

THE MASSACRES OF BABYN YAR

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The Babyn Yar ravine near the Ukrainian capital Kiev was the site of some of the biggest massacres committed in the Second World War. Between 1941 and 1943 the SS killed tens of thousands of Jews, Ukrainians, Roma and Sinti and buried their bodies in huge mass graves. The massacres started with the killing of 37,771 Jews from Kiev on 29 and 30 September 1941. In the following month, the inmates of five local “Gypsy” camps were also murdered and buried at Babyn Yar.

Did you know

... that only about ten percent of the victims of Babyn Yar, in the Ukraine, have so far been identified by name?

... that before their retreat, the German troops exhumed and burned thousands of bodies from Babyn Yar to obliterate all traces of their deeds? The ashes were scattered on nearby fields.

... that the Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich dedicated a symphony to the victims of Babyn Yar?

For you to do

Compare the roles of the various groups of perpetrators in the photo.

The photo

Piles of clothes belonging to the victims of a mass execution in Babyn Yar. The four men in the gorge are probably members of a Ukrainian auxiliary unit of the SS. German Federal Archives, Koblenz, Germany.