the topic. Despite the title suggesting a narrow focus on desertion, the discussions within the conference proceedings extend to various actors and landscapes involved. While the book predominantly concentrates on the Wehrmacht, with only two chapters exploring the Waffen-SS, there is a call for further exploration in this area for future research endeavors, especially regarding the Waffen-SS. Additionally, bridging the gap in research concerning non-German soldiers, particularly across different countries, could enhance its relevance for an international audience. Therefore, consideration should be given to translating the book into English.

In conclusion, this book fills a significant void in research and provides valuable insights into the individual experiences and societal impacts of desertion and draft evasion during World War II. It challenges conventional narratives surrounding loyalty and duty, emphasizing the nuanced complexities inherent in these concepts.

doi:10.1017/S0008938924000803

# Framing the Holocaust: Photographs of a Mass Shooting in Latvia, 1941

## Edited by Valerie Hébert. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press in Association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2023. Pp. vii + 275. Cloth $59.95. ISBN 978-0-299-34410-8.

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From December 15–17, 1941, Latvian police and German members of Einsatzgruppe Two, led by the SS Security Service (SD), rounded up and shot 2,749 Jews on the Šķēde beach near Liepāja, Latvia. Mass killings like this one had, by then, come to define the German invasion of the Soviet Union since it began in June 1941. During what historians today call the "Holocaust by bullets," the Germans and their local collaborators murdered 850,000 Jews in the first six months of that invasion alone. What was particularly unusual about the Šķēde shootings, however, were the twelve photographs SS men made to document the killing process. The pictures mainly show groups of Jewish women and children assembled at gunpoint, forced to undress, and then dragged to a ditch to be shot, the bodies of those murdered before them visible below. They are horrific scenes that are extremely difficult to see.

Should we look at them? That question has framed much of the literature on Holocaust atrocity photography since the 1980s, and so too does it animate this thought-provoking volume on the Šķēde photographs. Valerie Hébert's engaging first chapter, "'Not to Tiptoe Away in the Face of Suffering': Why We Look at Holocaust Photographs," delineates the theoretical terms of the debate on the ethics of looking at atrocity photography. And while Hébert acknowledges that looking at these photographs will remain an uncomfortable experience, she insists that we do so to understand and remember the Holocaust. Hébert reminds us that there are rules to this, however, long established by the scholarship on Holocaust photography. Correctly attributing to the photographs their specific history, time, and place is one of them. This rule is often violated in exhibitions, publications, and classrooms today, where the unique circumstances behind the Šķēde beach photographs are stripped away to merely illustrate the depravity of Holocaust perpetrators and the suffering of their victims more

broadly. The contributors to this book correct this tendency by restoring that context to the photographs and, in doing so, reveal what is to be gained by engaging with them.

Above all, the photographs attest to the lives so brutally ended that December. Edward Anders, to whom the book is dedicated, describes in his powerful foreword to the book how he survived the Šķēde massacre by passing as "Aryan" with his mother and brother. The Nazi occupation of Liepāja would, however, claim the lives of his father, cousin, grandparents, and many other family members, friends, and neighbors. With the help of forensic technology, as Daniel Newman explains in his compelling chapter, "The Mystery of an Iconic Photograph: Investigating Both Sides of the Camera on the Beach at Šķēde," many of those individuals, some of whom are depicted in the photographs, can now be properly honored. Members of the Grinfeld, Purve, and Epstein families, for example, are all identified in the photographs. The Šķēde photographs commemorate the victims, then, but they also constitute incontrovertible evidence of what happened to Liepāja's Jews in 1941.

The photographs also testify to the defilement of a place that held so much meaning for the Jews of Liepāja before the Nazis arrived. Although settings like concentration camps, forests, ghettoes, cattle cars, attics, and cellars might be more familiar, Daniel H. Magilow's excellent chapter, "A Day at the Beach: The Šķēde Massacre and Littoral Photography," establishes the importance of the beach as a site of Holocaust history and memory. Located on the Baltic Sea, Liepāja became an active shipping hub and popular destination for tourism and leisure during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Magilow convincingly shows how the littoral photography of the period reflected these roles. For Liepāja's Jews, the beaches symbolized their own contributions to the city's commercial success as well as cherished moments of recreation and belonging with family, friends, and neighbors. But the Nazis shattered these happy memories when they arrived and turned the beaches into places of terror and mass murder instead.

The photographs illuminate the motives of the German and Latvian perpetrators of the Šķēde shootings as well. The exact identity of the photographer is still a mystery, but SD-Oberscharführer Sobeck as well as Erich Handke and Karl-Emil Strott, both members of Einsatzgruppe Two, are the most likely candidates. As Hébert explains in the introduction to the book, these men likely made the photographs for high-ranking authorities to show what an exemplary shooting action looked like. To minimize the fallout if their enemies intercepted such incriminating material, only Latvian policemen were shown in the images (p. 36). Tanja Kinzel's chapter, "Reading Against the Gaze: Perpetrator Motives and Subject Responses in Photographs of a Mass Shooting," further shows that antisemitism and the desire to dominate, humiliate, and dehumanize the victims also motivated these men to take the pictures as well as pull the triggers alongside other German and Latvian killers.

But it is not because of the perpetrators alone that these photographs exist today. Jewish resistance made that possible. In their chapters, Hébert, Magilow, and Newman tell the story of David Zivcon, a Latvian Jew forced by the SD to work as an electrician at their headquarters in Liepāja. It was Zivcon who discovered and preserved the twelve Šķēde photographs. One day in late December 1941, Zivcon was ordered to the home of SD-Oberscharführer Sobeck to fix a faulty wire. While he was there, Zivcon discovered a roll of film in Sobeck's desk drawer. Correctly suspecting that there was incriminating material on the negatives, Zivcon took the roll with him when he left and made copies with the help of Pessach Meier Stein, a Jewish optician forced to operate a photography lab for the SD in Liepāja. Zivcon put the prints in a box and buried it. He returned to Sobeck's apartment under the pretext of needing to fix another electrical problem and, miraculously, managed to return the original film roll to Sobeck's desk undetected. I would add that by risking their lives to copy and preserve the Šķēde photographs, both Zivcon and Stein were part of the much wider practice of Jewish resistance through photographic documentation during the Holocaust. In forests, concentration camps, and ghettos throughout Europe, Jewish and non-Jewish fighters, prisoners, and forced laborers used photography to provide evidence of Nazi crimes. Greater attention to Stein and Zivcon's contributions to this aspect of

Jewish resistance during the Nazi occupation of Liepāja would have strengthened the book. Indeed, Stein is not discussed at all in this volume.

When in October 1943 Zivcon learned that the SD planned to murder the remaining Jews of Liepāja, he narrowly escaped deportation by going into hiding with his wife and several others, including the diarist Kalman Linkimer, in the home of their Christian friends, Robert and Johanna Seduls. They remained there until 1945, when Soviet troops arrived to liberate the area. It is likely that Sobeck destroyed the original negatives then, as did panicked German troops everywhere who burned the evidence of their crimes in retreat from the Allied advance. Zivcon returned to the spot where he buried the prints and gave them to Soviet intelligence officers. This exchange was not without its own challenges. As Marilyn Campeau describes in her fascinating chapter, "Describing Atrocity: Soviet Words on German Perpetrator Images," even though Zivcon and Linkimer told Soviet authorities that the Šķēde shootings specifically targeted Jews, the Soviets ignored this information to instead describe those pictured as "peaceful Soviet citizens" and "workers" in their captions for the Šķēde photographs. The rigidity of Soviet ideology, Campeau explains, prompted officials to suppress the fundamentally antisemitic character of the Šķēde massacre just as they had suppressed the antisemitic character of the September 29–30, 1941 massacre of 33,771 Ukrainian Jews at Babi Yar.

Decontextualizing the Šķēde photographs is no recent phenomenon, then, but one with its own long history that should not be repeated. This book serves as a corrective for that tendency, which is unfortunately still common among those who use photographs without explaining the circumstances behind them. But it behooves all scholars to keep the rules of photographic analysis in mind. As the contributors to this volume have shown, there is much that photographs can reveal when those rules are followed. For that, we are indebted to this book.

doi:10.1017/S0008938924000815

# Vielheit. Jüdische Geschichte und die Ambivalenzen des Universalismus

## By Till van Rahden. Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2022. Pp. 224. Cloth €30.0. ISBN: 978-3868543582.

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For researchers of German and German-Jewish history, *Vielheit* presents an opportunity to revisit some of the tensions that lay at the heart of the nineteenth century. Foremost, *Vielheit* is both a *Begriffsgeschichte* (history of ideas) that discusses diversity (Vielheit), difference (Verschiedenheit), and related concepts and their historical evolution. Van Rahden then interrogates how these concepts were integral components within German-Jewish history since the Enlightenment, especially the struggle for emancipation and integration. Moreover, *Vielheit* provides an opportunity for readers to think more carefully about universalism and particularism on a spectrum and how the Jewish minority in Germany (and perhaps elsewhere) have had to negotiate between these systems of thought in their quest for inclusion.

The book is divided into six, easily accessible chapters with subsections that are laser-focused, and which help to move forward the discussion about Jews' desire to promote difference as the basis of societal inclusion. The introduction asks us to think about numerous pairs of terms not in binary opposition to one another, but as "Sowohl-als-auch" (both ...