourself "human" also during and after the suffered sufferings. I admire you very much. Thanks!

Barbara

... of your meeting, they have remained engraved your sweetness and delicacy to face dramatic and delicate contents experiences. As for, you are a person full of desire to live and, even if our knowledge has been short, I can affirm that you will always love you. I will never forget you.

Sara

... I was very struck by your ability to forgive. I don't believe that I could. The modesty and the reservation, with which you wanted to save us the rawest details of your imprisonment, moved me. I thank you to have given me this lesson of humanity and history.

Ombretta

... your sweetness, towards us and those people that hurt you, struck me. I don't know how you can forgive them. I wish you could spend a good summer and live always with the joy that has shown us. Good luck.

Adele

... you have suffered, you have suffered violence and injustices as many friends of yours. It must have been difficult to hold on, but you did it because you had your faith and your family. You had not seen your child yet, so you have hoped to the end to come back home safe and sound only for her. The desire to live has never abandoned you, you didn't feel sorry for yourself, but you have found the strength to

react. You are happy to be alive, but inside yourself, you know that you will never forget.

Michela

... I consider myself lucky to have known you and I want to express you my admiration for your extraordinary ability of forgiveness toward his jailers. Thanks for what you made me learn.

Alessandra

... I have not felt in your story traces of hate or revenge, you limited to tell us what you have suffered without betraying a judgment on your jailers. Yours have been words of peace... and in a very first moment I could not understand, then listening to you paying attention, I have realized that you come to us not to condemn anybody but to invest us of the responsibility for the future. I imagine how much pain it costs to you to keep on remembering and answering to our questions, your often damp eyes prove it, and for this love, I admire you as an exceptional person, kind and human person. Thanks.

Laura

... I am really convinced that I will forget never you, because you have taught me that forgiveness is the virtue of the wise man. You are a sweet and sincere person that devoted his life to help the others and you saw to it that also the other people can follow your example. If your teachings will help me to become a better person, I will owe hit to you. However I will always keep in my heart the memory of our meeting.

Cristina

... what I feel is a feeling so intense and deep that it's difficult to express it by the pen. But a sentence of a great contemporary German narrator, Hermann Hesse, partially modified by me, it seemed able to interpret and express the whirl of my feelings at its best. "The wars for years have made the whole world desolate and we still find ourselves among their ruins, stunned by the noise, embittered by

their foolishness, poisoned by the rivers of blood that keep on flowing in our dreams.” Thanks
Virna

... the fact to have known you, it has made me very proud. Your words, so peaceful and serene, in the respects of the tragic lived experience, they have never communicated hate or grudge either toward your executioners, rather you have testified that creating a society of love, solidarity, friendship and peace is possible. Thanks for your lesson of life.

Alessandro

... I have seen about ten films about the World War Second and about the extermination Nazi camps, but none of them has known how to arouse in me the emotions that your words have caused. You have shown us that knowing how to forgive is a fundamental value, that the revenge and hate are not useful to anybody and that the strength of mind, the faith and hope can help us against the adversities.

With affection

Mariagrazia

... what to say after the words of the boys and girls?

Only a sentence, one of those that you love to keep as aphorism:
“The man that can forgive, he is a free man.”

With so much affection

The teacher Adriana

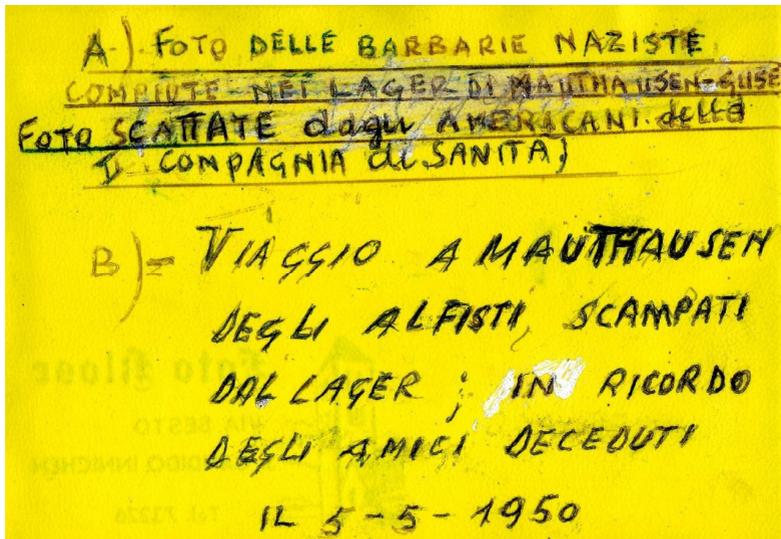
PHOTOGRAPHIC REPORT

The notes and the photos published following are to refer two different circumstances: the first ones were immediately taken by the Americans after the liberation, and the second ones refer to a commemorative visit paid by my father and other displaced persons of Alfa Romeo in 1950, a kind of pilgrimage in the camps of Mauthausen and Gusen to honour the fallen.

The Alfa Romeo Company had placed at their disposal the presidential car and they were proud of it.

My father meticulously annotated the content of the photos on some pieces of paper when, some years ago, he understood that by the time he would not have succeeded in remembering anymore.

They follow resources from the web, photos and documents collected in the sites about the deportation.



LAGER DI

MAUTHAUSEN

INGRESSO PRINCIPALE
DEL CAMPO TEDESCO





LAGER DI
MAUTHAUSEN

LOCALITA APPEL PLATZ



La CAVA DEL LAGER DI MAUTHAUSEN

La cava del campo
N° 486 gradini per
arrivare al posto di lavoro
ORARIO ^{di} ~~ore~~ 6-12,30
LAVORO ^{di} ~~ore~~ 13,30 TRENTA

NB - Si calcola che un milione di
persone non muore sui gradini -



5-5-45 GIORNO DELLA

LIBERAZIONE.

CADAVERI IN ATTESA

DI ESSERE PORTATI

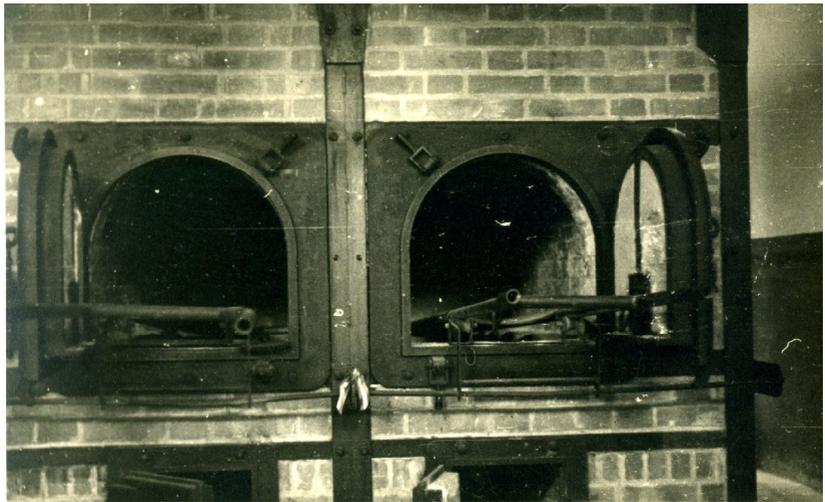
A I FORNI CREMATORI

DI GUSEN E DI MAUTHAUSEN



1) SUSEN
MAGGIO
2) 1945
MAUTHAUSEN

5/5/43 LAGER di Mauthausen
FORNO CREMATORIO
IN FUNZIONE 24 ME GIORNO



L'ex deportato Valletti ~~Mario~~
Con il comandante
delle forze americane
prima della partenza
per l'Italia

AGOSTO 1945 - RIMPATRIO



Alfa 2500
presidenziale
messe a disposizione
della DIREZIONE
ALFA ROMEO
Sosta al confine
Italiano

Da sinistra
Valletti
Giuppa
Ferrazza - } Direttore
Roussaroni } del personale
Nespoli } Alfa Romeo
Vignolle

5/5/1950



35 I 5 alpini reduci dal
lager di Mauthausen assieme
al direttore del personale Alf. R.
al (posto di confine con l'Austria)



Cippi in ricordo de
caduti, ubicato nel mezzo
dell'appelplatz DEL LAGER
DI MAUTHAUSEN

5-5-1950



LAGER MAUTHAUSEN - 5-5-950
OMAGGIO FLOREALE DEGLI ALFISTI
AI DEPORTATI DECEDUTI NEL LAGER
NB: Scrivere al custode (ex deposito)
antico

ferraria



VISITA AL LAGER
DI GUSEN
UBICATO A CIRCA 3KM
DAL PICCOLO PAESE
DELLA FOTO



Vienna, sorte
durante il viaggio
a ritorno -
Consiglio Federale
ESPOSTO SULLA PIAZZA
PRINCIPALE DELLA CITTÀ.

ferraria



5-5-950

Di ritorno da Vienna

In viaggio a. N. ...

l'oste sul lago di Garda

ferraria



List of the one hundred displaced persons from Reichenau-Innsbruck to other Nazi concentration camps

Elenco dei cento deportati da Reichenau-Innsbruck ad altri campi di concentramento nazisti

Numero	Sognomo	Nome	Luogo di nascita	Data nascita		
57539	Albano	Damiano	Scilla (Rc)	22.05.1916	<u>superstito</u> †	1
57540	Allua	Palmito	Pozzaglio ed Uniti (Cr)	22.11.1896	m. Melk	20.03.1945
57541	Angelini	Gioacchino	Firenze (Fl)	09.10.1906	m. Ebensee	28.04.1945
57542	Armetti	Enrico	Milano (Mi)	26.02.1894	m. Mauthausen	14.12.1944
57543	Bugattu	Bruno	Mi-Vigentino (Mi)	16.03.1914	<u>superstito</u> †	
57544	Baldi	Ugo	Gropello Cairoli (Pv)	29.10.1908	m. Ebensee	03.06.1944
57545	Balteri	Luigi		13.05.1907		
57546	Baresila	Luigi	Tressore Malnorio (Bg)	10.01.1925	m. Ebensee	22.04.1945
57547	Bertazzoni	Egidio	Milano (Mi)	03.09.1894	m. Hartheim	24.08.1944
57548	Biffi	Paolo	Milano (Mi)	22.02.1904	m. Ebensee	15.04.1945
57549	Biadi	Gaudenzio	Bucine (Ar)	10.03.1893	m. Gusen	15.01.1945
57550	Borroni	Pierino	Milano	17.09.1902	<u>superstito</u> †	
57551	Bozzi	Bruno	Milano (Mi)	29.04.1922	<u>superstito</u> †	
57552	Bozzi	Emilio	Sesto S. Giovanni (Mi)	25.05.1912	m. Ebensee	29.04.1945
57553	Bracini	Domènico		28.04.1920		
57554	Calloni	Quinto	Cernusco sul Nav. (Mi)	27.09.1926	<u>superstito</u>	
57555	Camerani	Roberto	Triuggio (Mi)	09.04.1925	<u>superstito</u>	
57556	Camoccioli	Enzo		18.12.1914		
57557	Campi	Ambrogio	Turro Milanese (Mi)	22.12.1902	m. Ebensee	25.02.1945
57558	Candacci	Matala	Casena (Po)	25.12.1897	m. Wien/Floriendorf	08.10.1944
57559	De Capitani	Ferdinando	Verona (Vr)	01.11.1891	m. Hartheim	18.07.1944
57560	Capra	Idvio	Monza (Mi)	01.07.1913	m. Gusen	09.04.1945
57561	Cas	Gino		30.05.1923		
57562	Casarini	Libero	Colico (Co)	02.08.1913	m. Ebensee	28.01.1945
Numero cognome	nome	luogo di nascita	Data nascita			2
57563	Codini	Costantino	Mibbiola (Mo)	27.01.1912	m. Ebensee	14.05.1944
57564	Clerici	Ampelio	Milano (Mi)	20.03.1912	<u>superstito</u> †	
57565	Colombo	Pierino	Carpusco sul Nav. (MI)	20.10.1920	m. Mauthausen	07.05.1945
57566	Colombo	Pietro	Trezzo d'Adda (Mi)	19.06.1902	<u>superstito</u> †	
57567	Colombo	Tullio	Milano (MI)	22.07.1894	m. Hartheim	08.05.1944
57568	Contorini	Amato	Iselle	04.03.1909	m. Hartheim	09.08.1944
57569	Cristofari	Giuseppe	Vienna (Vi)	01.08.1897	m. Hartheim	10.10.1944
57570	Danesi	Raffaele	Milano (Mi)	22.08.1889	m. Mauthausen	26.09.1944
57571	Dregoni	Sergio	Milano (Mi)	01.11.1901	<u>superstito</u> †	
57572	Dreccini	Elvezio	Lavone Ponte Tresa (Va)	18.03.1915	m. Mauthausen	08.03.1945
57573	Dreppati	Angelo	Milano (Mi)	30.05.1908	m. Ebensee	23.05.1944
57574	Fabris-Favaro	Silvio	Milano (Mi)	09.03.1916	m. Gusen	16.01.1945
57575	Faccioli	Augusto	Milano (Mi)	28.03.1920	<u>superstito</u>	
57576	Ferrante	Franco	Lucca (Lu)	15.02.1913	<u>superstito</u> †	
57577	Ferrari	Enzo	Novellara (Re)	06.07.1912	<u>superstito</u>	
57578	Ferrari	Ettore	Gaszuolo (Ma)	14.07.1892	m. Hartheim	18.07.1944
57579	Ferrazzato	Bonaventura	Venezia (Ve)	05.08.1887	m. Hartheim	04.10.1944
57580	De Fini	Domènico	Rodi Garganico (Pg)	08.07.1896	m. Ebensee	09.05.1945
57581	Fontanella	Annibale	Lodi (Mi)	20.07.1886	m. Mauthausen	03.07.1944
57582	Gabriellini	Fausto	Quingenbela (Xn)	06.05.1903	m. Gusen	21.04.1945
57583	Gagliardi	Anillo		12.08.1912		
57584	Garotta	Romeo	Milano (Mi)	15.04.1909	m. Mauthausen	27.06.1944
57585	Ghianda	Fraancesco	Bovisio Masciago (Mi)	24.08.1909	m. Wien/Hinterbühl	31.03.1945
57586	Ghirardelli	Otello	Ferrara (Fe)	08.02.1895	m. Wiener/Heudorf	07.08.1944
57587	Girola	Piero	Milano (Mi)	04.11.1902	<u>superstito</u> †	

Numero	Cognome	Nome	Luogo di nascita	Data nascita	
57588	Giudici	Oreste	Milano (Mi)	23.02.1918 m.	Mauthausen 08.04.1945
57589	Gotti	Athos	Castelfiorentino (Fl)	04.04.1913	<u>superstite</u> †
57590	Guffanti	Luigi	Assago (Mi)	05.11.1891 m.	Harthaus 05.10.1944
57591	Leggeseo	Luigi	Langosco (Iv)	26.09.1896 m.	Harthaus 18.07.1944
57592	Levati	Ulgio	Lodi (Mi)	09.08.1913	<u>superstite</u> †
57593	Lucarelli	Amadeo	Sora (Fr)	09.03.1902 m.	Malk 19.01.1945
57594	Marchetti	Pietro	Mortara (Pv)	27.09.1903	<u>superstite</u> †
57595	Merini	Lidamo	Ponzano Nagro (Sp)	05.04.1907 m.	Mauthausen 12.05.1945
57596	De Martino	Giustino	Irsina (Mt)	15.10.1899	<u>superstite</u> †
57597	Merini	Isola	Milano (Mi)	06.07.1913	<u>superstite</u> †
57598	Minciaci	Norio	Milano (Mi)	01.08.1914	<u>superstite</u>
57599	Montagna	Mario	S. Gialletta (Pv)	22.03.1900	<u>superstite</u> †
57600	Monti	Erminio	Dovera (Cr)	09.11.1891 m.	Mauthausen 22.04.1944
57601	Morandi	Domenico	Milano (Mi)	20.07.1910	<u>superstite</u>
57602	Morganti	Luciano	Villadossola (No)	17.07.1897 m.	Ebensee 15.11.1944
57603	Moro	Gianfelice	Legnago (Vr)	09.10.1922 m.	Ebensee 02.02.1945
57604	Neopola	Primo	Muggiò (Mi)	10.02.1927 m.	Ebensee 23.04.1945
57605	Nesca	Alberto		02.07.1897	
57606	Oggiano	Francesco		21.11.1901	
57607	Oriani	Virginio	Cervate (Mi)	06.06.1927 m.	Ebensee 22.04.1945
57608	Paganì	Giancarlo	Boffalora Ticino (Mi)	20.07.1924 m.	Ebensee 30.04.1945
57609	Pansetti	Andrea	Milano (Mi)	30.11.1905 m.	Harthaus 02.12.1944
57610	Puravelli	Angelo	Milano (Mi)	09.02.1920 m.	Harthaus 11.08.1944
57611	Parietti	Dionigi	Bosco Valtravaglia	04.12.1905 m.	Ebensee 09.05.1945

Numero	Cognome	Nome	Luogo di nascita	Data nascita	
57612	Pavarotti	Romolo	Milano (Mi)	24.10.1925	<u>superstite</u>
57613	Pezzoni	Mario	Rho (Mi)	20.07.1905	<u>superstite</u> †
57614	Picardi	Eliseo	S. Giovanni Valdarno (Fl)	08.06.1920 m.	Ebensee 29.03.1945
57615	Picardi	Luciano	S. Civ. Valdarno (Fl)	08.01.1918	<u>superstite</u> †
57616	Ratti	Angelo	Cernusco sul Naviglio (Mi)		
57617	Rigamonti	Franco	Ziano Piacentino (Pv)	04.05.1926	<u>superstite</u>
57618	Riva	Mario	Vignale Monferrato (Al)	14.01.1895 m.	Ebensee 05.05.1944
57619	Rivolto	Valentino	Machorio (Mi)	22.02.1913 m.	Mauthausen 17.03.1945
57620	Rocca	Rezo		12.02.1902 m.	Mauthausen 11.06.1945
57621	Rossetti	Oreste	S. Giuliano Mil. (Mi)	05.06.1902 m.	Gusen 21.09.1944
57622	Ruononi	Giovanni		17.10.1910	
57623	Sula	Ennio	Milano (Mi)	23.02.1925	<u>superstite</u> †
57624	Salma	Luigi	Milano (Mi)	17.09.1902 m.	Mauthausen 18.06.1944
57625	Sarvadui	Edmondo	Ferrara (Fe)	10.07.1911 m.	Harthaus 19.12.1944
57626	Spadi	Torquato	Arcidosso (Cr)	15.01.1903	<u>superstite</u>
57627	Stacchi	Giulio		17.08.1877	<u>superstite</u> †
57628	Tauchini	Luigi	Milano (Mi)	03.12.1898 m.	Ebensee 22.07.1944
57629	Tamagni	Giovanni	Viedana (Ma)	02.02.1902 m.	Gusen 14.01.1945
57630	Tassati	Federico	Milano (Mi)	12.05.1912 m.	Gusen 18.04.1945
57631	Trovigian	Luigi	Milano (Mi)	14.12.1915 m.	Goicera 08.07.1945
57632	Trifoglietti	Bruno		23.07.1910	
57633	Valletti	Ferdinando	Verona (Vr)	05.04.1921	<u>superstite</u>
57634	Vigani	Enrico	Milano (Mi)	05.07.1900 m.	Ebensee 20.04.1945

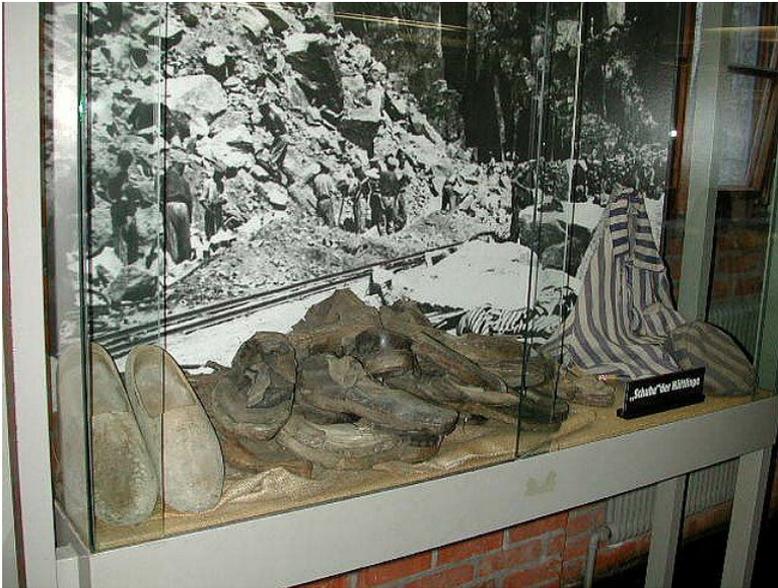
Numero	Cognome	Nome	Luogo di nascita	Data nascita	
57635	Vigoalle	Mario	Belluno (Bl)	29.01.1913	<u>superstite</u> †
57636	Vinanzi	Giuseppe	Triuggio (Mi)	22.01.1909 m.	Mauthausen 30.10.1944
57637	Vittosi	Enzo	Napoli (Na)	05.11.1916	<u>superstite</u> †
57638	Zappà	Paolo	Milano (Mi)	10.05.1917 m.	Ebensee 19.04.1945

The uniform of the political displaced persons



Museum of Mauthausen - photo Association Camerani

The displaced persons' shoes

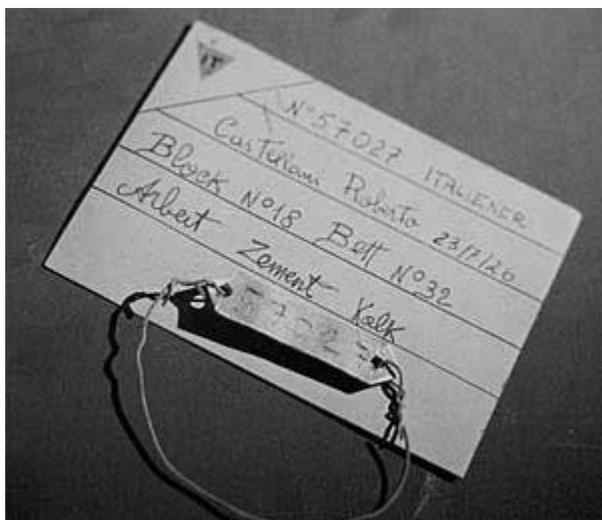


Museum of Mauthausen - photo Association Camerani

Mess-tin for the food



Badge with the number of the displaced persons



New arrivals to Mauthausen



Gas chamber disguised as showers room



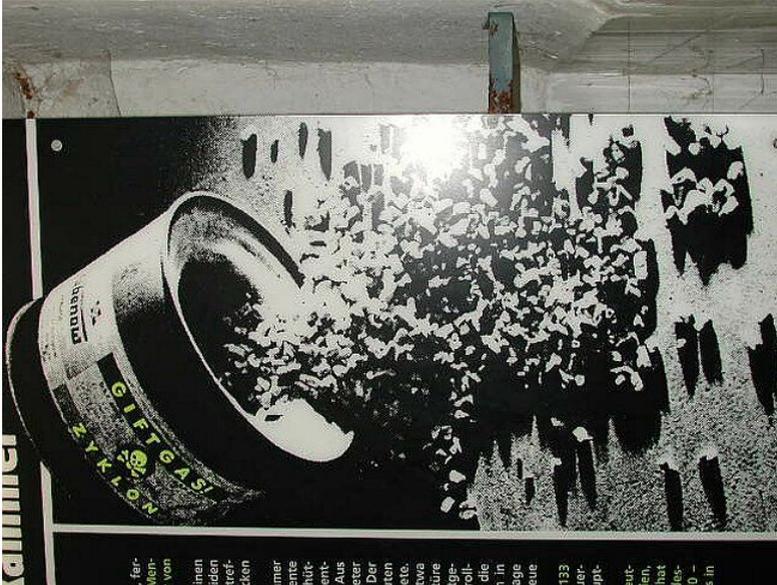
The stairs of the death that led to the stone quarry



Carts loaded of stones in the quarry



Gas ZYKLON-B tank



Barbed wire with electricity



Informative notes for the students

THE DAY OF THE MEMORY

The Day of the Memory is a recurrence established by the law n. 211 on 20th July 2000 by the Italian Parliament that agreed to the international proposal to declare on 27th January as day to commemorate the victims of the National Socialism and the Holocaust.

The text of the article 1 of the law fixes the finalities of the Day of the Memory as follows:

«The Italian Republic recognizes the 27th January as date of pulling down of the gates in Auschwitz, “Day of the Memory”, with the purpose to remember the Shoah (extermination of the Jewish people), the racial laws, the Italian persecution of the Jewish citizens, Italians that have suffered the deportation, the imprisonment, the death, as well as those people that, even in camps and different alliances, opposed to the project of extermination, and risking their own life they have saved other lives and protected the victims of persecution».

The choice of the date remembers 27th January 1945 when the Soviet troops of the Red Army, during the offensive towards Berlin; they arrived near the Polish town Oświęcim (known with the German name Auschwitz), discovering his sadly famous concentration camp and freeing the few survivors. The discovery of Auschwitz and the testimonies of the survivors completely revealed for the first time in the world the horror of the Nazi genocide.

On 27th January, the memory of the Shoah, in other words the extermination of the Jewish people, is celebrated also by many other nations, among which Germany and Great Britain, as well as the U.N., owing to the resolution 60/7 on 1st November 2005.

In reality the Soviets had previously come already to free some camps, Chelmno and Belzec, but these camps, called commonly of “annihilation” they were real factories of death where the prisoners

and the displaced persons immediately gassed, saving only few “sonderkommando”.

Nevertheless the opening of the gates at Auschwitz, where 10-12 days before the Nazi ruinously retreated, bringing with them in one “death's march “all the skilled prisoners, many of which died during the same march, it showed not only many witnesses of the tragedy to the world, but also the tools of torture and annihilation of the lager (even if it is rightful to say that two of the crematory ovens located in Birkenau I and II were destroyed in the autumn 1944).

FERDINANDO VALLETTI'S BIOGRAPHY

Ferdinando Valletti was born in Verona on 5th April 1921 and he died on 23rd July 2007 in Milan.

He spends the childhood and the adolescence in a college and he got a diploma at the Industrial Institute in Verona.

In 1938 he is engaged at Alfa Romeo in Milan as “Master of Art.”

In 1941 he is in the military service.

In 1942-1943 he plays in the A.C. Milan in the role of halfback next to Meazza.

In March 1944 he is arrested by the men of the Muti for the strike at Alfa Romeo, he was sent to St. Vittore prison and deported to Mauthausen first and subsequently to Gusen where he knows and helps the professor Aldo Carpi that mentions him in his book “Diario di Gusen”.

On 5th May 1945 he was freed by the Americans.

In August 1945 he is repatriated in precarious conditions of health and took in the nursing home, subsequently the State recognizes him an indemnity as “Disabled Ex-Serviceman”.

In 1946 he started working at Alfa Romeo again and his professional ascent starts.

In 1947 he is honoured by the Garibaldian Medal to the military valour and they recognized him the “Commission as Fighting Partisan.”

In 1950 he comes back to Mathausen and Gusen in official visit with a delegation of the Alfa Romeo: Ferrazza, Crippa, Romanoni, Nespoli, Vignolle, displaced persons and survivors like him.

From 1961 he becomes executive of the Alfa Romeo logistics area.

From 1970 he becomes a teacher in the sector of the Business Logistics of the Mechanical Association and the I.S.E.O. and he took part as speaker in the “TRAMAG” the international showroom of the handling and the logistics in Padua.

In 1970 he is named President of the Senior Group of Alfa Romeo and he carries out a program of charitable, cultural and recreational activities that sets the Senior Group of Alfa Romeo in the forefront among the Company Group of the A.N.L.A.

In 1975 he is named “Master of Work” by the President of the Republic.

In February 1976 he gets the Ambrogino from the Mayor of Milan Aldo Aniasi.

In 1978, after 40 years of service, he resigns from Alfa Romeo.

In 1980 he starts his testimony in the secondary and high schools in Milan through the ANED and the ANPI; the purpose that he proposed is to make people understand how much important is to know not to forget and to undertake ourselves so that the horrors suffered by many innocent people don't happen again.

In 1988 he is mentioned by Duccio Bigatti in his book “The Hatch. Workers, technicians, entrepreneurs at Alfa Romeo”, an essay of history on the Italian industry.

In 1994 he introduces at the Academy of Brera with Pinin Carpi (the known painter Aldo Carpi's son) and other personalities, the second edition of the “Diario di Gusen”.

From 1994 his health is sapped by serious pathologies, last of which the disease of Alzheimer, that forces him to give up his didactic activity in 2000.

Web references about the deportation

ANED - National Association ex political displaced persons in the Nazi camps.

<http://www.deportati.it>

The Lager of Mauthausen

In Austria. Official site of the camp, nowadays under the responsibility of the Austrian Ministry of the Interior. The schedules of visit, the museum, the program of the commemorative demonstrations.

Texts in English and German.

<http://www.mauthausen-memorial.at/>

The Camp of Gusen

Depending by Mauthausen, where thousand of Italian displaced persons died. Texts in English and Italian.

<http://www.gusen.org>

Platform 21

<http://www.binario21.org/>

In the Central Station in Milan at ground level truck number 21, many displaced persons were taken and transported in the concentration camps

Official website of the 11th Armored Division that liberated KZ Gusen I, II & III and KZ Mauthausen on May 5, 1945

<http://www.11tharmoreddivision.com/>

Ferdinando Valletti displaced person 57633

The story of the deportation to the camp of Mauthausen and Gusen in 1944-1945.

<http://ferdinandovalletti.milanometropoli.com>

Biography of the author

Manuela Valletti, journalist, was born and lives in Milan, she is married and has two children, a little nephew and a Giant Schnauzer called Flora.

She has had for a long time the passion to write, but she has started her working at the Alfa Romeo in the Quality sector.

After a break of quite a lot years due to her maternity and the growth of her children, she came close to the politics and she has become adviser of the Area 19, now zone 8 in Milan, she has been President of the Committees Upbringing and Health.

She came to the journalism in the eighties; she is enrolled on the Regional Register of the Lombardy.

She has worked as freelance for a lot of newspapers and magazines, she managed some newspapers.

At the present time she carries out her work through her web sites: Cyberdogs Magazine, a magazine for the ones that love dogs and cats founded in 1999 and Milano Metropoli the site of the Virtual Community in Milan.

She has published two books: “Qui Milano”, that tells the Milan on line and it has been distributed with an attached cd, and “Papà mi portava in bicicletta” in which she tells with tenderness the four years she spent close to her suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Her passion for the dogs has induced her to found in 2000 the Responsible Owners Association

In memory of her father, she has founded the Association “Il Ciclamino” and she dedicated a web site to him that is an important reference for students and teachers that desire to know, through a direct testimony, the horrors of the Nazism.

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