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Shortly after I was appointed Lecturer in International History at the London School of Economics and Political Science in 1970, I received a telephone call from Józef Garliński asking if he could come and see me. I had already had some contact with him. He was a prominent figure in Polish London, born in Kiev in 1913 and whose family had moved to Kalisz after the Russian Revolution. After completing his military service at the cavalry school in Grudziądz, he had begun to study law at the University of Warsaw when the Germans invaded Poland. Wounded in the September campaign, he quickly joined the Polish underground, participating in a cell which assisted those arrested and detained in Pawiak prison in Warsaw. In 1943, he was arrested—the Gestapo were looking for another Garliński—and sent to the notorious Nazi concentration camp at Auschwitz.

From Auschwitz he was moved first to the camp at Neuengamme, near Hamburg, and then to that at Wittenberge. After he was liberated by the Americans, he worked as an interpreter for the American Seventh Army Division and subsequently moved to London. Here he was reunited with his Irish-born wife, Eileen, whom he had married on the eve of the war. I also knew him as the author of a series of novels about the war (*Dramat i opatrzność*, *Matki i żony* and *Ziemia*) as well as two important studies of the Polish resistance during the war, *Między Londynem i Warszawą* (*Between London and Warsaw*, London, 1966) and *Politycy i żołnierze* (London, 1968), which had been translated into English as *Poland, S.O.E. and the Allies* (London, 1969).

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He explained to me that he had had a successful career as an insurance salesman and mortgage broker, and wished now to devote himself entirely to scholarship. He would never be properly recognized, he felt, either by the Polish emigration or by the larger scholarly community unless he had a Ph.D. Would I be willing to take him on as a student and supervise his doctoral studies? He also brought a strong recommendation from the English historian of S.O.E. (Special Operations Executive), M.R.D. (Michael) Foot. I was somewhat taken aback as Józef was nearly twenty-five years older than me and had a much more impressive list of publications. I was, however, greatly struck both by his determination and his ram-rod bearing as well as by his considerable personal charm. I persuaded the head of our department, James Joll, that we should take him on and he successfully submitted his thesis within two years—the third examiner was Michael Foot.

The result was this book. As has been fully documented in the five-volume study of the camp prepared by the Auschwitz State Museum, *Auschwitz 1940-1945: Central Issues in the History of the Camp* (edited by Waclaw Długoborski and Franciszek Piper, translated from Polish by William Brand, Oświęcim, 2000), the camp was originally set up to hold detained members of the Polish underground. It was subsequently expanded to house members of other European resistance movements and, once the Nazis began to employ industrial methods of mass murder in their genocide of the Jews, became the principal killing site for the Jews of Europe not murdered earlier by mobile killing squads.

In addition to the Jews, an estimated 150,000 ethnic Poles were deported to Auschwitz, of whom about 75,000 died. With the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union, Red Army prisoners-of-war were sent to the camp, of whom at least 15,000 died, many

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in the first experiment with using the insecticide Zyklon B to gas prisoners. In addition to these casualties, perhaps 23,000 Roma and 15,000 members of resistance movements in other European countries died in the camp. By the time the Red Army liberated Auschwitz and its many sub-camps in January 1945, an estimated 1.3 million people had been detained there and at least 1.1 million, including 960,000 Jews, had perished, although because the fleeing Germans burned most of the documents of the camp, the exact toll will never be known.

Garliński's thesis, based on German, Jewish and Polish documents and survivors' recollections, was primarily an account of the functioning of the resistance movement among the political prisoners in the camp, first Polish and then also from other European countries. This movement was primarily intended to defend the prisoners as liberation approached, since it was widely feared that the Germans would murder all the inhabitants of the camp to hide their crimes. In addition, as Garliński showed, the camp's hospital was used by the underground to shelter prisoners threatened by execution. He also described the differences in strategy which developed among the members of the underground and their inevitably limited attempts to assist the Jews, who were all threatened with death. One important revelation was his account of the mission of Witold Pilecki, the army officer who had got himself arrested in order to set up a military organization inside the camp which would co-ordinate a rising with an outside attack that never materialized. Pilecki later escaped to give a full account of the workings of the camp—he survived the war, only to be executed by the post-war communist government.

I remember James Joll telling Józef that the only difference between a thesis and a book was that a thesis was read by only three people. This was certainly the case with Józef's thesis

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which required almost no modification to become a major book. It was published in London in 1975 as *Fighting Auschwitz: The Resistance Movement in the Concentration Camp* by a small press run by Julian Friedmann, the son of political exiles (like myself) from South Africa. The following year it appeared in a paperback edition published by Fontana. It had already appeared in Polish as *Oświęcim walczący* (London, 1974). It remains the definitive study of the topic and has not been superseded by more recent scholarship. I am delighted that it is now being reprinted.

Józef continued to publish extensively on the history of Poland during the Second World War. Among his major contributions on this topic one should mention *Hitler's Last Weapons: The Underground War Against V1 and V2*, which was also published by Julian Friedmann in 1978 (a Polish edition appeared the year before); *Intercept: The Enigma War* (London, 1979; Polish edition, 1980); *The Swiss Corridor: Espionage Networks in Switzerland during World War II* (London, 1981; Polish edition, 1981); and his summing up of all his work in *Poland in the Second World War* (Basingstoke, 1985). He also produced a moving memoir expressing his deep love for his wife Eileen, *The Survival of Love: Memoirs of a Resistance Fighter* (Blackwell, 1991; Polish edition *Świat mojej pamięci*, Warsaw, 1992).

My wife and I became very friendly with Józef and his devoted wife Eileen, who had participated in the Warsaw Uprising. Józef was a man of principle and of great integrity. I remember how during the oil crisis of 1974 he refused to use his car and only travelled on public transport. He played a major role in the beginnings of the attempt to create a better understanding between Poles and Jews, insofar as these are discrete categories, which is not always the case. He was highly active in the organization of the break-through conference on

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Polish-Jewish relations in Oxford in 1984 and his participation in the discussion there on the Holocaust certainly contributed greatly to fostering of greater mutual comprehension. This discussion, in which the other participants included Władysław Bartoszewski, Israel Gutman and Jozef Lichten, all no longer with us, switched imperceptibly from English to Polish. I remember Józef saying to me as we went to lunch that this demonstrated that Polish was a 'world language'. It is a great privilege to have been able to know these great men, our predecessors, among whom Józef was a towering figure. We owe it to them to prove worthy of what they have imparted to us.

Antony Polonsky

Emeritus Professor of Holocaust Studies, Brandeis University
Chief Historian, POLIN Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw
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