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# Kaddish in Flossenbürg. On the Genesis of the Memorials to Jewish Victims of the Concentration Camp

The memory of the Jewish victims of the Nazi concentration camp (*Konzentrationslager*, KL), which was built in 1938, is manifested in three places on the grounds of today's Flossenbürg concentration camp memorial site. The main camp and an adjoining quarry had served the extraction of the rich granite deposits in the Upper Palatinate by Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke (DEST), one of the SS's economic enterprises. Of the approximately 100,000 registered prisoners of the Flossenbürg camp complex, with 70 subcamp locations until 1945, more than 30,000 were murdered or perished due to the harsh prison conditions.<sup>1</sup>

The aspect of the remembrance of Jewish victims has not yet been studied in detail for Flossenbürg. This chapter therefore aims to describe diachronically the sequence and development of the structurally manifested or memorialized forms of remembrance. The setting of two memorial stones in 1949/50 and 1985 and the construction of an architecturally designed prayer and memorial site in 1995 can thus serve as examples for the currents of remembrance culture of the respective decade in the Federal Republic of Germany. The classification of the memorial settings – the construction of the prayer and memorial site is to be understood as such here – in their contemporary historical context aims to show characteristics that on the one hand are genuine for the place of remembrance in Flossenbürg, and on the other hand fit into contexts that go beyond it. Methodologically, this approach combines an art-historical and a cultural-scientific spatial and actor-related perspective on the memorial landscape of Flossenbürg. It will become clear which community of remembrance was responsible for the monuments and how the actors and their objectives changed.

The source material is provided by the Bavarian Administration of State-Owned Palaces, Gardens and Lakes (branch office Eremitage in Bayreuth), which was responsible for the care of the so-called Valley of Death, designated as a concentration camp cemetery and memorial, since 1953. The old records are located in the archive of the Flossenbürg Memorial (AGFl) and represent the internal correspondence with the headquarters of the authority in Munich as well as the external correspondence with the State Association of Jewish Communities in Bavaria (*Landesverband der*

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<sup>1</sup> Jörg Skriebeleit, "Flossenbürg – Hauptlager," in *Flossenbürg: Das Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg und seine Außenlager*, ed. Wolfgang Benz, and Barbara Distel (München, 2007), 11–60, here 51; *Konzentrationslager Flossenbürg 1938–1945. Catalogue of the permanent exhibition*, ed. KZ-Gedenkstätte Flossenbürg (Göttingen, 2008).

*Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern*), Munich, and the locally responsible offices, such as the municipality of Flossenbürg, the District Office (*Landratsamt*) of Neustadt an der Waldnaab, and the Land Construction Office of Weiden (*Landbauamt*).

## The Jewish memorial stone from 1949/50

On a two-day tour in early November 1950, Philipp Auerbach visited some of the numerous concentration camp cemeteries in Bavaria with a delegation of administrative officials, functionaries of victims' associations, accompanied by changing local politicians.<sup>2</sup> In his function as State Commissioner for the racially, religiously and politically persecuted in Bavaria (*Staatskommissar für rassistisch, religiös und politisch Verfolgte* since 1946) and as acting president of the State Compensation Office (*Landesentschädigungsamt* since November 1949), Auerbach was an exposed player in reparations policy and a high-profile figure.<sup>3</sup> Connected with his double function was, qua office, the task of accompanying the reverent design and care of the concentration camp cemeteries considered to be "war graves." On the second day, November 5, and Sunday after All Saints' Day, the concentration camp cemetery in Flossenbürg was officially handed over to the public.

The district administrator of Neustadt an der Waldnaab, Christian Kreuzer, had invited the public to "dedication acts" of the Christian clergy and to the "Jewish prayer for the dead."<sup>4</sup> Fig. 1. It was only with this act that the entire complex was completed in its first stage of development, after a memorial stone for Jewish victims had also been erected, which had been missing from the original cemetery plan.

Designed by Weiden's master builder, Josef Linhardt, the highly rectangular granite plaque with a rim and recessed mirror stands on a low pedestal and bears a six-line, engraved and red-colored Hebrew inscription:

<sup>2</sup> See Bayerische Verwaltung der staatlichen Schlösser, Gärten und See, *KZ-Friedhöfe und -Gedenkstätten: „Wenn das neue Geschlecht erkennt, was das alte verschuldet...“*, ed. Constanze Werner (Regensburg, 2011).

<sup>3</sup> Jörg Skriebeleit, *Erinnerungsort Flossenbürg: Akteure, Zäsuren, Geschichtsbilder* (Göttingen, 2009), especially 133 on; Gerhard Fürmetz, "Neue Einblicke in die Praxis der frühen Wiedergutmachung in Bayern. Die Auerbach-Korrespondenz im Bayerischen Hauptstaatsarchiv und die Akten des Strafprozesses gegen die Führung des Landesentschädigungsamtes von 1952," *Zeitenblicke* 3 (2004): 2, <http://www.zeitenblicke.de/2004/2/Fuermetz>. Accessed October 31, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> AGFl, Gemeinde Flossenbürg, Az. 064 (KZ – Feiern und Veranstaltungen, 1950–1983), District Administrator Kreuzer, invitation for the festivities of the dedication of the concentration camp cemetery in Flossenbürg on Sunday, November 5, 1950.



**Fig. 1:** Flossenbürg, Kaddish on November 5, 1950, in front of the Jewish memorial stone. Philipp Auerbach is seen on the right with a cylinder hat (Photograph: Foto Bauer, Weiden, AGFI 2017.0297, Image 5941).

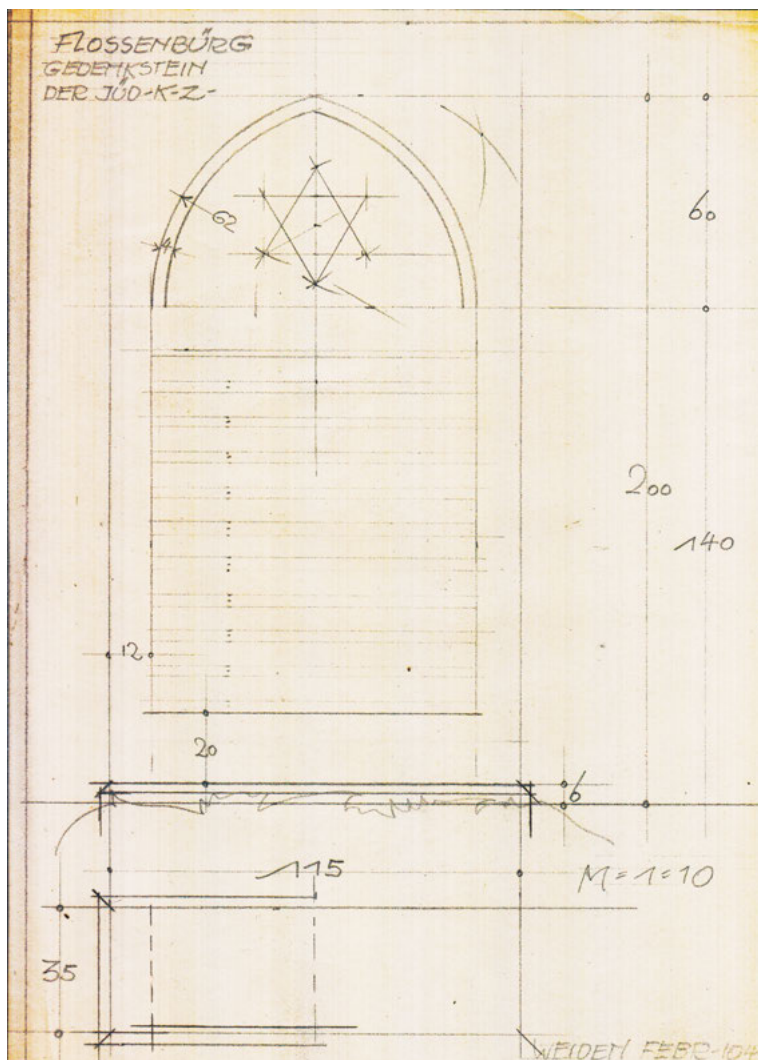
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הקדושים לזכרון הזאת 'המצב  
על נהרגו אשר ורעב חרב חללי  
ש"ימ הרשעים י"ע השם קדוש  
ה"תש - ח"תרצ בשנות בפלאסענבורג  
ה"תנצב

*'Witness*

*be this stele' in memory of the holy martyrs,  
'victims of sword and famine', 'who were killed to sanctify the  
sanctification of the (divine) name' by the wicked, their name be blotted out,  
in Flossenbürg in the years 698–705.  
Let their souls be bound in the bundle of life.<sup>5</sup>*

<sup>5</sup> AGFI, 2018.0134 (Translation to German by Nathanja Hüttenmeister and Elisabeth Singer-Brehm).



**Fig. 2:** Flossenbürg, design for the Jewish memorial stone by Josef Linhardt, dated February 1949 (AGFI, Josef Linhardt estate, K40.0004).

On the epitaph there is a somewhat narrower top with a pointed arch, in the lunette of which the outline of a yellow painted shield of David is carved out as a flat relief (Fig. 2).

The memorial is slightly more than two meters high and stands at the foot of the retaining wall of the actual camp area near the former camp crematorium (Fig. 3). The location is noteworthy for two reasons: It is elevated, which on the one hand



**Fig. 3:** Flossenbürg, Jewish memorial stone in the Valley of Death, condition March 2020 (Photograph: Timo Saalman, Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial).

makes the stone stand out from the overall landscaping concept of the Valley of Death, but on the other hand also moves it out of the longitudinal visual axis and thus makes it appear isolated.

The area adjoining the actual camp grounds, where the SS had burned the death victims and their ashes were then carelessly scattered on the embankment sloping down to the forest, became a memorial to Nazi crimes soon after the liberation by US forces on April 23, 1945. However, the need to create a memorial came less from survivors of the Flossenbürg camp complex itself than from Catholic Poles who, as former civilian forced laborers or inmates of other concentration camps, lived as Displaced Persons (DPs) in Flossenbürg, Floss, Weiden, or the surrounding area after the end of the war. The memorial committee, which had set itself the goal of making the Valley of Death worthy, mainly consisted of them.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Skriebeleit, *Erinnerungsort Flossenbürg*, see note 3, 103–104.



**Fig. 4:** Flossenbürg, Valley of Death, view to the chapel above the execution site, ash pyramid, Square of Nations (Photograph: Foto Bauer, Weiden, AGFI 2017.0246, Image No. 3194).

The genesis of the Valley of Death is described in detail.<sup>7</sup> Josef Linhardt was responsible for the overall concept of the landscaped/cemetery-gardened Valley of Death and the “Jesus in prison” chapel (Fig. 4).

According to Jörg Skriebeleit, the site is Christian through and through. Essential for this is the eschatologically and salvation-historically charged sequence of structural relics, monuments and newly erected architectural elements. Beginning at the southeastern edge of the site, a sequence of crematorium, firing squad, the ash pyramid arranged after the liberation, the Square of Nations with cenotaphs for the victims named according to nationality, including the number of victims assumed at the time of construction, as well as the chapel “Jesus in prison,” located northeast and elevated on the level of the camp site, is created roughly on a longitudinal axis. The chapel, consecrated to the Catholic Church, was built from the *spolia* of the watch-towers, some of which had been demolished. The interior design of the chapel is entirely focused on the national prisoner groups. Thus, the stained-glass windows and shields in the shape of crests again take up the naming of nationalities and numbers of victims. A wooden sculpture group on the altar depicts a martyred Jesus with attendants. The overall impression of the strongly Christian-Catholic character with a

<sup>7</sup> See in detail Skriebeleit, *Erinnerungsort Flossenbürg*, see note 3, 116–145.

simultaneously international claim to the commemoration of the multinational prisoner society was reflected in the course of events, rituals and speeches of the inauguration ceremony on Pentecost 1947, May 25.<sup>8</sup>

The nationalization of the early commemoration of the majority of Flossenbürg prisoners becomes clear. Nevertheless, Jews were excluded from the main national line of remembrance, as the circumstances surrounding the installation of the first Jewish memorial stone indicate. It is symptomatic that this group of victims does not appear in the design that was planned and realized by the memorial committee or was simply omitted. Thus, Jörg Skriebeleit states about the work of the memorial committee that Jewish concentration camp survivors, unlike local and Allied decision-makers, “were apparently consciously not recruited for the committee.” Although many Jewish Polish DPs were on site, on the part of the non-Jewish Polish DPs there were reservations and no sense of belonging shared with the Jewish Poles and no “willingness to cooperate with them in any way.”<sup>9</sup> There is no evidence of any demarcation on the part of the Jewish DPs, but in fact their perspective was not taken into account. The absence of any Jewish symbolism in the new cemetery was pointed out to Auerbach by a US military rabbi in late November 1946. The social democratic second mayor of Weiden, Josef Tröger, who himself had been in KL Dachau in 1933/34 and KL Flossenbürg in 1944, and Earl F. Cruickshank (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, UNRRA), who were members of the memorial committee, now argued that the concerns of “all” groups of victims should be taken into account, regardless of their nationality or the reasons for their imprisonment. As a result, on January 13, 1947, the monument committee approved a memorial stone for Jewish victims and decided to erect it.<sup>10</sup> This episode clearly shows that at least three distinct groups were represented in the memorial committee. In addition to the Polish DPs, there were also representatives of the international, de facto US dominated aid organizations or the occupation administration, as well as the group of German (political) former prisoners who came from or resided in the region.

With the memorial stone, there was then an area in the Valley of Death in which the remembrance of the Jewish victims became visible. The memorial had a special function, because now there was a place where the Kaddish could be said as a prayer for the dead. The formulaic use of the Kaddish after the Shoah as a prayer not only for deceased relatives, but for the entirety of the murdered Jews becomes recognizable here. The necessity of gathering a minyan to say the Kaddish lent special weight to the place and prayer against the background of a public culture of remembrance.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Skriebeleit, *Erinnerungsort Flossenbürg*, see note 3, 135.

<sup>9</sup> Skriebeleit, *Erinnerungsort Flossenbürg*, see note 3, 103–104.

<sup>10</sup> Skriebeleit, *Erinnerungsort Flossenbürg*, see note 3, 103–104.

<sup>11</sup> Andreas Lehnardt, “Kaddisch-Gebet,” *WiBiLex* <https://www.bibelwissenschaft.de/stichwort/22980/>, paras. 3.3. Accessed October 31, 2021.



Nevertheless, Flossenbürg remained a Jewish place of remembrance only to a limited extent at the end of the 1940s, since the KL had not been a “Jewish Space” in that sense either.<sup>12</sup> If KL Flossenbürg is categorized and systematized, it is a main camp in the old Reich founded relatively late for the economic interests of the SS, which differed functionally from German forced ghettos or the concentration and extermination camps in occupied Poland – and thus also in memory. Jewish prisoners played a role in Flossenbürg relatively late in the war. It was not until the last year of the war that they became the largest prison group, with more than 22,000 (including female prisoners in subcamps), this after numerous transports of Jewish people from (evacuated) Eastern European ghettos and camps began arriving in August 1944, who were then used as laborers for forced labor in armaments production in the subcamps in the German Reich. The Jewish prisoners had only come to the Flossenbürg camp system as a result of forced labor in the armaments industry and its relocation back to German territory, or even after liberation as DPs, and therefore brought with them different camp experiences and needs for a commemorative culture. The routes of Jewish victims to Flossenbürg were diverse and resembled each other depending on the national or regional origin of the persecutees.<sup>13</sup>

The vast majority of the Jewish prisoners of the Flossenbürg main camp and its satellite camps were driven south on the so-called “evacuation” or “death marches” as the front lines approached, provided they were able to march or walk.<sup>14</sup> About 1,200 sick prisoners or prisoners close to death were left behind in the abandoned camp area. Unless the inmates died from the hardships of the march or were murdered by guards, they arrived emaciated at their destination. Some marching columns were left to their own devices on the way by deserting guards or had already been liberated by units of the US Army before finally reaching KL Dachau on April 29, 1945. Dachau had been the destination of the forced marches, which also seemed uncoordinated and, from today’s perspective, often haphazard, due to collapsed command and command structures, partly because it was located in the center of the ever-shrinking territory controlled by German units. Some 5,500 dead from the forced marches were exhumed between 1955 and 1957 as part of the closure of various concentration camp cemeteries in Bavaria and reburied in the Flossenbürg Cemetery of Honor at what is now known as the Concentration Camp Gravesite and Memorial.

<sup>12</sup> See, for example, Stephan Lehnstaedt, “Jewish Spaces? Defining Nazi Ghettos Then and Now,” *The Polish Review* 61.4 (2016): 41–56, <https://doi.org/10.5406/polishreview.61.4.0041>. Accessed October 31, 2021.

<sup>13</sup> Katarzyna Person, “Juden aus Polen im besetzten Bayern – die Erfahrung der Befreiung,” in *Transporte polnischer Häftlinge in den KZ-Systemen Auschwitz, Dachau und Flossenbürg*, ed. Staatliches Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau (Oświęcim, 2020).

<sup>14</sup> On the following, see Skriebeleit, “Flossenbürg – Hauptlager,” see note 1, 51–52.



## The second Jewish memorial stone from 1985

Since 1980, the Bavarian Palace Department considered erecting another Jewish memorial stone. Initially, another simple gravestone-like monument with a David shield and German inscription made of bronze was considered. Corresponding offers had been obtained from a local stonemason. In the fall, however, the Munich headquarters informed the Bayreuth branch that “an artistic design for the stone is now desired.”<sup>15</sup> What form such a monument should take, however, remained unresolved for the time being. Drafts and executed monuments for comparable tenders were examined by the *Landbauamt*, the *Schlösserverwaltung* and the *Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern*, but did not meet with approval. In the fall of 1984, Helmut Langhammer from Pressath was commissioned, a sculptor of regional renown, who had realized numerous projects for art in public spaces and whose design “seemed more contemporary and expressive than the proposals and offers received so far.”<sup>16</sup>

An increased effort to commemorate the destruction of Jewish businesses and institutions, synagogues as well as the transfer of thousands of Jewish men to concentration camps and the murder of about 1,500 people during the November pogroms of 1938 can be seen since the fortieth anniversary of the events. Mostly based on the initiative of local actors, memorial stones or plaques have been erected at Jewish cemeteries or the former sites of destroyed synagogues since the late 1970s, bringing them back into public awareness. Frequently, prominent places were also used to commemorate the victims of Nazi persecution in a more general way.<sup>17</sup> It can be said with some certainty that these developments also affected the planning for Flossenbürg.

The ceremonies took place on a Sunday, May 5, 1985, relatively close to the fortieth anniversary of the end of the war or the German surrender. Yet the dedication was only one of at least four separate commemorative events organized by the Bavarian state government, the SPD, the regional council of churches of the Protestant Church in Bavaria, and precisely the regional association of Jewish religious communities in Bavaria. In the presence of local political representatives and the two Christian denominations, the sculpture was handed over to the public with speeches followed by a “Jewish prayer for the dead.”<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> AGFl, BSV Fl 7, Fraundorfer to the Palace and Garden Administration Hermitage, Bayreuth, September 18, 1980.

<sup>16</sup> AGFl, BSV Fl 7, memo of Frauenhofer, September 26, 1984.

<sup>17</sup> Christoph Daxelmüller, *Der gute Ort: Jüdische Friedhöfe in Bayern, Hefte zur Bayerischen Geschichte und Kultur* 39 (Augsburg, 2009); Israel Schwierz, *Steinerne Zeugnisse jüdischen Lebens in Bayern. Eine Dokumentation* (München, 1988).

<sup>18</sup> AGFl, BSV Fl 7, Bavarian State Chancellery (Protocol Department) to Klauf, Vice-President BSV, April 18, 1985, and letter of invitation from the BSV, April 18, 1985.



**Fig. 5:** Flossenbürg, memorial stone of Helmut Langhammer in the Valley of Death, condition March 2020 (Photograph: Timo Saalmann, Flossenbürg Concentration Camp Memorial).

From the running horizon of the former camp area, the cemetery and the chapel, a flight of steps leads down into the terraced Valley of Death. On a first landing of the stairs a larger plateau was built for the new memorial stone. This was aligned so that it stands in alignment with the older Jewish memorial stone in the longitudinal direction of the site. In a sense, this creates an additional longitudinal axis in the Valley of Death. The memorial stone, which is taller than a man and measures almost 2.5 meters, is made of granite typical of the site (from the Wurmstein quarry, which was also used by KL) and hewn from a single ashlar (Fig. 5).

The central design feature is a Star of David formed by two interlocking triangles with a smoothly polished surface, which is backed by an equilateral triangle in the front view, creating the association of the KL prisoners' "angle" and invoking the common iconography of memorial culture for concentration camp victims. The impression of a prisoner's angle is created by beveled triangular surfaces recessed toward the interior to the left and right of the central axis. The base plate bears in bas-relief an inscription set in capitals in the generally formulating linguistic style of the 1980s: "To the Jewish victims of National Socialist tyranny." A stylized menorah is carved on the reverse. In its outline, the memorial is reminiscent of a tree; the base is designed to be slightly wider, then the column narrows slightly and rises in clean lines before the stone transitions to more organic forms at the top and a

sculptural element cantilevers out the sides and back. The roughly chipped edges and sides suggest foliage in this area.

Two leading representatives of Jewish life in Bavaria who came from Poland were instrumental in the installation of the additional memorial stone. The Munich physician Simon Snopkowski, for many years vice-president and since 1971 president of the Jewish Communities in Bavaria, who had come to the DP camp Landsberg am Lech after the liberation from KL Groß-Rosen, and Julius Spokojny, who had been imprisoned for about two weeks in KL Flossenbürg and after the liberation from the subcamp Ohrdruf of KL Buchenwald became a textile entrepreneur in Augsburg. He had been chairman of the Jewish Community of Augsburg-Swabia since 1963, a member of the Board of Directors of the Central Council of Jews in Germany since 1973, and initiated the founding of the Jewish Cultural Museum of Augsburg-Swabia, which opened in 1985. Both also belonged to the second chamber of the Free State, the Bavarian Senate (Snopkowski 1975, 1996–1999; Spokojny from 1982 until his death in 1996).<sup>19</sup> In the context of the culture of remembrance of the 1980s and 1990s in Bavaria, including the development of what was then called Christian-Jewish cooperation, contemporary witness work, the musealization of Jewish history and culture, and ultimately also their participation in the erection of monuments, the work of Snopkowski and Spokojny can probably not be valued highly enough. Their functions not only within their communities, but above all their activities in Jewish umbrella organizations at the state and federal level, as well as their political mandates, provided them with influence in public life. Their participation was decisive for the further genesis of the Jewish memorial sites in Flossenbürg.

## The prayer and memorial site of 1995

Perhaps even more clearly than in 1985, the importance of the *Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern* in shaping the culture of remembrance became apparent ten years later when a “Prayer and Memorial Site” for the Jewish Flossenbürg prisoners was opened on the grounds of the Flossenbürg concentration camp gravesite and memorial in 1995. Present and giving speeches were Hans Bradl, the District President of the Upper Palatinate, the first mayor of the municipality of Flossenbürg Johann Werner, Hugo Höllenreiner as representative of the

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<sup>19</sup> See the biographical sketches and testimonies in Michael Brenner, *Nach dem Holocaust: Juden in Deutschland, 1945–1950* (München, 1995), 129–132 (Spokojny), 176–178 (Snopkowski) as well as Benigna Schönhagen, *Die Augsburger Synagoge: ein Bauwerk und seine Geschichte* (Augsburg, 2010) on Spokojny.

Documentation and Cultural Center of German Sinti and Roma e. V. as well as Simon Snopkowski as President of the State Association of Jewish Communities in Bavaria and Hans Zehetmair for the State Government in his function as Deputy Minister President and State Minister for Education, Culture, Science and Art. Zehetmair's presence was due to his dual function, as his ministry had assumed responsibility for the Nazi memorials since 1991.<sup>20</sup>

The construction program of the small, simple building is developed together with the presidium of the regional association, Simon Snopkowski, Julius Spokojny and David Schuster (Würzburg).<sup>21</sup> Generationally, these men share the fate of persecution as native Polish and German Jews, respectively, who in the post-war period are professionally established and respected in their places of residence and hold



**Fig. 6:** Flossenbürg, view of the Jewish prayer and memorial site, 2004 (Photograph: Architect Würschinger, Weiden).

<sup>20</sup> Unpublished sources on the construction of the prayer and memorial site is not yet accessible, so that only published sources could be evaluated.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Träger, *Die jüdische Gedenkstätte in Flossenbürg*, ed. Landesverband der Israelitischen Kultusgemeinden in Bayern (München, 1995).



leadership positions in their respective communities or the national association. Fifty years after the end of the war, they represented, in terms of origin and age, the two main lines of the overaged postwar German communities: Schuster, born in 1910, was the oldest of them; Snopkowski (born in 1925) and Spokojny (born in 1923) belonged to the age cohort of Eastern European Jews shaped by experience as forced laborers, who built their lives in Germany after liberation. In the mid-1990s, the growth of Jewish communities through immigration from the former Soviet republics only made itself felt.<sup>22</sup>

In the immediate vicinity of the “Jesus in prison” chapel, a functionalist building with cubic forms was erected, measuring just under 12 meters in length and 6.50 meters in width. It was designed by the Weiden-based architectural firm Kunnert & Würschinger, using prefabricated concrete components with whitewashed walls and a flat



**Fig. 7:** Flossenbürg, front view of the Jewish prayer and memorial site, 2004 (Photograph: architect Würschinger, Weiden).

<sup>22</sup> Jutta Fleckenstein, and Piritta Kleiner, ed., *Juden 45: Von da und dort – Überlebende aus Osteuropa/Juden 90: Von ganz weit weg – Einwanderer aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion*, exhibition catalogue of the Jewish Museum Munich, 2 vols. (Berlin, 2011/2012).



**Fig. 8:** Flossenbürg, Interior of the Jewish prayer and memorial site, 2004 (Photograph: Architect Würschinger, Weiden).

roof. The cubature features a metal door as openings as well as high-set, quasi sky-light-giving horizontal window bands to the left and right of the vestibule. Fig. 6 and 7. Inside, the sequence of rooms begins with a covered vestibule, from which three steps lead down to the central room (Psalm 130:1), where there are columns arranged in a hexagon. The main room receives light through a tower-shaped skylight that casts the shadow of a shield of David into the room. Opposite the exit is a niche in which “Zachor” is written in Hebrew in large metal letters (Figs. 8 and 9).

The high symbolic content of the building program and the materiality in concrete and white of modernism as well as the regional granite was explained in this way: “The external bleakness of the building” stands for the “exposure of the prisoners,” the “nakedness of the facade is to remind us of how the victims were deprived of their personality.” Inside, “the number and quality of [...] design elements as well as the structural unity increase.” The Flossenbürger granite, which was used for the floor and walls of the central room, reminds one “of the hard labor of the prisoners in the quarry.”<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Träger, *Die jüdische Gedenkstätte in Flossenbürg*, see note 21, n.p.



**Fig. 9:** Flossenbürg, detail (skylight) of the Jewish prayer and memorial site, 2004  
(Photograph: Architect Würschinger, Weiden).

## Summary

The prayer and memorial site subsequently became the location for the annual Kaddish at the commemoration ceremonies marking the anniversary of the liberation of KL Flossenbürg. Previously, the Jewish commemoration of the dead took place first at the 1949/50 memorial stone, then at the 1985 memorial. The new sculptural memorial stone was erected on the initiative of Shoah survivors and leading representatives of Jewish life, such as Simon Snopkowski, Julius Spokojny and David Schuster, who wanted to ensure a dignified remembrance of Jewish Nazi victims in Flossenbürg. This project was renewed in 1995, when the State Association of Jewish Communities in Bavaria established a “Prayer and Memorial Site” especially for Jewish Flossenbürg prisoners. The initiative of the Bavarian Jewish umbrella organization was part of the renewal of the culture of remembrance after the end of the Cold War. The previous forms of remembrance were no longer up to date by the mid-1990s, and the commemoration of one of the “forgotten camps” is beginning to realign itself with the fiftieth anniversary of the liberation. This should be understood in light of the fact that the memorial’s so-called Valley of Death, which was created in the immediate post-war period, commemorates nationally defined groups of victims. At the same time, the commemoration had a distinctly Christian character, as evidenced not only by a burial ground laid out in the 1950s along with the “Jesus in the prison” chapel. Jewish victims of the Flossenbürg camp system, on the other hand, were for a long time hardly visible.



