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 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’hai B’rith.

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**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

HOLOCAUST FILM

**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, Tuva 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 nearly five decades she has lived quietly in Connecticut, producing mainly works of nonfiction — the story of the small minority of Jewish victims who went passively to their death.”

**(Continued on page 15)**
GERMANY AGREES TO INCREASE PAYMENTS FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

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GERMAN COURT RULES ON NAZI-CONFISCATED ART

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

The museum also said it plans to appeal court ruling, had argued Hans Sachs had relinquished his rights to the paintings collection when he accepted $50,000 in compensation from the government of West Germany in 1961. But Sachs’s son and current head of the museum, 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.

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 grinding reparations to a Holocaust victim.

The council said the French must “solemly recognize the responsibility of the state and the country prejudiced there by. Because the country permitted or facilitated the deportation from France of victims, the state bears anti-Semitic persecution,” the French Daily Le Figaro reported.

It took until 1995 for former French Prime Minister 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 occupants 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 task of finding out 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 “compenate” Holocaust victims, the court underlined that the government had already paid them “as much as possible.”

The New York-based Anti-Defamation League 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 millions of dollars from the government. He cited a $632 million sum paid to Holocaust victims and their children in 2002.

The very day of the opening, April 20, demonstrates insulation to Jewish feelings, a Jewish Agency spokesman noted. April 20, 2009 will mark the 120th anniversary of the birth of Adolf Hitler.

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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 the Responsibility of Memory.”

Taking the podium before the keynote speaker – Rabbi Yisrael Mer 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 Birkenau and your struggle to bring the pain 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,” she said, “is nothing to anybody, even to Jews from Romania.”

Transnistria, which 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.

“Just to be here at the 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 U.N.

That day, her mother died, as had Gold’s father and brother. The same day in 1945, Soviet troops liberated the Buchenwald camp, where she 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 Cernovitza. In 1941, Romanian soldiers and German Nazis marched into the area and mass killed 2,000 Jews.

The ruling Romanian fascists forced Jewish residents into a ghetto. Gold, then, and her family were moved to Buchenwald, where they were held for two-week march to the town of Birkenau, 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 to Turkey, then to 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 a brother. “The child survivors are the last ones left to tell the story, and we are slowly dying out,” she said. “We survived from the abyss and survived to speak the unspeakable.”

In a declaration released at the end of the first ever inter-parliamentary summit on combating anti-Semitism, more than 100 lawmakers called on their governments “never again to allow the institutions of the European Union 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 Bush administration announced that the United States would send a delegation to a Geneva pre-conference before which it will attend the conference, known as Durban II, in Switzerland.

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

US TO UNVEIL COURT RULINGS AGAINST NAZIS

The criminal division of the US Department of Justice 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 Investigations, which handles cases against 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.

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


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 and national communities of Galicia and their 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 facts 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, and interviews with both locals and Jews of that generation are reluctant to talk about the rule of Adolf Hitler, preferring to tell stories of democracy and of postwar chaos and hardship.

Typical of the places Bartov takes us is Drohobycz, also known as “Drohobyts,” Drohobets, and Drohobycz. Now a Ukrainian town, it was “some 40 miles southwest” of what we know as Lemberg. In 1939, according to Bartov, there were “10,000 Poles” in Drohobycz, “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 were deported to the death camps), “about 15,000” Jews lived here among “Poles, Ukrainians, Hutus, Germans, Armenians, Hungarians, Viachs, and others.” Once again, the Germans deported many of the Jews to Belzec or other extermination camps, killed them in the town and the forests nearby. Today, there is little evidence that there ever was a Jewish community living in Drohobycz. 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 ground of the ghetto” where the Germans penned up the Jews of Drohobycz 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 monument or a street name hints at the fact that another people’s story is buried here.

Bartov takes us to Kolomyia, also known as Kolomyya, Kolomey and Kolomea. “On the eve of World War II,” “about 15,000” Jews lived here among “Poles, Ukrainians, Hutus, Germans, Armenians, Hungarians, Viachs, and others.” Once again, the Germans deported many of the Jews to Belzec or other extermination camps, killed them in the town and the forests nearby. Today, there is little evidence that there ever was a Jewish community living in Drohobycz. 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 ground of the ghetto” where the Germans penned up the Jews of Drohobycz 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 monument or a street name hints at the fact that another people’s story is buried here.

Finally, this reviewer would like to direct 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, Buczachtsch, and Btshchutsch.” 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 Jewish community living in present-day Ukraine, sometimes simply referring to people “not Jews specific-ally” or Ukrainians as having been murdered. In fact, only tombstones, found in a cemetery by one who must have been Jewish, potentially identify the facts that the Jews were here ever . . . and then there is a strange little museum in the town with a few books written by Yosef Shmuel Agnon, a “former resi-dent” of Buchach. And, yes, no doubt, 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 democracy and 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, 90, says it was only her 3-year-old son who knew about her past. When she was photographed sitting on the Fuhrer’s knee. Her father taught her the “Heil Hitler” porters: Their proudest moment was brushing aside. When the mentally dis-abled child of a neighbor is taken by the Gestapo, “No, he’s just a Jew.” That’s the explanation Hunt’s mother gave when she was combed archives across the former Reich 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 stripping of Polish workers as head of the Gestapo in the German city of Munster.

The seeds of Bavarian nationalism — an alliance between ethnic Germans and Slovaks. In the family in 1912 moved to the Austrian town of Amstetten, just across the border from Hitler’s mountain. During studying law, Bast joined a national-ist fraternity and gained the dual 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 Hoffman, seems barely credible, one cannot imagine that it was written geologically, making it hard to follow at times. The research is meticulous, though. Pollack combed archives across Austria, former Rasch and interviewed aging Nazis.

How do you cope with the knowledge that your father was a cold-blooded murderer? Pollack seems numb 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

For years the Nazis kept their pastels, their bead-like gowns stashed from billboards and free sheets across the land. Black hair, lacquered and pure, these were the women of Hitler’s Third Reich. They were prolific mothers, skilled homemakers, hard-working secretaries and dedicated auxiliaries. They supported their men at war and devoted themselves to the cause of their Führer. And their Führer 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. Faring income benefits were dispensed for every new child, “childish” families were publicly honored and the gold Cross of Honor, Hitler’s personal order, was awarded 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 busy killing Jews and armaments plants continue to pump out lipstick, nylons and fashion accessories for “the glorious 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 wives?

Until recently, the role of the Nazi woman in the construction of the brutal machinery of the state has remained a sensitive issue. “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 propaganda machine of Josef Goebbels was, according to Kompisch, every bit as eager to turn the thumbscrews on the victims held in Gestapo cells 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 “Sadiest of Stutthof” for her merciless beatings. And they were handmaids in 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 pacifism would have denied them. Just as the “ordinary Joe” could become an extraordinary “superman”, 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 Blockwärter — apartment house

Some women had very close access to the Führer.

F

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.

Some 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 testi monies 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.”

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

Dorothea Binz, head training overseer at the all-female camp of Ravensbrück after 1942, trained her female students in “ordinary Joe” could become an extraordi-inary “superman,” who first sterilized, and later murdered, the “useless handicapped.”
A young boy named Sam Spritzer lived in Rawa Ruska, Poland in 1939. When he was 17, Nazis rounded him up along with other boys and men from the theater hall and forced them to work in Auschwitz. "I was a Nazi soldier he needed water from," Spritzer recalls. He endured for months old, trapped in the theater. He sank thigh-deep in snow. Once, Spritzer took a group of soldiers on a gray March day in 2007. He was adept at half a dozen languages, he worked as an army escort. Spritzer was in the process of玑Old Father, I have nothing. I have nothing. I've never wanted any of it."

"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 farmers and tailors. Until the German invasion, Spritzer led a comfortable life. "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 farmers and tailors. Until the German invasion, Spritzer led a comfortable life.

When the soldier wasn't looking, the kid dumped a bucket of water and only one toilet, and Spritzer's tormentors made him spend his daylight hours cleaning up human excrement. He remembered the horror of the Nazi ghettos.

"I went to make memory whole and love again."

Today, 70 years later, the German government is offering to pay Spritzer and others left in the world. One was in Paris, Furlan Spritzer Furs. Another was in Houston, and in 1955, Spritzer moved to France. He and his business was in the process of building a bigger, better fur business. He and his business was in the process of building a bigger, better fur business here.

"He and his business was in the process of building a bigger, better fur business here."

The jars of ashes beneath the tree are huge. There are experiences that settle in a person's image forever: My mother, Anna Glogover, a pretty auburn-haired woman in her 30s, came with me. "See you soon," my father, Lazer Glogover, said. Itka and the boys that Azriel held on tight. Gray hairs were in a sink. He had no information on the transport from the Miawa Ghetto, in Poland. The wind was whistling, the temperature below zero, and there was nothing in sight except a birch was nothing more than a sapling. I never saw them again."

"They know the night patrols came upon me with nothing. All I really have is my wife, my family and I first arrived in Auschwitz in November 1942 on the train in search of food. Immediately he sank thigh-deep in snow."

Spritzer is 86. He and Pantipa closed their Galleria store in 2003, but they continue to sell fur at Houston Jewelry. Spritzer says, "I've cooled off. I forgive."
HELEN ZIEGERSCHMIDT, THIS WEEK IN HEBREW

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 she had designed and sewed the wedding gown herself, her family was not impressed. “My mother didn’t have the heart to tell my father, my mother said she was her aunt,” Pieniak said. “He and his two sons were murdered – and that she was taught murder – 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 want her to go and cry a lot,” Pieniak said. “She bought a green dress and a burgundy-chi- red 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. “My father hid her in the woods when the Germans were gone.”

Two years after the war was over, Teresa suddenly announced it was time for her to return “to my people.” “My mother didn’t have the heart to tell my father,” Pieniak said. “We went to church and recited the bless-...”

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 Krakow. “I’m not the type of person to go looking for her,” Pieniak said. “I think she just wanted to go somewhere...”

Teresa, smiling at a family wedding in Krakow. “I’m not the type of person to go looking for her,” Pieniak said. “I think she just wanted to go somewhere...”

By Corky Siemaszko, Daily News

E verything about her was a lie. Her name was not Teresa Wisniewska. She was a Jew. Of that matter to Edward Pieniak when he was a toddler and his mother hid her from the Germans in a trade for his worthless parachute. In...
Over 800 people attended the American Society for Yad Vashem Young 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 and data. Instead, it is a collection of 90 vintage postcards and 55 poems displayed, highlighting some of the personal stories of the children, providing a glimpse into their world – the struggle of these children to hold on to life. It describes their attempts to escape from that which surrounded them. In many cases, it was the children who gave up 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 educational programs, social events and activities.

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

Jaci and Gonen Paradis.

Jason Wilf and Cori Rothkopf.

Matthew Rubin, Alicia Post and David Katsylehsa.

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

Adam and Iris Lindenbaum.

Kevin and Amanda Cyrulnik.
ng Leadership Associates’ Annual Winter Gala on February 12, 2009 at the
Jerusalem which opened a window into the world of children during the Holocaust.
or descriptions of physical violence. Instead, the toys, games, artwork, diaries, and
gape into their lives during the Holocaust. The exhibition tells the story of sur-
to maintain their childhood and youth by creating for themselves a different reali-
their parents the encouragement and hope to continue their desperate daily fight
American Society for Yad Vashem.
highly motivated young professionals, are an integral part of the American
education. They ensure the continuity of this mission through educational pro-

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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Supersol Caterers
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GERMAN OFFICER WHO HELPED "THE PIANIST" HONORED

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 Nareva River, and said, “Over there, drink from the river, resting under the ground.”

During the Nazi occupation, some 2,000 Jews, interned in a graphite factory, were shot in September 1941 and April 1942, next to the village of Naumy, and on the banks of the Nareva River near the town. Only five Jews survived. These locations are two of the 101 muder sites in the former USSR. From this pool of data, 51 different communities whose Jewish populations were massacred — 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 testemonies, 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 Myasa Shirlkiehter to her brother Grisha, a Red Army soldier, in which she describes the murder of her 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 the pramuncal cities and towns throughout the former Soviet Union. Jews were murdered with unbreakable 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 coming to 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

A n 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, Chair of Yad Vashem Avner Shalev said, “The complex historical issues that will arise during the workshop must be rooted in research. 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 the truth. At the end of his remarks, the Nuncio also referred to the upcoming visit of Pope Benedict XVI to Yad Vashem.

The meeting of scholars is being held to understand the current 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 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 on Israel on June 9, 1981, during the trial of Nazi war criminal Adolph Eichmann.

Haim Gouri, the poet and journalist who witnessed the shooting of Jews in Latvia, said: “There is no documentary relating to 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 Nazi’s rise to power, his opposition to them was deep and consistent, Yad Vashem said.

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. During the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, he employed him at the sports center after Hosenfeld had provided them with shelter while Wladyslaw wrote to Yad Vashem, as

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 publishing Hosenfeld’s personal diaries, and letters to his wife were reviewed by Yad Vashem, which clarified 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 Nazi’s 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.
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 continue twin research in a monstrous era, but by that time Verschuer had an assistant, Josef Mengele. Rockefeller funding stopped during World War II, but by that time Verschuer had been transferred into Auschwitz to continue twin research in a monstrous fashion. Even the eugenicist, he sent precise clinical reports weekly to Verschuer.

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 book throughout the country "by the carload." The Rockefeller Foundation, the philanthropic incarnation of America's greatest industrial giants, paid for historian reviews. But in an era when people no longer believe big corporations, the dots can be 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 corporations.

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 craftsmen. 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.

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.
One page of an antisemitic coloring book wide-distributed to children with a portrait of a Jew drawn by the German caricaturist known as Fips. The book's 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.”

BY NAFEESA SYEED, AP

One of the most disturbing revelations of the 1945 exhibit, “State of Deception: The Propaganda of the Third Reich” is displayed in the exhibit.

The exhibit opened Jan. 30 at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and runs through December 2011. It documents how propaganda fostered public indifference and portrayed Jewish people as the enemy in the context of how Nazi Germany's propaganda machine cultivated hatred and suspicion and furthered the notion that attacking Israel has become a means of once again attacking the Jews.

The Nazi party promised to unite Germans under a national, Aryan, and religious umbrella, but only Jews, the mentally and physically disabled, gays and other groups considered “impure.” 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.

“The grandchildren of Holocaust survivors from World War II are still being deceived,” said Steven Luckert, the exhibit's curator. “These are things that we have to be constantly aware of in our own day.”

The exhibit is 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.”

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 the defeat of Nazi Germany, the Allies dismantled, demolished, or confiscated monuments, statues, and other public artwork glorifying Adolf Hitler and the Third Reich. But the Allies did not retire a part of a systematic program of denazification. This photo graph shows a bust of Adolf Hitler being carted away with other refuse.

The swastika, accompanied by the words, “Upgrade to Holocaust Version 2.0.”

The Yazidi, a religious community, was Expanded and explained, it also has been mocked those branded as the enemy.

The swastika, accompanied by the words, “Upgrade to Holocaust Version 2.0.”

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Using the Holocaust to attack the Jews

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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 just set up and dedicated.

"I was shaken by my mother's stories, because there was almost nothing in our textbooks about the Holocaust," the 42-year-old said. "I decided to do it myself."

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

Even though President Alexander Lukashenko in 2007 compared Jews to Nazis, the Belarussian 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, Belarussian Jewish community leader Yakov Basin said. "Inencyclopedias and academic literature the history of the Jews is still suppressed."

Belarus Jews lumps 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 80 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, "in the name of Soviet citizens."

So the demoralization of Ilyuchik, a Christian, to honor a handful of Jews was something he just had to do.

"Belarusians and Jews won this victory," he said. "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 kilometers (250 kilometers) southwest of the capital, Minsk.

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.

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 fighters and they avoided being sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp for 2½ years, and smuggling out secrets to the Allies, Witold Pilecki overcame a card guard, and, with two comrades, escaped almost certain death.

Newly released documents from the Polish archives reveal how Mr Pilecki, going under the false name Tomasz Sarzewski, 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 they cannot call me by name and must be aware of another cell," he wrote in one of his reports.

The RAF and MI6 had been working since 1939 to gather intelligence on the Nazi war effort, and in September 1940 and sent to the most notorious Nazi extermination camp, which has now come to light.

"We will liberate the camp, he wrote. "I have plans to liberate the camp, 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 Auschitz continued to feed information to Britain and the United States, confirming that the Nazis were bent on the extermination of the Jews.

"At least 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."

A new material includes his charge sheet, which has 132 subsections, and 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 powers and was involved in activities aimed at undermining the Polish state and the order of the state."

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 occupied territories, 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 He and death of Mr Pilecki brought the Office's betrayal of Poland is the darkest chapter in its history, even if that betrayal was a strategic necessity," he said.
NAZI WOMEN EXPOSED AS EVERY BIT AS BAD AS HITLER’S DERANGED MALE FOLLOWERS

(Continued from page 5)

were tortured and drowned before the inmates. The woman was then told to beat a prisoner. Of the 60 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 outwardly civilized women to try to get to the core of the corruption of their sex by the Nazi regime. The sapling in with a research job as a social historian. Karin Magnusson, 20, born in 1925 in Makow-Mazowiecki, Poland. After the war, she became instrumental in the round-ups of local cameras, to bear witness for Mama Britain. Magnussen in 1945. She was allowed to teach for another 20 years said Magnussen. "I was a Nazi fellow traveler, that’s all," said Ruth Kellermann, born in 1913, was another female intellectual who willingly joined the Nazi crusade. A gifted scientist, she worked at the sinster Belsen, suffering from housekeeping turned into a meme as protesters 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 independent means, she joined Ravensbrück concentration camp. Oberheuser killed healthy women with injections made from oil, mixed with the barbiturate evipan, and then removed their limbs and vital organs. In 1947, the two of us left Europe to with relatives in the United States. The image of the tree over, we became each other's miracle. "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 print it. In 1992, according to Gabi Bron, the project's coordinator in Israel. "We know dozens of people have come forward to survivors' groups, and hundreds more have written to their memoirs but never did." The project is at a very early stage. The budget will depend on the success of the project has yet to reach the Jewish and general media around the world. T he 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 hand-written manuscripts, and no plans are in place to help survivors type up their memories. Claims Conference officials are consi dering using community center volunteers who are teaching computer courses for the elderly. The website, memoirs.claimson.org, currently operates in two languages, Hebrew and English, with translations under way into French, German, Hungarian, Yiddish, Spanish, Russian and Polish.

By Richard Carter, AFP

One of the most wanted Nazi war criminals, Arnhardt Heim or "Doctor Death," thought to be in his 90s and in South America, was arrested 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 there are more than 100 documents including Heim's passport, bank statements, travel letters and medical records that prove without a doubt that Heim lived in a Cairo hotel until his death. Heim was known in history 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 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. "People have an interest in sub- stantiating this death, so we are going to check the available documents on the subject." He added: "Personally, I would be very surprised if Heim had been able to end his days without being located, 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." 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 Mexico and again last year in a small Chilean town some 600 miles south of Santiago. However, Heim's lawyer told ZDF in an interview that his father went to ground in 1962 and travelled to Cairo via France, Spain and Italy. Here he contracted an incurable form of bowel cancer in the early 1990s and died following several months of radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

SEARCH LAUNCHED FOR “UNSEEN” SURVIVORS’ MEMOIRS

HAVV N REIT TIG, THE JERUSALEM POST

W ith 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. "We are very encouraged by the response of survivors and their families," said Gabi Bron, the project's coordinator in Israel. "We know dozens of people have come forward to survivors' groups, and hundreds more have written to their memoirs but never did." The project is at a very early stage. The budget will depend on the success 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 hand-written manuscripts, and no plans are in place to help survivors type up their memories. Claims Conference officials are considering using community center volunteers who are teaching computer courses for the elderly. The website, memoirs.claimson.org, currently operates in two languages, Hebrew and English, with translations 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 more names were located before the end of the workday.

FUGITIVE “DOCTOR DEATH” DIED IN 1992

Born on June 28, 1914, in Radthersburg, Austria, Heim joined the Nazi party before Austria came under German control in 1938. After veering away from the Nazi regime, the so-called "Angel of Death" was a doctor at Auschwitz. Heim was Number Two on the Simon Wiesenthal Centre's most wanted Nazi list in 1985 and 1992. According to media reports, Heim was arrested by US troops in 1945 but was released two-and-a-half years later. Citing his son and acquaintances in Cairo, he was arrested 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 there are more than 100 documents including Heim's passport, bank statements, travel letters and medical records that prove without a doubt that Heim lived in a Cairo hotel until his death. Heim was known in history 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 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. "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 surprised if Heim had been able to end his days without being located, 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." 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 Mexico and again last year in a small Chilean town some 600 miles south of Santiago. However, Heim's lawyer told ZDF in an interview that his father went to ground in 1962 and travelled to Cairo via France, Spain and Italy. Here he contracted an incurable form of bowel cancer in the early 1990s and died following several months of radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

VISITING A MOTHER’S GRAVE AT AUSCHWITZ

(Continued from page 6)

Matozkow-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’s 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 1945, the two of us left Europe to begin a whole new life across the Atlantic with relatives in the United States. I was born in Taipeh, Taiwan, 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. "We’ll go with me to Poland," she asked, "to give your story to the camera, 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, and 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 dead. I stand with my daughter-in-law, Norma, and together we lay the roses on the arms 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.”
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 Manhattan 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 Israel plans to hold a workshop under the direction of Ms. Dorit Novak who was present at the conference. The conference featured a wealth of 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 ele- ments to the story. Transmitting these mes- sages 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 survivor. Dr. Kassenoff made a presentation on litera- ture of the Holocaust for classroom use and led a workshop on the “Power of Film in Holocaust Education.” Close to two hun- dred educators from the tri-state area attended this year’s conference. “The lost world of European Jewry and the tragic con- sequences should be used as points of departure to educate younger generations of the importance of tolerance, under- standing and the dangers of hatred and discrimination,” said Mr. Eil Zborowski. The conference included the following: • An overview of the Yad Vashem educa- tional philosophy. • Diverse hands-on workshops on les- son modeling for Holocaust education. • Interactive workshops using Holocaust educational units prepared by Yad Vashem.

Social Studies/United Federation of Teachers which once again co-sponsored the Conference, pointed out that, “This year’s conference focused on three themes of the Holocaust: Children, Rescuers and Perpetrators. The curricu- lum was developed and prepared by the International School of Yad Vashem. The

AUTHOR GAINS NEW EXPOSURE FROM HOLOCAUST FILM

(Continued from page 1) seller the past two weeks and has gener- ated new interest in several of Tec’s earli- er works. Interview requests have poured in from around the world. Tec, a Lofthi 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 50,000.

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 charis- ma 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. So as he was past it, he sort of just, before my eyes, he became the person that he was, this charismatic leader, that this obdurate power in the unit.”

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

When Tom Cruise dons his eye patch and steps into the world’s most famous role 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, how- ever, 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 pilot 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, sparing 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 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

HOLLYWOOD AND THE HOLOCAUST

BY ANDREW JOHNSON, THE INDEPENDENT

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- old who are the majority of film audiences,” he said.

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 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 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 trend is to get a bully to stop picking on you is to stand up to them and, if necessary, punch them in the eye. We’re looking for a way to stop and plead all we want, but I’m not sure if in the history of the world an aggressor ever stopped pursuing a prey because the prey asked nicely.”

Tec is not unaware of the implications of the Bielski story for contempo- rary Jewry. If Tuvia Bielski saw how south- ern 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 cow- dards, 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 per- petual, 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 the victim for something that they have not done.”

Miriam Klein Kassenoff, Keynote Speaker, Diane Applebot, Education American Society for Yad Vashem, Caroline Musk, 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

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...Onto a 1938, looks at the German attempt to conquer the north face of the Eiger for the glory of the Nazis. Recently released...
BEHIND FAIRY-TALE DRAWINGS, WALLS TALK OF UNSPEAKABLE CRUELTY

BY ETHAN BRONNER

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{Image 400x559 to 578x739}

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.

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.

Marina 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. “I had 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.”

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. First published in The New York Times

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

“There was something very Kafkaesque about his aloofness, 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.”

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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 zigzags, 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 art 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 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.