

Introductory note

Though it is generally assumed that the photo of the boy in the Warsaw ghetto was known throughout the world during the entire post-war period, what the evidence suggests is that prior to 1956, it had little international exposure, and that it was not until 1960 that the picture decisively acquired the prominence it has today. Not even in the wake of the Nuremberg trials did such mainstream news magazines as *Time* and *Life* carry the picture.<sup>1</sup>

And the only books in which the photo appeared in the 1940s and 1950s reached a very limited public.<sup>2</sup>

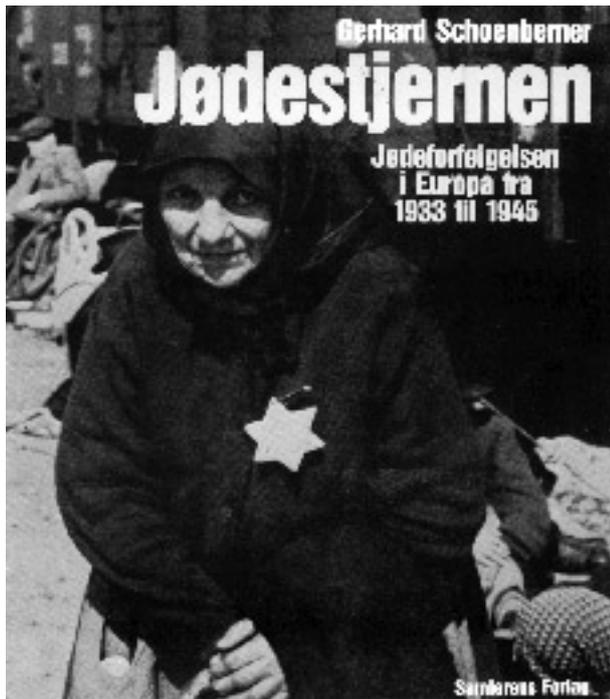
The first person to bring the picture to the attention of a world audience was Alain Resnais, who included the photo in *Nuit et Brouillard* (*Night and Fog*), premiered at the Cannes film festival in 1956, and generally considered the first serious documentary film on the Nazi crimes against the civilian populations of Europe. In a sequence describing the building of the concentration camps, and showing photos of barracks, the narrator states (in words written for the film by the poet Jean Cayrol):

During this time, Burger a German worker, Stern a Jewish student in Amsterdam, Schmulzki a tradesman in Krakow, Annette a high school student in Bordeaux go on living their daily lives, unaware that a thousand kilometers from their homes a place has already been assigned to them. And the day arrives when their blocks are ready and only they are missing. Deportees from Lodz, Prague, Brussels, Athens, Zagreb, Odessa or Rome...<sup>3</sup>

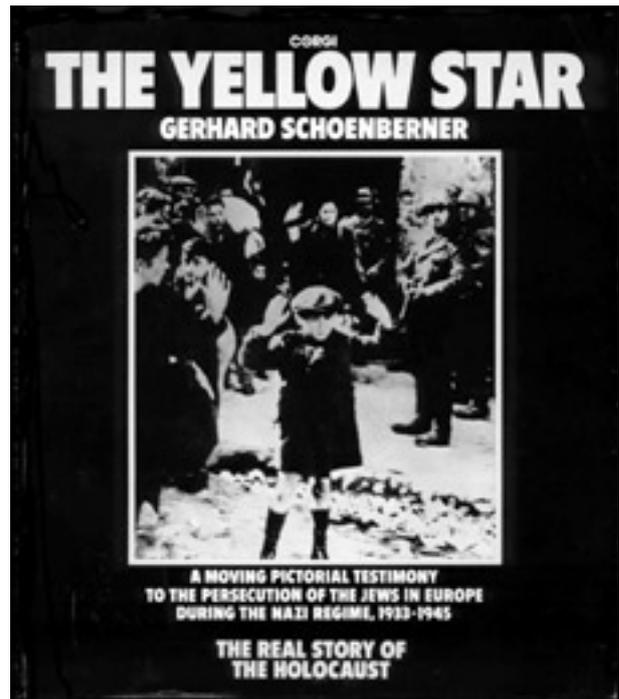
It is between the words "missing" and "deportees" that the photo of the boy with raised hands appears on screen for four seconds.<sup>4</sup>

But 1960 is the year that the photograph acquired the international status it has today, largely through the efforts of Gerhard Schoenberner whose book *Der gelbe Stern* (*The Yellow Star*) was the first widely circulated and comprehensive collection of Holocaust photographs.<sup>5</sup>

Published in Germany in 1960, the book would soon be released in a number of other countries on several continents, bringing the photo of the boy in the Warsaw ghetto to readers throughout the world. And in the Dutch edition, also published in 1960, the photograph was used on the cover of the book as well, which would also be the case for the British, French and Canadian editions (first appearing in 1969, 1982 and 1985, respectively).



The cover of the Danish edition of *The Yellow Star* (Copenhagen: Samlerens Forlag, 1978), using the photo that appeared on the cover of the original 1960 German edition of the book. Reprinted here with kind permission of Samlerens Forlag.



The cover of the British edition of *The Yellow Star* (London: Corgi, 1969 and 1978), reprinted here with kind permission of Corgi Press.

1960 was also the year in which *Life* finally carried the photo (mentioned on p. 52 above),<sup>6</sup> the year in which the first facsimile edition of the Stroop Report was published in Germany,<sup>7</sup> and in which the first exhibition to include photographs of Nazi crimes against European Jewry was organized in Germany, the photo of the boy with raised hands appearing on the poster for the exhibition.<sup>8</sup> By the time Ingmar Bergman used the photograph in his film *Persona* in 1966, the image was well known. In a memorable scene in this film, the character played by Liv Ullmann – voluntarily mute as a silent protest against the evil of the world – stares intently at a copy of the picture.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to the role the photo has played in a BBC television series (1976), a poem (1982), a short film (1985) and a series of paintings (1995 to the present). After a brief presentation of each work, the reader will find an interview with the person who wrote, acted in, filmed or painted the work in question, describing in his or her own words the meaning of the photograph in that context.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Mitko Panov, *With Raised Hands* (1985)

This five-minute film was made in 1985 by a student at the renowned National School for Film, Television and Theater at Lodz, Poland. It went on to win the Golden Palm Award for Best Short Film at the Cannes Film Festival in 1991. The film is pure fiction in the sense that the writer/director imagined what might have happened when the photograph was taken.<sup>10</sup>

Mitko Panov was born in 1963 in Macedonia, then part of Yugoslavia. After studying painting at the University of Skopje, he left for Poland to study directing at the National School for Film Television and Theater in Lodz. In 1988, he moved to New York where he taught film directing at the NYU Graduate Film Department (1992-1995), also helping to found and to design the curriculum of the New York Film Academy workshop. In 1998 he moved to Austin where he teaches film production in the Department of Radio, Television and Film at the University of Texas, and is also a guest professor in film directing at the Hochschule für Fernsehen und Film in Munich. His most recent film, completed in 2000, is a feature-length documentary entitled *Comrades*.

I wish to thank Mitko Panov for his kind permission to reconstruct the film, shot-by-shot and with numerous stills, in the pages that follow.

*With Raised Hands*

Principal production credits

Direction and screenplay Mitko Panov  
Cinematography Jarek Szoda  
Film Editor Halina Szalinska  
Music Janusz Hajdun  
Production PWSFTv&T  
(National School for Film, Television and Theater)  
Lodz, Poland, 1985

5 min.

35 mm

b/w

Cast

Etel Szyk

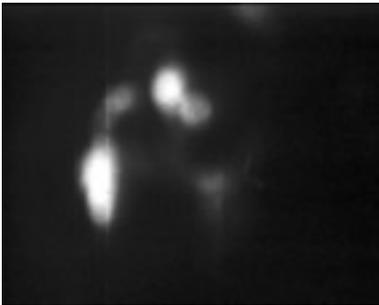
Monika Mozer

Jaroslav Dunaj

A shot-by-shot reconstruction of With Raised Hands



Shot 1 (17 sec) Hands adjust the turret of a wartime movie camera and affix a square lens shade to the front of the camera. The title appears momentarily on screen, after which the photographer places his hand in front of the lens and the screen goes black.



Shot 2 (60 sec) Gradually, a blurry shape appears in the darkness and can barely be made to be a woman with her hands raised as she approaches the camera. A German soldier, with motorcycle goggles on his helmet, suddenly appears on screen, blocking our view of the woman. He looks around then straight into the lens and smiles at the photographer, after which he looks downward, coaxing someone off-camera to do something. The soldier now moves out of frame, no longer eclipsing the woman who was standing behind him and facing away from the camera. She now turns toward us, still with her hands raised.



Shot 2 (cont.) The woman is roughly pushed along by another soldier who abruptly appears within frame, and she is soon followed by other captives – women, children and older men – all roughly made to move along by the soldier. As a woman with a striking face stares at the soldier, the screen suddenly goes black.



**Shot 3 (28 sec)** Again, an image is rotated upward onto the screen, indicating that the turret is turned once again, the present lens now showing a wider shot of the scene. The first soldier pushes a little boy into our field of vision, picking up the boy's cap from the ground, planting it firmly on the boy's head, and holding the boy's arms up in the air. But instead of assuming that position, the boy runs to his mother, clinging to her, as she continues to hold her hands up. When the soldiers pull him away from her, she tries in vain to hold onto him. He gets away from the soldiers and runs out of frame, the first soldier running after him. The screen goes black again.



**Shot 4 (25 sec)** A new image is rotated downward this time and the photographer's face is momentarily fills the screen as he looks into his camera., Once he is out of frame, we see the soldier pushing the little boy back to the desired spot. The boy faces him, with his back to us, as the soldier coaxes him once again and finally threatens him by brandishing his submachine gun. Resigned, the boy turns around, facing the camera and raises his hands. The soldier beams and the picture - modeled on the 1943 photograph - is frozen for about five seconds.



**Shot 5 (3 sec)** The photographer cranks his camera.

**Shot 6 (6 sec)** Freeze-frame of the soldier.

**Shot 7 (9 sec)** Close-up of the boy's mother.



Shot 8 (3 sec) A younger boy.



Shot 9 (5 sec) A woman looking to our right, a boy to our left, as in the photograph.



Shot 10 (7 sec) A young girl.



Shot 11 (6 sec) Close shot of the boy with his hands raised. A gust of wind suddenly blows his cap off. He looks to our right, in the direction of the cap, then turns back toward the photographer, as if to ask what he should do



Shot 12 (9 sec) After a moment, the photographer stops cranking his camera, looks in the direction the cap was blown, then at the boy. With a panning movement, the camera then returns to the boy, still standing bare-headed and not knowing what to do.



Shot 13 (37 sec) All eyes seem to be on the main soldier, but he just stands there, waiting. The camera pans left, past the other soldier...



Shot 13 (cont.) ...past the boy's mother and other women and children, standing with their hands raised. As it passes the boy, we see only his raised hands, and from their movement, we can see that he is turning around. After showing the little girl, standing at the end of the row of prisoners...



Shot 13 (cont.)...the camera changes direction, now panning right and returning to the boy who once again looks toward the photographer.

Shot 14 (4 sec.)  
The photographer is cranking his camera.

Shot 15 (8 sec) The little boy looks at the main soldier, who simply stands and waits. The boy turns toward the direction in which his cap had blown, and simply walks out of frame.



Shot 16 (7 sec) Filmed now from an entirely different angle, the boy leaves the scene of the filming, walking cautiously at first with hands up, then when he spots his cap, running forward toward it.



Shot 17 (6 sec) The cap, lying on the pavement, is suddenly blown away by another gust of wind, just as the boy reaches it. A swish-pan begins.



Shot 18 (3 sec) A new swish-pan takes over seamlessly from the first one, apparently bringing us from the spot on the pavement to the boy's new location, even farther from the scene of the filming, which he now looks at from a distance.



Shot 19 (5 sec) The scene of the filming, from the boy's point of view.



Shot 20 (3 sec) The boy looks at the distant scene, then bends down to pick up his cap.



Shot 21 (3 sec) Once again, the cap is blown away by a new gust of wind, just as the boy reaches for it. A swish-pan begins.



Shot 22 (3 sec) Again a new swish-pan takes over seamlessly, and once again, the boy turns to look at the distant scene he has left.



Shot 23 (4 sec) We see the distant scene of the filming through the boy's point of view once again.



Shot 24 (3 sec) After looking he turns and runs after his cap once again.



Shot 25 (3 sec) The cap, lying on the pavement, is for the third time blown away by a gust of wind as the boy reaches for it. Again a swish-pan serves as a transition to the next shot.



Shot 26 (7 sec) This time the boy manages to grab the cap and puts it firmly on his head. Again he watches.



Shot 27 (7 sec) The boy's point of view: the photographer is still cranking his camera, but when the little girl appears in frame and looks for the boy, the photographer also stops what he is doing and looks as well.



Shot 28 (5 sec) The point of view of the photographer and little girl: the boy is gone. Billows of black smoke (from burning buildings) fill the air.



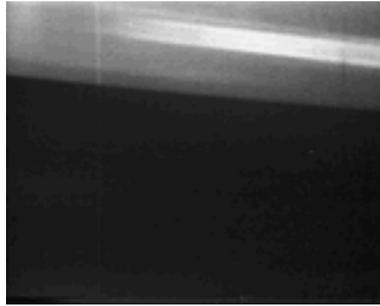
Shot 29 (26 sec) The boy on his way out of the ghetto.



Shot 29 (cont.) Once on the other side of the gate, the boy can no longer be seen. But his cap suddenly appears, thrown up in the air.



Shot 29 (cont.) After coming down from its flight, the cap is once again thrown into the air, so high that it is out of frame, and this time it doesn't come down. This picture with nothing more happening persists for several seconds.



Shot 30 (7 sec) The cars of a railroad train streak by.



Shot 31 (59 sec) The 1943 photo now appears on screen and remains in view with the end credits superimposed over the lower half of the picture.

<sup>1</sup> I examined every issue of the International Edition of Life, from August 1946 to December 1959, and of the Atlantic Overseas edition of Time from November 1945 to December 1948, without finding a copy of the photograph in either magazine.

<sup>2</sup> This applies for example to volume 26 of Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nuremberg 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1946 ("Blue Series"), published in Nuremberg in 1947, and already mentioned on p. 30 above. It is also true of Leon Poliakov's and Josef Wulf's scholarly work entitled *Das Dritte Reich und die Juden. Dokumente und Aufsätze* (Berlin-Grunewald: Arani, 1955) in which the photo appears on p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> This portion of Jean Cayrol's text reads as follows: "Pendant ce temps, Burger ouvrier allemand, Stern étudiant juif d'Amsterdam, Schmulzki marchand de Cracovie, Annette lycéenne de Bordeaux vivent leur vie de tous les jours, sans savoir qu'ils ont déjà, à mille kilomètres de chez-eux, une place assignée. Et le jour vient où leur blocks sont terminés, où il ne manque plus qu'eux, déportés de Lodz, de Prague, de Bruxelles, d'Athènes, Zagreb, d'Odessa ou de Rome."

<sup>4</sup> The copy of the photo Resnais used was found at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, according to the shooting script kindly provided by Argos Films in Paris. For a fuller discussion of *Nuit et Brouillard*, see my book on the film, cited in footnote 36 on p. 88 above. This film – like the photo of the boy – has a unique status, this time of course within the genre of Holocaust documentary. When the Jewish cemetery at Carpentras was desecrated on May 9-10 1990 and all of France was in a state of shock and shame, *Night and Fog* was broadcast simultaneously on all French TV channels at the request of Jewish and other anti-racist organizations. To broadcast *Night and Fog* in that way was in itself a symbolic act, showing that the film is experienced as a potent warning and an antidote against racism. Two years later, it became known that a certain M. Touvier, who had participated in the murder of French Jews during the occupation, had enjoyed the protection of both ecclesiastic and political authorities right up until 1992. Again the French had a reason to feel ashamed. And on that occasion, the Minister of Culture, Jacques Lang, took the initiative to have video copies of *Night and Fog* sent to all French lycées. To this day, deniers of the Holocaust are still upset by that initiative.

<sup>5</sup> Gerhard Schoenberger had first seen the photo of the boy with his hands raised during a visit to Warsaw in 1957. In 1959, he organized the first exhibition in Germany to include photographs of Nazi war crimes against European Jewry and used the photo of the Warsaw Ghetto boy on the poster for that exhibit. I am grateful to Gerhard Schoenberger for the information he kindly conveyed to me during telephone conversations on July 29 and August 7, 2003, and in a letter dated July 31, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> As already mentioned on p. 46 above and its accompanying footnote, the picture appeared in the issue of November 28th 1960, in connection with the first installment of "Eichmann's Story." The photo was used on p. 106 with the caption: "Grim roundup of young Jews takes place in Warsaw after conquest of Poland. Germans sent some to ghettos, but the killings had already begun."

<sup>7</sup> Es gibt keinen jüdischen Wohnbezirk mehr! (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1960), edited by Andrzej Wirth. This edition appeared thanks to the efforts of Günther Grass and Andrzej Wirth.

<sup>8</sup> The exhibition, which Gerhard Schoenberger helped to organize, was called Die Vergangenheit Mahnt (The Past as Warning), and was held from 8 April to 3 May 1960. It covered the persecution of the Jews from the Middle Ages onward. In a telephone conversation on August 7, 2003, Gerhard Schoenberger told that initially, Berlin's minister of culture objected to the use of the photo of the Warsaw ghetto boy on the poster because he couldn't believe it was an authentic photo. In his eyes, it looked like a shot from an anti-German film made in Russia, in which the characterization of the SS had been very much overdone: "That stupid, that primitive, that brutal, these people didn't look."

<sup>9</sup> I had hoped to devote a section of this chapter to *Persona*, but neither Ingmar Bergman nor Liv Ullmann responded to my letters. And it was their voices I was hoping to bring to the reader, not my own comments on the film. The best resource for studying the film is a collection of essays edited by Lloyd Michaels and called simply *Ingmar Bergman's Persona* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> Readers interested in additional information on *With Raised Hands*, as well as several articles on the film, are referred to the March 2003 issue of p.o.v. – A Danish Journal of Film Studies, accessible on the Web at: [http://imv.au.dk/publikationer/pov/Issue\\_15/POV\\_15cnt.html](http://imv.au.dk/publikationer/pov/Issue_15/POV_15cnt.html)