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Česká anatomická společnost,
Ústav pro soudobé dějiny AV ČR, v.v.i.**

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**Anatomy in National Socialist Germany
– Politics, Science, Ethics and Legacies**

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**ve velké posluchárně Anatomického ústavu 1. LF UK,
U Nemocnice 3, Praha 2**

Abstract: The systematic exploration of the interaction between the anatomical sciences and the National Socialist (NS) regime in Germany has only recently begun. Anatomists, in their role as physical anthropologists and racial hygienists, contributed to the scientific justification of the biologicistic NS ideology. After 1933, most of those anatomist who were not dismissed for “racial” or political reasons joined the NS party. Some served as leaders in the teaching and implementation of eugenics, and all of them profited from changes in the traditional anatomical body procurement, which included increasing numbers of victims of the NS regime. Among them were psychiatric patients murdered in the “euthanasia” program, prisoners of war, slave laborers and an unprecedented number of persons executed following civilian and military trials. Anatomists used these bodies for teaching and research purposes. A few researchers left the traditional paradigm of knowledge gain through work with the dead for a new paradigm of working with the “future dead” in human experiments on prisoners who were subsequently murdered. The victims’ remains were buried in unmarked graves, without names. Thus anatomists were complicit in the complete physical annihilation and destruction of the memory of the perceived “enemies” of the NS regime. Legacies from this history reach into the present and inform ongoing discussions on dealing with human remains from past abuses, as well as deliberations on the use of human bodies in current medical education.

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