

*Always sharing, explaining, and transmitting to give  
meaning to the indispensable duty of Memory.*

*Jean Esmonin  
Mayor of Chenôve*



## *The Flames of Memory*

This film is part of a collection "The Last French Survivors of the Resistance and Deportation" that was designed to save, shed light on and transmit the words of men and women who were thrown into the heart of the events.

They have not only accepted to describe what they experienced, but to also share their thoughts and feelings.

In accepting to open up, they are making an irreplaceable contribution to memory work and to writing history.



*Production Ville de Chenôve  
Conception et réalisation Jean-Marc Bordet.*

*I would like to pay tribute to the exceptional film, “The Flames of Memory”. Indeed, the city of Cbenôve has made a remarkable production dedicated to deportation and my sincere gratitude and admiration go to the city's mayor, Jean Esmonin as well as to his entire team for this beautiful piece of work. Our Foundation most actively supports this magnificent pedagogical tool and endeavours to help distribute it and make it known.*

Marie-José Chombart de Lauwe,  
President of the Foundation for the Memory of Deportation



*“The Flames of Memory” is a film that was created and produced at the initiative of the Mayor of Chenôve, Jean Esmonin and the audio-visual department of the city directed by Jean-Marc Bordet and is of great interest for all of those involved in memory work, from associations to schools.*

*It is a remarkable pedagogical tool which enables viewers to enter the universe of nazi*

*concentration camps in several different ways: men and women who were deported and endured such an extreme experience speak and share; some go back to the places of their pain and suffering; deportees’ silence, words, emotions, music, symbols are shared in a dynamic setting that is in every way captivating and admirably balanced. It brings the viewer inside the universe that negated Humankind and inside the suffering and distress in a humble and respectful manner by suggesting more than by demonstrating. This balance allows each person to form his/her own idea about what this reality was like.*

*For many years, the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Déportation had longed to see a quality media source created with so many resources and so much diversity which can be used to help teach this period of history. We are thrilled that this now exists.*

*I invite you to let yourselves be transported to beyond the human or as Pierre Sudreau said when he was writing his memoirs, to the “beyond all borders”. I invite you to confront this experience for a moment with your commitments dedicated to this humanity which sways, despite itself, between the worst and the best and the best and worst, this humanity to which we all belong. You won’t regret it.*

Yves Lescure,

Director of the Foundation for the Memory of Deportation.

## *The Strength to Say No*

*By bringing together fifteen personal itineraries, the documentary produced by the city of Chenôve and directed by Jean-Marc Bordet, invites us to think about the somber period of the Occupation and the Vichy regime again through the angle of the Resistance and deportation. These parallel portraits offer a vision of the Resistance from the base; a vision of the anonymous who made up the battalions of the "Army of Shadows". Far from the clichés and collective images, these experiences shed light on the diversity of the Resistance in both its methods of action and in its urban and rural roots. In our collective imaginary, we usually see the Resistant only with respect to heroes who incarnate the icon of Jean Moulin or the representation of the summer 1944 resistance fighter carrying weapons. If this vision reflects one reality of the Resistance as regards the Liberation combats or that of martyrs, it doesn't take into consideration the whole of the historical density regarding the mobilization of men and women from varied social, cultural and geographical backgrounds, who chose to oppose the wrongfulness and humiliation of the occupation.*

*Between 1940 and 1944, 'resisting' did not always have the same forms, did not always have the same objectives and the same ways of taking action. There were isolated groups, with no real coordination at the start of the Resistance, which distributed pamphlets and underground press. There was the armed fighting that started in 1941 within the framework of the Communist Youth. These entities were progressively substituted by the different cores of the Resistance merging together. This process led to the unification of the Interior Resistance in 1943 with the support of the National Resistance Council that recognized the supreme authority of General de Gaulle who was doing his best to prepare the D-day and Liberation operations at the return of the Republic. This film therefore contributes to re-establishing the members of the Resistance sociologically. Admittedly, some people will recognize their heroic gestures, but the most essential aspect to underscore concerns the logistics of entering the Resistance. It's also important not to forget the time-frame and particularly the moment they refused; some joined very early on, others went underground at the 1942-1943 turning point. This was the case for the STO (obligatory work service) refractories that supplied troops at the beginning of the Resistance. However, the most important contribution without a doubt encompasses the motivations of these Resistants. These motivations were sometimes fueled by patriotism or antifascism which most often revealed their political cultures.*

*These poignant testimonials that are guided by the director, allow viewers to have a better understanding of the base meaning of “resisting”: permanently risking one’s life. Underground life was a difficult apprenticeship; you had to know how to hide, to integrate new codes which were usually previously unknown, and know how to assume different identities. Carelessness carried a heavy price.*

*Counter-relief guessed which logistics of repression and tracking methods the French forces (of the Vichy government) and the Occupant would use; the weight of the national French and German police, but also the Wehrmacht or the SIPO-SD were very much present as was denunciation or informing.*

*Arrests, interrogations, torture, prison and then deportation are all related by what people lived. Today the repression archives can be consulted and they reveal an unequal and shapeless fight; the Resistants only made up a small part. On the other hand, these archives also underscore that under torture and through different forms of pressure, confessions were obtained and that most people spoke.*

*Lastly, the film helps to understand how these women and men returned to civil life with the images, the screams, and the noises in prison and in the deportation camps, and how they lived with the pain from losing loved ones or friends. Each of the testimonials wonderfully illustrates how it was necessary to set up associations which didn’t exist. They are important not only to keep the flame of memory alive, but also to have their rights recognised (something local and national Amicales strive for), and also to systematically refuse all forms of negationism.*

*In their diversity, they have all worked to set up the CNR (National Council of the Resistance) that has been able to enhance liberal democracy with social democracy. The pass down the strength to say No and, as the Aubracs reminded us, that Resisting is always part of our landscape.*

*I thank the city of Chenôve and Jean-Marc Bordet for not forgetting their very singular testimonies and history which is so important to understand history in its larger sense. More than a duty of memory, it is a history lesson that keeps all of those who are no longer with us alive since the documentary was made. It indeed pays them a very special tribute.*

Jean Vigueux,  
Professor of Contemporary History  
University of Burgundy

## *Testimonials*



### **Marcelle Bastien, married name Michea**

She was born 25th September 1922 in Reims

She was a militant Communist who was active in the Resistance. At the beginning of 1942 she became a liaison to Lucien Dupont for whom the police had an arrest warrant in several departments in France.

She was arrested on 8th July 1942 in the suburbs of Bordeaux by the French police due to her affiliation with the Front National.

She was held at Ha prison in Bordeaux and then the Romainville transit camp (identification number 940) from 16th Oct. 1942 to 29th Aug. 1943.

She gave birth to Lucien Dupont's daughter, Christiane on 16th April 1943 at Val de Grâce hospital.

She was separated from her daughter and deported to Paris on 29th Aug. 1943. She was registered at the Ravensbrück camp on 2nd Sept. 1943 (camp serial number 22337).

On 4th Oct. 1943 she was transferred to the Neubrandenburg Kommando which was evacuated at the end of April 1945 due to the advancing allied forces.

She was freed on 1st May 1945 in Waren by the Red Army.

She was repatriated after a stay at the Lille centre on 29th May 1945. She subsequently learnt that Lucien Dupont had been arrested on 16th Oct. 1942 and shot at Mont Valérien on 26th Feb. 1943.



### **Monique Boulanger, married name Hesling**

She was born 26th April 1925 in Deneuvre.

She was arrested on 29th March 1943 in Baccarat by the "Feldgendarmarie" in Lunéville for speaking out against the Germans (wanted the allies to arrive) and for refusing to work.

She was held at Lunéville from 29th March 1943 to 30th March 1943, then at Charles III prison in Nancy and finally at the Romainville transit camp (identification number 2024) from 8th April 1943 to 27th April 1943.

She was deported on this date from Compiègne to the Ravensbrück camp where she was registered on 29th April 1943 (identification number 19392). She was freed on 23rd April 1945 from Ravensbrück by the Swedish Red Cross.

She was repatriated after a stay at the Lutétia hotel on 10th July 1945.



### **Guy Chataigné**

He was born on 18th 1924 in Bois.

He was arrested on 23rd September 1942 on a farm near Jonzac by the Feldgendamerie for being a member of the Front National (Gibeaud and Bernard groups respectively).

He was held in la Rochelle (Lafond prison) from 23rd September 1942 to November 1942, then at the Compiègne transit camp until 24th Jan. 1943.

He was deported on this date to the Sachsenhausen camp where he was registered on 25th January 1943 (identification number 58067).

He was assigned to the Heinkel and then to the Klinker Kommando.

He was evacuated from the central camp on 21st April 1945 and was freed on 2nd May 1945 in Schwerin.

He was repatriated on 22nd May 1945 after a stay at the Valenciennes centre.



### **Paul Cornu**

He was born on 12th December 1923 in Dijon.

He was arrested on 9th 1942 in Dijon by the French police as an FTPF (Lucien Dupont's group)

He was held in Dijon, then Clairvaux, Blois and at the Romainville transit camp (identification number 4093) and on 13th January 1944 in Compiègne after which he was deported on 22nd January 1944.

He arrived at the Buchenwald camp on 24th January 1944 (identification number 43360).

He was transferred on 15th Feb. at the Weimar Kommando.

He was freed on 11th April 1945 from Buchenwald's central camp.

He was repatriated on 8th May 1945 after a stay at the St-Avold centre.



### **Jacques Fort**

He was born on 28th Dec. 1924 in Paris (10th district)

He was arrested on 9th March 1944 in Toutry for being a member of the Jean-Marie Buckmaster Resistance network (Henri Bourgogne group).

He was held in Dijon from 9th March 1944 to 29th April 1944, then at the Compiègne transit camp until 12th May 1944 (identification number 34353).

He was deported on this date to the Buchenwald camp where he was registered on 14th May 1944 (identification number 51105)

He was freed from Buchenwald on 11th April 1945.

He was repatriated on 1st July 1945.

He died on Dec. 2013.



### **Pierre Jobard**

He was born on 7th Feb. 1927 in Villeberny.

He was arrested on 23rd Feb. 1944 in Villeberny by the Gestapo of Dijon for being a member of the Navarre Resistance network.

He was held in Dijon and then at the Compiègne transit camp (identification number 30839) until 27th April 1944. He was deported on this date to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp where he was registered on 30th April 1944 (identification number 185784). He was transferred on 12th May 1944 to the Buchenwald camp where he was registered on 14th May 1944 (identification number 53664). He was transferred on 24th May 1944 to the Flossenbürg camp where he was registered on 25th May 1944 (identification number 9816). He was freed from Flossenbürg on 23rd April 1945. He was repatriated on 9th May 1945 after a stay at the Thionville centre.



### **Marie-France Lefevre, married name Poitevin**

She was born on 16th Dec. 1923 in Janzé.

She was arrested on 4th April 1943 in Janzé by the Gestapo of Rennes for helping Resistants and future STO (obligatory work service) workers

She was held in Rennes from 4th April 1943, then at the Romainville transit camp (identification number 2839) from 20th June 1943 to 29th Aug. 1943.

She was deported on this date from Paris to the Ravensbrück camp where she was registered on 2nd Sept. 1943 (identification number 22402). She was transferred on 4th Oct. 1943 to the Neubrandenburg Kommando which was evacuated at the end of April 1945 due to the advancing allied armies. She was freed by the Red Army on 30th April 1945 near Waren. She was repatriated on 27th May 1945 after a stay at the Hazebrouck centre. She arrived back in Janzé on 28th May 1945.



### **Thérèse Mazel, married name Menot**

She was born on 29th Aug. 1923 in Cosnac.

She was a member of the RIF (French Interior Resistance), "Combat" movement. She worked in the Personnel Department at the Gnome and Rhône factory. She broadcasted underground press, help make fake papers and she was in contact with the Limousin Resistant members.

She was arrested on 4th Jan. 1944 in Limoges by the Gestapo at her place of work. She was held in Limoges from 4th Jan. 1944 to 21st Jan. 1944, then at the Compiègne transit camp from 22nd Jan. 1944 to 31st Jan. 1944 (identification number 26013). She was deported on this date to the Ravensbrück camp where she was registered on 3rd Feb. 1944 (identification number 27476). She was transferred on 13th April 1944 to the Holleischen Kommando, part of Flossenbürg (identification number 50419). She was freed on 5th May 1945 from Holleischen. She was repatriated on 20th May 1945 after a stay at the Longuyon centre. She died on 13th Aug. 2009.



### **Maurice Ninot**

He was born on 26th Sept. 1922 in Venarey-les-Laumes.

He was arrested on 27th Oct. 1943 in St-Jeoire by the Annemasse Gestapo as a FTPF (member of the Mégevette Resistance), under the fake name of Jean Grapin.

He was held in Annemasse from 27th Oct. 1943 to 12th Nov. 1943, then in Lyon (Montluc) and at the Compiègne transit camp (identification number 37202) until 4th June 1944. He was deported on this date to the Neuengamme camp where he was registered on 7th June 1944 (identification number 34757).

He was transferred to the Lengerich Kommando 7th July 1944, to Neuengamme's central camp in March 1945 from which he was evacuated in April 1945.

He was freed on 29th April 1945 in Sandbostel. He was repatriated on 8th June 1945 after a stay at the Lutétia hotel. He died on 6th Dec. 2010.



### **Rose Richard**

She was born on 6th Sept. 1919 in Hauteroche.

She was arrested on 25th Feb. 1944 in Hauteroche for being denounced as a member of the Bernard Compagnie Vercingétorix Resistance group. She was held in Dijon from 25th Feb. 1944 to 10th March 1944, then at the Romainville transit camp from 10th March 1944 to 18th April 1944 (identification number 4535).

She was deported from Paris on 18th April 1944 to the Ravensbrück camp where she was registered on 22nd April 1944 (identification number 35454).

She was transferred to the Mauthausen camp on 7th March 1945 (identification number 2440). She was freed on 22nd April 1945 from Mauthausen by the Red Cross.

She was repatriated on 3rd May 1945 after a stay at the Annemasse centre.



### **René Santot**

He was born on 15th Aug. 1924 in Dijon.

He was arrested on 10th Feb. 1944 in Chalon-sur-Saône by the Feldgendarmerie when his I.D. was being checked. He was a member of the Action BOA network.

He was held in Chalon-sur-Saône from 10th Feb. 1944 to 6th May 1944, then in Dijon from 6th May 1944 to 23rd Aug. 1944.

He was deported to the Natzweiler-Struthof camp (identification number 23272).

He was transferred to the Dachau camp on 4th Sept. 1944 (identification number 100290), to the Mauthausen camp on 16th Sept. 1944 (identification number 99062) and to the Ebensee Kommando on 23rd September 1944.

He was freed on 6th May 1945 from Ebensee.

He was repatriated on 24th May 1945 after a stay at the Lutétia hotel.

He died on 13th Aug. 2008 in Dijon.



### **Henri Simon**

He was born on 24th July 1926 in Châtel-Gérard.

He was arrested on 5th Dec. 1943 in Banon by the Waffen-SS after being denounced as a member of the Banon Resistance group.

He was held in Hyères, Marseille (Les Baumettes) and at the Compiègne transit camp until 6th April 1944.

He was deported on this date to the Mauthausen camp where he is registered on 8th April 1944 (identification number 63164).

He was transferred to the Melk Kommando on 24th April 1944 and then that of Ebensee.

He was freed on 6th May 1945 from Ebensee.

He was repatriated 24th May 1945 after a stay at the Longuyon centre.



### **Marcel Suillerot**

He was born on 9th June 1923 in Dijon.

He was arrested on 6th October 1941 in Chenôve by the French police for being a resistent of the Lucien Dupont group.

He was held in Dijon from 6th June 1941 to 27th Feb. 1942, in Chaumont from 28th Feb. 1942 to 2nd Oct. 1942, in Rouillé from 2nd Oct. 1942 to 11th Jan. 1943 and at the Compiègne transit camp from 11th Jan. to 23rd Jan. 1943.

He was deported to the Sachsenhausen camp where he was registered on 25th Jan. 1943

(identification number 58337).

He was transferred to the Heinkel Kommando.

He was evacuated on 21st April 1945 from Sachsenhausen's central camp due to the advancing allied armies.

He was freed on 4th May 1945 in Zapel.



### **Michel Thomas**

He was born on 14th August 1924 in Dijon.

He was arrested on 7th July 1943 by the Feldgendarmarie during a raid for refusing to work in Germany.

He was held in Dijon from 7th July 1943 to 8th July 1943.

He was deported on this date to the Nürnberg-Fürth prison, and then transferred to the Dachau camp on Sept. 3rd 1943 (identification number 50660).

He was transferred to the Friedrichshafen Kommando in Oct. 1943, then to the Dora camp on 5th Oct. 1944 (identification number 91767), and finally to the Nordhausen Kommando in March 1945.

He was freed on 11th April 1945 from Nordhausen.

He was repatriated on 21st May 1945.

He died on 20th April 2012.



### **Paulette Renault, married name Lechevallier**

She was born on 23rd Sept. 1920 in Caen.

She belonged to the “Front National pour la Liberté et l’Indépendance de la France”.

Actions: distributed flyers, made fake papers, helped those who refused the STO (obligatory work service), coastal information and places the Germans went, was the liaison between regional and inter-regional managers, forbidden ceremonies at the Memorial Monuments

She was arrested on 11th Dec. 1943 in Caen by the Gestapo.

She was held in Caen and at the Romainville transit camp (identification number 4323) from 19th Feb. 1944 to 2nd March 1944.

She was deported on this date from Paris to the Aix-la-Chapelle prison, then transferred to

Essen, Bremen and Hambourg (43 days at civilian hospital), before arriving at the Ravensbrück camp on 3rd May 1944 (identification number 37766).

She was transferred to the Mauthausen camp on 7th March 1945 (identification number 2719).

She was freed on 27th April 1945 from Mauthausen by the Red Cross.

She was repatriated on 29th April 1945 after a stay at the Annecy centre.



### **Maurice Voutey**

He was born on 2nd April 1925 in Dijon.

He was arrested on 22nd May 1944 in Dijon by the Gestapo for being a member of the FrontNational.

He was held in Dijon from 22nd May 1944 to 22nd June 1944 and at the Compiègne transit camp from 24th June 1944 to 2nd July 1944 (identification number 42574).

He was deported on this date to the Dachau camp where he was registered on 5th July 1944

(identification number 77518).

He was transferred on 20th July 1944 to the Neckarelz Kommando where he was registered on 22nd July 1944 (identification number 22040), then to the Neckarbischofsheim Kommando in Sept. 1944 and in Jan. 1945 to the Neckargerach Kommando which was evacuated on 29th March 1945 due to the advancing allied troops.

He was freed on 4th April 1945 in Osterburken.

He was repatriated on 27th April 1945 after a stay at the Strasbourg centre.

He died on 2nd May 2012 in Dijon.

## *Nazism*

It is an ideology founded on the theories Hitler wrote about in “mein Kampf”, which endorsed:

- The superiority of the “Aryan race”. Germans were the purest representatives and called to dominate the “inferior races”.
- Hatred of Jews, considered as enemies of the “race” and who were responsible for all of Germany’s woes.
- The theory of “vital space” according to which German people had to conquer Eastern territories to ensure their survival.

Under the nazi regime, the State decided an individual’s social value and if a life was worthy or not to be lived.

The nazi ideology was intrinsically antidemocratic and established a genuine mystic around its leader. It made all of its opponents, real or supposed enemies of the Germans who had to be punished or eliminated. Concentrations camps were the most concrete form of these theories.

## *The Concentration Camp System*

The nazis designed and applied a concentration camp system which was placed under the responsibility of the SS. Heinrich Himmler was the commander in chief (Reichsführer SS).

This system resorted to coercive and disciplinary measures that were inspired by Prussian military methods, the German prisons and the racist ideology of nazism. These methods were put into practice by the SS with unparalleled brutality, with total disdain for human life and “inferior” beings who were considered to be the enemies of the regime and the enemies of the “race”.

The system became a huge enterprise which negated human value and rights. It was an absolute universe of slow death and expiation for opponents and “enemies of the Reich”, and it was immediate death for the “enemies of the race” (Jews, Gypsies, people of Slavic origins). Additionally, the system was characterized by a surprising bureaucracy and an internal hierarchy among the prisoners who expressed their devotion to the SS. Some (generally speaking common law prisoners) were given absolute power over the others.

Until 1939, prisoners were citizens of the Reich, sorted by category: political opponents (red triangle), asocial (black triangle), and common law (green triangle).

The internationalization and extension of the system began in September 1939 with the invasion of Poland (start of WW2). The numbers of prisoners subsequently continued to rise and their living conditions continued to deteriorate. Moreover, nationalities were added to the categories.



The extermination of Jews, or the “Final Solution for Jews in Europe”, began in the first weeks of 1941, reached its peak between mid-1942 and mid-1943 and then decreased until the end of 1944. There were between five and six million victims in total.

From 1943 onwards until the collapse of the Reich, the system, without ever losing its vocation to eliminate the enemies of the regime, nor that of repression, coercion and terror, added the vocation to create an immense reserve of human beings dedicated to force labor.

This was all the more grueling as it was coupled with malnourishment and absolute destitution in the fight against the cold, the heat, disease or accidents. This population of slaves had monstrous work rhythms and was split up in several different Kommandos replacing the central camps via the Reich. They worked in all of the military sectors (plane, V1 and V2 rockets, tanks, weapons, ammunition) as well as those in the German economy civil sectors. They also built road, rail and maritime networks. In 1944/45, they had to help bury the sites used to develop and experiment with secret weapons.

In addition to the prisoners’ work referred to as ‘production’, which created considerable profit for the SS who rented out this labor, prisoners were kept in a permanent state of anxiety and unrest, used to discourage all attempts to organize collectively, to show solidarity and to escape.

The slightest pretext was used to inflict arbitrary sanctions and make the prisoners suffer even more, and often led to them being killed. The average life expectancy rarely lasted more than 9 months.

Those who had incurable diseases and those unable to work (“the useless”) were periodically eliminated by lethal injections or were sent to the gas chambers in the camps (when there were chambers) or they sent to euthanasia centres like Hartheim in Upper Austria.

The SS doctors went to the camps to perform pseudo-medical experiments of an unheard barbarity on male, female and child prisoners. Political prisoner, however, managed to obtain key internal administration functions though not without risks. They also created clandestine organizations that favored certain forms of resistance, solidarity, help to others and information.

## *The End of the System*

Faced with the advancing allied armies and the end of 1944 and especially at the beginning of 1945 until April, the SS evacuated the concentration camps and try to erase the traces of their crimes.

The prisoners were transferred in the middle of -20°C-30°C winter weather in freight cars, often open-air, or their emaciated silhouettes were forced into never ending lines by the thousands. These “death marches” led then to other camps which themselves were quickly overcrowded. Close to 50% of the evacuated prisoners perished in this ultimate ordeal where guards shot those who could no longer follow.

The system that was designed and applied by the SS didn't collapse: it was shattered by the allied armies' victorious offensive.

The deadly rage and fanaticism of the SS continued until the very last moments leading to the arrival of the allied armies.

The criminals who were identified and captured were judged and sentences over the course of a series of court proceedings, the most famous being Nuremberg, where the notion of crime against humanity was introduced, inprescriptible.

## *Deportation from France*

- **A total of 165,000 people were deported from France to the nazi concentration system.**

- **89,000 were sent for repressive measures (Resistants, opponents, anti-nazis, hostages), mainly to the Compiègne and Romainville transit camps.**

The estimated mortality rate is a little more than 40% (around 35,000 deaths of which 1,500 in gas chambers).

- **76,000 Jews, including 11,000 children, within the framework of the “Final Solution”.**

**Most were regrouped at the Drancy internment camp and were subsequently deported to the gas chambers at Auschwitz Birkenau. Only 3% came back.**

### **Deportation had two objectives in France:**

- In collaboration with the French authorities of Vichy, to crack down on and discourage the slightest act of resistance or opposition within the population. This was carried out through imprisonment which was generally followed by being sent to concentration camps. Resistants who were arrested with weapons or accused of actions leading to the death of German soldiers were executed, as were sometimes simple hostages who were executed for terrorizing the population and to incite their submission.
- Implementing that “Final Solution for Jews in Europe”, **by exporting entire families of men, women and children to extermination camps, for the most part under the initiative of the Vichy regime. Only a small minority of these deportees escaped immediate execution. They were kept to work in particularly severe Kommandos and where respite was short lived.**

In addition to the fundamental distinction between persecuted deportees and those sent away for precautionary reasons, there were specific deportation cases, such as those of the Gypsies, Jehovah Witnesses and homosexuals who were deported from annexed territories and placed under German administration military rule in the North and East of France. There were also the “Jews married to Aryan women”, who were removed from the Final Solution and deported to the Channel Islands of Aurigny.

Between their arrest and deportation, prisoners spent unspecified amounts of time in prisons (Fresnes, Montluc, Beaumettes, Blois, Le Hâ à Bordeaux, Dijon, etc.), or in **internment camps** (Pithiviers, Beaune-la-Rolande, Rivesaltes, Gurs, Chateaubriant, Rouillé, etc.), run by the Vichy authorities and sometimes partially by the German occupied authorities.

Deportation transportation took place under German authorities from the internment and transit camps (Drancy, Compiègne, Romainville, etc.) via trains with animal cars. Prisoners were packed into them without toilets, water, aeration for days and nights on end. If they didn't die during the trip, they arrived at the concentration camps exhausted and some lost their minds.



## Glossary

**Appellplatz:** roll call square.

**Arbeitslager:** labour camp.

**Block:** detainee barracks most often built out of boards.

**Concentration camp (nazi):** detention centres initially created by the 3rd Reich starting in 1933 to intern, eliminate political opponents to the nazi regime as well as Gypsies, Jews, Jehovah Witnesses, homosexuals and asocial elements (criminals, the homeless, etc.) and exploit their labour. The camps were also used to detain resistants and opponents in all of occupied Europe and to use them as servile laborers. Everything was aimed at dehumanising the detainees and leading them to a quick death.

**Extermination camp:** specially created camps to implement the “final solution” as well as to eliminate the Gypsies and Slavic people.

**Goumi:** rubber Billy club.

**Kapo:** detainees (often common law criminals) responsible for managing the camp prisoners, a block or a commando.

**KL:** Konzentrationslager (concentration camp).

**Kommando:** annex camp from original camp- work camp- group of detainees assigned to a specific job.

**Lager:** a camp

**Los! Los schnell! :** order given to go more quickly, often given with physical blows.

**Death march:** with allied troops approaching, the SS had camps evacuated. These transfers of prisoners, weakened by work, hardships and diseases, and often carried out in appalling conditions, resulted in numerous deaths.

**NN:** Nacht und Nebel (Night and Fog). Referred to deportees who were destined to, ‘disappear’. The “NN” decrees of December 1941 aimed at intensifying repression against opponents in Western Europe. The objective was to completely eliminate them by erasing all trace of their existence and deaths, like silhouettes pulled into the night and fog.

**Revier:** infirmary.

**Schlague:** Billy club, club

**Final solution:** nazi code name for the programmed extermination of Jews in Europe.

**SS:** Schutzstaffeln (protection squadrons). Among their diverse missions, the SS organised the repressive element of the nazi regime with concentration and extermination camps. The “Totenkopf” SS (“skull-crossbones”) were camp guards.

**Stück:** piece, part, accounting term used to designate the detainees.

**Typhus fever:** epidemic disease transmitted by body lice.

# LE SYSTÈME CONCENTRATIONNAIRE NAZI

## 1933 – 1945



Portraits signalétiques de détenus à leur arrivée au camp d'Auschwitz entre 1942 et 1944. Photographie du service d'identification d'Auschwitz (musée d'état d'Auschwitz)



Détenu politique allemand  
German political prisoner  
Deutscher politischer Schutzhäftling



Détenu politique français  
French political prisoner  
Französischer politischer Schutzhäftling



Détenu politique juif  
Jewish political prisoner  
Jüdischer politischer Schutzhäftling



Tzigane  
Gipsy  
Zigeuner



Témoin de Jéhovah  
Jehovah's Witness  
Bibelforscher



Apatriote  
Stateless person  
Staatenloser



Asocial  
Anti-social  
Asozialer



Homosexuel  
Homosexual  
Homosexueller



Détenu de droit commun  
Professional criminal  
Befristete  
Vorbeugehaft (BV)



Etoile juive  
Jewish star  
Judenstern

# Chronological References

■ **1923** Hitler's failed military coup in Munich. He writes "Mein Kampf" in prison.

■ **1933**, 30th January, Hitler is appointed Chancellor of the Republic of Weimar

27 February, Reichstag fire and massive opponent arrests, especially of German Communists.

28 February, decree to "protect the people and the State". 5 March, the NSDAP (National Socialist German Workers' Party) obtains 43% of the votes in the legislative elections compared to 18% for the SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany), 12% for the KDP and 11% for the Zentrum Katolik. **March, first concentration camps are opened in order to intern political opponents (20th March Oranienburg, 22nd March Dachau).**

26th April, Gestapo is created. April, unions are forbidden. 10th May burning of books by authors convicted by the nazis (notably Jews, Communists and democrats). July, establishment of the one party and dissolution of the other political parties.

■ **1934**, 30th June, "The Night of the Long Knives", the SS eliminate the SA and take over as leaders of the nazi prisoner system.

■ **1935**, 15th September, Nuremberg racial laws to "protect German blood and honour".

■ **1936**, 7th March, the Wehrmacht enters demilitarised Rhineland

■ **1937**, 16th July, Buchenwald concentration camp is opened. 23rd September, Sachsenhausen camp is opened.

■ **1938/1940**, opening of concentration camps in Flossenbürg (3rd May 1938), Mauthausen (8th August 1938), Neuengamme (13th December 1938),

Ravensbrück (15th May 1939, concentration camp for women), Stutthof (August 1939, camp near Danzig, in the annexed territory of former Poland), Auschwitz (20th May 1940, opening of the base camp), and at the same time, the internationalisation of the prisoners (Czech and Austrian in 1938, Polish in 1939, and from 1940 onwards, Dutch, Belgian, French, etc. 22 nationalities in all are represented).

■ **1938**, 12th March, annexion of Austria (Anschluss).

July, Evian Conference to welcome Reich refugees fails. 29th September, Munich Accords by which France and The UK allow Hitler to annex parts of Czechoslovakia (annexation of the Sudetens). 9th/10th November, Crystal night (massive pogrom against German Jews. 267 synagogues are burnt and numerous shops belonging to Jews are destroyed. **30,000 Jews are arrested and interned at Buchenwald, Dachau, and Sachsenhausen).**

■ **1939**, 15th March, annexion of Czechoslovakia. August, order to euthanatize mentally ill people. 23rd August, German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact.

1 September, Poland is invaded. 3 September Great Britain and France declare war against the 3rd Reich without helping Poland. 3 September/10 May 1940 "Phoney War".

■ **1940**, Establishment of the first Jewish ghettos on Polish territory. From May to June, invasion of Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium and France. 17th June, marshal Pétain gives speech announcing, "the time has come to stop fighting."

18 June, De Gaulle makes appeal speech to pursue fighting. 22 June, Franco-German armistice is signed in Rethondes (dividing French territory into an occupied and unoccupied zone, separated by a line of demarcation). 29 June, the French government sets up in Vichy. 10 July, the French Parliament gives marshal Pétain full constitutional powers. 11 July, the French Republic is replaced by the French State which implements the National Revolution. 3 October, Vichy government promulgates Jewish status. 24 October, Hitler and Pétain are seen shaking hands in Montoire (affirming political collaboration).

■ **1941**, First agreement between the SS and German industries (IG Farben) to use prisoners as labourers. April, invasion of Greece and Yugoslavia. 1st May, opening of the Natzweiler-Struthof (Alsace) and Gross-Rosen camps.

22nd June, German offensive against the USSR. September, first gas chamber killings at Auschwitz.

October, Jews are forbidden to emigrate outside the territories controlled by the Reich. **24th November**, opening of the Theresienstadt concentration camp (Teresin). **26th November**, opening of Auschwitz II-Birkenau camp. **7th December** “Nacht und Nebe” (NN) ‘Night and Fog’ decree, establishing a secretive procedure against the Resistants of western European countries to sentence them to “disappear in the night and fog” (Keitel Decree). **8th December**, exterminations begin at Chelmno. **11th December**, Hitler declares war on the United States. **29th December**, first experiments carried out on prisoners.

■ **1942**, **21st January**, last adjustments of the “Final Solution for Jews in Wannsee (suburb of Berlin). **30th January**, first gas chamber at Birkenau. **17th March**, exterminations begin at Belzec. **30th April**, codification camps’ economic roles (extermination by work). **May** exterminations at Sobibor.

**7th June**, Jews in the occupied zone have to wear yellow stars. **July**, exterminations begin at Birkenau and Treblinka. **July and August**, the Vichy regime organises Jewish raids and hands them over to the Gestapo. The biggest raid took place **16th and 17th July 1942** in Paris (Vel’ d’hiv, 13,000 Jews are arrested and deported). **4th September 1942**, Vichy government promulgates law on “the use and guidance of the workforce”. **8th November 1942**, allied landing in North Africa. **11th November 1942**, Germans enter non-occupied zone.

■ **1943**, **January**, Himmler rules for selective deportation and extermination and Reich Gypsies.

**2nd February**, Germans surrender in Stalingrad. **16th February**, Vichy government implements Obligatory Work Service (STO).

**28th March**, opening of Auirigny concentration camp. **April**, opening of Bergen Belsen camp.

From 19th April to 16th May Warsaw Ghetto uprising and destruction where close to 450,000 Polish

Jews have already perished. **27th May** in France, 1st National Resistance Council meeting is held, run by Jean Moulin (unification of the interior Resistance), **2nd August** Treblinka camp revolt, **28th August**, opening of the Dora camp, initially a “kommando” of Buchenwald where the V1 and V2 missiles are buried. **September**, allied landing in the Italian peninsula. **14th October**, Sobibor camp revolt.

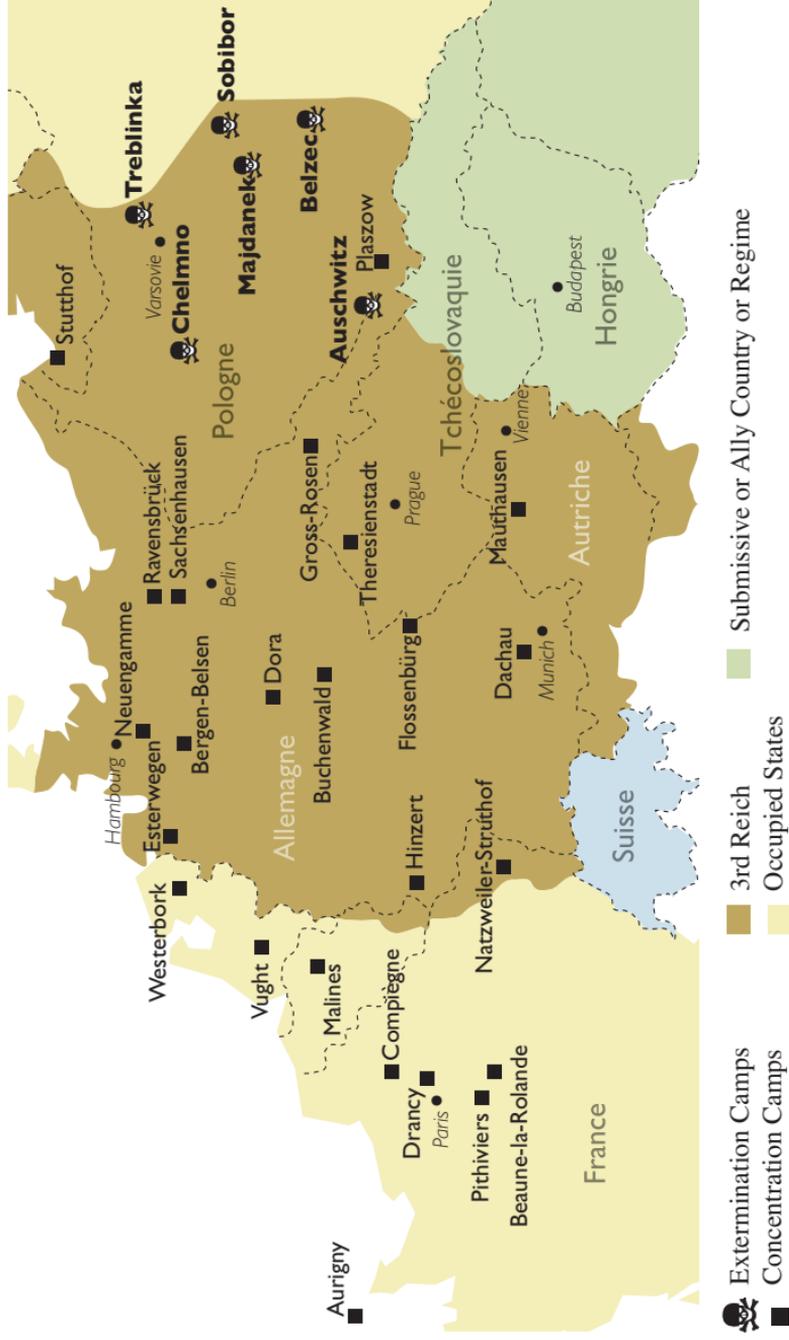
■ **1944, from 5th to 22nd June**, Auirigny evacuation. **6th June 1944**, allied landing in Normandy. **20th July**. Hitler escapes an organised assassination by German officers. **2nd August**, extermination of Birkenau Gypsies. **15th August 1944**, allied landing in Provence. **25th August 1944**, Paris is liberated.

**1st September**, evacuation of Natzweiler-Struthof to Dachau. **7th October**, Sonderkommando revolt at Birkenau. **23rd November 1944**, Strasbourg is liberated. **26th November**, Himmler orders to eliminate all traces of extermination centres.

■ **1945**, **20th January**, faced with the advancing Allies, the SS decide to destroy proof and to eliminate the witnesses of the concentration camp system. No prisoner must fall into the hands of the enemy. **January-February**, first camps freed by the Soviet troops. (Stutthof **25th** and Auschwitz **27th January**, Gross Rosen **28th February**). **4th-11th February**, Yalta Conference. **April**, Battle of Berlin and Hitler commits suicide (**30th April**). **April/May**, concentration camps are liberated (by the Russians, Sachsenhausen **22nd April** and Ravensbrück **30th April**; by the British, Bergen-Belsen **14th**

**April**; by the American Buchenwald and Dora **11th April**, Flossenbug **23rd April**, Dachau **29th April**, Neuengamme **4th May**, Mauthausen **5th May**). **7th and 8th May**, Germans surrender in Reims followed by Berlin.

# Main concentration camps within the nazi system and occupied France



## *Foundation for the Memory of Deportation*

The Foundation for the Memory of Deportation is the oldest foundation of memory of WW2. From its creation in 1990, its aim has been that of its founders: to represent different historical aspects of deportation, thereby highlighting several memories. Its Board of Directors translate this aim as it is made up of repression deportees (Resistants, hostages, Communists, unionists, members of the military, etc.) and persecution deportees (Jews according to the criteria established by the French Vichy regime and the nazis).

Moreover, the balanced mix of its trustees' political views fosters the expression of the different schools of thought which led the Resistance and opposition to nazism and the French State of Vichy and subsequently spurred post-war memory.

The foundation has the strong desire to present the two major deportations in a balanced and differentiated manner. One sent people to the "death camps" because they were born Jewish or Gypsy and the other sent people to concentration camps as "enemies of the German-nazi Reich" (Resistants, Communists, Socialists, Christians, Jehovah Witnesses, the "asocial" etc.), to destroy them and make them zealous servants of nazism or to eliminate them. This was always preceded by exploiting them until they were not longer able to work.

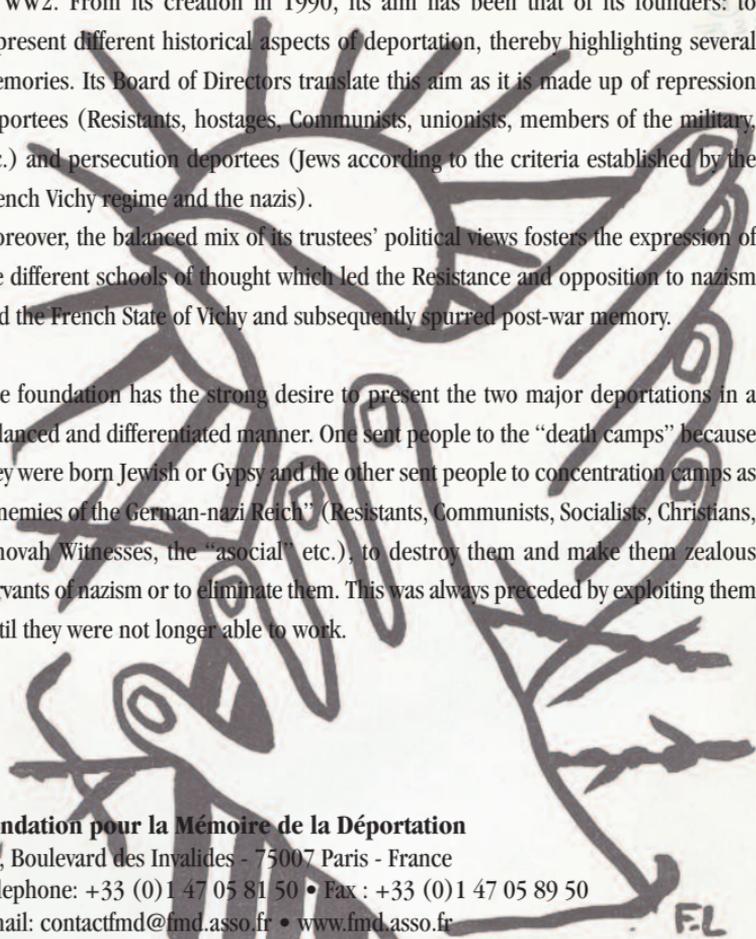
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## **Foundations**

Amis de la Fondation pour la mémoire de la déportation

(Friends of the Foundation for the Memory of Deportation) : <http://www.afmd.asso.fr/>

Fondation de la Résistance)(Foundation of the Resistance) : <http://www.fondationresistance.com/>

Fondation pour la mémoire de la déportation (FMD)

(Foundation for the Memory of Deportation) : <http://www.fmd.asso.fr/>

Fondation pour la mémoire de la Shoah

(Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah) : <http://www.fondationshoah.org/>