

# MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE



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## NECHAMA TECH

### GUEST SPEAKER AT THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

Nechama Tec, Professor Emerita of Sociology at University of Connecticut, received her PhD from Columbia University. A Holocaust scholar for years, her research and publications have concentrated on the intricate relationships between self preservation, compassion, altruism, rescue, resistance, cooperation and gender.

Her books help expand and deepen our understanding of the Holocaust by venturing into overlooked territory, such as the Christian rescue of Jews (*When Light Pierced the Darkness*), Jewish and Christian identity (*In the Lion's Den*), Jewish wartime heroism (*Defiance*) and most recently, gender survival (*Resilience and Courage*). This fascination with the unexplored began with her own memoir (*Dry Tears*),



which is unusual for its candid exploration of the ways in which a false identity can become all-consuming. Tec's next book will undertake a comparative analysis of Jewish and non-Jewish resistance during the war.

On May 23, 2009 Nechama Tec will receive an honorary degree from Lafayette College. She is also the recipient of two honorary degrees of Doctor of Humane Letters: Seton Hall University and Hebrew Union College — Jewish Institute of Religion. In 2002, she was appointed by the President to the Council of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C. Tec also serves on the Academic Advisory Committee at the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies at the United States Holocaust

Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C. In 1997, she was a Senior Research Fellow at the Miles Lerman Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance, at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. In 1995, she was a Scholar-in-Residence at the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

Her books have been translated into Dutch, French, Hebrew, German, Italian, Polish and Japanese.

Nechama Tec is also the author of over seventy scholarly articles and continues to be a frequent lecturer at international and national meetings and conferences. Over the years Tec's research has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Social Science Research Council, the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, and others.

Her book, *Defiance*, was adapted for the screen in 2008 by Writer/Director Edward Zwick. The motion picture stars Daniel Craig, Jamie Bell and Liev Schreiber, and is released by Paramount Vantage.

Two of her books have been nominated for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. *Resilience and Courage* won the National Jewish Book Award in 2003. *In the Lion's Den* won the Christopher Award in 1993. When *Light Pierced the Darkness* received the Merit of Distinction Award from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

## AUTHOR GAINS NEW EXPOSURE FROM HOLOCAUST FILM

BY BEN HARRIS, JTA

When Nechama Tec set out to write a book about the Bielski brothers more than two decades ago, she sought to fill in omissions and correct distortions created by their almost total excision from historical accounts of the Holocaust.

"The omission is the conspicuous silence about Jews who, while themselves threatened by death, were saving others," Tec wrote in the opening to her 1993 book, *Defiance*. "The distortion is the common description of European Jews as victims who went passively to their death."

With the release of a major Hollywood adaptation of the book, Tec's efforts to correct the historical record have reached a vast new audience.

In its first weekend of wide release, *Defiance*, which stars James Bond hero Daniel Craig and Liev Schreiber as the Bielski brothers, Tuvia and Zus, grossed more than \$10 million, the eighth highest take in the country that weekend.

Meanwhile, the book has been released in a new edition, with Craig's bellicose mug on the cover, and in audio book format narrated by Stefan Rudnicki.

"It is most gratifying," Tec told JTA in an interview at her Connecticut home. "I think I am very fortunate that it happened."

Like the book, the film version of *Defiance* has restored to public attention a long overlooked part of Holocaust history — the story of the small minority of Jewish victims who dared to fight back against their oppressors. Historians have long known of uprisings at the Auschwitz and Treblinka camps, in addition to the better-known rebellion in the Warsaw Ghetto led by Mordecai Anielewicz, but the story of the Bielskis differed fundamentally in that it was successful.

For years the brothers, sons of a large peasant family from *Stankiewiczze* in western Belorussia, led a band of forest dwellers that ultimately swelled to 1,200. The community established a hospital, tannery, school and bathhouse, while remaining perpetually on the move and carrying out acts of sabotage against German troops. Their efforts are considered the largest rescue of Jews by Jews during the war.

Prior to the film, Tec was little known beyond the academic world and the tight-knit community of American Holocaust survivors. For nearly five decades she has lived quietly in Connecticut, producing mainly works of Holocaust scholarship and teaching sociology at the University of Connecticut in Stamford, a satellite of the university's main campus 100 miles up the road in Storrs.

Now she is the focus of popular attention. Sales of *Defiance* have exploded. The publisher, Oxford University Press, says the book has been the label's top

(Continued on page 15)

### "WOMEN, RESISTANCE & RENEWAL"

The American Society for Yad Vashem  
Annual Spring Luncheon  
Honoring

Anna Erlich Stella Skura

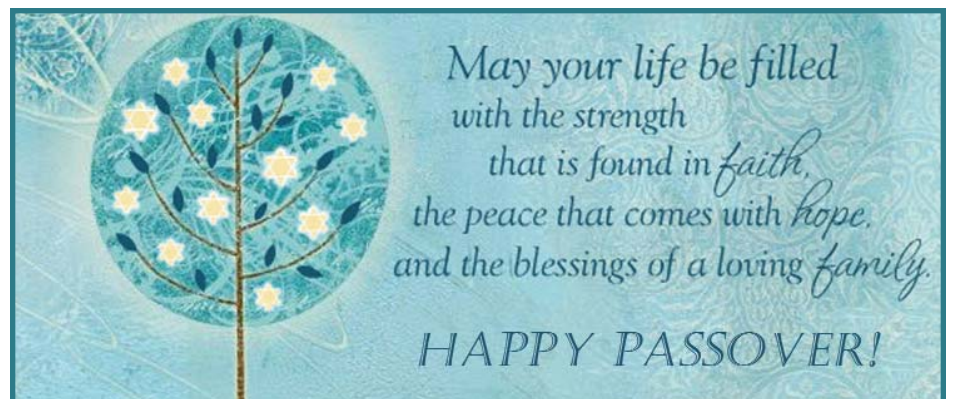
Thursday, May 21, 2009

the Rainbow Room, Pegasus Suite  
49 West 49th Street, New York City



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## GERMANY AGREES TO INCREASE PAYMENTS FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

Needy Holocaust survivors in Eastern Europe will receive major increases in monthly payments from Germany.

The raise follows intensive negotiations between Germany and the Claims Conference.

According to the agreement, an additional estimated \$80 million will be paid over the next 10 years to approximately 13,000 Holocaust survivors in 22 countries. In addition, there will be major increases in monthly payments from the Central and Eastern European Fund, or CEEF, to survivors in European Union and non-EU countries, bringing the two groups to parity.

As of next January, recipients of CEEF pensions will receive about \$339 per month, which represents a 35 percent increase for those in non-EU countries and an 11 percent increase for EU residents.

"The agreement reinforces for me the commitment I saw during the lengthy negotiations [for the Clinton administra-

tion] with the Germans to continue their moral responsibility," Stuart Eizenstat, the former U.S. deputy treasury secretary and a special negotiator for the Claims Conference, told JTA in a telephone interview.

Roman Kent, one of several survivors on the negotiating team and a board member of the International Auschwitz Committee, said that many of the survivors in Eastern Europe live well below the poverty level.

"They lack money for food, medicine and fuel," he told JTA. "And time is not the best medicine for the survivor," many of whom are alone in later years. "And when you are older, you think about what happened not yesterday but what happened 60, 70 years ago."

Claims Conference's chairman, Julius Berman, said there would be an unprecedented second meeting before the end of this year to deal with open questions such as home care funds for 2010.

## BISHOP WHO DENIED HOLOCAUST LOST SEMINARY POST

A rehabilitated bishop at the heart of a Vatican uproar for denying the Holocaust ever happened has been dismissed as the head of an Argentine seminary, Argentina newspapers reported.

They said the bishop, Richard Williamson, who has asserted that he does not believe the Nazis used gas chambers, was no longer the head of the *La Reja* seminary on the outskirts of the Argentina capital.



Bishop Richard Williamson.

"Monsignor Williamson's statements do not in any way reflect the position of our congregation," the newspapers quoted Father Christian Bouchacourt, the head of the Latin American chapter of the Catholic Society St. Pius X, as saying.

Pope Benedict XVI provoked widespread anger in January when he rescinded the excommunications of Bishop Williamson and three fellow bishops as part of an effort to heal a 20-year-old schism within the church.

## GERMAN COURT RULES ON NAZI-CONFISCATED ART

Rare posters seized by Nazi secret police and valued at \$6 million belong to the son of a Jewish collector, not to a German museum, a German court ruled.

The German Historical Museum must return some 4,200 posters of exhibitions, cabarets, films and products – including works by French artists Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Jules Cheret – to Peter Sachs, a retired airline pilot from Sarasota, Fla., Berlin's administrative court ruled.

The Gestapo seized the posters, collected by Sachs's father, Hans Sachs, a Jewish German dentist, in 1938.

Hans Sachs was arrested shortly afterward in a coordinated Nazi attack against Jews and their property known as *Kristallnacht*, Nov .9, 1938, *The*

Apparently surprised by the vociferous reaction, including unusual public criticism from Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany, the pope's native country, the Vatican has since said Bishop Williamson must recant his views on the Holocaust.

The pope has also made efforts to soothe offended relations with Jews and other groups angered by Bishop Williamson's rehabilitation, saying he had been unaware of the bishop's views.

News of Bishop Williamson's dismissal from the Argentine seminary came after the pope and Chancellor Merkel had a "cordial and constructive" phone conversation, spokesmen for both said.

A joint statement issued by the Vatican and the chancellor's office said that both the pope and Mrs. Merkel referred to Benedict's Jan. 28 remarks condemning Holocaust denial and expressing solidarity with Jews.

A statement released by the Vatican Secretariat of State called on Bishop Williamson to recant his comments. In a rare case of the Vatican's diplomatic arm furthering remarks by the pope, the Secretariat of State also made clear that the traditionalist bishops would not be welcomed back into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church unless they accepted the liberalizing teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

Statement by the Secretariat of State seemed to repair relations with the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, which plans to continue its dialogue with the Vatican, said its director general, Oded Wiener.

*Washington Post* reported. Sachs was deported to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp before managing to flee Germany with his wife and son, then an infant, the Post said.

The museum, which said it plans to appeal the court ruling, had argued Hans Sachs had relinquished his rights to the stolen collection when he accepted \$50,000 in compensation from the government of West Germany in 1961.

But his son and his lawyers said Hans Sachs had been told the posters were destroyed during World War II, when they were actually held by the East German government.

Hans Sachs died in 1974 and his collection was given to the museum in 1990 after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

## HIGHEST ANTI-SEMITISM RATES IN TWO DECADES

The number of anti-Semitic attacks around the world during Israel's three-week military operation against Hamas in Gaza was up more than 300 percent compared to the same period last year, reaching a two-decade high, according to figures released by the Global Forum Against Anti-Semitism.

The bulk of the incidents were carried out in Western Europe and were led by local Muslims, including 100 each in France and Britain, the report found.

The violent assaults included attacks against both synagogues and Jewish communities, as well as vandalism of privately owned Jewish property, the report said.

The number and intensity of anti-Semitic incidents during the Gaza assault were "unprecedented" in the last two decades, said Jewish Agency official Amos Hermon at a press conference at Jerusalem's Jewish Agency headquarters, where the report was released.

Ironically, the dramatic spike in anti-Semitism followed a year in which anti-Semitic incidents dropped by 15%-20% from the previous year, according to the report.

At the event, Jewish Agency Treasurer Hagai Meir predicted a fresh wave of global anti-Semitism in the wake of Operation Cast Lead – even though the report noted a drop in incidents since the end of the operation – and stressed that the government needed to provide additional resources to effectively respond to such attacks worldwide.

Over the last two weeks, a Vatican official, a Norwegian foreign ministry official and a British MP have all compared Israel's actions to those of the Nazis.

The upswing in virulently anti-Israel Holocaust parallels comes at a time of

increasingly global Holocaust education and resources, Holocaust educators say.

"Paradoxically, as interest in the Holocaust continues to grow around the world, we are also witnessing a rise in the provocative and cynical use of the Holocaust in attacking Israel and Jews," Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev said.

"Our hope is that by making comprehensive, credible information about the Holocaust available in a number of languages, that we build a cadre of people who know what the Holocaust really was, who understand the realities and can serve as a buffer against those who would deny the Holocaust, or make such manipulative comparisons that are so divorced from any semblance of reality," he added.

The New York-based Anti-Defamation League urged the leaders of several European countries to publicly condemn "the explosion of anti-Semitic rhetoric" and Holocaust comparisons at anti-Israel rallies against the Gaza operation.

The American Jewish group reminded the European leaders of the obligations their countries had undertaken to combat anti-Semitism in the 2004 Berlin Declaration of the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe.

The document declared unambiguously that international developments or political issues, including those in Israel or elsewhere in the Middle East, never justify anti-Semitism.

Meanwhile, a renewed blast of anti-Semitic vitriol is expected to be aired at the Durban II United Nations World Conference, to be held in Geneva in April.

The very date of the opening, April 20, demonstrates insensitivity to Jewish feelings, a Jewish Agency spokesman noted.

April 20, 2009 will mark the 120th anniversary of the birth of Adolf Hitler.

## FRANCE RECOGNIZES ITS SHOAH GUILT

For the first time, France officially recognized it was guilty of helping murder French Jews during World War II.

The country's high court, the Council of State, took the opportunity to hold France "responsible" for sending Jews to Nazi camps, when asked about a related case on granting reparations to a Holocaust victim.

The council said the French must "solemnly recognize the responsibility of the state and the collective prejudice suffered" because the country "permitted or facilitated the deportation from France of victims of anti-Semitic persecution," the French Daily *le Figaro* reported.

It took until 1995 for former French President Jacques Chirac to become the first French leader to publicly assume his country's responsibility for sending some 76,000 French Jews to Nazi camps during World War II. Approximately 2,600 survived, according to the Paris-based Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah.

Until Chirac's statement, German occupiers under the French Vichy government were officially blamed for the Holocaust. Chirac's belated comments also did not

hold the legal weight of the court's ruling.

The council delegated to a lower court the final ruling on whether the daughter of a Holocaust victim deserves financial reparations. Their decision will make new requests for reparations more difficult to satisfy. Though the state should "compensate" Holocaust victims, the court underlined that the government had already paid them "as much as possible."

Indeed, Serge Klarsfeld, president of the Association for Sons and Daughters of Jewish Deportees, and vice president of the Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah, agreed that French Holocaust survivors and children of deportees already received considerable financial reparations from the government. He cited a \$632 million sum dealt to Holocaust victims and foundations this year, according to *le Figaro*.

"It is a decision that satisfies me," Klarsfeld said of the council's ruling, in an interview with *le Figaro*. "France is now showing it is in the avant-guard of countries taking responsibility for their past, which was not the case until the 1990s."

## VANDALS STRIKE MEMORIAL TO AUSTRIAN JEWS

An artwork remembering the suffering of Austrian Jews under the Nazis was destroyed days after it was installed.

Artist Peter Wagner had planted the 70 wooden stakes alongside a road in the town of *Oberschutzen*, near a controversial memorial that serves as a reminder of Germany's annexation of Austria.

According to the *Kurier* newspaper, Wagner's project was called "zone38 – 70 years after the annexation," and was ded-

icated to the memory of the Jews of the *Oberswart* district.

*Oberschutzen* Mayor Gunter Toth said he had noticed that many stakes had been removed but thought it had something to do with traffic regulations.

Wagner said the vandalism was probably a deliberate act by those who disliked being reminded of the past. Austria has been slow to recognize its complicity in the Nazi crimes.



## ROMANIAN HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR AT UNITED NATIONS

Each year, the United Nations holds an International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

This year's theme was "An Authentic Basis for Hope: Holocaust Remembrance and Education."

Taking the podium before the keynote speaker – Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council at the State of Israel's Holocaust memorial – is Aventura's Ruth Glasberg Gold.

"We would like you to share your story of survival, including your experiences at the camp at *Bershad* and your struggle to bring the plight of the Jews of *Transnistria* camps to light," a letter of invitation reads. "Your remarks should last approximately 15 minutes."

Fifteen minutes, to educate 1,500 people in the Trusteeship Council Chamber about what Gold, 78, calls "an obscure episode" in Holocaust history.

"The Romanian Holocaust is almost unknown," she said.

"*Transnistria* means nothing to anybody, even to Jews from Romania."

*Transnistria*, in western Ukraine, was part of the Soviet Union. There were no gas chambers in the camps there, no numbers tattooed on inmates' arms. They were left to starve, freeze or die of disease.

The retired nurse – who last worked at Florida International University's North Campus student clinic – noted the day's particular personal significance.

"January 27 is the same date in 1942 that I was left an orphan alone in the world."



Ruth Glasberg Gold, survivor of the *Transnistria* concentration camp, addresses a ceremony at UN.

That day, her mother died, as had Gold's father and brother.

The same day in 1945, Soviet troops liberated the death camp Auschwitz.

Einat Temkin, assistant public information officer for the UN's Holocaust Outreach program, said event organizers knew of Gold because of her book, *Ruth's Journey: A Survivor's Memoir* and because "she's rather well known as being a good speaker and being very moving."

Gold's story begins in Romania's *Bukovina* region, in the city of *Czernowitz*. In 1941, Romanian soldiers and German Nazis marched into town and massacred 2,000 Jews.

The ruling Romanian fascists forced Jewish residents into a ghetto.

Gold, then 11, and her family, survived a bone-chilling, two-week march to the town of *Bershad*, where a concentration camp was established.

Her parents and brother soon died, and during the next three years, Gold endured sub-human conditions, fed only corn mush once a day.

Liberated in 1944, she went to a refugee camp in Yugoslavia, then a detention camp on Cyprus, then to Palestine, which became Israel in 1948.

She married, moved to Colombia, and came to the United States in 1972. In 1990, she co-founded the Child Survivors Support Group of Florida, which still meets.

Now widowed, she has two children and two grandchildren.

"The child survivors are the last ones left to tell the story, and we are slowly dying out," she said. "We returned from the abyss and survived to speak the unspeakable."

## LEGISLATORS SAY NEVER AGAIN TO ANTI-SEMITISM

Legislators from 42 countries signed a declaration recommending a series of strategies to tackle global anti-Semitism.

In a declaration released at the end of the first ever interparliamentary summit on anti-Semitism, more than 100 lawmakers called on their governments "never again to allow the institutions of the international community to be abused for the purposes of trying to establish any legitimacy for anti-Semitism."

They also decried the 2001 U.N. World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa, where the focus on Israel to the exclusion of all other issues was widely perceived as anti-Semitic. A successor conference in Geneva is planned for April.

The summit ended several days after the Obama administration announced that the United States would send a delegation to a Geneva pre-conference before deciding if it will attend the conference, known as Durban II, in Switzerland.

The declaration calls for the European Union Council of Ministers to address the issue of combating anti-Semitism; exposing and isolating governments and individual politicians who engage in hate against the Jews; and establishing an international task force of Internet specialists to measure racism and anti-Semitism online and propose international responses.

Abraham Foxman, Israeli national director of the Anti-Defamation League, told JTA that the Internet presents a new challenge, enabling the transmission of hate propaganda in seconds to people all over the world.

Former Canadian Attorney General Irwin Kotler, a member of the summit's steering committee, said "There is a new sophisticated, globalizing, virulent and even lethal anti-Semitism, reminiscent of the atmospherics of the '30s, and without parallel or precedent since the end of the Second World War."

Speaking as the declaration was published, British lawmaker John Mann, chair of the Parliamentary Committee Against Anti-Semitism and host of the conference, told the assemblage that "The Internet, the globalization of the media, a resurgence of the extreme right and an anti-Zionist hard left have combined to create a febrile environment in which the spread of old and new anti-Semitic theories and attitudes have been able to gain traction with alarming ease. The Durban conference was amongst the manifestations of this trend."

"Anti-Semitism is a touchstone for other ills within wider society and unless we move to address its spread now, and as a matter of the utmost urgency, we will all pay a heavy price," he said.

The delegates agreed to continue coordinating their work and to meet again, using the same format, in two years in Canada.

## HOLOCAUST MUSEUM PLANS HISTORIC OPENING

Officials with the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center announced the museum will open April 19 to coincide with the anniversary of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, considered the largest revolt by Jewish prisoners against the Nazis during the Holocaust.

Architects, organizers and museum benefactors updated the public on the facility near the Edens Expressway between Golf and Old Orchard Roads in Skokie, where construction began in June 2006. The museum will be the largest of its kind in the Midwest.

"This is likely to be the last major Holocaust museum built in collaboration with survivors," said Richard Hirschhaut, the museum's executive director.

One exhibit is already in place: A wooden, windowless German train car of the type used for transporting livestock until the Nazis used the cars to carry thousands of Jews to almost certain death at concentration camps.

## SERBIAN CITY GRANTS NAZI HUNTER HONORARY CITIZENSHIP

The chief Nazi hunter of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center has been awarded honorary citizenship by the Serbian city of *Novi Sad*, in recognition of his work in exposing a former Nazi war criminal who helped organize the large-scale massacre of Jews, Serbs, and Gypsies in the city during World War II.

*Novi Sad* honored Dr. Ephraim Zuroff for his role in exposing former Hungarian gendarmerie officer Dr. Sandor Kepiro, who participated in organizing the massacre of more than 1,000 Jews, Serbs, and Gypsies in the Serbian city on January 23, 1942.

Kepiro, whom the Wiesenthal Center exposed two-and-a-half years ago while he was living in Budapest, has not been brought to trial due to a lack of political will on the part of Hungarian authorities, Zuroff said.

The Nazi war criminal, who was twice convicted by Hungarian courts in the past, ranks third on the Wiesenthal Center's 2008 list of most wanted Nazis.

The American leadership of the Wiesenthal Center welcomed the honor bestowed on its Israel director, and noted its significance at a time when "the memory of the Holocaust and the victims of Nazism has been under such heavy attack by those seeking to besmirch the State of Israel."

Zuroff said that the honor constituted the

Museum officials say incomplete and missing records have made them unable to say with certainty whether the museum's train car was used to transport people, but they know it is German-made and was refurbished during the Holocaust era.

The museum will have some similarities to U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, with rare documents, photographs and clothing.

But the Illinois museum also will contain the audio testimony of Holocaust survivors who relocated to Illinois after World War II, an exhibit on the neo-Nazi conflict Skokie in 1977, and an educational spotlight on other genocides, including the massacres in Darfur.

Also under way: An extensive art exhibit showing works of art done in reaction to genocide worldwide.

About 250,000 students are predicted to visit the museum annually. Since 1990, Illinois children have been required to learn about Holocaust.

recognition of bringing Nazi war criminals to justice even today.

"It reinforces the important principles that the passage of time in no way diminishes the guilt of the perpetrators and that old age should not shield merciless killers



from being held accountable for their heinous crimes," Zuroff said at the Monday night ceremony at the *Novi Sad* city hall.

He was the 11th person to receive honorary citizenship from *Novi Sad*, which is home to Serbia's second-largest Jewish community.

## US TO UNVEIL COURT RULINGS AGAINST NAZIS

The criminal division of the US Justice Department that deals with cases of Nazis who entered the United States after the Holocaust is going to make public three decades of American court decisions against dozens of Nazi war criminals, Yad Vashem announced.

The vast amount of legal material, which is slated to be published in the coming months and includes nearly 100 cases against Nazi war criminals living in the US over the last 30 years, is one of the largest contemporary sources of material in English about the trials of Nazis.

The US Justice Department's Office of Special Investigation, which handles cases against people accused of being former Nazis, began operations in 1979 and has successfully prosecuted more than 100 participants in Nazi crimes.

The publication of the court records comes as the number of elderly Holocaust survivors is on the wane, and as the effort

to nab suspected Nazi war criminals who still remain at large enters its final stage.

The material, which will be published in only three sets of multi-volume book-form, will be presented to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, as well as to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, while the final copy will be retained by the US Department of Justice.

"This is one of the leading institutions in the world for compiling cases against suspected Nazi war criminals," said Dr. Haim Gertner, Director of the Yad Vashem Archives.

He added that some of the more low-profile cases have never officially been published, and that the material would be of interest to scholars and historians, as well as the public at large.

The American institution has in years past turned to Yad Vashem as well as the Holocaust Museum in the US for archival assistance in its work.





# BOOK REVIEWS

## ERASED: VANISHING TRACES OF JEWISH GALICIA IN PRESENT-DAY UKRAINE

Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine.

By Omer Bartov. Princeton University Press: Princeton and Oxford, 2007. 232 pp. \$26.95 hardcover.

REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN

*"This is a story of discovery of what there once was, what has remained, and what has been swept away."*

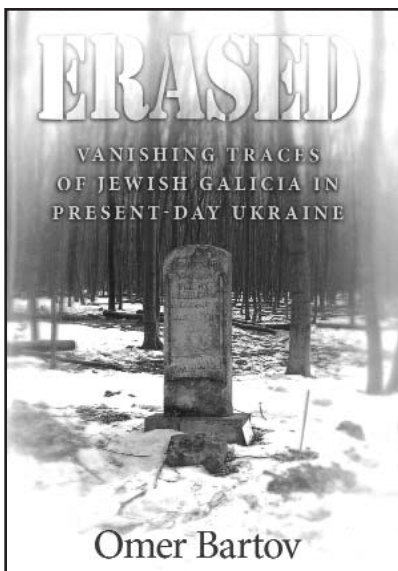
In *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine*, the author, Omer Bartov, presents us with a unique kind of travelogue. Journeying with him, we learn much about the various ethnic populations that lived in twenty cities and towns, once the territory of *Eastern Galicia* and now part of Western Ukraine. Journeying with him, sadly, we also learn much about how the fact that Jews ever made these cities and towns their home is being "erased." Indeed, in most cases, it's almost as if Jews were never there.

Typical of the places Bartov takes us is *Drohobych*, also known as "*Drohobycz*, *Drogobych*, *Drohobets*, and *Drohovitch*." Now a Ukrainian town, *Drohobych* is "some 40 miles southwest of" what we know as *Lemberg*. In 1939, according to Bartov, there were "10,000 Poles" in *Drohobych*, "10,000 Ukrainians, and 15,000 Jews." During the war however, while "most of the Poles were" sent back to Poland (after they and the Ukrainians immediately murdered some Jews), "the vast majority of the Jews were either

deported to the *Belzec* extermination camp or killed in the town and its vicinity."

Today, there is very little evidence that there was once a substantial Jewish community living in *Drohobych*. The City Synagogue has become a "sports club." The building which housed the Jewish Orphanage is still there, but has been altered, making it difficult to see that it was once a Jewish institution. A park has been "built directly on the grounds of the ghetto" where the Germans penned up the Jews of *Drohobych* before murdering them. Additionally, in the midst of this park is a statue honoring a Ukrainian hero, "whose followers were deeply implicated in the genocide of the Jews . . ." In sum, only a forlorn plaque, or a street name hints at the fact that another people's story is buried here.

Bartov takes us to *Kolomyia*, also known as *Kolomyja*, *Kolomey* and *Kolomea*. "On the eve of World War II," "about 15,000" Jews lived here among "Poles, Ukrainians, Hutsuls, Germans, Armenians, Hungarians, Vlachs, and others." Once again, the Germans deported many of the Jews to *Belzec* or, with the



help of the Ukrainians, killed them in the town or the forests nearby.

Today, while there is a little synagogue on a side street that the author never saw "functioning," *Kolomyia's* Great Synagogue is gone. "A modern building and an open marketplace" stand in its stead, and next to it, a statue of two women and a baby dressed in traditional Ukrainian-style, underlines "Ukrainian victimhood." Indeed, not

only is there little if anything left to reveal that Jews were ever here, there is, concomitantly, nothing to tell us what happened to them. Moreover, to add insult to injury, Bartov reveals that recently, Ukrainian dreams of developing a ski industry in the Carpathian Mountains, hard by *Kolomyia*, now a Ukrainian town, would have tourists unwittingly "treading on . . . thousands" of the town's Jews killed there during the war!

Finally, this reviewer would like to mention another place the author takes us — undoubtedly, the reason for his passionate interest in the area — *Buchach*. *Buchach* is the place the author's mother was born, (luckily, she left

in 1935!) It's the place his mother told him about. It's the place where, if not for her untimely death, they would have visited together.

*Buchach* is also known as "*Buczacz*, *Butshatsch*, and *Bitshutsh*." When World War II began, an "estimated . . . 10,000 Jews lived in the town," amongst Poles and Ukrainians. Once again the Germans sent many Jews to *Belzec* and also, with the help of the Ukrainians, murdered them in *Buchach*. Later, "ethnic cleansing" would rid *Buchach* of its Poles.

Today, as regards the Jews, according to Bartov, an open market has replaced the Great Synagogue. A shopping center has replaced the study house ("*Beit Hamidrash*").

And, in this Ukrainian town, signs memorializing World War II deaths either simply refer to "people" (not Jews specifically) or Ukrainians as having been murdered. In fact, only tombstones, found in a cemetery by one who must already know the cemetery exists, identifies the fact that Jews were ever here . . . and then there is a strange little museum in the town with a few books written by Yosef Shmuel Agnon, a "former resident" of *Buchach* . . .

Needless to say, readers of *M&R* will find this book absorbing and thought-provoking. Put simply, it's a must have for students of the Holocaust and revisionism.

*Dr. Diane Cypkin is a Professor of Media and Communication Arts at Pace University.*

## SINS OF THE FATHERS: CHILDREN OF NAZIS DIG UP PAST IN NEW BOOKS

Six decades after World War II ended, the number of people with firsthand memories of the Nazi era is dwindling. Many Germans and Austrians of that generation are reluctant to talk about the rule of Adolf Hitler, preferring to tell stories of postwar chaos and hardship.

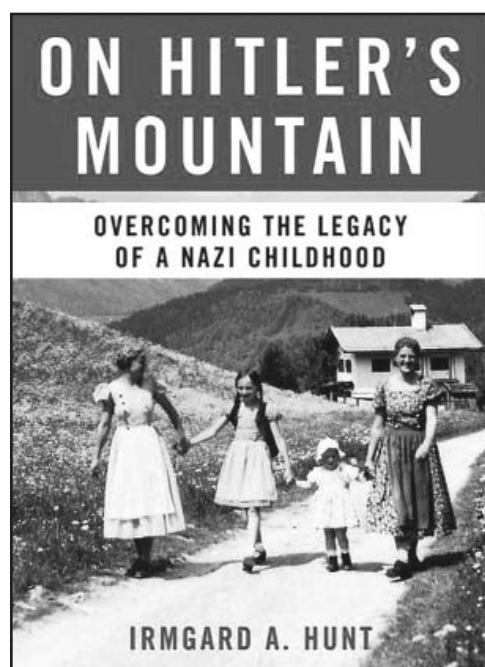
So it's increasingly left to the children of Nazis to explore how their parents were drawn to a party that carried out some of the worst crimes in history.

Irmgard Hunt's absorbing memoir, "*On Hitler's Mountain: My Nazi Childhood*" (Atlantic Books, 2005, \$17.13, 322 pp.), was written partly to answer queries from her son, a historian. Austrian journalist Martin Pollack investigates his father's S.S. and *Gestapo* past in his harrowing "*The Dead Man in the Bunker*" (Faber and Faber, 2006, \$23.00, 216 pp.).

Hunt was born in 1934 in *Berchtesgaden*, on the *Bavarian* mountain where Hitler and his henchman had their retreat. Her parents, ordinary working-class Germans, were enthusiastic supporters: Their proudest moment was when she was photographed sitting on the *Fuhrer's* knee. Her father taught her the "*Heil Hitler*" salute when she was 3.

Drawing on her mother's diary, her own memory and interviews with relatives and friends, Hunt shows how Hitler's dictatorship penetrated every aspect of family life. She describes her mother trying to make Christmas cookies shaped like Nazi-approved symbols — such as Nordic "trees of life" or Celtic runes — instead of the traditional stars and hearts.

What scant evidence there was of Nazi crimes against Jews and other groups in this Alpine idyll was either hushed up or

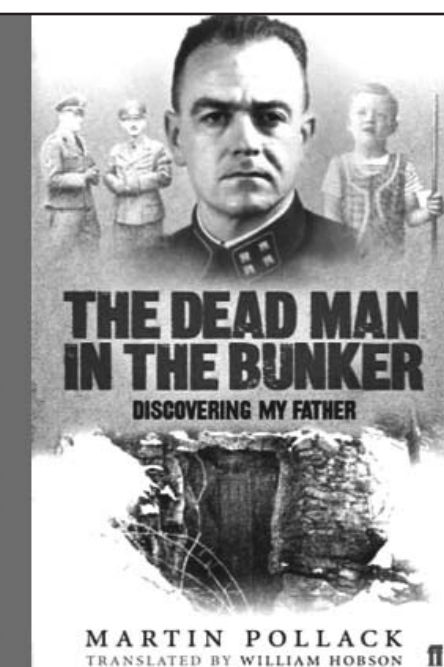


brushed aside. When the mentally disabled child of a neighbor is taken by health authorities and "dies of a cold," Hunt's mother and her friend Susi discuss it while doing laundry.

"It's probably true" that the child died of a cold, says Susi. If Hunt's mother, Albine Paul, had "suspected foul play concerning the Dehmel baby, she would have convinced herself that Hitler himself would not condone such murder," Hunt writes.

During the war, an uncle on leave from the eastern front mentions trains packed with people heading east. On one, women "were so desperate to relieve themselves that they actually did so out of the train windows."

Hunt, then 9, says she plagued her



mother with questions: "Who sent the trains? Where were they going?" Her mother didn't answer.

She describes her anger toward her mother and her sense of betrayal. "The guilt of genocide would be upon all of us for generations," says Hunt, who emigrated to the U.S. in 1958. She currently lives in Washington with her Jewish partner of 17 years, Mike Shor.

Hunt says her mother didn't know about the gas chambers and didn't preach anti-Semitism. Yet she blinded herself to Nazi crimes and "never thought beyond the great immediate need at the end of the twenties for someone, anyone, to end inflation, unemployment and the nationwide disorder and violence."

Hunt, who has had her whole life to come to terms with the past, blames her mother for sins of omission.

Pollack, who was only 3 when his father died in 1947, has far more to swallow. Gerhard Bast, whose surname Pollack chose not to adopt, ordered the deaths of Jews and Poles as head of a *Sonderkommando* in Poland, the author learned. Bast also rounded up Jews to be deported and oversaw the hangings of Polish workers as head of the *Gestapo* in the German city of *Munster*.

The seeds of Bast's extreme nationalism were planted during his childhood in Slovenia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire and a tinderbox of tensions between ethnic Germans and Slovenes. The family in 1912 moved to the Austrian town of *Amstetten*, just across the border from Hitler's mountain. While studying law, Bast joined a nationalist fraternity and gained the dueling scars that would mark him as a Nazi for the rest of his life. He joined the party in 1931 and remained a member after it was banned in Austria in 1933.

Pollack's account, translated into English by William Hobson, jumps around chronologically, making it hard to follow at times. The research is meticulous, though. Pollack combed archives across the former Reich and interviewed aging Nazis.

How do you cope with the knowledge that your father was a cold-blooded murderer? Pollack seems numbed and traumatized.

"The dark shadow of this question has accompanied me for many years and I know I shall never be able to shake it off."

*First published by Bloomberg News*



# NAZI WOMEN EXPOSED AS EVERY BIT AS BAD AS HITLER'S DERANGED MALE FOLLOWERS

BY ALLAN HALL, MAIL ONLINE

Portrayed in soft tones and pastels, their beatific gaze stared from billboards and free sheets across the land.

Blonde, fresh-faced and pure, these were the women of Hitler's *Third Reich*.

They were prolific mothers, skilful homemakers, hard-working secretaries and dedicated auxiliaries.

They supported their men at war and devoted themselves to the cause of their *Fuhrer*.

And their *Fuhrer* treated them with all the delicacy of a courting lover.

When war began, Hitler forbade them to work in the munitions factories for fear they would lose their femininity under the stress of hard physical labor.

Family income benefits were dispensed for every new child, "*childrich*" families were publicly honored and the gold Cross of Honor of the German Mother was bestowed on women bearing four or more babies.

Hitler needed a docile and devoted female population to breed the supermen he needed to populate his dream of the 1,000-year *Reich*.

Even as Allied bombers turned Germany into brick dust, Hitler gave orders that industries which logically should have been transformed into armaments plants continue to pump out lipsticks, nylons and fashion accessories "for the gracious ladies".

In Nazi art, films and magazines, women were always the fairer sex, defending the home-front as their menfolk fought on the battlefields.

But what did Hitler get in return for his dutiful attentions?

Until recently, the role of the Nazi woman in the construction of the brutal state machinery of the Reich has never been truly revealed.

Now a new book in Germany called *Perpetrators: Women Under National Socialism* explodes the myth behind the propaganda.

In the first German post-war analysis of the role of women in the crimes of the Nazis, historian Kathrin Kompisch documents the shameful truth about her sex in the war, which until now has been a taboo subject in her homeland.

"The participation of women in the crimes of the Nazis has been blended out of the collective conscious of the Germans for a long time," she writes.

The fairer sex venerated by the propa-



Some women had very close access to the *Fuhrer*.

ganda machine of Josef Goebbels was, according to Kompisch, every bit as eager to turn the thumbscrews on the victims held in *Gestapo* cellars across Europe; every bit as fanatical as the male when it came to crushing resistance to the state.

They became assistants to the doctors who first sterilized, and later murdered, the "useless" handicapped.

They became head guards in the gulag of concentration camps — like Herta Bothe, known as the *Sadist of Stutthof* for her merciless beatings.

And they were handmaidens to the SS as they staffed the "baby farms" where "supermen" children were born. In these ghoulish clinics, women were the managers and nurses.

And, Kompisch points out: "One should never forget the legions of women who stood by their menfolk as they killed people by the tens of thousands in Russia, in Poland, in places like Auschwitz and *Treblinka*."

Kompisch says women under Hitler — pushed though they were towards a clichéd ideal of hearth and home — actually found opportunities for advancement in the regime that normal peacetime

would have denied them. Just as the "ordinary Joe" could become an extraordinary killer, so could the "weaker sex" prove itself strong under the swastika.

Analyzing pre and post-war statistics, Kompisch found there were more government, private sector and military jobs to be had for women under Hitler than in peacetime.

But those who stayed at home — and had the babies the regime craved — also bloodied their hands.

After all, it was largely women who queued up at government warehouses to buy the furniture, jewels, household appliances and clothes of their Jewish neighbors who had disappeared in the night without a word.

The high-testosterone, all-male hierarchy of the Nazi state blocked out women from leadership positions from the very start — but the regime actively encouraged female participation in enforcing the Nazi terror at grassroots levels.

Most *Blockwaerts* — apartment house

promote, for they were avid denounciators of their spouses. The surviving files of the *Gestapo* in the city of *Dusseldorf* noted they "try to change the power balance of the household by denouncing their husbands as spies or Communists or anti-Nazis".

So what made the caring sex morph into servants of evil on such a massive scale?

On one level, the women who served helping the SS in the death camps — like Hermine Braunsteiner, the "*Mare of Majdanek*," who killed her victims by stamping on them and Irma Grese, the "*Angel of Death*" at *Belsen* and *Auschwitz* — were poorly educated, dysfunctional misfits who would have faced permanent rejection in ordinary society.

Some 3,200 women served in the concentration camps. Female guards were generally low-to-middle class and had little or no work experience, although SS records show some were matrons, hairdressers, tram conductors or retired teachers.



Female auxiliary guards at Auschwitz smile as they take a break.

snoops who reported on un-Nazi activities to the party — were female. Women also made unofficial denunciations to the *Gestapo* of suspicious neighbors, Jews and other enemies of the state at a rate of three-to-one, compared to men.

Women also undermined the sacred marriage illusion which Nazism tried to

Dorothea Binz, head training overseer at the all-female camp of *Ravensbruck* after 1942, trained her female students in the finer points of "malicious pleasure." One survivor stated after the war that the Germans brought a group of 50 women to the camp to undergo training. The women  
(Continued on page 14)

## SCRAMBLING TO PRESERVE HOLOCAUST MEMORIES

BY JOANNA LIN, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Fifteen years ago, nearly 52,000 Holocaust survivors and witnesses began sharing their stories with a group that would come to be known as the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education. The testimonies, averaging about two hours each, were documented on videotape, a format whose quality deteriorates over time.

And that's why the foundation, intent on preserving its Holocaust material for future generations, has launched a \$10-million initiative to turn 105,000 hours of videotaped testimony into a vast digital archive.

The switch, foundation leaders say, cannot come a moment too soon — with the videotapes expected to start decaying within five years and aging Holocaust survivors dying off.

"It's like a ticking time bomb," said Sam Gustman, the foundation's chief

technology officer.

Gustman said the foundation plans to digitize 12,000 testimonies a year, finishing the collection by 2013. The completion will mark the latest step for the Shoah project that began in 1994, when director Steven Spielberg established the foundation to collect survivors' stories after the debut of his film, "*Schindler's List*." Five years later, the foundation had amassed testimony in 32 languages and across 56 countries.

Sam Goetz is among the survivors who have added their stories to the foundation's collection.

As a young boy, Goetz survived concentration camps in Poland, Germany and Austria. He recorded his story with the foundation in 1995. Documenting survivors' stories, he said, is a "time-sensitive issue."

Knowing that his story and thousands of other tales are being safeguarded for years to come has comforted the 80-year-old Goetz, chairman of the Anti-

Defamation League's Holocaust education committee in Los Angeles. "The feeling, the emotion of the event, the separation from the family, are difficult to put into words," he said. "You hope by relating these events of occupied Europe by the Nazis, that this can have a universal meaning to those growing up later and in future generations."

The foundation's videotapes have been stored in a vast facility known as Iron Mountain, a former limestone mine in western Pennsylvania. The tapes are now being packed into trucks, 15,000 at a time, and hauled across the country to the Shoah Foundation's office a few blocks east of the USC campus. There, foundation staff — with the help of two automated "robots" that look like large vending machines, and a massive archive with 9 million gigabytes of memory — are duplicating the tapes into Motion JPEG 2000 files, as well as other formats for computer and television viewing.

Although the primary benefit of the new

digital format is preservation, it also has allowed the foundation to correct recording errors and reduce duplication time. The digital format allows staff to spot bad recording signals or tape defects and fix them.

The foundation hopes the digital testimonies will have a broader reach. Currently, all 51,682 testimonies are available at USC, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and several other research institutions around the world. But only excerpts of a dozen interviews are available on the foundation's website.

Gustman said the foundation plans to add 1,000 interviews, all in an upgraded digital format, to its website over the next year.

With the generation of Holocaust survivors quickly vanishing, Gustman said it's all the more important for the testimonies to last.

"When you don't have the people to teach the kids, what do you do?" he said. "That's where we come in."



# SURVIVORS' CORNER

## HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS SAY NO TO BLOOD MONEY

BY CLAUDIA FELDMAN,  
HOUSTON CHRONICLE

The German government is looking for Sam Spritzer.

Again.

In 1939, when Spritzer was 17, Nazis rounded him up and forced him into an old theater hall with other boys and men from his Polish town. There was no running water and only one toilet, and Spritzer's tormenters made him spend his daylight hours cleaning up human excrement.

Today, 70 years later, the German government is offering to pay Spritzer and thousands of other Jews for the work they were forced to do in those Nazi ghettos.

The Holocaust survivors stand to gain 2,000 euros, or about \$2,500, from the Germans' latest reparations program, launched in October 2007. But there's a catch or two: The forms are difficult for people in their 70s and 80s to complete. Also, there's reluctance on the part of many survivors to participate.

"It's blood money," Spritzer says. "In the past, I haven't wanted any of it."

Spritzer grew up in *Rawa Ruska*. On his father's side were dairy farmers. On his mother's side were furriers and tailors. Until the German invasion, Spritzer led a sheltered, religious life.

"If my mother had told me to jump, I would have said, how high?" Spritzer says.

When the soldiers came with machine guns, Spritzer found himself trapped in the theater. He endured for a few days, scooping waste, then told a Nazi soldier he needed water from an outdoor pump.

When the soldier wasn't looking, the kid jumped the bushes and ran. As it turned out, his escape was perfectly timed.

Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin were in the process of splitting Poland in two, and Spritzer and his mother's side of the family were fortunate to wind up on Soviet turf.

But the Nazis struck again in 1941. When Spritzer's mother told him to run for his life, he did, disappearing into the Russian countryside.

"It was a time of wandering," Spritzer says. "If you ask me where I went or why, it's almost impossible to describe."

Sometimes he walked, sometimes he hopped trains. He had no money, not even a change of clothes. He will never forget stooping to drink from a puddle "green from frogs."

Eventually he was drafted into the Soviet army, but he didn't fight, he dug ditches. Sometimes, because he was adept at half a dozen languages, he worked as an army escort.

Once, Spritzer took a group of soldiers to a training camp in Siberia. On the long and lonely trip back to base, he got off the train in search of food. Immediately he sank thigh-deep in snow.

The wind was whistling, the temperatures were 30 or 40 degrees below zero, and there was nothing in sight except a distant light.

Spritzer trudged toward the beacon, hoping he might find someone who would give him something to eat. Miles later, he realized he was making no progress. The light was still there, shining in the dis-



This Spritzer family photo was taken in 1937, shortly before the family was ripped apart. Sam Spritzer, in the center of the back row, was 15 at the time.

tance, but it was miles and hours away. Deeply discouraged, he retraced his snowy steps and prepared to board the next train. In time a train did pull into the station. But the doors wouldn't open, and Spritzer plastered himself to the side and held on tight.

"I cried," he says. "That was one of many times."

In 1943, while still in the army, Spritzer's fortunes improved. He got a job as a postman, and villagers gave him bread as he delivered their mail.

But he didn't stick with it very long. In 1944 he got word that his Polish city had been destroyed by the Nazis, and everyone in his family was killed.

Once again, he got back on the train. He had to go to *Rawa Ruska* and see for himself.

By 1950, Spritzer had only a few relatives left in the world. One was in Paris, and Spritzer moved to France.

Another was in Houston, and in 1955,

Spritzer moved again, thinking he could build a bigger, better fur business here.

In the past half-century, the Texas Gulf Coast has agreed with him. The modest enterprise he started in 1957 grew into *Furlan Spritzer Furs*. He and his business partner moved into the Galleria, where they entertained Hollywood starlets, local socialites, anyone and everyone wanting knockout fur coats.

Along the way the amicable partnership ended, but Spritzer kept the business going and contributed money and furs to countless charities.

"Why not?" he asks in an accent still reminiscent of the Old Country. "I came into this world with nothing. I will leave with nothing. All I really have is my wife, Pantipa, our daughter, Kristina, my name, and the good I did in this town."

Spritzer is 86. He and Pantipa closed their Galleria store in 2003, but they continue to sell furs at Houston Jewelry.

He also works as a volunteer and gives speeches about his experiences during the Holocaust.

"If we don't talk about it," he says, "we will not remember. And life will repeat itself."

In the past, Spritzer has ignored other efforts by the German government to make reparations.

This time, with the help of an army of local attorneys, Spritzer will apply for the money. He encourages other survivors who qualify to apply, too.

The volunteer attorneys are making the complicated process as easy as possible, he says.

And he thinks it's time to accept the help, which, truth to tell, would come in handy.

"I'm older," he says. "I've cooled off. I forgive."

## VISITING A MOTHER'S GRAVE AT AUSCHWITZ

BY STANLEY GLOGOVER

I remember, after the Kaddish was said, after the pale roses were laid down, a light rain falling through trees.

On a gray March day in 2007, I made a visit to what in all likelihood was the grave of my mother, my two younger brothers, Hershek and Moshek, and my infant sister, Itka. The boys were only 11 and 9 when they left the world; Itka was barely 6 months old.

Their nameless tomb rests in a location to which I once vowed never to return, a death-sown place that had destroyed my teenage years and 28 members of my family.

But the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau are far different now from the time I was detained there, from 1942 to January 1945. It has the dubious honor of being the most heavily visited museum in Poland. Brightly painted buses from many countries are a regular sight in the parking lot, and tourists line up in the cafeteria for its fine soups and pastries.

I went to give testimony to a hard-working documentary TV crew from the Britain. I went to make memory whole and love useful, and to honor my dead.

My family and I first arrived in Auschwitz-Birkenau in November 1942 on



Stanley Glogover, with his daughter-in-law Norma Glogover, at the entrance to Auschwitz, with the sign above reading "Work Makes You Free."

the transport from the *Mława Ghetto*, in Poland. The rail head was crowded with bewildered travelers, snapping guard dogs, heaps of abandoned luggage and dull-eyed inmates in striped pajamas. We had no idea of where we were and truly believed that this was just a labor camp.

I recall my mother, Anna Glogover, a pretty auburn-haired woman in her 30s, bouncing my sister in her arms and keeping her good humor at the chaos around us, even when the German clerk came to separate her and my siblings from my father and me.

"We must consider bathing facilities for

the ladies and the 'kinder' first," he said politely. "*Mein Frau*, come with me."

He ushered them away quickly. And I hold this image forever: My mother smiling back at us, my two brothers clinging to her coat, baby Itka riding up close to her shoulder.

"See you soon," my mother called out, her voice warm with encouragement. The four of them disappeared in a huge wave of women and children.

I never saw them again.

From that day forth my father, Lazer Glogover, and I entered the pit of the beast the Germans had created. Days of unceasing hunger, terror, illness and brutalizing work followed. A few weeks later my father disappeared. I could find no trace of him.

Eventually I found an uncle, Azriel Glogover, working as a *Sonderkommando*, a Jewish official forced to aid the Nazis by disposing of Jewish corpses.

At great risk, I went at night to his barack alley, whispering to him through a small window. He had no information on

my father, but he told me that he had found my mother and three siblings on the metal corpse cart. Her lifeless fingers so tightly gripped Itka and the boys that Azriel had to pry their dead fingers apart. He and another man had cremated their bodies separately.

"I put their ashes in glass jars," my uncle said. "I waited until it was quiet and buried them behind Crematorium Three. Underneath a tree, you can't miss it. It's the only thing growing there."

Despite the curfew and the bitter cold, I had to go and see for myself. The small birch was nothing more than a sapling. I knelt and said Kaddish for them, not caring if the night patrols came upon me with their guns. Nothing in the future could ever be as horrible as this moment.

There are experiences that settle in a man like a stone buried permanently in the flesh.

The jars of ashes beneath the tree are my marker. I see the image of the birch tree now. I shall see it forever.

Through a miraculous fate and the compassion of others, I lived through the next two years and survived to be rehabilitated by the Allies Displaced Persons program.

After the war I wandered through various DP camps, thinking I might at least find someone from my hometown of

(Continued on page 14)



# THE WEDDING GOWN THAT MADE HISTORY

HELEN ZEGERMAN SCHWIMMER,  
THE JEWISH PRESS

Lilly Friedman doesn't remember the last name of the woman who designed and sewed the wedding gown she wore when she walked down the aisle over 60 years ago. But the grandmother of seven does recall that when she first told her fiancé Ludwig that she had always dreamed of being married in a white gown, he realized he had his work cut out for him.

For the tall, lanky 21-year-old who had survived hunger, disease and torture this was a different kind of challenge. How was he ever going to find such a dress in the Bergen-Belsen Displaced Person's camp, where they felt grateful for the clothes on their backs? Fate would intervene in the guise of a former German pilot who walked into the food distribution center where Ludwig worked, eager to make a trade for his worthless parachute. In exchange for two pounds of coffee beans and a couple of packs of cigarettes, Lilly would have her wedding gown.

For two weeks, Miriam the seamstress worked under the curious eyes of her fellow DPs, carefully fashioning the six parachute panels into a simple, long-sleeved gown, with a rolled collar and a fitted waist that tied in the back with a bow. When the dress was completed she sewed the leftover material into a matching shirt for the groom.

A white wedding gown may have seemed like a frivolous request in the surreal environment of the camps, but for Lilly the dress symbolized the innocent, normal life she and her family had once

led before the world descended into madness. Lilly and her siblings were raised in a Torah-observant home in the small town of *Zarica*, Czechoslovakia where her father was a *melamed*, respected and well liked by the young yeshiva students he taught in nearby *Irsheva*.

He and his two sons were marked for extermination immediately upon arriving at Auschwitz. For Lilly and her sisters it was only their first stop on their long journey of persecution, which included *Plashof*, *Neustadt*, *Gross Rosen* and finally *Bergen-Belsen*.

Four hundred people marched 15 miles in the snow to the town of *Celle* on January 27, 1946 to attend Lilly and Ludwig's wedding. The town synagogue, damaged and desecrated, had been lovingly renovated by the DPs with the meager materials available to them. When a *Sefer Torah* arrived from England, they converted an old kitchen cabinet into a makeshift *Aron Kodesh*.

"My sisters and I lost everything – our parents, our two brothers, our homes. The most important thing was to build a new home." Six months later, Lilly's sister Ilona wore the dress when she married Max Traeger. After that came Cousin Rosie. How many brides wore Lilly's dress? "I stopped counting after 17." With the camps experiencing the highest mar-

riage rate in the world, Lilly's gown was in great demand.

In 1948, when President Harry Truman finally permitted the 100,000 Jews who had been languishing in DP camps since

the end of the war to emigrate, the gown accompanied Lilly across the ocean to America. Unable to part with her dress, it lay at the bottom of her bedroom closet for the next 50 years, "not even good enough for a garage sale. I was happy when it found such a good home."

Home was the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. When Lilly's niece, a volunteer, told museum officials about her aunt's dress, they immediately recognized its historical significance and displayed the gown in a specially designed showcase, guaranteed to preserve it for 500 years.

But Lilly Friedman's dress had one more journey to make. *Bergen-Belsen*, the museum, opened its doors on October 28, 2007. The German government invited Lilly and her sisters to be their guests for the grand opening. They initially declined, but finally traveled to *Hanover* the follow-

ing year with their children, their grandchildren and extended families to view the extraordinary exhibit created for the wedding dress made from a parachute.

Lilly's family, who were all familiar with the stories about the wedding in *Celle*, were eager to visit the synagogue. They found the building had been completely renovated and modernized. But when they pulled aside the handsome curtain they were astounded to find that the *Aron Kodesh*, made from a kitchen cabinet, had remained untouched as a testament to the profound faith of the survivors. As Lilly stood on the *bimah* once again, she beckoned to her granddaughter, Jackie, to stand beside her where she was once a *kallah*. "It was an emotional trip. We cried a lot."

Two weeks later, the woman who had once stood trembling before the selective eyes of the infamous Dr. Josef Mengele returned home and witnessed the marriage of her granddaughter. The three Lax sisters – Lilly, Ilona and Eva, who together survived Auschwitz, a forced labor camp, a death march and *Bergen-Belsen* – have remained close, and today live within walking distance of each other in Brooklyn. As mere teenagers, they managed to outwit and outlive a monstrous killing machine, then went on to marry, have children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and were ultimately honored by the country that had earmarked them for extinction.

As young brides, they had stood underneath the *chuppah* and recited the blessings that their ancestors had been saying for thousands of years. In doing so, they chose to honor the legacy of those who had perished, by choosing life.



Lily Friedman and her fiancé Ludwig on their wedding day.

## BROOKLYN MAN SEARCHING FOR GIRL HIS FAMILY HID DURING HOLOCAUST

BY CORKY SIEMASZKO, DAILY NEWS

Everything about her was a lie. Her name was not Teresa Wisniewska. She was not a cousin from another Polish village. She wasn't Catholic, she was a Jew.

None of that mattered to Edward Pieniak when he was a toddler and his family hid her from the Germans in World War II.

None of that matters now.

"She was like my older sister and I loved her," said Pieniak, a 67-year-old grandfather who lives in Brooklyn. "What I really want is to find her again. I want to see Teresa one more time."

Finding Teresa, who would be about 77 today, is like trying to track down a ghost.

She never told them her real name. She did not say where she was going when she left as a teen in 1947. She never contacted the Pieniak family again.

All Pieniak has is a faded photograph of Teresa, smiling at a family wedding in 1944. He has what his mother told him. And he's got fragmented memories of his "big sister."

"I was about six when she left, so I remember things like going with her when she took the cows to graze in the fields," he said.

"I remember holding her hand and that she had black hair and black eyes and was very beautiful."

It was 1942 and the Holocaust was

underway when Teresa turned up in *Wlasnosc*, a crossroads south of the city of *Lublin* that's now called *Kloczew*.

Teresa was 10 and may have been from another flyspeck village called *Olszyniak*. The mysterious couple that brought her said her parents had been murdered – and that she was taught



Under the name "Teresa Wisniewska," this woman was hidden from the Germans during World War II by the Pieniak family.

Catholic prayers to make it easier for her to pass for a Pole.

"My mother didn't have the heart to turn her away," Pieniak said, and Teresa became the daughter his mother never had.

They sewed together. They planted tomatoes. They sang and tended to young Edward and his baby brother, Kazimierz.

Pieniak has clear memories of the fear that gripped the family whenever the

Germans raided.

"Everybody knew we would all get a bullet to the head if Teresa was found," he said. "My father hid her in the woods or took her to the local priest, who hid her in a hole in his cellar. She came back when the Germans were gone."

The neighbors knew Teresa's secret "but nobody said a thing," Pieniak said. "She went to church with us. If strangers asked, my mother said she was her niece."

Two years after the war was over, Teresa suddenly announced it was time for her to return "to my people."

"My mother didn't want her to go and cried a lot," Pieniak said. "She bought her a green dress and a burgundy-colored dress. Then my father drove her by horse cart to the town of *Ryki*, where she boarded a train."

And she was gone.

Pieniak grew up, married and raised two children of his own. But he never stopped wondering about Teresa. And once, on a train in 1965, he thought he saw her. "But it was not her," he said.

Pieniak said he tracked down a boy from his village "who had been in love with Teresa and had an address for her in Krakow." She was not there.

He also contacted Jewish organizations in Poland, but they couldn't track Teresa down based on the photograph and what he and others told them.

"I know what I would say to Teresa if I saw her again," Pieniak said. "I would tell her how much I missed her and ask her, 'Why did you disappear?'"

## POLAND AWARDS DOZENS FOR SAVING JEWS

Dozens of Poles were awarded medals for risking their lives during World War II to save Jews from the Holocaust.

President Lech Kaczynski awarded state medals – many posthumously – to around 70 people from across Poland. First lady Maria Kaczynska presented them to the people or their relatives in a gala ceremony at Warsaw's National Theater.

Among those awarded was Zofia Brusikiewicz, 81, whose parents hid 13 Jews in an apartment in Warsaw and Irena Gut-Opdyke, whose dramatic story is narrated in a one-act play, "*Irena's Vow*," that opened Off Broadway in September 2008.

Gut-Opdyke hid 12 Jews in the basement of an SS officer's house, where she served as a housekeeper. She died, aged 85, in 2003 in New York, where her family recently received her medal.

Poland was the only country under Nazi occupation where helping Jews was punished with summary execution of the entire family.

Most of the recipients are already among the 6,000 Poles holding the title of the Righteous Among the Nations from Israel's Yad Vashem. They were largely found thanks to testimony deposited with the institute.

About 3.5 million Jews, or 10 percent of the country's population, lived in Poland before World War II. Most were killed in death camps. Many of those who survived, left for Israel or other countries amid anti-Semitic purges of the 1960s. Jewish life is being slowly rekindled since Poland shed communism in 1989.

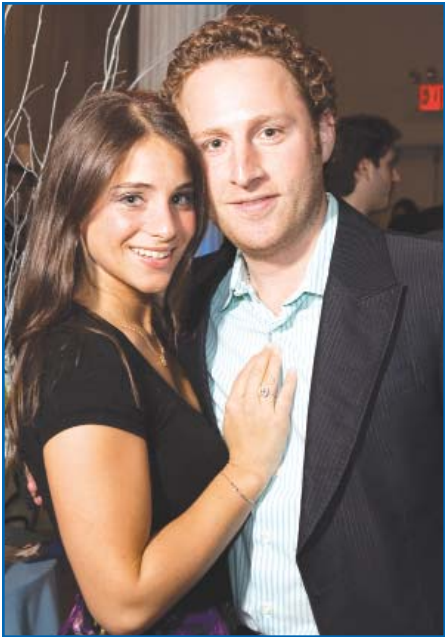


# AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM YOU



Rebecca Hanus, Event Co-Chair, Caroline Massel, Chair, Young Leadership Associates, Barry Levine, Event Co-Chair, Nicole Pines, Event Co-Chair.

Over 800 people attended the American Society for Yad Vashem Young Leadership Associates Winter Gala at the Metropolitan Pavilion in New York City. Featured at this year's Gala was the No Child's Play Exhibit from Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. Unlike other Holocaust exhibitions, this exhibit does not focus on history, statistics or facts. Instead, it features poems displayed, highlight some of the personal stories of the children, providing a sense of life and vitality – the struggle of these children to hold on to life. It describes their attempts to survive in the face of death – the struggle of these children to hold on to life. In many cases, it was the children who gave their lives for survival. This exhibit is one of several available for loan free of charge by the American Society for Yad Vashem's efforts to commemorate the Holocaust through education, programs, social events and activities.



Jaci and Gonen Paradis.



Jason Wilf and Cori Rothkopf.



The No Child's Play Exhibit as it was seen at the 2009 Young Leadership Associates Winter Gala. Metropolitan Pavilion, New York City, February 12, 2009.



Matthew Rubin, Alicia Post and David Kaiyalethe.



Avi Lieberman, Nicole Pines, Tova Lieberman Garber and Scott Garber.



Barry Levine, Jonathan Wilf, Jeffrey Hiller and Jeffrey Wilf.



Adam and Iris Lindenbaum.



Kevin and Amanda Cyrulnik.



# YOUNG LEADERSHIP ASSOCIATES WINTER GALA

Young Leadership Associates' Annual Winter Gala on February 12, 2009 at the

Jerusalem which opened a window into the world of children during the Holocaust. Instead of descriptions of physical violence. Instead, the toys, games, artwork, diaries, and a glimpse into their lives during the Holocaust. The exhibition tells the story of survivors who maintained their childhood and youth by creating for themselves a different reality. Their parents provided the encouragement and hope to continue their desperate daily fight.

The American Society for Yad Vashem. Highly motivated young professionals, are an integral part of the American Jewish community. They ensure the continuity of this mission through educational pro-



Caroline and Morris Massel and Jennifer and Mark Smith.



Metropolitan Pavilion, New York City,



Center piece and Event Program.



Holly Newman and Noa Besner.



Cadence Greenberg and Boaz Zborowski.



Nicole Pines, Event Co-Chair, Nadav Besner, Event Co-Chair, Rebecca Hanus, Event Co-Chair, Barry Levine, Event Co-Chair, Caroline Massel, Chair, Young Leadership Associates.



Stacy Herzog and Ariel Zborowski.

**We would like to acknowledge the generosity and support of the following vendors and raffle donors who helped make the 2009 Young Leadership Associates Winter Gala a success.**

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# REPORT FROM YAD VASHEM

## GERMAN OFFICER WHO HELPED "THE PIANIST" HONORED

The German officer made famous in Roman Polanski's 2002 film *The Pianist* for sheltering two Jews who escaped from the Nazis during the Holocaust has been posthumously recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

Wilm Hosenfeld was drafted into the German Army shortly before the outbreak of World War II and was stationed in Poland, where he spent most of the war as a sports and culture officer. During the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, he interrogated prisoners.

After the war, Hosenfeld was arrested and tried by the Soviets and sentenced to life imprisonment. His sentence was subsequently commuted to 25 years, but Hosenfeld died in a Soviet prison in 1952.

Over the years, the testimony of two Holocaust survivors was presented to Yad Vashem, detailing how the German officer had provided them with shelter from the Nazis.



Wilm Hosenfeld, a German officer who helped save two Jews during the Holocaust.

Leon Wurm testified that Hosenfeld employed him at the sports center after his escape from the train to Treblinka, while Wladyslaw wrote to Yad Vashem, as well as in his diaries (which became the basis for the film), that in November 1944, Hosenfeld helped him find a hiding place and that he provided blankets, food and moral support.

Yad Vashem had previously considered bestowing the German officer with its highest honor for saving the pair, but waited until it was clear that he was not involved in war crimes during the Warsaw Uprising.

Recently, new material, including Hosenfeld's personal diaries, and letters to his wife were reviewed by Yad Vashem, which clarify his "consistent stance" against the Nazi policy toward the Jews, Yad Vashem said.

In his writing, Hosenfeld stressed his growing disgust with the regime's oppression of Poles, the persecution of Polish clergy, abuse of the Jews, and, with the beginning of the Final Solution, his horror at the extermination of the Jewish people.

Although Hosenfeld supported the Nazi party in its beginnings, it is clear that as he saw the consequences of the Nazis' rise to power, his opposition to them was deep and consistent, Yad Vashem said.

Hosenfeld's children, who live in Germany, will receive the medal and certificate on their late father's behalf.

More than 22,000 non-Jews have been recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem.

## THE MURDER SITES OF THE JEWS IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

BY DR. LEA PRAIS

In 1943, five years after he visited the town of *Lyady* in Belarus, journalist Vladimir Pomerantsev returned as an officer in the Red Army. "The streets are empty, there are no people, no houses," he wrote in an article published in March 1944. In answer to his question regarding the whereabouts of the residents, one of the locals pointed to the far side of the *Mereya River*, and said, "Over there, beyond the river, resting under the ground."

During the Nazi occupation, some 2,000 Jews were rounded up from *Lyady*, the cradle of Chabad (Lubavitch) Hassidism, and assembled in the town. They were shot in September 1941 and April 1942, next to the village of *Plauny*, and on the banks of the *Mereya River* near the town. Only five Jews survived. These locations are two of the 101 murder sites at the center of a new project by the International Institute for Holocaust Research, which tells the hitherto untold stories of the destruction of the Jews of the Former USSR.

The new project, recently uploaded to the Yad Vashem website, began with the collection and registration of all the murder sites in the former USSR being studied by researchers at Yad Vashem. From this pool of data, 51 different communities whose Jewish populations were mass-

cred — in Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia and Russia — were chosen. The historical background serves as the central feature of the site, from which links branch out to a variety of primary and secondary resources — documents, photographs, letters, maps, illustrations, video



The town of *Lyady*, Belarus, in the 1930s.

testimonies, Pages of Testimony, film clips, lists of victims and stories of Righteous Among the Nations — which together create a multi-dimensional historical and human portrait. For example, alongside the basic information about the murder of the Jews of *Lyady*, there is an original letter written in December 1944 by Musya Shulrikhter to her brother Grisha, a Red Army soldier, in which she describes the murder of their youngest sister, Riva, and their cousins Vova and Marek on the banks of the river. Another link brings the visitor to photographs and the Pages of Testimony commemorating those killed.

Pomerantsev's article is displayed in a special section devoted to the work of surviving Soviet Jews to commemorate the victims. Describing the exhumations at the murder site, he writes: "The bodies are piled up three meters high in deep ditches [...] As I stand there, four babies are brought up from the mass grave, one of them with a pacifier still in her mouth." His chilling descriptions are illustrated with original photographs.

In total, the new website contains 139 video clips, of which over 80 are witness accounts, most of them from the collection of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education (formerly the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History foundation), founded by Steven Spielberg. It also features 1,459 photographs, some of them scans of original documents.

The manner in which the Jews of *Lyady* were murdered was not unusual. Similar events took place in most of the provincial cities and towns throughout the former Soviet Union. Jews were murdered with unspeakable cruelty, shot in or near their hometowns. For many years, the separation and isolation mandated by the Soviet authorities pushed their stories to the margins of historiography. Now, these stories are finally seeing the light of day.

The author is Project Director of "The Untold Stories," International Institute for Holocaust Research.

## POPE PIUS XII AND THE HOLOCAUST – CURRENT STATE OF RESEARCH

An international academic workshop looking at the current state of research on Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust took place at Yad Vashem in the beginning of March. The 2-day workshop was held in partnership of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and the *Studium Theologicum Salesianum*, Saints Peter.

At the opening session, Chairman of Yad Vashem Avner Shalev said, "The complex historical issues that will arise during the workshop touch on basic human values, and questions of morality. Serious academic research, whose goal is to uncover the truth, must rest on documentation. I was pleased to learn that the Pope has directed that the cataloguing of the Vatican archives related to the Holocaust be accelerated, so that the Archives can be opened up as soon as possible to researchers."

Vatican Nuncio Msgr. Antonio Franco

referred in his remarks to the case of the Holocaust-denying Bishop Williamson and said, "It is clear that one cannot be



Avner Shalev, Chairman of Yad Vashem (left) and Msgr. Antonio Franco, Vatican Nuncio.

Catholic if he denies the *Shoah*." He added that the workshop is an important step in building cooperation in the search

for the truth. At the end of his remarks, the Nuncio also referred to the upcoming visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Yad Vashem.

This meeting of scholars is being held to understand the present state of research on the man and the topic, and is an opportunity for an exchange of updated knowledge and a sharing of scholarly opinions. In the last few years, several important books and articles have been published, and new material has come to light, and therefore there is a need to summarize what information is known to scholars, to see whether there is any new information not previously known, as well as any information that needs re-evaluating.

Among the topics scholars discussed were the pre-Papacy period; relations with the German Bishops; Pius XII and the Holocaust; the situation in Italy during the Holocaust; and the aftermath of the Holocaust.

## "A PLACE WHERE THE GRAIN IS FED BY CORPSES"

A film documenting the shooting of the Jews of *Liepaja*, Latvia was publicly screened in Israel on June 9, 1961, during the trial of Nazi war criminal Adolph Eichmann.

Haim Gouri, the poet and journalist who covered the trial, described the scenes in short phrases: "A truck stops, it unloads Jews. They run [...] You see an enormous German standing with his legs apart." The footage was blurry and filmed from a distance, but, "you multiply the number of shot Jews by such and such a number, and you see the end of Russian and Baltic Jewry in those occupied areas: the place

where the grain is fed by corpses."

Over the years, the short silent film, the only one of its kind documenting the murder of Jews, became one of the representations mostly closely identified with the Holocaust: a 67-second clip screened countless times in Holocaust museums and documentaries around the world. How was it filmed? When? By whom? At the end of September 1981, the photographer, Reinhardt Wiener, a member of the SA and the German naval forces during WWII, arrived in Israel. In his videotaped testimony, taken and documented by Yad Vashem researchers, he shed new light on

the time of the filming and the circumstances. Above all he describes, from the German point of view, the story of one brief instance of murder that represents the essence of the Holocaust within the area of the former USSR.

The film documenting the murder of the Jews of *Liepaja*, the video testimony of the man who filmed it, as well as dozens of video testimonies of survivors, and the testimony of the locals who watched it happen, are all part of the vast research project now available to visitors to the Yad Vashem website.



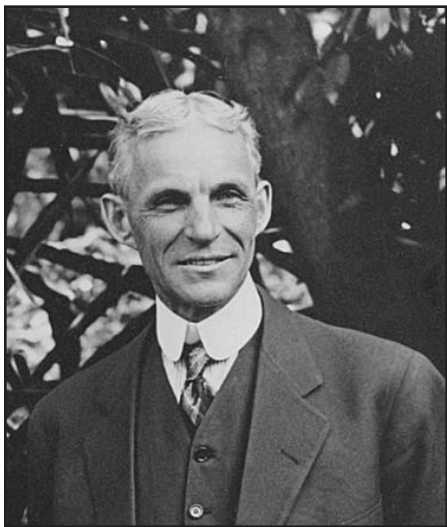
# AMERICAN CORPORATE COMPLICITY CREATED UNDENIABLE NAZI NEXUS

HITLER WAS COMPLETELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HOLOCAUST. BUT HE HAD HELP.

BY EDWIN BLACK, JTA

When zealous Nazis waged war against an imaginary generation-to-generation Jewish conspiracy; when Nazis created ghastly extermination plans to help ensure their master race would rule the world; when the German military smashed across Europe with lightning speed in heavy Blitz trucks; when Mengele undertook heinous medical experiments on twins in Auschwitz; and when the *Reich* identified the Jews everywhere in Europe and then systematically pauperized and destroyed them – when all these terrible things were done, the shape and scope of the horror was pivotally determined by major American industrial giants.

Now the dots can be connected. They create an undeniably Nazi nexus between iconic American corporations and the greatest crime of the 20th century: the Holocaust.



Henry Ford.

Henry Ford, acting directly through the *Ford Motor Company*, virtually invented political anti-Semitism when he published worldwide the fake "*Protocols of the Elders of Zion*." Ford's book quickly became the bible of German anti-Semites and early incarnations of the Nazi party. Nazis shipped the work throughout the country "by the carload."

Among the many Germans massively influenced by the book was Adolf Hitler. *Der Fuehrer* read the work at least two years before "*Mein Kampf*" was written. In "*Mein Kampf*," Hitler wrote, "The whole existence of this people is based on a continuous lie [as] shown incomparably by the '*Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.'"

The Carnegie Institution, the philanthropic incarnation of America's greatest steel fortune, propagated the deadly American race science of eugenics that idealized a blond, blue-eyed superior race. In pursuit of that dream, Carnegie scientists believed some 90 percent of humanity was to be eliminated using various methods. These methods included organized identification, seizure of assets, marriage prohibition or nullification, forced surgical sterilization, segregation into camps and publicly operated gas chambers. Carnegie spent millions to propagate American eugenic theories in post-World War I Germany, financing race science programs in universities and official institutions.

While in prison, Hitler closely studied American eugenics. He proudly told his comrades, "I have studied with great inter-

est the laws of several American states concerning prevention of reproduction by people whose progeny would, in all probability, be of no value or be injurious to the racial stock."

Hitler was so steeped in American race science that he even wrote a fan letter to American eugenic leader Madison Grant, called his writing "my bible." *Der Fuehrer* merely exchanged the American term "Nordic" for the Nazi term "Aryan" and then medicalized his pre-existing virulent anti-Semitism and fascist nationalism to formulate the concept of the blond, blue-eyed Master Race he deified in "*Mein Kampf*." As Hitler's deputy Rudolf Hess insisted, "National Socialism is nothing but applied biology."

The Rockefeller Foundation, the philanthropic incarnation of Standard Oil, acted as a full partner with Carnegie in establishing eugenics in Germany. In the quest to perfect the master race, millions of Depression-era dollars were transmitted by Rockefeller to Hitler's most anti-Jewish doctors. In this quest, one specimen was desired above all: twins. Rockefeller funded Hitler's chief raceologist, Otmar Verschuer, and his insatiable twin experimentation programs. Twins, it was thought, held the secret to industrially multiplying the Aryan racial type and quickly subtracting biological undesirables.

Verschuer had an assistant, Josef Mengele. Rockefeller funding stopped during World War II, but by that time Mengele had transferred into Auschwitz to continue twin research in a monstrous fashion. Ever the eugenicist, he sent precise clinical reports weekly to Verschuer.



Alfred Sloan.

From the first weeks of the *Third Reich*, General Motors president Alfred Sloan committed the company and its German division Opel to motorizing a substantially horse-drawn Germany, preparing it for war. Prior to this, Germany had been a nation devoted to legendary automotive engineering but only one vehicle at a time, built by craftsman. GM brought mass production to the *Reich*, converting it from a horse-drawn threat to a motorized powerhouse.

Sloan and GM knowingly prepared the *Wehrmacht* to wage war in Europe. GM built the *Blitz* truck for the *Blitzkrieg*. Detroit even secretly moved massive stores of spare *Blitz* parts to the Polish border in the days just before the Sept. 1, 1939 invasion to facilitate the *Blitzkrieg*.

Using a charade of interlocking boards and executive committees, Sloan kept GM's role secret as long as possible.

Internal Business Machines, inventor of the Hollerith punch card, precursor to the modern computer, custom-designed and co-planned the Nazi solutions to Jewish existence. IBM enjoyed a monopoly on information technology. Under the micromanagement of its president, Thomas Watson, while advertising itself as "a solutions company," IBM in 1933 reached out to the new Hitler regime. It offered to organize and system-



Thomas Watson.

ize any solution the *Reich* desired, including solutions to the Jewish problem.

With IBM as a partner, the Hitler regime was able to substantially automate and accelerate all six phases of the 12-year Holocaust: identification, exclusion, confiscation, ghettoization, deportation and even extermination. As it did with any other customer, IBM simply asked the Hitler regime what result was desired. Then company engineers devised custom-tailored punch card systems to deliver those results. There was an IBM customer site in every concentration camp. Machines were serviced monthly, sometimes weekly, by IBM on site – whether that site was Auschwitz or downtown Berlin.

Had it not been for the continued conscious involvement of iconic American corporations in Hitler's war against the Jews, the speed, shape and statistics of the Holocaust as we know it would have been dramatically different. No one knows how different, but the astronomical dimensions could have never been achieved.

For their part, American corporate collaborators have long tried to obscure or hide the details of their collusion using the well-known tools of corporate misinformation, financial contributions, and bought and paid for historian reviews. But in an era when people no longer believe big corporations, the dots can be fully connected to unveil the outlines of an indisputable Nazi nexus. The words "never again" must resound not just among the victims, but within board rooms of corporate perpetrators.

*Edwin Black is the award-winning, New York Times and international investigative author of 65 bestselling editions in 14 languages in 61 countries, as well as scores of newspaper and magazine articles in the leading publications of the United States, Europe and Israel.*

## GERMANY CONVICTS NON-RESIDENT BLOGGER FOR INCITING HATRED

Claiming the Holocaust is a hoax is illegal in Germany, even online, and a non-resident alien man who denied the veracity of the *Third Reich's* "Final Solution" on a blog was imprisoned for the act. A German court sentenced Ernst Zundel, a former Tennessee, USA and Canadian resident, and lifelong Holocaust denier to five years in prison for incitement of racial hatred. His publications include "*The Hitler We Loved and Why*." Zundel was convicted in Berlin on February 15, 2007, and received the harshest sentence possible for his acts.

The accused 67-year-old man was convicted in the regional court in *Mannheim*, Germany on 14 counts of incitement, including one charge involving offense and slander to the memory of the dead. The successful prosecution was a symbolic win for Germany, which has expressed a strong interest in making the act of Holocaust Denial an EU-wide crime, which has been defeated in such countries as Spain and Italy.

Mr. Zundel is a German citizen born in the *Black Forest* region, who immigrated to Canada at age 19 to avoid the draft. He spent the next four decades in Canada, where he began his pamphleteering career, releasing Nazi and anti-Jewish works. In the late 1970s he created *Samisdat Publishers*, one of world's biggest distributors of Nazi and neo-Nazi propaganda and memorabilia. He has also become a central "revisionist" figure and author for his *ZundelSite*, since 1995 a hub for Holocaust-denial propaganda.

Zundel was not popular with the Canadian Government, as his activities led to many trials when he lived in the country, between 1958 to 2001. Zundel married his neo-Nazi Webmaster, Ingrid Rimland, and they immigrated to Tennessee, USA in 2001. But his stay was short-lived, as U.S. officials deported him back to Canada for visa violations, due to his Nazi-promotions as a security risk. When Zundel arrived in Toronto, he was arrested and detained until a Canadian judge ruled in March 2005 his activities posed a threat to national and international security. He was deported back to Germany.

German courts wasted no time prosecuting Zundel, charging him with inciting racial hatred, for publishing on his site such works as Arthur Butz's "*The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*," and Austin App's "*The Six Million Swindle*."

The law used in Zundel's prosecution is found in the German Criminal Code (*Strafgesetzbuch, StGB*), promulgated on November 13, 1998.

One of the most controversial aspects of this case was the fact that all the publications had been made outside Germany, which some analysts argued took the crime outside of Germany's jurisdiction to prosecute. Since all of Zundel's publications were made outside of Germany, and created in Canada and the U.S., it could have been argued that the robust Anglo-American law of freedom of speech should have applied.

But German courts had already ruled on this issue, in the case of German-born Dr. Fredrick Toben, who was also charged with denying the Holocaust from the Adelaide Institute, in Australia. Toben was sentenced to 10 months in prison. He appealed on the grounds that since his Internet material was "printed" outside Germany, it should not be subject to German legislation. In response, the German Federal Court of Justice ruled that any persons publishing pro-Nazi material on the Internet is subject to German law, regardless of their country of origin.



# HOLOCAUST MUSEUM CHRONICLES NAZI PROPAGANDA

BY NAFEESA SYEED, AP

Wearing a black hat and a suit bearing the yellow Star of David, a man recoils from a large finger pointing at him from above.

"He is to blame for the war," reads the poster caption.

Similar images, along with newspapers, speeches and broadcast clips, tell the story of how Nazi Germany's propaganda machine cultivated hatred and suspicion and



One page of an antisemitic coloring book widely distributed to children with a portrait of a Jew drawn by the German caricaturist known as Fips. In the upper left-hand corner is the *Der Stürmer* logo featuring a Star of David superimposed over a caricature of a Jewish face. The caption under the star reads: "Without a solution to the Jewish question, there will be no salvation for mankind."

portrayed Jewish people as the enemy in the new museum exhibit, "State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda."

The exhibit opened Jan. 30 at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and runs through December 2011. It documents how propaganda fostered public indiffer-



This poster from 1943, titled *He is to blame for the war!*, is displayed in the exhibit.

ence as the government and its allies went from hostilities to mass atrocities of the Holocaust, when millions of Jews and other groups were killed between 1933 and 1945.

Museum officials hope visitors will become more critical of information and more aware of anti-Semitism and intolerance. For instance, the exhibit touches on the 1994 Rwandan genocide and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's call to wipe Israel off the map.

"It's to alert people to the fact that hate speech and language like this didn't go away when the Nazis fell," said Steven Luckert, the exhibit's curator. "These are things that we have to be constantly aware of in our own day."

Nazi leaders branded Adolf Hitler as a savior. The swastika logo became instantly recognizable in posters and other marketing used to attract votes from women, laborers and students as the Nazis rose from a little-known party.

After coming to power in 1933, Hitler established a ministry of "public enlightenment and propaganda." Visitors can use a touchscreen monitor to see and hear examples of the ministry's work, including music they used.

Newspaper reports also played a role in gaining support for the Nazi agenda. Curators said many Germans didn't share Hitler's desire to go to war in 1939, so fabricated reports of countries such as Poland threatening the country were printed to make it seem like an invasion was necessary.

At its core, the Nazi party promised to unite Germans under a national, Aryan identity regardless of class, religion or region — but excluded were Jews, the mentally and physically disabled, gays and other groups considered "impure."

Anti-Semitic propaganda accused Jews of conspiring to take over the world, describing them as "aliens" and "parasitic."

A photo slide depicts a white woman with her arm around a black woman, both smiling, warning: "Racial pride fades" with such friendship.

Films and other entertainment mocked those branded as the enemy. A movie poster shows a thick-browed, grimacing Jewish caricature for "The Eternal Jew," a 1940 documentary-like film with footage of Jewish ghettos. The film failed at the box office.

But another movie with famous actors and a well-known director, was more subtle in its message. Jews were expelled at the historical drama's end.

Nazi propagandists spread radio broadcasts and news reels in dozens of languages across Europe and overseas, including to the U.S., South America and India. At the same time, they banned foreign news broadcasts.

Despite the demonizing rhetoric, curators said references to the atrocities that were committed were rare. Officials focused on presenting a positive image of Germany.

"I think that represents real danger," Luckert said. "That you could be so swayed by something that seems so positive to you, that you neglect the consequences that it has for somebody else."

Following World War II, the Allied forces that toppled the Nazis worked to destroy the party's propaganda. They renamed streets, closed newspapers and banned symbols. A 1945 photo shows an American soldier in Germany searching for Nazi content in a large pile of books.

Kerry Overbeck, 19, a sophomore at American University, visited the exhibit as



Following the defeat of Nazi Germany, the Allies dismantled, demolished, or confiscated monuments, statues, and other public artwork glorifying Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich as part of a systematic program of denazification. This photograph shows a bust of Adolf Hitler being carted away with other refuse.

part of her class on Holocaust history. The propaganda targeting the youth especially shook her, she said.

"What people always ask is, 'Why learn about the Holocaust still?'" she said. "But there's so much more to teach us, because it's an ongoing cycle of hatred."

## USING THE HOLOCAUST TO ATTACK THE JEWS

BY WALTER REICH, WASHINGTON POST

Dozens of cities held ceremonies on January 27 to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day. The good news is that the dead were remembered. The bad news is that even as the Holocaust is becoming a fixture in the world's memory, it is also being increasingly used as a weapon against the Jews and the Jewish state.

For some, ironically, the acknowledgment of the Holocaust's reality has become a screen behind which anti-Semitism has gathered new force. The hard-core Jew-haters spent decades denying that the best-documented genocide in world history ever took place. That won them such derision that even many anti-Semites have begun to admit the reality of the Holocaust — and now are hoping that simply by doing so, they can immunize themselves from the charge that they're anti-Semites in the first place. How can you be an anti-Semite, they figure, if you recognize the Holocaust?

But as some people who don't like Jews have found, it's worth acknowledging the Holocaust if you can then turn it into a cudgel against the Jews. And that they've done, in spades. According to this crowd, the Jews today have become Nazis. The Jewish state is now supposedly carrying out a Holocaust against the Palestinians.

Jews, the haters say, have always been evil, and their evil is only growing.

Of course, not all criticisms of Israel are the product of such bigoted logic. People of good will around the world are naturally shocked by the tragic and appalling deaths of Palestinian civilians, including those killed in the recent war in the Gaza Strip. Like any country, Israel can be criticized. But the massive and unceasing eruptions of outrage against the Jewish state — in a world in which other countries and groups have, often provoking barely any outrage, engaged in immensely more destructive and immoral behavior — can only be explained in a few ways. One is that attacking Israel has become a means of attacking Israel's ally, the United States. Another is that over-the-top attacks on Israel, particularly those invoking Holocaust language, have become a means of once again attacking the Jews.

The Anti-Defamation League has documented the way this weapon was used during the recent war with Hamas. Here are a few of the placards spotted at rallies: In Times Square, the group reported such signs as, "Israel: The Fourth Reich," "Stop Israel's Holocaust," "Holocaust by Holocaust Survivors." In Chicago: "Palestinian Holocaust in Gaza Now." In a Los Angeles demonstration, the Star of David in an Israeli flag was said to have been replaced by a swastika, accompanied by the words,

"Upgrade to Holocaust Version 2.0."

The Gaza war provoked similar attacks from some world leaders and people of influence. "The Holocaust, that is what is happening right now in Gaza," Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said in televised comments, according to Reuters. The New York Times quoted a Catholic cardinal who argued that Gaza increasingly "resembled a big concentration camp." And according to the Jerusalem Post, a Norwegian diplomat based in Saudi Arabia sent out an e-mail from her Foreign Ministry account in which she wrote, "The grandchildren of Holocaust survivors from World War II are doing to the Palestinians exactly what was done to them by Nazi Germany."

Are all those who have accused Israel of being a Nazi state anti-Semites? Hardly. There's genuine anger in the Muslim world, as well as in Europe and elsewhere, about Israel's actions in Gaza. The suffering is terrible. So are the images of devastation Israel left behind. And there are also plenty of people who are angry at Israel because it stands for the reviled United States.

But the reality is that much of the vitriol directed at Israel has indeed been spouted by anti-Semites. Not only have they hurled the Nazi canard at Israel, they've expressed clear anti-Semitism — some of it openly violent or even eliminationist. The pro-Israel

but reliable Middle East Media and Research Institute has been documenting anti-Semitism on Palestinian television for years, including calls for the murder of Jews. It reports that, the day before International Holocaust Remembrance Day, one Egyptian cleric admitted on an Islamist TV channel that the Holocaust had happened — and added that he hoped that one day Muslims would do to the Jews what the Germans had done to them. To demonstrate what he had in mind, according to the institute, he showed footage of heaps of Jewish corpses being bulldozed into pits.

In designating an International Holocaust Remembrance Day back in 2005, the U.N. General Assembly acted with noble intentions, even if parts of the world body still aim to delegitimize Israel. Such commemorations help the world understand that the goal of the Holocaust was the annihilation of an entire people — and help them appreciate the vast differences between that event and, for example, the war in Gaza. But even as the Holocaust has been increasingly acknowledged and explained, it also has been increasingly used as a cudgel to beat Jews and the Jewish state.

Walter Reich, a professor of international affairs at George Washington University, is a former director of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.



# DOUBLE LIFE OF WITOLD PILECKI

BY KAMIL TCHOREK, TIMESONLINE

It was perhaps the bravest act of espionage of the Second World War. After voluntarily being imprisoned in the Auschwitz concentration camp for 2½ years, and smuggling out its darkest secrets to the Allies, Witold Pilecki overcame a guard and, with two comrades, escaped almost certain death.

Now new details have emerged of the extraordinary tale of the Polish officer who hatched a plot with the country's resistance to be rounded up by the occupying Germans in September 1940 and sent to the most notorious Nazi extermination centre.

At the time Auschwitz was predominantly a camp for captured resistance fighters, although Jews and anyone considered a threat to the Nazi regime were also being sent there.

Newly released documents from the Polish archives reveal how Mr Pilecki, going under the false name Tomasz Serafinski, went about setting up an underground resistance group in the camp, recruiting its members and organizing it into a coherent movement.

"In order to assure greater security, I have taken the view that each cell of five will not be aware of another cell," he wrote in one of his reports smuggled out to the Resistance, and which has now come to light.

"This is also why I have avoided people who are registered here under their real names. Some are involved in the most incompetent conspiracies and have their own plans for rebellion in the camp."

Later, he wrote: "The gigantic machinery

of the camp spewing out dead bodies has claimed many of my friends ... We have sent messages to the outside world which were then transmitted back by foreign radio stations. Consequently, the camp guards are very angry right now."

Mr Pilecki's reports from the camp were channelled to the Allies via a courier system that the Polish Resistance operated throughout occupied Europe. By 1942 Mr Pilecki's organisation realised the existence of the gas chambers and he worked on several plans to liberate Auschwitz, including one in which the RAF would bomb the walls, or Free Polish paratroopers would fly in from Britain.

However, in 1943, realizing that the Allies had no plans to liberate the camp, he and two others escaped. The new documents include a Gestapo manhunt alert after his escape.

Mr Pilecki ensured that a full report on the camp reached London, and the resistance group he started in Auschwitz continued to feed information to Britain and the United States, confirming that the Nazis were bent on the extermination of the Jews.

The archive material will again raise questions as to why the Allies, and in par-

ticular Winston Churchill, never did anything to stop the atrocities there. "We can only assume the British thought we were exaggerating," said the Polish historian Jacek Pawlowicz. "I'm certain Poles shared their intelligence with MI6 and the highest levels of British Government,

which, for some reason, remained silent."

After his escape, Mr Pilecki was captured fighting in the Warsaw Uprising in 1944 and spent the rest of the conflict in a prisoner-of-war camp. In July 1945 he joined Free Polish troops in Italy, from where he agreed to return to Poland and gather intelligence on the Soviet takeover of the country.

He was, however, caught by the Polish Communist regime. In a twist of fate, a Polish

Jew administered the torture during his interrogation. Mr Pilecki's wife was invited to visit and he told her that his time in Auschwitz was child's play by comparison. After a show trial he was given three death sentences and shot.

The new material includes his charge sheet, which has 132 subsections, each listing a separate alleged crime. "From July 1945 to May 1947 the accused worked against the Polish state as a paid resident of an overseas intelligence

agency," one accusation reads. "The worst crime committed against the state was that he was acting in the interests of foreign imperialism, to which he has completely sold out through a prolonged period of work as a spy." The implication is clear: Mr Pilecki was providing information on the Soviet-backed regime that was finding its way to MI6.

After his death, Mr Pilecki was demonized by the Communists and his heroics re-emerged only after 1989.

His son, Andrzej Pilecki, who was 16 when he learned that his father had been executed, said: "There'd be no better memorial to my father than for the young to learn of his example. I was at school at the time, it was a terrible shock, but now after 60 years of waiting, I am thrilled to see justice."

The Chief Rabbi of Poland, Michael Schudrich, said that Mr Pilecki was "an example of inexplicable goodness at a time of inexplicable evil. There is ever-growing awareness of Poles helping Jews in the Holocaust, and how they paid with their lives, like Pilecki. We must honour these examples and follow them today in the parts of the world where there are horrors again."

The historian Michael R.D. Foot said that the life and death of Mr Pilecki brought shame on the British and the Allies, who turned a blind eye to Stalin's European ambitions as well as the Holocaust. "The Foreign Office's betrayal of Poland is the darkest chapter in its history, even if that betrayal was a strategic necessity," he said.



Witold Pilecki

## BELARUSIAN BUILDS MONUMENT TO HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

BY YURAS KARMANAU, AP

Nikolai Ilyuchik was 11 when his mother first told him how the Nazis killed all the Jewish men in their Belarusian village during World War II.

Three decades later, in defiance of the local government, Ilyuchik has built his own memorial to the six men shot Aug. 2, 1941, on the outskirts of *Bogdanovka*. It was something he just had to do.

"I was shaken by my mother's stories, because there was almost nothing in our textbooks about the Holocaust," the 42-year-old fireman said. "I built the monument to honor the memory, not for money or glory."

The Holocaust has been hushed up and largely forgotten in Belarus, a former Soviet republic between Poland and Russia where 800,000 Jews lost their lives during the war.

Even though President Alexander Lukashenko in 2007 compared Jews to pigs, the Belarusian government denies the existence of anti-Semitism. It pays lip service to Holocaust victims while at the same time allowing the destruction of Jewish cemeteries.

"In school textbooks, the history of the Holocaust is told in several paragraphs," Belarusian Jewish community leader Yakov Basin said. "In encyclopedias and academic literature, the history of the Jews is still suppressed."

Belarus lumps Jews together with all those who died during World War II, rather than acknowledging they were victims of genocide, he said.

About one-third of its population died in the war, including about 90 percent of the Jews, who formed a substantial minority in the predominantly Slavic nation. Only about 25,000 Jews remain

in the nation of 10 million.

Soviet-era monuments erected on the sites of mass shootings of Jews noted the deaths only of "Soviet citizens."

So the determination of Ilyuchik, a Christian, to honor a handful of Jews was met with deep suspicion in the regional government, which threatened to hit him with huge fines if he put up a monument on village land. But he pushed ahead with

stones around the monument.

"The children would come home and simply collapse from exhaustion," said their mother, Raisa Ilyuchik. "For them it was a difficult history lesson."

Before the Nazis invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, five Jewish families lived in *Bogdanovka*, then a village of 1,000 people 150 miles (250 kilometers) southwest of the capital, *Minsk*.



Nikolai Ilyuchik stands near a memorial he built to the six men shot Aug. 2, 1941, in defiance of the local government, on the outskirts of the village of *Bogdanovka*.

support from his family, neighbors and Protestant church, building the monument from metal and concrete in his own yard.

He then called on his three sons — 12-year-old Anton and 11-year-old twins Viktor and Vitaly — to build a gravel footpath from the village to the site of the killings, about a kilometer (half mile) away. The boys also laid

There is no historical record of the Jews or their fate, so Ilyuchik questioned elderly villagers and appealed for information through the local newspaper about the six men who were shot — two blacksmiths, two farmers, a trader and a rabbi.

They are honored on the monument, a black candle rising from the center of a

concrete Star of David. Six red teardrops run down the side like dripping wax.

Their families were rounded up and sent to a ghetto. Ilyuchik was unable to determine whether any of the women or children had survived.

But two teenage boys who managed to escape the Nazis were saved by Ilyuchik's grandfather, who hid them in his barn for about six months. They later joined partisan forces fighting with the Red Army, where they became friends with Ilyuchik's father.

"Belarusians and Jews won this victory together," Ilyuchik said.

For support for his project, Ilyuchik turned to his pastor and fellow villagers, about half of whom belong to the same Protestant church. His pastor allowed him to keep the 10 percent of his income he usually gives to the church, so he could buy the building materials.

Protestants are a small minority in Belarus. Roman Catholics make up about 15 percent of the population and the overwhelming majority belong to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Ilyuchik's church and Jewish groups offered to collect money for the monument, but he said it was important to him to do it himself.

So far, the regional government has not made good on its threats to fine him, and the monument has become a fixture in the village, where 2,000 people now live.

Children visit the monument on school excursions, and newlyweds come to lay flowers, honoring a Soviet tradition in which brides and grooms visit war memorials on their wedding day.

"When I see flowers on the monument I know that the memory of the murdered Jews is alive," Ilyuchik said, straightening a wreath that someone had left.



## NAZI WOMEN EXPOSED AS EVERY BIT AS BAD AS HITLER'S DERANGED MALE FOLLOWERS

(Continued from page 5)

were then separated and brought before the inmates. Each woman was then told to beat a prisoner.

Of the 50 women, three had asked for a reason and only one had refused. She was later imprisoned.

But not all women were like Binz or Grese.

Kompisch draws on several case histories of other more outwardly civilized woman to try to get to the core of the corruption of their sex by the Nazi regime.

Karin Magnussen, 20, born in 1908 in *Bremen*, was a brilliant biologist and physicist. Here was a woman venerated by her profession, unaffected by the financial and political upheavals that propelled Hitler to power — and who ended up using the eyeballs taken from still-living prisoners at Auschwitz by the demented Dr Josef Mengele for experiments on the pigmentation of the human iris.

She became a fanatical Nazi out of choice and belief, not for any advancement of social or fiscal standing that such a step offered the less intelligent or less fortunate in society. At the end of the war she was one of the legions who claimed to be “dragged along in things.”

“I was a Nazi fellow traveler, that's all,” said Magnussen in 1945. She was allowed to teach for another 20 years before dying peacefully in her bed, aged 89 in 1997.

Dr Ruth Kellermann, born in 1913, was another female intellectual who willingly joined the Nazi crusade.

A gifted scientist, she worked at the sinister Race Hygiene and Peoples' Biology Research Institute in Berlin where she experimented on the cadavers of gypsies killed in *Ravensbruck*.

She moved to *Hamburg*, where she was ‘instrumental’ in the round-ups of local gypsies to extermination camps.

After the war, there was no longer any call for eugenics and she satisfied herself with a research job as a social historian.

Her past was forgotten until the 1980s, when one of her lectures at Hamburg University about the history of housekeeping turned into a melee as protestors

stormed the building accusing her of war crimes. Kellermann never served any prison time, and she never apologized.

And take Dr Herta Oberheuser. Although happy, talented and a woman of independent means, she joined *Ravensbruck* concentration camp.

Oberheuser killed healthy children with injections made from oil, mixed with the barbiturate *evipan*, and then removed their limbs and vital organs.



Female SS guards after *Belsen* was liberated by Allied forces.

The time from injection to death was around five minutes, with the person being fully conscious until the last moment.

Oberheuser also performed gruesome and painful medical experiments, focusing on deliberately inflicting wounds on the subjects.

In order to simulate the combat wounds of German soldiers fighting in the war and identify ready cures, Oberheuser rubbed foreign objects, such as wood, rusty nails, slivers of glass, dirt, or sawdust, into the wounds of prisoners.

Oberheuser was the only female defendant in the Nuremberg Medical Trial, where she was sentenced to 20 years in jail.

She was released in April 1952 for good behavior and became a family doctor at *Stocksee* in Germany, only to lose her position in 1956 after a *Ravensbruck* survivor recognized her.

Her license to practice medicine was revoked in 1958.

She said of her service: “Being a woman didn't stop me being a good National Socialist. I think female National Socialists were every bit as valuable as men in keeping what we believed in alive.”

## VISITING A MOTHER'S GRAVE AT AUSCHWITZ

(Continued from page 6)

*Makow-Mazowiecki*. My search took me across Europe to Italy. At the very last camp in Santa Maria Di Bagni, I was blessed to find my father — alive!

My father and I hadn't seen each other since our time in Auschwitz in 1942; his work detail had been shipped to a camp in Austria. But somehow, when the war was over, we became each other's miracle.

In 1947, the two of us left Europe to begin a whole new life across the Atlantic with relatives in the United States.

More than 60 years have passed since that tumultuous period. The image of the tree and all that is beneath it rises before me.

A British writer friend connected me to the Holocaust documentary crew from Britain.

“Will you come with me to Poland,” she asked, “to give your story to the cameras, to bear witness for Mama Anna and the kids?”

The sapling in *Birkenau* is now a tall,

majestic birch, its bark silvered with age, its trunk durable and wide, its leaves shimmering in the wind. Just beyond are the ruins of the crematorium where the grandchildren of former inmates light *yahrzeit* candles in honor of the lost.

I stand with my daughter-in-law, Norma, and together we lay the roses among the birch's winding roots. We recite the *Kaddish* and I can't tell whether I grieve or feel relief, or maybe both. Just as the birch grips the earth, I feel anchored with it and sense some emanation of peace from the much-loved presences that lie here.

A light rain begins to fall through the pale gray branches, and it's time to go. I kiss the tree's trunk and whisper, “I did not forget you.”

*Stanley (Szlamek) Glogover was born 1925 in Makow-Mazowiecki, Poland. After surviving Auschwitz, he immigrated to the United States in 1947. He lives in Florida with his wife, Joanie.*

## SEARCH LAUNCHED FOR “UNSEEN” SURVIVORS' MEMOIRS

HAVIV RETTIG, THE JERUSALEM POST

With even the youngest Holocaust survivors in their late 70s, a new Claims Conference project seeks to locate, digitize and present to the world thousands of as-yet unknown memoirs and diaries from that period. According to Claims Conference officials, thousands of unpublished memoirs are thought to exist. The next few years may be the last opportunity to preserve and make public the last of these texts.

Now, the Worldwide Shoah Memoirs Collection hopes to create a database of these memoirs that will offer future generations living after the last survivors have died direct access to original testimony in the language and style of the survivor.

“There are thousands of writings and diaries in the hands of survivors or their families that lie at home because there wasn't the money to publish. Some printed just 10 or 20 copies for the close family. There are texts catalogued in small archives somewhere that nobody touches,” according to Gabi Bron, the project's coordinator in Israel.

“We know dozens of people have come

forward to survivors' groups, and hundreds more wanted to write their memoirs but never did.”

The project is at a very early stage. The budget will depend on response, and news of the project has yet to reach the Jewish and general media around the world.

The structure of the catalog is also unfinished. Though the details have yet to be finalized, the Web site is expected to be arranged according to countries, historical periods and types of story. The system currently cannot accept handwritten manuscripts, and no plans are in place to help survivors type up their memoirs. Claims Conference officials are considering using community center volunteers who are teaching computer courses for the elderly.

The Web site, [memoirs.claimscon.org](http://memoirs.claimscon.org), currently operates in two languages, Hebrew and English, with translation under way into French, German, Hungarian, Yiddish, Spanish, Russian and Polish.

Yet, Bron is optimistic that the project will be a success. First announced on Tuesday, two manuscripts were located before the end of the workday.

## FUGITIVE “DOCTOR DEATH” DIED IN 1992

BY RICHARD CARTER, AFP

One of the most wanted Nazi war criminals, Aribert Heim or “*Doctor Death*,” thought to be in his 90s and in South America, actually died in Cairo in 1992, according to media reports.

Heim was wanted for killing hundreds of concentration camp victims with horrific medical experiments, including performing operations without anesthetics and injecting petrol directly into their hearts.

German public TV channel ZDF said in a statement that Heim died of bowel cancer in 1992, citing his son and acquaintances in Cairo where he had been living under the assumed identity of Tarek Farid Hussein after converting to Islam.

ZDF and also the *New York Times* claim they have more than 100 documents including Heim's passport, bank statements, personal letters and medical records that prove without a doubt that Heim lived in a Cairo hotel until his death.

He had been in hiding since 1962. Leading Nazi hunter Efraim Zuroff from the Simon Wiesenthal Centre said last July that he believed Heim was still alive and living in either Argentina or Chile.

Zuroff said that the German TV report sounded authoritative but that he would be seeking further confirmation.

“The report on the death of the ‘butcher of Mauthausen’ is apparently reliable but we don't for the moment have either a body or a grave...,” he said.

“Some people have an interest in substantiating this death, so we are going to check the available documents on the subject.”

He added: “Personally, I would be very disappointed if Heim had been able to end his life without being tried, but I do not regret the efforts that we have made to try and have him arrested because through this the world came to know what he was.”

Born on June 28, 1914, in *Radhersburg*, Austria, Heim joined the Nazi party before Germany annexed Austria, when membership of the party was still illegal.

He then became a member of Hitler's elite SS guard in 1940 and, after stints at camps in *Buchenwald* and *Sachsenhausen* in Germany, was posted to the infamous *Mauthausen* camp in Austria.

It was at *Mauthausen* that he became

known as “*Doctor Death*” after performing sadistic and grotesque medical experiments. Survivors of *Mauthausen* allege the father of three cut prisoners open, removing their livers, among other things. His cruelty was such that he has frequently been compared to Josef Mengele, the so-called “*Angel of Death*” who was a doctor at Auschwitz.

Heim was Number Two on the Simon Wiesenthal Centre's most wanted Nazi list, after Alois Brunner, Adolf Eichmann's main assistant, who is thought to be dead.

Heim was arrested by US troops in 1945 but was released two-and-a-half years later. He subsequently set himself up as a gynecologist in Germany, but fled in 1962, when authorities were poised to arrest him.

There had been numerous reported sightings of him as far afield as South America, Egypt and Spain.

Nazi-hunters thought twice in recent years they were close to pinning him down, once in Spain in 2005 and again last year in a small Chilean town some 600 miles south of Santiago.

However, Heim's son Ruediger told ZDF in an interview that his father went to ground in 1962 and travelled to Cairo via France, Spain and Morocco.

Here he contracted an incurable form of bowel cancer in the early 1990s and died following several months of radiotherapy and chemotherapy.



Police handout dated 1950 shows Aribert Heim. Nazi fugitive Aribert Heim, known as “*Doctor Death*.”



## RECORD PARTICIPATION AT THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE ON HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

The Education Department of the American Society for Yad Vashem and its Young Leadership Associates held the Eleventh Annual Professional Development Conference on Holocaust Education. The Conference took place on Sunday, March 22, 2009 at the Pratt Mansions/Marymount School in New York City. This year's conference was largest in recent years.

The Association of the Teachers of

Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem under the direction of Ms. Dorit Novak who was present at the conference. The conference featured the most recent educational units: "Through Our Eyes" and "How Was It Humanly Possible?" "We work to put a face on individual Holocaust victims in order to introduce a human element to the story. Transmitting these messages is our hope for the future,"

explained Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society.

This year's keynote speaker was Dr. Miriam Klein Kassenoff. Herself a child-survivor, Dr. Kassenoff made a presentation on literature of the Holocaust for classroom use and led a workshop on the "Power of Film in Holocaust Education."

Close to two hundred educators from the tri-State area attended this year's conference. "The lost world of European Jewry and the tragic consequences should be used as points of departure to educate younger generations of the importance of tolerance, understanding and the dangers of hatred and discrimination," said Mr. Eli Zborowski.

The conference included the following:

- An overview of the Yad Vashem educational philosophy.
- Diverse hands-on workshops on lesson modeling for Holocaust education.
- Interactive workshops using Holocaust educational units prepared by Yad Vashem.



Carolyn Herbst, UFT/ATSS Rep, Eli Zborowski, Chairman American Society for Yad Vashem, Miriam Kassenoff, Keynote Speaker, Ilana Apelker, Education American Society for Yad Vashem, Caroline Massel, President Young Leadership Associates, Dorit Novak, Director International School for Holocaust Studies Yad Vashem and Elizabeth Mundlak Zborowski Cultural Director American Society for Yad Vashem

Social Studies/United Federation of Teachers which once again co-sponsored the Conference, pointed out that, "This conference is an invaluable resource for increasing awareness and sensitivity to intolerance and injustice, especially in today's world."

This year's conference focused on three themes of the Holocaust: Children, Rescuers and Perpetrators. The curriculum was developed and prepared by the International School of Yad Vashem, The

## HOLLYWOOD AND THE HOLOCAUST

BY ANDREW JOHNSON,  
THE INDEPENDENT

When Tom Cruise dons his eye patch and steps into the world's multiplexes on Boxing Day as Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg in the much-anticipated biopic *Valkyrie*, he will be leading an attack. It's the first of a host of films starring A-list actors that revisit the Nazi era in Germany and show how it has affected subsequent decades.

The brutality of the Nazi regime and the horror of the Holocaust have held a grim fascination for 60 years. Until now, however, the subject has mainly been tackled in the cinema through romanticized war films or hard-hitting attempts at docu-drama, such as *Schindler's List*.

Cruise's film dramatizes the failed plot to assassinate Hitler in 1944. Like *Downfall*, the groundbreaking German film about Hitler's final days in his bunker, it shows the war from a German point of view.

It will be followed by several films that look at the aftermath of the Holocaust. *Adam Resurrected*, starring Jeff Goldblum and Willem Defoe, is about a circus entertainer who, spared the gas chamber, comes to terms with his history while in an Israeli mental institution in 1961.

*The Reader* has Kate Winslet as a German woman with a secret past and Ralph Fiennes as her former lover, who discovers that secret during the Nuremberg trials. *Defiance* sees Daniel Craig switch the guile of James Bond for that of Tuvia Bielski, one of three Jewish brothers who became resistance fighters in the Belarussian forest.

Germany itself is also seeing a new generation tackle the subject of the Nazis, which for decades was too difficult for the nation to face. *North Face*, set in 1938, looks at the German attempt to conquer the north face of the Eiger for the glory of the Nazis. Recently released

films include *A Secret* and *One Day You'll Understand*, both from France, in which a younger generation tries to piece together wartime Jewish history through the stories of their parents and grandparents.

Even Quentin Tarantino is making a Nazi-themed film. His much-anticipated *Inglorious Bastards* is about a Jewish girl seeking revenge alongside a platoon of Jewish-American soldiers.

While war films are nothing new, Dr Helmut Schmitz, who lectures in post-war German literature and culture at the University of Warwick, believes this slew of new films comes from a younger generation attempting to deal with a subject that is moving out of living memory.

"We are now in a generational shift," he said. "Over the past 10 years or so we have a whole new generation of consumers who do not have a big connection with this history. Films such as *Downfall* perhaps began the trend to look at these events from a post-cold war perspective."

He added, however, that he was "ambivalent" about whether the new trend was a good thing. "There's an argument it could increase knowledge," he said. "But to engage with it in the form of entertainment is perhaps not appropriate to the sober subject matter. Even if you empathize with the victims you can't fully understand the situation they're in."

The critic and playwright Bonnie Greer pointed out that these films were made while wars raged in Iraq and Afghanistan. "We've been in a longer war than the Second World War, and in order to explain what that means, we have to go back over other wars. I think the Holocaust has to be retold for each generation, and in the language of that generation," she said.

The veteran film critic Barry Norman agreed. "If they are accurate films then they will probably provide some much-needed education to the 12- to 25-year-olds who make up the majority of film audiences," he said.

## AUTHOR GAINS NEW EXPOSURE FROM HOLOCAUST FILM

(Continued from page 1)

seller the past two weeks and has generated new interest in several of Tec's earlier works. Interview requests have poured in from around the world.

Tec, a Lublin native, was 8 years old when the Germans arrived. She and her sister survived three years by posing as the nieces of a Catholic family. Her family was one of only three that survived the war intact from a prewar population of some 40,000.

After the war Tec immigrated to Israel, where she married. Later she moved to the United States, where she earned a doctorate at Columbia University. She has two children, one of whom – son Roland – co-produced the film.

Tec met Tuvia Bielski only once, in Brooklyn, N.Y., just weeks before his death in 1987. Bielski's legendary charisma still was manifest, Tec says, even though he was old and frail.

"He was whispering," she recalled. "I thought that my tape recorder won't get anything. And I was trying to have the information flow. And as he got into his past, he sort of just, before my eyes, he became the person that he was, this charismatic leader, that has this absolute power in the unit."

She added later, "When he came into the room, he filled it with himself."

Tec's intention in documenting the Bielski history, to challenge the dominant Holocaust narrative of Jewish passivity, is also what has made the brothers' story appealing to Jewish educators and

encouraging students to grapple with the thorny ethical questions raised by their legacy.

Jon Loew, the founder of the pro-Israel group Fuel For Truth, says he has given out scores of copies of Tec's book in an effort to



Daniel Craig as Tuvia Bielski in "Defiance."

activists. The Jewish Partisan Education Foundation has crafted an entire curriculum in response to the film in the hopes of perpetuating the memory of the Bielskis and

awaken Jews to their own history and inspire them to stand up for themselves.

"One of the challenges we face as a people is that many Jews living today are

not willing to resort to violence under any circumstances," Loew said. "We don't want to 'lower ourselves to their level.' But unfortunately, the only way to get a bully to stop picking on you is to stand up to them and, if necessary, punch them in the eye. So we can negotiate and beg and plead all we want, but I'm not sure if in the history of the world an aggressor ever stopped pursuing its prey because the prey asked nicely."

Tec is not unaware of the implications of the Bielskis' story for contemporary Jewry. If Tuvia Bielski saw how southern Israeli towns were enduring waves of Hamas rocket fire, Tec said, "he wouldn't take it. He'd probably kill them."

But while Tec believes the film will do away with the notion that Jews are cowards, she is under no illusions that Jewish toughness will bring about the end of anti-Semitism, an illness she attributes – like racism and sexism – to an impulse to blame the victim.

"Anti-Semitism is with us; it is like a perpetual, chronic addiction of humanity," she said. "You cannot learn about anti-Semitism by examining what the anti-Semites tell us because this is not based on fact. It is based on their need to blame somebody for something that they have not done."



## BEHIND FAIRY-TALE DRAWINGS, WALLS TALK OF UNSPEAKABLE CRUELTY

BY ETHAN BRONNER

He occupies the driver's seat with an air of insouciance, a blue helmet atop his head, two proud white steeds under his command and a sly smile across his lips. Bruno Schulz looks out at the world from his painting as if he owns it. But like much else in his life, cut short by a Nazi bullet, this is pure fantasy.

The work and story of Schulz, a Jewish writer and painter in Poland who was forced to illustrate a children's playroom in a Nazi officer's home and then killed, have long attracted literary attention. There was something about his humility, talent and fate that captivated writers like Cynthia Ozick, Philip Roth and David Grossman, who all made him a character in their works.



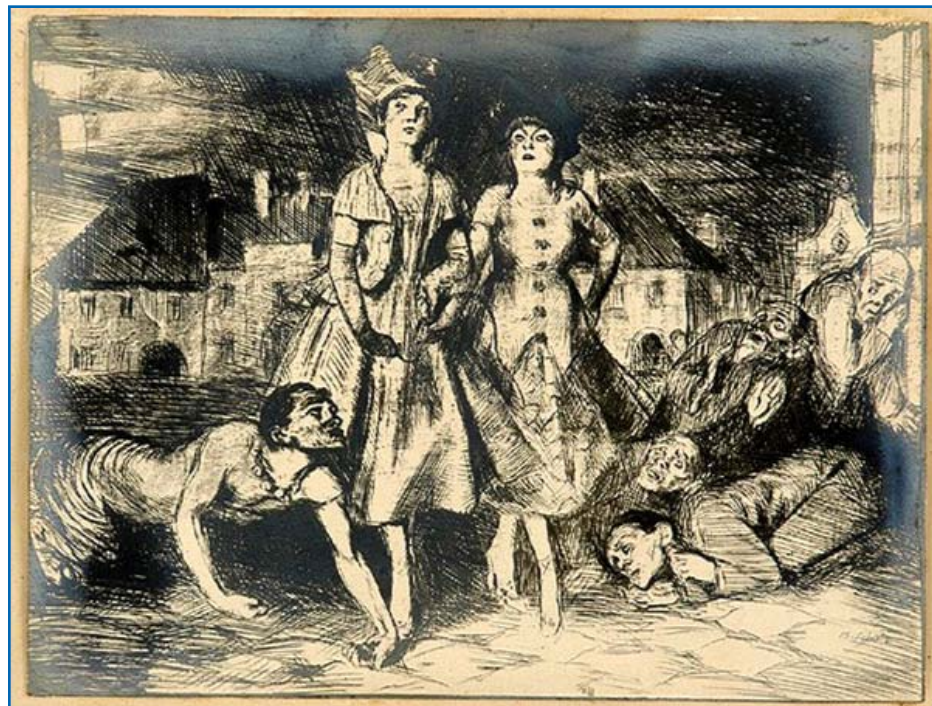
Bruno Schulz, in 1934 on stairs of his house.

Yet until the wall drawings for children were discovered in 2001 by a documentary filmmaker, fading and peeling like ancient Roman frescoes, they were thought to have been destroyed. Spirited out of Schulz's hometown in what is now Ukraine under contested circumstances by the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum in Israel, they have been painstakingly preserved and put on view here for the first time.

And while this haunting show, a permanent exhibition titled "Wall Painting Under

Coercion," will not end the lingering controversy over whether Schulz belongs more to Polish than to Jewish culture, or whether the wall drawings should have remained in Ukraine rather than go to

Landau did save Schulz for more than a year, until November 1942, by providing him with work and the means for minimal sustenance. Schulz, whose literary reputation as a short-story writer had already



"The Enchanted Town II, Drohobych" 1920-1922.

Israel, it offers a poignant example of artistic defiance in the face of overwhelming cruelty.

"There was something very Kafkaesque about his abhorrence of bureaucracy and authority," said Yehudit Shendar, senior art curator at Yad Vashem. "He is sometimes called the Polish Kafka. He took courage with a brush in his hand. It became a weapon of rebellion."

For example, the Cinderella, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs, and Hansel and Gretel that Schulz created for the officer's children's playroom bore the faces of real people: Schulz himself, his father and other members of the Jewish population in their town, *Drohobych*. Putting himself at the reins in his drawing struck a note of defiance, since Nazi law forbade Jews from riding in or driving carriages.

His face is also that of the witch, a reference, curators believe, to the witch hunts that Jews faced in eastern *Galicia*, then part of Poland, in those months after the Nazi conquest of his town in June 1941.

Instantly, some 900 Jews were rounded up and shot. Most of the rest were pressed into forced labor before being killed. Schulz was a sickly man and a talented one, and the *Gestapo* sergeant in charge of Jewish laborers, Felix Landau, held him aside and ordered him to decorate a riding school and his children's nursery. It seemed to be his salvation.

Marila B., who was 11 at the time and lived in the house next to the riding school, eventually escaped through the forest with her family and lives today in Israel. She remembers the Nazi sergeant and the wall drawings because she was ordered to baby-sit for the officer's children, aged 4 and 2.

"I would play with the children in the garden and then take them up to the playroom, and there I saw the drawings," she said in a brief interview at the opening of the exhibition at Yad Vashem. Loath to be obliged to repeat her story, she asked that her full name not be published. "Landau used to walk around with a pistol in one hand and a whip in the other. He was the very embodiment of evil."

been established, had obtained false Aryan papers and was about to escape when another *Gestapo* sergeant, Karl Günter, angry that Landau had killed his Jewish dentist, put a bullet in Schulz's head. He is said to have told Landau: "You killed my Jew. Now I've killed yours."

Schulz was 50 and a bachelor, and though he had published only a handful of works, he was viewed as brilliant by those who mattered most in Polish literature. His reputation later grew immensely. As Isaac Bashevis Singer put it, "What he did in his short life was enough to make him one of the most remarkable writers who ever lived."

Always rooted in *Drohobych*, his work had a magical vitality to it.

As one of his famous lines reads, "My colored pencils rushed in inspiration across columns of illegible text in masterly squiggles, in breakneck zig-zags that knotted themselves suddenly into anagrams of vision, into enigmas of bright revelation, and then dissolved into empty, shiny flashes of lightning, following imaginary tracks."

Mr. Grossman, the Israeli author, says he discovered Schulz when someone told him that Schulz's influence was evident in his own first novel. He had never heard of Schulz, but he picked up his stories and felt a chill of admiration and recognition. Upon learning of the infamous line about Nazis' killing each other's Jews, Mr. Grossman was filled with the ambition to write about the Holocaust.

In his widely admired novel "See Under: Love," a character named Bruno escapes a ghetto under Nazi occupation and jumps into a river, joining a school of salmon.

Most of Schulz's artwork has not survived, but was also esteemed by his contemporaries. Expressionist in the way of Middle European artists of the interwar era, it mixed dreamlike fantasy with a touch of erotica. Because he was an assimilated Jew who wrote in Polish and whose hometown is now in Ukraine, the



"Carriage Driver (Self-Portrait), Drohobych" 1941-1942.

discovery of the murals was greeted in Eastern Europe as the retrieval of a piece of national heritage.

For officials at Yad Vashem, however, Schulz was killed for being a Jew, and his work belonged here. When they learned of the discovery, they negotiated with the family living in the house and the municipality to get permission to rescue the paintings from their neglected circumstances.

What happened next is disputed, but most of the paintings were removed and taken to Israel without the Ukrainian government's permission. After years of bad feelings, a deal has been struck whereby the murals belong to Ukraine but are on long-term loan to Yad Vashem. The Ukrainian deputy culture minister attended the exhibition's opening.

So did Mr. Grossman. He told the audience an anecdote from Schulz's childhood. His mother caught him feeding sugar water to flies one autumn day, and she asked him what he was doing. "Helping them get through the long winter," he replied.

That, Mr. Grossman said, is what Schulz's work does for us all.

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