Sharsheret: the Holocaust from the perspective of what happened to the Jews, which began in 1939 and ended with the defeat of the Third Reich in 1945. But when essential to ensuring our legacy.

The Young Leadership Associates are the guardians of the future and constitute the generations. YLA members are increasing awareness and fostering sensitivity in reducing various themes relating to the Holocaust that attracts several hundred teachers from the Tri-State area and beyond. By transmitting the lessons of the Holocaust to present and future generations, YLA members are increasing awareness and fostering sensitivity in reducing hatred, intolerance, and prejudice.

We are pleased to honor the major leadership of this spectacular 800-member association. The Young Leadership Associates are the guardians of the future and constitute the essential link to ensuring our legacy.

It is now sixty-five years since the Liberation. In the commonly accepted narrative, the Holocaust began in 1939 and ended with the defeat of the Third Reich in 1945. But, when we look at the Holocaust from the perspective of what happened to the Jews, ‘we see a Sharsheret’—a chain of events whose impact will extend for generations to come beyond the liberation. It is imperative that efforts be put forth to research and study the post-Holocaust period throughout the world.

The first in-depth exploration of this period took place last month at Yad Vashem at the inaugural conference of The Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Shoah. I would like to acknowledge the support for this endeavor of Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, and recognize the presence of Dr. Bella Guttermann, Director of the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem, who coordinated the conference, a truly historic event.

This conference created a model for future study on survivor communities worldwide. Yad Vashem has lit the lamp on the importance of the post-Holocaust period. For the Holocaust to take its proper place in history, the influence of the chain of events that link us to the past must be documented, understood and accepted.

The Yiddish phrase, “dike goldene kayt” — the golden chain — is a symbol in Jewish lore of the continuity of traditional beliefs and values. By involving successive generations, our work in the American Society for Yad Vashem is emblematic of the unbroken chain of Jewish determination and resilience.

Yitzhak Arad:

“OUR NATIONAL LESSONS SHOULD BE OUR CHAIN OF REMEMBRANCE”

Thirty years have passed since we established the Society for Yad Vashem. The pushing force to establish the society was Eli Zborowski. The first members were mainly survivors of the Holocaust; many of them are no more with us. But I am happy to see their children and grandchildren, who are continuing the work their fathers started. This proves more than anything else the success of the Society.

We, the generation of grandfathers, remember the days of liberation which we met with deep feelings of joy and sadness. Joy of survival and the defeat of Nazi Germany. The sadness emanated from the fact that only after liberation we began to understand the full extent of our tragedy, that we remained few and alone, most of our families murdered, our communities devastated and destroyed, surrounded by an indifference to our suffering.

For the overwhelming majority of the Jewish people, liberation came too late. They did not survive Auschwitz and Treblinka, neither the pits of Ponary and BabI Yar. But we the survivors have to be grateful, to the Red Army, to the British and American Armies, and to the other Allied forces, for crushing Nazi Germany and liberating us. Many Jews were among the Liberators. Approximately one and a half million Jews served in the ranks of the Allied armies, and 250,000 of them fell in battle.

Each and every survivor will never forget the date and circumstances of his liberation. I was one of the lucky who not only experienced liberation but also fought as a liberator. I fought against Nazi Germany for close to three years, until the last days of the war. I encountered my liberation step by step. My first feeling of liberty was when I succeeded in smuggling a short-barreled rifle, which I stole from a German store, into the ghetto. It was February 1942. Keeping the weapon provided me with a feeling of strength, that I am no longer at the mercy of the Nazis, I can fight back. I experienced the feeling of liberty for the second time. It was when I escaped from the ghetto and joined the partisans in the forest. Now I was a fighter. It was March 1943.

On July 6th, 1944, I entered my hometown Sventiany, from which I had escaped a year before. Since the rainy night when I escaped from the ghetto, I had been dreaming of this moment. And here I was. But I found no more Jews in my shtetl; only the stoves and chimneys of the burned wooden houses stood as monuments to a flourishing Jewish community. Outside the township I stood by the pit where the town’s Jews were shot and buried, among them dozens of members of my own family. This is what I liberated.

The final stage of experiencing liberation was the night of December 24, 1945, when I illegally reached the beaches of the Land of Israel on a small boat, and joined the ranks of the fighters of our independence.

Tonight’s dinner focuses on the chain of remembrance. A tree cannot grow without roots, so we Jews, in order to exist as a people, have to preserve our roots. Among our roots is Holocaust remembrance and its implications and lessons. One of the universal lessons gained from the Holocaust is our duty to fight against racism, narrow-minded nationalism, and anti-Semitism.

We Jews should not forget that Hitler and Nazi Germany aimed to murder all the Jewish people, to erase and eradicate their very existence. The current Iranian president uses the same language. Therefore an additional lesson which we must embrace is our obligation to preserve and strengthen our Jewish identity, and our links to our ancient historical homeland, the land of Israel. These universal and our national lessons should be our chain of remembrance.
The American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner

Jeremy Halpern:

"WE ARE CHOOSING TO FOLLOW YOUR PATH."

I feel honored to represent a group of young men and women who have taken on the charge to continue what our parents and grandparents have started. The third generation has an incredible responsibility. The third generation must make a decision. Do we carry forward the heritage and traditions of the past? Or do we go out to make our own mark on the world?

The originators, in this case the survivors, our grandparents and great grandparents, saw the atrocities and felt the pain themselves. They were forced to learn the incredibly hard lessons that came with living through the Holocaust. They reacted and chose to move forward and reprise the light of the generations that came before them. They kept Torah and Yiddishkeit alive. They fought to create the State of Israel. They built communities with synagogues and Jewish day schools. They chose to honor all of those that perished by forging ahead.

They formed Yad Vashem and taught us the importance of remembrance and education.

Our parents, the second generation, lived through much of the rebirth their parents dreamed about. They saw the hard work and sacrifice firsthand and had a direct understanding of the history and faith their parents represented and exemplified.

We, the third generation, have grown up in an easier world. We have seen the fruits of our grandparents' labor without the majority of the sacrifice.

Therein lies our challenge.

Certainly we have studied the history and attended events that perpetuate our grandparents' experiences. But are we just being kept warm by the flames of our parents and grandparents? Do we have what it takes to build our own fire?

Even more importantly, will our children? G-d willing they will never have to be a first-hand witness to anything like the Holocaust. However, that is all the more reason that we must step up and cement the heritage being passed down through our generation.

There are but only a few years to teach an entire generation. If we lose the next one, we lose it all.

Thank G-d as we stand here tonight, the task is well underway. Eli Zborowski recognized this problem many years ago. Over 12 years ago Eli, Caroline Massel and many others set out to confront it. They created the Young Leadership Society of Yad Vashem, the YLA. Caroline has worked tirelessly to push the agenda and grow the organization.

So how have they done?

Just look at some of the most active members being honored tonight. Attend one of the annual YLA gala events to witness an amazing sight. Over 800 young Jewish men and women gather to eagerly support Yad Vashem!

We can proudly say that our heritage and faith are strong. That the fire is burning bright and the third and fourth generations have been taught how to make it grow.

Together, Caroline, the entire YLA and I are proud to stand in front of our parents and grandparents and say Toda Rabah and "Himeni." We are here. We are choosing to follow your path. We have learned the lessons, and have started to teach them ourselves.

On behalf of my fellow honorees, I would like to thank Eli Zborowski and the entirety of Yad Vashem and the American Society for Yad Vashem. I would also like to thank Caroline Massel for her incredible work and achievements.

Most importantly, we thank our parents and grandparents for showing us how to ensure that the memory and the lessons of the Shoah are never forgotten. We hope to work hand in hand with all of you for many years to come.

Mark Moskowitz:

"WE ARE A LINK IN AN ENDLESS, UNBREAKABLE CHAIN."

In 1948 in Berlin, a man who lost, among other family members, his wife and daughter, met in love with a woman who lost, among other family members, her parents and twin sister. They married and had a family. My siblings and I are that family.

We are a link in an endless, unbreakable chain. I would like to start by thanking you for this honor, for which I am deeply moved. I also want to congratulate my fellow honorees, and join in their dedication and commitment to Yad Vashem and its mission.

Tonight’s theme, "sharsheret" (a chain), is reflected throughout this room. Collectively, we represent a chain of strength and a history of prevailing as a people. It has been my life’s mission—and that of my family—to keep that chain strong and growing.

Following the annual YLA gala events to witness an amazing sight. Over 800 young Jewish men and women gather to eagerly support Yad Vashem! The survivors taught all humanity that the originators, in this case the survivors, our grandparents, and join in their dedication and commitment to Yad Vashem and its mission.

I am the son of survivors. My brothers and sister and I were always strongly aware of our parents' tragic history and their watchful survival. Even though our beloved parents, Henry co'm and Rose, suffered unbearable losses, they imbued us in an unlimited sense of hope and determination, and a commitment to helping others achieve the life they found with one another.

Yad Vashem has been both an inspiration to me and an unparalleled resource. It has provided me with context for the stories I heard from my parents while growing up. As in the case of so many Holocaust survivors, they were understandably reluctant to talk about all the terrible details with their children. But the bits and pieces of information I gleaned growing up truly came to light, in their horrific, true, at the Museum; like so many individual links coming together, connecting the past with the present.

This remarkable center [Yad Vashem] provides us all with a critical eye on history. It is a history the world must never forget and never deny! In order to move forward as a nation and as a people, it is essential for us to maintain an awareness of the past.

My father believed that a true understanding of what happened during the Holocaust could be achieved only in the context of being in Israel. And I share that belief, wholeheartedly. The fact that Yad Vashem is centered in Jerusalem not only brings us a better understanding of the roots of the State of Israel and its importance to the Jewish People, it gives us a destination to view our history... and to secure our future.

The profound effect that Yad Vashem has had on me defies description. Actively participating in supporting and maintaining this center of history and remembrance has become a true "center" of my life. And being here tonight as part of a chain that is, inherently, defined by strength and spirit — standing amongst my mother, my siblings and some of my 10 nieces and nephews, the newest links in our strong family chain — is one of the greatest honors of my life.

Dear Yad Vashem Friends,

I want to express my warm appreciation for your long-standing support of Yad Vashem and its meaningful mission. Given the present trend of Holocaust denial, Yad Vashem related activities serve to draw public attention to a dark era that should never be forgotten, and nurture its memory in perpetuity.

Today, emphasis on Jewish moral and ethical values and respect for human life are of the essence.

In the true Jewish tradition of mutual responsibility, whether in Israel or the Diaspora, it is our collective responsibility to continue bearing the torch of remembrance and passing it on to the generations to come, in tribute to those who have perished and those who survived. I thank you for joining in this effort.

Shimon Peres

GREETINGS FROM ISRAEL

Greetings from His Excellency the President of Israel, Mr. Shimon Peres, to the Friends of Yad Vashem

Dear Yad Vashem Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to send warm greetings on the occasion of the American and International Societies for Yad Vashem’s Annual Tribute Dinner.

Following their liberation, and in the shadow of their horrific experiences, the survivors of the Holocaust set out to recreate and reconstruct not only their own lives, but also to rebuild the Jewish people and help reestablish the Jewish state. The survivors taught all humanity that even the most appalling personal and collective experiences can become a source of inspiration and resolve.

The support and dedication of the American and International Societies for Yad Vashem ensures that these experiences will forever be part of our history.

We appreciate your commitment to this important cause. I wish you a meaningful and memorable evening.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Netanyahu

GREETINGS FROM ISRAEL

Jeremy Halpern:

"WE ARE CHOOSING TO FOLLOW YOUR PATH."

Sincerely,

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Mark Moskowitz:

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Tonight’s theme, “sharsheret” (a chain), is reflected throughout this room. Collectively, we represent a chain of strength and a history of prevailing as a people. It has been my life’s mission— and that of my family— to keep that chain strong and growing.

Attending the annual Yom Ha’atzmaut ceremony at Yad Vashem, in Jerusalem, has become an integral part of my life. Every year, it is held a week before Yom Hazikaron, the Memorial Day for fallen soldiers in Israel, and I am there to observe this most solemn day of remembrance.

Together, these memorials provide a deep and historic connection between Israel and Jews worldwide.

In sharp contrast, like many other interesting juxtapositions in Israel, Yom Ha’atzmaut, Israel’s Independence Day, follows immediately after. This is the time when we rejoice at the miracle that is the State of Israel, and we celebrate the unbreakable chain that links our fate as a nation all the way back to Biblical times.

These three events represent sharsheret on many levels. They provide consecutive days of reflection for us as individuals—as a country... and as a people. The understanding and insight— the spiritual connection— begins at Yad Vashem. This is where we begin to appreciate the history and ethos of the State of Israel and, in a greater sense, the heart of the Jewish nation.

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Shimon Peres
GENETIC SCARS OF THE HOLOCAUST: CHILDREN SUFFER TOO

BY JEFFREY KLUGER, TIME

T he Holocaust is a crime that never ends. Even as survivors grow smaller each year, the impact of that dark passage in history continues to be felt. And it’s not just the Holocaust survivors who feel the effects; it’s their children too. Psychologists have long been intrigued by the notion that the stress hormone cortisol, for example, is passed on from parents to their children. How genes are activated is a result of environmental factors in ways that can be passed on to the next generation. The Holocaust is hardly the only life crisis that can shape behavior and genes. Survivors of Afghanistan, Iraq, or Darfur—or even those who grew up in unstable or abusive homes—can exhibit similar changes. But Holocaust survivors remain one of the best study groups available because their trauma was so great, their population is so well known, and so many of them have gone on to produce children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren. Humans, alas, may never run out of ways to behave savagely toward one another. But the better we can understand the path our genes took and the babies of the victims—the better we may be able to treat their wounds.

HOUSE RESOLUTION AIDS TO HELP HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

The House of Representatives has introduced a resolution aimed at helping Holocaust survivors. Of the approximately 127,000 Holocaust survivors living in the United States in need of in-home care, U.S. Reps. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) and Jackie Speier (D-Calif.) introduced a resolution Sept. 29 to raise awareness of the social service needs of Holocaust survivors—specifically the need for them to be able to age in place.

The resolution, which was referred to the House Education and Labor Committee, expresses congressional support for efforts that help Holocaust survivors in America continue to live. Of the three-quarters of survivors older than 75—a majority are in their 80s and 90s—some two-thirds of the survivors in America are living alone, and many lack the financial resources for basic necessities such as proper housing and health care.

Most Holocaust survivors fall beneath the federal poverty threshold that would place them at risk of institutionalization. Institutionalized settings are especially difficult for Holocaust survivors, research has shown, because such environments reintroduce the sights, sounds, and routines reminiscent of their Holocaust experiences.

Wasserman Schultz said the United States has “a moral obligation to act immediately to address the need and provide support to at-risk Holocaust survivors.”

in place in their communities and avoid institutionalization during their remaining years.

in the United States, and health care.

The resolution calls on the Department of Health and Human Services to provide Holocaust survivors with needed social services through existing programs, and to develop and implement programs that ensure Holocaust survivors are able to age in place in their communities and avoid institutionalization during their remaining years.

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It’s natural to think that the larger the book, the more important information it has to offer the reader. But, that’s not necessarily so. For example, The Emergence of Holocaust Education by Thomas D. Faible is a slim volume — 231 pages — yet it is chock-full of valuable material meticulously gleaned by way of conscientious research, all of it absorbing and often quite provocative.

Thus, in Faible’s work — just as the title promises — we read the history of exactly how Holocaust education came upon the American scene. We see how, immediately after the war, there was a silence as regards the topic, very like the silence of the victims themselves. Interestingly, we note how the silence was broken in the 1960s as a result of the media’s coverage of the Adolf Eichmann trial and Israel’s subsequent 1967 war, a war which frightened many into thinking that another Holocaust was “imminent.” Then, in the 1970s we learn of the substantive affect price-winning writer and Professor, Elie Wiesel had on furthering interest in the Holocaust. Finally, we realize the tremendous and determined impact the April 1978 NBC miniseries Holocaust had. Indeed, this miniseries stunningly captured the attention of millions of Americans and squarely focused this attention on the Holocaust.

Not surprisingly, Faible goes on to tell us, concomitant with the above, study of the Holocaust grew and with it curricula on how to teach it... along with problems. Problems many could never have imagined. Why? “Genocide consciousness crossed [paths] with other ideological currents called the affective revolution.” In the 1960s and 1970s this, in pedagogical terms, meant that teachers were “exceptionally con- cerned with making all they taught ‘relevant’ to the lives of the students in their classrooms. This, more specific to our discussion, meant that simply transmitting the facts of the Holocaust was not enough. It meant that Holocaust curricula would often include comparisons to other genocides. It meant that Holocaust curricula would often use the subject to engage students in a greater study of morality and ethics.

In short, complaints about the curricula came fast and furious. For example, some felt strongly that the Holocaust was “unique” and not to be compared to any other genocide in any way. To these individuals, comparison was sacrilegious. In the meanwhile, others were upset that more genocides weren’t included. And, along the same lines, still others felt that the Nazis were being unfairly presented as “the only ones who committed crimes against humanity.” That the Jews were the only ones who suffered to any great extent? Then, too, there was the whole ques- tion of whether history should be used to teach morality. Could it? Should it?

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Further, there was the question of just who was doing the teaching. Did they know the subject matter well enough? Did they have their own agenda? Did this matter? For example, some felt strongly that the Holocaust was “unique” and not to be compared to any other genocide in any way. To these individuals, comparison was sacrilegious. In the meanwhile, others were upset that more genocides weren’t included. And, along the same lines, still others felt that the Nazis were being unfairly presented as “the only ones who committed crimes against humanity.” That the Jews were the only ones who suffered to any great extent? Then, too, there was the whole question of whether history should be used to teach morality. Could it? Should it?

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TATSUMI OSAKOWA

The young man’s monochromic portrait is at least 70 years old, the white frame around it, but it is the way he had style. His hair is sliced down, eye arched, suit perfect with matching tie and handkerchief. He also had the good fortune to escape Europe in the early days of World War II. The photo, a gift to the man who helped him escape, is one of several recently discovered snapshots that cast light on a little-known subplot of the war — even as Germany sought to seal Jewish Europe in, a small army of tourism officials from its main ally, Japan, helped shepherd thousands away to safety.

“My regards to my friend Tatsuo Osakawa,” is scrawled in French on the back of the picture, which is signed “I. Segaloff” and dated March 4, 1941. His fate is unknown.

An effort is under way to find the people in these portraits or their descendants, all of whom are assumed to be Jewish. Personal photos of such refugees, who often fled with just their clothing and a suitcase, are rare.

The photos were found in an old diary owned by Osakawa, who was a young employee of the Japan Tourist Bureau at the time, and died in 2003. Akira Kitade, who worked under Osakawa and is researching a book about the diary, has contacted officials for help and visited the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

The museum said he gave it about 30 photographs that he is trying to identify, of which seven relate to 2,000 Jews who received travel papers that enabled them to escape.

Nissim Ben Shitli, the Israeli ambassador to Japan, says he has passed the information on to the Jewish Federation in Jerusalem, which tracks and honors victims of the Holocaust, and is optimistic some of the individuals can be tracked down.

“I thought that we discovered almost everything about the horror of the Holocaust,” Shitli said. “And yet there is more to discover.”

The photos shed further light on the ongoing GREECE. Temples of Judaism were only slightly from the warmest to the coolest months. There is a rich diversity of visitors. Autumn is the coolest months. There is a rich diversity of visitors. Autumn is the

The photo shows further light on the cooling breeze. Temperatures vary considerably in the summer as the trade winds prod

The report concluded that “the proclamation in question, is in all respects, legally unassailable.” The Attorney General, however, who on October 16, 1939, was asked by the Secretary of the Interior for his evaluation of the legalities, refused on March 29, 1940, to study the issue “for the reason that the Secretary of State had not invited such an opinion.”

SUGIHARA HONORED

The Department of the Interior and the State Department immediately spoke such an affidavit, as were many major relatives in the U.S. who were willing to provide a legal avenue of escape. On December 15, 1941, to study the issue "for the reason that the Secretary of State had not invited such an opinion.”

“DELAY AND DELAY”

During all that time, people who could have been rescued and living in a Caribbean paradise remained in the hell of Nazi Europe until they fell victim to the death camps. The effectiveness of this “delay and delay” policy was praised by the Assistant Secretary of State, Breckinridge "delay and delay" policy was praised by the Assistant Secretary of State, Breckinridge Paul, as “murder by delay.” He charged the

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The State Department immediately spoke such an affidavit, as were many major relatives in the U.S. who were willing to provide a legal avenue of escape. On December 15, 1941, to study the issue "for the reason that the Secretary of State had not invited such an opinion.”

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In October 1945, I spent Yom Kippur in the displaced persons camp in Landsberg in Bavaria, Germany, as the representative of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), working with displaced persons.

The liberated Jews who had been imprisoned in the nearby Dachau concentration camp, as well as those who had been forced to work in ammunition and other factories in Bavaria, were gathered into Landsberg and nearby Feldafing camps. Many Jews from other concentration camps had been force-marched to this part of Germany, where the U.S. Army liberated them.

In Landsberg there was a spacious German Army barracks confiscated by the U.S. Army, in which some of the liberated Jews had been housed. Basic food and medical care were provided by the Army, supplemented by assistance from JDC.

The Jews elected a committee which assumed responsibility for the internal administration of the camp. Synagogues were organized for the high holidays by different groups, often on the basis of the origin of the participants. I attended morning services in the synagogue for Polish Jews. The older generation was almost not there. They were the first victims, since they lacked the physical strength to withstand the horrors of the camps.

Few children survived. They, too, succumbed quickly. The survivors prayed, remembered, wept and found a little comfort in those tears.

After morning prayers, I decided to visit other synagogues and spend some time with other groups. I left the synagogue and walked across the half-empty streets. There were many people who remained in the street and refused to attend services. They were angry at G-d. Among them were formerly religious Jews who could not accept the apparent indifference of G-d to the suffering, the torture, and the tragedy they had both witnessed and experienced in their homes and in the camps.

They could not reconcile their former beliefs and convictions of an All-Merciful, Almighty Divine Being, with the catastrophe that had struck their communities. They would not pray. When they heard the recitation of the Kaddish, the special prayer of mourners expressing praise of the Lord, they reacted angrily that G-d did not deserve the Kaddish.

They were broken in spirit. They could not reconcile recent events to which they were witnessless with the contents of the Hebrew prayers. These Jews roamed the streets. They wanted to express their anger, to show G-d that they still feared Him, as he seemed to have abandoned them.

Some ate their food on the fast day publicly in the streets, as a gesture of defiance – of rejection.

In one of the streets, I saw a large group of people standing in a circle. I approached nearer to find out what was going on.

In the middle of the circle stood a seven-year-old girl, embarrassed, perplexed. She could not understand why all these people were surprised to find a Jewish child. So they stood, silently, and just looked at this child.

In this April 24, 1945, photo released by the U.S. National Archives, an American soldier stands among German loot stored in a church in Ellingen, Germany.

The database is a joint project of the New York-based Conference of Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

The database is unusual because it has been built around Nazi-era records that were digitized and rendered searchable, showing what was seized and from whom, with data on restitution or repatriation and photographs taken of the seized objects, the groups told The Associated Press.

The Claims Conference, which helps Holocaust survivors and their relatives to reclaim property, said it had used the database to estimate that nearly half of the objects may never have been returned to their rightful owners or their descendants or their country of origin.

“Most people think or thought that most of these items were repatriated or restituted,” said Wesley A. Fisher, director of research at the Claims Conference. “It isn’t true. Over half of them were never repatriated. That in itself is rather interesting historiographically.”

Marc Masurovsky, the project’s director at the museum, said the database was designed to evolve as new information is gathered. “I hope that the families do consult it and tell us what is right and what is wrong with it,” he added.

The database combines records from the U.S. National Archives in College Park,Md., the German Bundesarchiv, the federal archive in Koblenz; and repatriation and restitution records held by the French government.

By giving a new view of looted art, the database could raise questions about the possible tainted history of works of art in some of the world’s most important museum collections, experts said.

“I always tell people we have no idea how much is out there because nobody has really tried to take a complete inventory,” said Willi Korte, one of the most prominent independent provenance researchers of looted Nazi art. “I think all of those that say there’s not much left to do certainly should think twice.”

Korte has been at the forefront of the worldwide search for art looted by the Nazis, an undertaking that has accelerated over the past two decades, spurring court battles and pitting the descendants of Jewish families who were forced to give up their possession against museums and private collectors.

According to the database, some 650,000 art objects were taken, and thousands of items are still lost.

But the true number may never be known because of lack of documentation, the passage of time and the absence of a central arbitration body.

Some museum organizations have argued in recent years that most looted art has been identified and where possible should be returned, focusing on the provenance of art objects.

The database includes a slice of the records generated by the Einsatzstab Reichsleiter Rosenberg, an undertaking of Third Reich ideologists to take a comprehensive inventory to seize archives, books, art, Judaica, home furnishings, and other objects from Jewish families, bookstores, and collections. Records of the looting were disbursed to nearly a dozen countries after the war.
Anti-Semitism is back, and what is taking gogue and Jewish kids in schools are rou-
group of Jews peacefully demonstrating for
Heil' and 'Hitler, Hitler,' a mostly Muslim
starkest possible terms: "Screaming 'Sieg

The war against the same synagogue.

What still chills me to the marrow is the
whole history of the world." The war against

In reality, they were participants in what

In German, it was merely an extreme man-

Above all, politicians must speak out

We must not tolerate those who

Sweden must not tolerate those who

And some of the units were so
dying down within the
graves, which made for an easier
cleanup.

In major operations
such as the slaugh-
ter of 337,000
Babi Yar in the Ukraine, which took days to accomplish — mobile field kitchens arrived to keep the bodies from
snapping. Some of the units were so
drunk that they were sick while performing ex-
ecutions.

German Army spectators were wel-
comed by Babi Yar. Some further contrib-
ted to the perpetrators’ sense of
normality — but one SS officer who
brought his pregnant bride along was con-
sidered to have crossed the line. That’s
how warped their sense of morality was. At
least 10,000 Jews were killed by men
standing a few feet away from them.
The genocidal regime tailed into, and
empow-
ered,
its brutal streak of these cords.

One such creature was the very drunk
member of the Gestapo seen in a bar with
adhered to this tunic, on which he had
scratched “1,000” in red ink. “I’m cele-
brating the thousandth shot in the
neck,” he smiled. He added that he’d shoot
his own father if he was ordered to.

But to what extent did the
outside world realize what was happening —
and could more have been done to stop it?
We can be sure that if the Allies since the full horrors of the Holocaust were
and could more have been done to stop it?

The Nazis are not the only perpetrators of
murder in the world. But the harsh truth is that the Allies were col-
luding with Hitler because of an
alleged pervasive anti-Semitism, an insin-
uation first made by David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first prime minister.

The Allies were to the second major
problem, and to join the campaign of delegitimization
against the Jewish state is to join a cam-
paign of delegitimization against much of
world Jewry, the vast majority of which ei-
ther lives in Israel or regards it as a central
component of Jewish identity. But one par-
ticular section of Sweden’s population has
never engaged in the pretense that there is
a distinction between hatred of Israel and
hatred of Jews.

Which brings us to the second major
problem at play here: Sweden’s Muslim
population. While all manifestations of intolerance
against Muslims must be firmly
dressed it?

Ultimately, change will not come unless

Even the first concrete reports of
never be diverted.

The picture that emerged was patchy.

Many Swedish Muslims inevitably see this
as a green light to unleash their hostil-
ities toward ordinary Jews. They feel their anger is justified by the

A third layer of this problem is the in-
creasingly symbiotic alliance be-
tween radical Islamist groups in
Sweden and a left that has departed from the hon-
orable social-democratic traditions for
Sweden and is spreading its influence around the world. When the Israeli Davis Cup tennis
team came to Malmo in 2009, it was forced to play against its hosts behind closed
doors while a crowd of 6,000 rioted out-
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There were other problems, too, in ana-
lyzing the future of Sweden — terrible
technologies — to wp-

Ronald Lauder , President of the

World Jewish Congress

In July, fireworks were
thrown at the
local cobbler was Jewish.

What was it like to be known. How has such a state of

For months, Malmo’s Jews have been
to an increasingly hostile atmosphere, with
many saying they are frightened to go out on
defense of the Swedish Red Cross,
and until Sweden’s leaders address these
crimes, partisans and so forth, rather
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The American & International Societies

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate; Yitzhak Arad, recipient of the 2010 Yad Vashem Remembrance Award; and Eli Zborowski, American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Chairman.

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Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Robert Bernstein, YLA Honoree. Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Na

Marilyn Rubenstein, 2010 Annual Tribute Dinner Chair.

Eli Zborowski, American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Chairman; Jean and Eugene Gluck, and their grandsons Matthew Gluck and Michael Gluck.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Adam & Iris Lindenbaum, YLA Honorees.
HAIN 65 YEARS LATER

for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate; Mark Moskowitz, recipient of the 2010 Yad Vashem Leadership Award; and Eli Zborowski, American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Chairman.

Adina and Lawrence Burian, YLA Honorees.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Adina and Lawrence Burian, YLA Honorees.

Leonard Wilf, 2010 Annual Tribute Dinner Honorary Chairman.

Mitchell Kahn, YLA Honoree; Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Ilana Kahn, YLA Honoree.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Barry Levine, YLA Honoree; and Melvin Bukiet, Dinner Chair.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Caroline and Morris Massel, YLA Honorees.

Eli Zborowski, American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Chairman; Sam Halpern, Cheryl Lifshitz, and Gladys Halpern.
REPORT FROM YAD VASHEM

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE SHOAH

By Eetta Prince-Gibson, The Jerusalem Post

H istorian Jan T. Gross is building a new history of the Holocaust, based on relations between Poles and Jews before, during, and after World War II. Jan T. Gross begins his keynote lecture by projecting an old photograph onto the screen behind him. He promises to talk about it at the end of the presentation, knowing that the picture, ostensibly a snapshot of summer vacation, is disturbing. The picture is fuzzy, and the lunar-like landscape beyond the village is desolate, the harvest too meager, the colors too gray. The exercise, like much of Gross’s work, is powerful and complex, the dramatic manipulation underlining the historical points he makes.

Gross, 63, a professor of history at Princeton University, was in Jerusalem, in early October, for an international conference entitled “The Aftermath of the Holocaust: The Polish Case 1944–2010,” which was sponsored by the Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Shoah, held at the beginning of October, concentrated on the many and different aspects of the repercussions of the Holocaust.

The conference, the initiative of the American Society for Yad Vashem Chairman Eli Zborowski and Prof. Feliks Tytch of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, was attended by 22 researchers from Poland, each of whom has already contributed a chapter to the broad collection of studies that will make up The Aftermath of the Holocaust: The Polish Case 1944–2010, due to be published in English and Polish by the end of the year. Discussions were significantly enriched by the presence of two distinguished guests from North America — Prof. Antony Polanski and Prof. Jan Tomasz Gross — together with a group of Israeli scholars in the field.

“The postwar effects of the Holocaust, especially in the years 1945 through 1947, require the attention of historians because it was precisely this period that was the most difficult for survivors to create for themselves something we might call a new normality, an attempt at self-determination after the tribulations of war,” said professor Tytch in his speech at the opening.

The topic of the returning survivors and the way they were received by residents of their hometowns is particularly important because it offers the key to reconstructing the real social and moral circumstances in which the Holocaust took place,” — continued Feliks Tytch. “The series of postwar pogroms in Poland, especially in the region of Silesia, show far the Holocaust’s shadow reached, and how deeply ran the conviction, birthed from the years 1941-1945, that a Jew may be killed without impunity.”

“I was impressed by the seriousness of these researchers,” Dr. Zeew Markowitz, head of Yad Vashem’s Zborowski Center, said in an interview.

“This is highly significant as it demonstrates a witness to confront the past, face it honestly and deal with it. The only way you can neutralize some of the deepest poisons that have harmed Polish-Jewish relations is by relating to the collective memory of Polish people. The only way for a culture to prove the death of its collective memory is to be done by the people who believe their culture has not suffered.”

The major themes tackled at the conference began with the survivors’ first encounters with Polish society, and the memory of this period embedded in everyday personal letters and in the documenta (Unsung Heroes, Our Children). The focus was then broadened to embrace Polish attitudes towards the surviving Jews, the first steps in rebuilding Jewish life and the initial attempts to shape adequate forms of commemoration. The conference ended with a discussion on Polish-Jewish relations and attempts to access what remains of the Polish-Jewish community. “The conference looked at how Polish society deals with the fact that their country was the main arena for the murders,” explained Dr. Berta Guterman, director of the International Institute.

“We examined the immediate postwar events — extreme anti-Semitic expressions from the Polish press, pogroms, through the Communist era and then from the fall of Communism until today. Much of what we presented was new research and findings undertaken in the past two years, and we look forward to broadening our scholarship and investigations as a result of the conference.”

“Our research project would not have been possible without the financial and emotional support of people and institutions,” said professor Tytch in his acknowledgment remarks.

“The first acknowledge- ment belongs to Mr. Eli Zborowski, who has been our project’s good genius from the beginning. His pa tronage gave us certainty that we will be able to complete the project, since he supported us both emotionally and financially. He also expressed our gratitude to Mrs. Nancy Brunn, who has founded and chaired the American Society of Jewish Heritage in Poland. Another organization that recognized the importance of our project and contributed to its financial undertakings was the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research.”

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE AFTERMATH OF THE SHOAH

Prof. Jan Tomasz Gross, Princeton University, NJ; Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem; Prof. Antony Polanski, Brandeis University, MA; Prof. Feliks Tytch, Jewish Historical Institute (ZIH), Warsaw, Poland, and others.

The conference was published by the American Society for Yad Vashem and the Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Shoah, in July 2010.

The events that he describes, Gross says, cannot be dismissed as deviant or marginal. He says that many Poles were driven by their own national, cultural, political, and religious circumstances to participate in the pogroms.

“The facts of the pogroms in Jedwabne and Kielce were known in Poland,” said Gross, “but they had been obscured, both by the Soviet occupation and then from the fall of Communism until today. Much of what we presented was new research and findings undertaken in the past two years, and we look forward to broadening our scholarship and investigations as a result of the conference.”

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MYTHS AND TRUTHS

BY EE TTA PRINCE-GIBSON, THE JERUSALEM POST

F or decades the destruction of Polish Jewry has been treated as the study of the Shoah, but it was only recently that the unprecedented challenges of the return to life of the surviving Jews have begun to attract sustained scholarly attention. This was particularly fitting that the first international conference of the Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Shoah, held at the beginning of October, concentrated on the many and different aspects of the repercussions of the Holocaust.

The conference, the initiative of the American Society for Yad Vashem Chairman Eli Zborowski and Prof. Feliks Tytch of the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, was attended by 22 researchers from Poland, each of whom has already contributed a chapter to the broad collection of studies that will make up The Aftermath of the Holocaust: The Polish Case 1944–2010, due to be published in English and Polish by the end of the year. Discussions were significantly enriched by the presence of two distinguished guests from North America — Prof. Antony Polanski and Prof. Jan Tomasz Gross — together with a group of Israeli scholars in the field.

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“The facts of the pogroms in Jedwabne and Kielce were known in Poland,” said Gross, “but they had been obscured, both by the Soviet regime that created a ‘permissible’ version of history and by the Polish government, which is based on a self-image as victims, not perpetrators. Poles’ reactions to the publications of Neighbors and Fear were intense and varied; some saw the revela- tions as Poland’s opportunity to come to terms with its past, but others were incensed. Polish officials even investigated the facts of the case in order to consider prosecution of Gross for defamation of the Polish population, although no charges were ever brought.”

Gross says that he knows that the dis- cussion is painful for Poles, but in- sists that it is necessary. “My identity as a Pole includes a profound sense of siding with the persecuted. And few have a better right than Poles to feel persecuted. But being Polish, whether we want or not, carries a responsibility, a need to sort out what we do have of our identity, our self-identity on lies or half-truths. We did these things. They happened in the streets and villages, and nobody else did them. The anti-Semitism is incomprehensible, it is beyond the pale. It is a blemish on our history.”

The events that he describes, Gross says, cannot be dismissed as deviant or marginal behavior.” Regular Jews were also involved in the pogroms. (Continued on page 15)
The suspected Nazi war criminal Klaa Faber, who is number five on the list of most wanted Nazi war criminals. In 1947, Faber was sentenced by a Dutch court to life in prison for multiple murders during World War II. But the former Nazi collaborator escaped from prison with a gang of fellow inmates and fled across the border into Germany.

The former menswear salesman, who was born in Haarnhem in the Netherlands, has lived in Innsbruck in the Austrian state of Tirol since 1960. He was put on the most wanted list of suspected Nazi war criminals in 1950, when he was 35 years old.

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The evidence continued to mount of the evil the Nazis were perpetrating. In addi-
tion to intelligence intercepts, another trickle of information came from news-
tions such as the Jewish Agency and the World Jewish Congress. Based
in neutral Switzerland, they col-
lated reports from across Nazi-occupied
Europe and relayed them to Jerusalem, Paris, and London.

In mid-1942, a Polish underground
group met a position to their govern-
ment-in-exile in London that 700,000 Jews
had been killed there between June 1941
and April 1942. This led to the first
article on Stalin in any major British newspa-
per in any British newspaper. On June 25,
Daly Telegraph headline declared: "Ge-
mans murder 700,000 Jews in Poland." A
couple of days earlier, Daily Mail reported,"Greatest pogrom—millions—Jews die.

By the following month, there was testi-
mony that these killings were being cen-
trally orchestrated by the German
authorities when a commission of Nazi
intelligence officers visited the area.
Their stories shattered all illusions that a
continent-wide atrocity was limited.

That month, too, one of the most coura-
geous men of the war, Polish underground
courier Jan Karski, crossed Nazi-Occup-
ied Europe with a precious key in his
pocket. Weided inside it was the micro-
film of Communists, the Jewish leaders
smuggled out of the Warsaw ghetto,
along with the horrors happening there.
Karski was later to be dismissed as in-
formation, when he took the enor-
mos risk of donating a guard's uniform
and slipping in disguise into a holding
camp for Jews. They were being mar-
shaled there before being sent by train
to camps with gas chambers, such as Sobib-
or Treblinka.

One of the Warsaw ghetto leaders
whose testimony he brought back told him:
"You can't describe to them what is happening to the Jews, they
will probably not believe you." It was an ac-
cessible way of expressing that

When Karski's report was given to lead-
thing British civil servants and politicians,
including the Foreign Secretary, Anthony
Edeyn, they seemed more interested in the
new details of his escape than in what he had
to tell them.

Nonetheless, on De-
cember 17, 1942, an in-
ternational declaration condemned Nazi atro-
cutions that had claimed the lives of "hundreds of thou-
sands" of Jews. By that
time, in reality, two million
Jews were dead.

But there was no refer-
ce to Auschwitz, which was
regarded errone-
ously as a concentra-
tion camp exclusively for
Christian Poles.

Besides, what could be done about
it?

The two Jewish underground
leaders who spoke to Karski wanted the Allies to
admit the happening of the Jews to their
stated war aims.

They also suggested issuing a public warning
about the Germaine people
would be held collectively responsible for
what was being done in their name.

But the RAF pointed out that the extreme
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Finally, to clinch the matter, Long had a
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G. Kirk, Chief of Naval Intelligence. "If the
Navy could deny it [the Virgin Islands] a restricted area for strictly naval reasons," Long explained, "that would prevent the raising of the political questions involved in
this refugee and undesirable citizens traffic which
is now a menace [then] we would have no
more trouble."

This settled the case. Nobody in wartime
could accept the solution that threatened the
security of the United States. The attempt
to tear a few thousand of the doomed from
Molotov's jaws had been sabotaged. This
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**OLD PHOTO REVEALS TALE OF JAPAN AND JEWS OF WWII**

(Continued from page 5) report by Shigeto Kitade.

The messages on the photos given to Osaka are in languages that reflect the Nazi advance through Europe: German, Polish, Norwegian, French. Kitade said the images left a strong impression on him. "It was 70 years ago, so the people in the pictures may no longer be alive, but if possible, somehow I’d like to find even their families and show them," he said.

Historians have various theories as to why Japan allowed Jews to pass through its territory. Others say it was because Japan wanted to gain educated citizens for its Manchuria territory.

In 1938, as Germany’s persecution increased, government ministers in Tokyo issued a statement that Japan would treat the refugees humanely. At the same time, Japan was slaughtering and enslaving others in its territories throughout Asia — actions for which post-war Japanese leaders have repeatedly apologized.

Osako’s daughter, Mie Kunimoto, now 62, was surprised to learn about the photos.

"I never heard about this, and neither had my sister. He wasn’t the type of person to tell me. He just kept it to himself," she said.

Milch died in 1989.

Towards the end of his life, he wrote his memoirs in Hebrew and asked Milch-Sheriff and his late sister Shosh Avigal to have them published.

In 1990, her sister went to Poland seeking the diary, but only got a copy. "We are always ready to give a family a copy of documents. But the mission of our institute is to record history, often based on the private notes of individuals," she said.

Milch’s family spent the next few years reconciling the Polish and Hebrew texts. Their edited version was issued in Hebrew in 1999 and English in 2003, while the original was published in Poland in 2002.

Milch-Sheriff said she is determined to pursue her claim and could turn to the European Court of Human Rights.

**VICHY GOVERNMENT TOUGHENED ANTI-JEWISH LAWS**

The head of the French government which collaborated with the Nazis during World War II personally made harsh anti-Jewish legislation even tougher, a leading Nazi hunter said, citing a newly unsealed document.

Serge Klarsfeld, decorated for his work to bring Nazis to trial, said Philippe Pétain penciled harsher measures into a Statute on Jews issued by his Vichy regime exactly 70 years ago.

First World War hero Pétain signed an amistice with the Nazis in 1940 which divided the country, leaving the north in German hands. Pétain created a government to the south in occupied France with which he collaborated.

According to the Statute, which Klarsfeld said had been handed over anonymously to the Holocaust Memorial in Paris and authenticated by experts, Pétain penciled in his own notes drastically worsening conditions for Jews in France.

"We didn’t know until now that Pétain had made changes to the text of Oct. 3, 1940, and that he had made it more strict," Klarsfeld said.

Before leaving, he gave his diary to a Polish Jewish group recording Holocaust history.

"He realized his records constituted an important document and that is why he entrusted them to Elenorosa Bergman, head of the Jewish Historical Institute, told AFP.

But Milch-Sheriff said her father had wanted the diary kept safe temporarily.

"The only testimony to what happened to his family and friends was there in his diary, and he was afraid that if he took it with him, it would get lost, damaged or destroyed," she said.

In 1990, it was immediately compared to the diary of Dutch-Jewish teenager Anne Frank. In 2007, Sapinska donated it to Yad Vashem on a trip organized by officials from Beitzen, who claimed they were unaware it was against the law.

**ROHIM ARCHIVE, ISRAELI SPAR OVER FATHER’S HOLOCAUST DIARY**

People in the picture had to be the best hands and in exhibitions, so that people, including family members, will be able to see it," she said.

"The document is a snapshot of Nazi Germany’s World War II occupation of Poland, which became the epicenter of its drive to wipe out Europe’s Jews. It also bears witness to Milch’s personal suffering. In one entry, he recounts the shocking death of his three-year-old son — who would have been Milch-Sheriff’s half brother.

But Polish officials say they are bound by strict rules covering historical records — including those made by private individuals. "The diary is Milch’s private archives, it is important evidence of the past, a document presenting the life and tragic fate of Polish nationalans of Jewish origin," national archive chief Stanislaw Kadrowski said in a statement.

"It is an archive document and, as such, cannot be taken from Poland permanently," he said.

A long history of war and occupation — and consequent destruction — means that Polish-Jewish archives, but officials refuse.

"The Jews that I saw at that time had no hope, no warmth, nothing. They considered the war as their fate," Osako wrote.

Like many of his generation, Osako didn’t talk much about his wartime experiences, although he wrote briefly about them in 1995 for a college alumni publication.

"The Jews that I saw at that time had no passports and were stateless, they were refugees that had fled Europe and were generally downcast, some with vacant eyes that projected the loneliness of people in exile," Osako wrote.

But he also had time to make friends along the way — he notes that some were very helpful in his duties, and he recalls seeing Jewish women "of a rarely seen beauty."

A souvenir to a very nice Japanese man," reads the Polish message on one of the photos from this diary, his one of a dark-haired young lady with a slightly furrowed brow. The signature looks like "Rozla." Her fate is also unknown.

First published in The Washington Post

The French historian Serge Klarsfeld with a draft law dated Oct. 3, 1940 and annotated by hand by Marshal Philippe Pétain.

The Viichy government helped in deporting about 80,000 Jews to concentration camps from France between 1942 and 1944.

The amendments "completely redrafted" the nature of an already extremely anti-Semitic law:

"It shows this was the desire of Pétain himself," he said of the document, which went on display a few days earlier. The original text had excluded the descendants of French Jews born or naturalized before 1860, but the notes showed Pétain had crossed this out, making all Jews targets for discrimination.

The French historian Serge Klarsfeld and USAID.

The amendments also widened the exclusion for Jews in society, barring them completely from jobs in education and the justice system and preventing them from standing for elected posts.

Until now, there has been little documention on Pétain’s Viichy government and its stance towards the Jews.

His defenders have always said his policies aimed to protect French Jews by assimilating them into the local culture and converting them into Catholics. "This was a period of collapses with this document," said Klarsfeld, awarded the Legion of Honor by then-President Mitterand for his work seeking prosecutions for Nazi war crimes.

Pétain was tried after the war and sentenced to death for treason, but his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment on an island off the Atlantic coast. He died in 1951.
A side from Auschwitz and other Nazi death camps, nothing epitomizes the horrors of the Holocaust more than the infamous Warsaw Ghetto. Surrounded by a barbed-wire-topped 10-foot-high brick wall, this was one of the smallest enclaves of the Polish capital that the Nazis set up to concentrate Jews.

Under the command of his German successor, Heydrich, the S.S. turned the Warsaw Ghetto into a stockade. The designs for the Warsaw Ghetto, which were unveiled by the Nazis to the world in 1940, were documented and filmed by the Nazis themselves. The book relates its dramatic stories in the long-abandoned footage via the cur- rent research into the archives of the film.

The book can refer only in passing to the Nazi crimes that took place more than six decades ago, as described in the film, which was never finished. For more than 50 years, the story of the Jews who moved to Brazil in the wake of the Roluba immigration law, the film is a rich source of information about the conditions in Brazil, as well as a resource for those who want to learn more about this period of Jewish history.

In 1990, Italian court documents more than half a century old. They contain evidence of the official hunting Nazi fugitives, said his team of the finished footage, 5 percent of the suspects were convicted, they turned over to state prose- cutors. The and directed the long-abandoned footage via the cur- rent research into the archives of the film.

The case against Demjanjuk came about in the 1970s and 1980s, when the unit was at its peak. He is known as Ivan the Terrible – only to be ac- quitted in 1993 by Israel’s Supreme Court after doubt about his identity emerged. Schrimm dismissed the rating, saying his Central Office doesn’t like being called a school kid.

"As long as there’s a possibility that these people are alive, we will continue our work," Schrimm said in an earlier interview. Schrimm, whose team taps on computers in two work rooms, gave a tour of one of the dusty file spaces filled to the ceiling with documents detailing Nazi crimes that took place more than six decades ago. The quiet setting was a far cry from the 1960s and 1970s, when the unit was at its busiest tracking down Nazis. Since its foun- dation in 1958, the Central Office has con- ducted more than 7,500 investigations.

The case against Demjanjuk came about after an investigator accidentally stumbled on a report on the Internet that the U.S. was seeking to revoke his passport. Dem- janjuk, who had been convicted of war crimes in 1988, was charged with being the Treblinka death-camp guard and sentenced to death by a U.S. court in 1988. Demjanjuk’s name was known because he had been identified as a former guard at the Treblinka death camp.

Schrimm, the top German justice of- ficial hunting Nazi fugitives, said his team won the right to keep working because of "disturbing images of Holo- caust atrocities, including graphic nudity," the latter in a Nazi-coerced scene of young women standing on a ramp.
MYTHS AND TRUTHS

(Continued from page 10)

munity took part in them, not miscreants or ‘manifestos’. It was the Jews, the local elites and by upstanding members of the community, who remained in good standing after the crimes a kind of official iniquity. These were quasi-normal events, and even remained a subject of writing. Jews might come to gatherings. The plunder was a widespread social practice, sanctioned by norms.

After the war, he notes, Western nations were able to reflect on what had happened, but Stalinism crushed any public discussion in Poland about the war, the Holocaust, anti-Semitism or Polish culpability, enabling Poles to entrench their view of themselves as noble, heroic victims.

Throughout his writings, Gross em-
phases greed as a motivating fac-
tor for the anti-Semitism. But can greed alone provide the explanation? The direct motive to commit the majority of murders and denunciations of Jews hiding in the countryside was the desire to plunder them, to take over their belongings, which were imagined to be considerable,” Gross analyzes, “for the terrible consequen-
tes of a structure of Jewish riches. People imagined that by killing these peo-
ple, they would get hold of their riches.

“But the barbarism was released by the Nazis,” he says. “The war in the East was very different from the war in the West. In the East, it was a more brutalizing experi-
ence. The Nazis regarded the Poles with contempt, as if they were subhuman.

Everyone is a witness to horrible vio-
ence. It was dehumanizing.

The note in her report were some who helped and rescued Jews. “There were some who, even though they were anti-
Semite, helped Jews. One woman on one of the boats in the Gdansk Ghetto, her fellow Poles, saying, ‘The Jews are our enemy, but in this situation, we, as Chris-
tians, cannot be passive observers of mur-
der.’ A woman in Kielce hid Jews from the pogrom; she later told a journalist that she is a devout Catholic and that when she is not working, she is praying.

“But there were not enough people like this.”

Gross rejects the idea, however, of collec-
tive responsibility. “There is no such thing as collective responsibility. I do not bear re-
ponsibility for the actions of the Holocaust. But we do have a collective sense of identity, and, as a Pole, that identity must include not only our political enemies but also Polish perpetrators. It is possible to be both a noble hero and a villain, and we have both been. We must accept this.”

The Holocaust, says Gross, if studied at all, was not integrated into Polish national history:

“for Poles, the history of World War II has not included the Holocaust, as if it were a separate part of history. Jewish historicism also kept alive, as if it were only their responsibility, and as if there were no interface between Poles and Jews.”

This foundation, he says, is simply wrong. In rewriting the history of World War II in Poland, Gross is also introduc-
ing a new historiography, based on nar-
ratives and testimonies. He is learning, he says, from his own experience.

“I came across the testimony of Samul Wassersztajn, who described the crime in Jedwabne, by chance. And yet, somehow, I was unable to accept that it wasn’t an exaggeration, but a pretty faithful description of what had happened. The events he was describing didn’t regis-
ter in my mind. It took me years to compre-
and accept.”

Historians of the Holocaust have tended to rely on institutional docu-
ments, following the lead of one of the founders of the field of Holocaust studies, Yehuda Bauer, who focused on the case of personal testimonies. Further-
more, says Gross, “Information provided by Jews about the fate they suffered during the war has been viewed with credibility — this is a consequence of the unbelievable scale of the crimes, but also because there were no witnesses against the Jews. The survivors them-
elves often repeated that they could not believe what they had seen.”

But spend some time submerged in these books — by no means a pleasant or an easy task — and these notions recede into irrelevance. Mr. Witcher’s volume presents itself as an encyclopedic history, and is so full of details and citations, it overpowers. We hear from a 17th-century Viennese preacher (“After Satan Chris-
tians have no more enemies than the Jews”), Karl Marx (“What is the world’s cult of the Jew? Hucksterey. What is his worldly god? Money”), and the Hezbollah secretary general, Hassan Nasrallah (“If we searched the entire world for a person more cowardly, despicable, weak, and fee-
ble in psyche, mind, ideology, and religion, we did not find one”). Mr. Witcher offers a less history, though, than a contemporary indictment with his-
torical background. This makes his book than a contemporary indictment with his-
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A HATRED THAT RESISTS EXORCISM

(Continued from page 4)

of Israel is not necessarily anti-Semitic any more than criticism of any particular Jew.

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The American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Joseph & Nicole Meyer, YLA Honorees.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Gonen and Jaci Paradis, YLA Honorees; and Melvin Bukiet, Dinner Chair.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Alan and Mindy Schall, YLA Honorees; and Melvin Bukiet, Dinner Chair.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Kerena Toledano, YLA Honoree; and Melvin Bukiet, Dinner Chair.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman; Ariel Zborowski, YLA Honoree; and Melvin Bukiet, Dinner Chair.

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For more information, or for help with proper wording for the bequest to ASYV, please contact us at 212-220-4304.