

Institute of National Remembrance

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“Between the Walls. Poland under totalitarian regimes 1939–1945” exhibition prepared by the Institute of National Remembrance - Warsaw, 22 August 2019

- The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact meant the fourth partition of Poland. After World War II, the communists wanted to erase the truth about this secret protocol, which enslaved the nations of Central and Eastern Europe - said the President of the Institute of National Remembrance Jarosław Szarek, opening the outdoor exhibition "Between the Walls. Poland under totalitarian regimes 1939–1945".



















The celebrations on Józef Piłsudski Square in Warsaw began with a minute of silence in memory of the victims of the German Third Reich and Soviet Russia.

The opening of the exhibition was attended by representatives of state authorities, the Polish army, veterans and representatives of other countries. Among the guests were the Ambassadors of the Republic of Lithuania Eduardas Borisovas; the Republic of Latvia Edgars Bondars; the Federal Republic of Germany, Rolf Nickel; Portugal Luis Cabaco, Ukraine Andrij Deszczyca. Ly Metsis - Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of the Republic of Estonia, Teodor Lupascu - Chargé d'affaires of the Embassy of Romania and the first secretary of the Hungarian Embassy Gabor Logzi, were also present. Rector - Commandant of the War Studies University Academy Brig. Ryszard Parafianowicz and Knight of

the Order of the White Eagle, judge Bogusław Nizieński. Jarosław Krajewski, MP of the Republic of Poland, read out a letter from Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

- 80 years after this pact was signed, we are living in independent countries - emphasized Jarosław Szarek in his speech. - Today, we are here together with representatives of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia in order to pay tribute to those to whom we owe our freedom. I hope that the exhibition of the Institute of National Remembrance "Between the Walls" will also serve this purpose - he said.

„Between the Walls. Poland 1939-1945” („Ściany Totalitaryzmów Polska 1939-1945”) is the title of the exhibition prepared by the Institute of National Remembrance on the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. The exhibition is held under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda.

It has the form of an installation inspired by the walls from the film "Unconquered" - an animated production of the Institute of National Remembrance recognized in the world for its unconventional approach to Polish history. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7MSG4Q-4as>).

The exhibition is presented in two spatial configurations. In visual, artistic and substantive terms, it touches upon the subject of the history of two totalitarianisms: the German Reich and Soviet Russia. The underlying theme of the narrative is the outbreak of World War II, its tragic consequences and the fight of Poles for freedom against the two occupiers.

Texts and photographs placed on the outer walls of the installation introduce the viewers to the dramatic reality of war.

The wall dedicated to German occupation presents: terror against civilians, the Polish Underground State (including the resistance movement in concentration camps and Pilecki's report), Polish-Jewish relations (the “Żegota” Council for Aid to Jews, including Jan Karski's mission and the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising), the Warsaw Uprising, the Polish Armed Forces in the West (Battle of Monte Cassino, Battle of Britain, General Maczek's 1st Armoured Division, the Silent-Unseen, the Polish intelligence).

On the wall dedicated to Soviet occupation the viewers can familiarize themselves with deportations, the Katyn Massacre, Soviet camps and the march of the Anders Army, as well as the Yalta arrangements that sanctioned the introduction of the communist regime in Poland.

On the inner planes of the walls one can find quoted memories of the war and photographs referring to everyday life during occupation, marked by repression and crimes. The underlying intention was to show that the occupation reality was a constant struggle for Polish citizens in the conditions of ubiquitous terror. The human, emotional perspective of the exhibition allows the visitors to experience the universal tragedy of World War II.

The texts accompanying the exhibition are in Polish, English, Russian and German.

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