The American Society for Yad Vashem Annual Spring Luncheon

May/June 2012 - Iyyar/Sivan 5772

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CELEBRATING THE STRENGTH OF WOMEN

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

It is therefore with great pleasure that I officially open this Luncheon’s program, acknowledging the contribution of our honorees and their leadership. “I now call on Eli Zborowski, our Founder, Chairman, and mentor.” Eli Zborowski addressed the audience with the following speech:

“I am privileged to have you all here today and thank you for your commitment to our organization’s important mission of Holocaust remembrance. ‘I wish to acknowledge our Chairman and Founder, Eli Zborowski, and his wife, Elizabeth. Eli and Elizabeth continue to inspire us with their tireless energy and complete dedication to the Society and, through it, to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. Thank you.

‘I also welcome our guest speaker Rochel Berman, a long-standing member of the American Society for Yad Vashem, whose book about Eli chronicles a life of exemplary leadership.

‘Today we celebrate the strength of women, the memory of those who perished so tragically while holding on to family and children for as long as they could; and those who survived and raised new generations of leaders in a new world.

‘Indeed it is appropriate to today we honor Sima Katz and Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum. Sima, a survivor who, with her late husband, Nathan, came to America and through hard work and unbending spirit raised children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren; and Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum, who carries the torch of our Young Benefactors. Sima Katz has endowed the Yad Vashem synagogue, a project established by Yad Vashem, was launched in 2000, has been open for two years. This afternoon, we are gaining about our work during the last twenty years. This afternoon, we are pleased to welcome Rochel as our guest speaker.

‘Just prior to Pesach, the book, co-published by Yad Vashem, was launched in the Yad Vashem synagogue, a project endowed by Marilyn and Barry Rubenstein and family. At the conclusion of his remarks, Joshua Berman, Professor of Bible at Bar Ilan, who represented his parents, pointed to four empty pages at the back of the book. He said that these pages symbolically signify that our work for the perpetuation of memory will continue for generations to come. With your interest and support we have built a strong organization that now includes the Second, Third, and Fourth generations. I am confident that there will be many more chapters written by successive generations about the aftermath of the Shoah.

‘After award presentation Rita Levy, Luncheon Co-Chair, introduced the guest speaker, Rochel Berman.

‘A bout fifteen years ago my parents went back to Lithuania to find the gentle family who hid them during the war. They were successful, and so they applied to Yad Vashem to have them named Righteous Among the Nations. We came up with the idea of having the ceremony at my daughter Rebecca’s Bat Mitzvah reception here in New York. And my father said something like, ‘I want the whole world to know about this family! Call the TV! As is typical in many father/daughter relationships, I just rolled my eyes. As was typical with my father, he steered on ahead. So, in the office of Benjamin Mead (may he rest in peace), the head of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, we came to a meeting about how we could accomplish the whole world should know.

‘It was there that we met a very, well, professional American woman, who also spoke Yiddish! And the most amazing part was, when she spoke, no matter what the language, my father listened. We all listened. And as a result: “When the Žieliński family arrived at JFK, our local news channel and the Daily News were there.

‘When they went with my parents to the Statue of Liberty, Newsday went with them.

‘It was the same Newsday reporter who listened to Mom and Dad tell their story while Matthew sat on his Zayde’s lap, hearing the stories for the first time – and at the bat mitzvah reception, as Rebecca stood with her brother and cousins and explained that because of the seven lives that his Žieliński family saved in 1943, twelve of us are here today. Tikon Olam. To save one life is to save the world. And channel four was there to record and later air the story. Newsday did a large feature spread.

‘Rochel Berman was responsible for helping to tell the world what happened. In fact, she helped with the publication of Dad’s memoir, Teach Us to Count Our Days.

‘On a personal note, Rochel taught me that no matter how nervous you are standing behind a podium, in front of a microphone, it is indeed important, imperative, to keep the stories alive, to pass them on from one generation to the next. Remember and never forget.”

‘The guest speaker, Rochel Berman, said: ‘I offer my heartfelt congratulations to four honorees Sima Katz and Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum. I have been privileged to work closely with two generations of the Katz and Skura families and am so pleased that there are now three generations in each of these dynasties that have embraced the cause of remembrance. The Skura and Katz ancestry as well as their progeny epitomize strength, courage, and compassion.

‘Because I inaugurated the Spring Luncheon more than a decade ago, I continue to have a very proprietary feeling about this event. While the program has evolved and attendance has doubled over the years, I
Israel honors six million victims of Nazi Holocaust

Israelis flocked to the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial on April 19 to read the names of loved ones who perished at the hands of the Nazis during World War II, a ritual that has become a centerpiece of the country's annual commemoration for the 6 million Jews killed in the genocide.

The ceremony, known as "Every Person Has a Name," tries to go beyond the huge numbers to personalize the stories of individuals, families, and communities destroyed during the war. Zvi Shefet, an 87-year-old survivor, carried a list of 48 names, including those of his parents, his lone sister, his grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins. Having fled to the countryside, he remained not only the lone survivor of his family but also one of the few Jews to escape from the village of Slonim — then part of Poland, today in Belarus — where Nazi troops massacred nearly 30,000 Jews and dumped their bodies into open pits.

Israel Prime Minister Netanyahu lays a wreath during the annual ceremony in memory of six million Jews who perished in the Nazi Holocaust, on Holocaust Remembrance Day at the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem.

Israel's psyche. The nation was created decades later, the mass murder of Jews during World War II is still a central part of Israel's psyche. The nation was created just three years after the end of the war, and hundreds of thousands of survivors made their way to Israel.

One of those who escaped, a woman who joined the Polish resistance movement, met his future wife, then sailed with her to Israel. Today, they are among fewer than 200,000 elderly survivors in Israel.

The link drawn between the Holocaust and Iran shows how more than six decades later, the mass murder of Jews during World War II is still a central part of Israel's psyche. The nation was created just three years after the end of the war, and hundreds of thousands of survivors made their way to Israel.

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FIFTY YEARS ON EICHMANN ON DISPLAY AT THE UN

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MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

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The UN marked Yom HaShoah with an exhibition on the 50th anniversary of the trial of Adolf Eichmann, one of the key architects of the Final Solution. Prominently displayed in the UN’s visitor’s lobby, the exhibition documents the historic trial through photographs, news clippings and works of art, including Eichmann’s note to himself written by the Mossad in Argentina in May 1960 to his execution in 1962.

The exhibit was produced by the Museums Division of Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem. It includes photographs, newspaper clippings, works of art and original film footage of the trial. International media coverage of the court hearing, which included testimony by Holocaust survivors, captured public attention around the globe and was considered a turning point in Holocaust history.

On the opening day, remarks were made by Minister Yossi Peled of Israel, a Holocaust survivor and retired general; H.E. Mr. Ron Prosor, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations; and Professor Melvin J. Bukiet, Sarah Lawrence College, member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Young Leadership Associates of the American Society for Yad Vashem.

“In telling Eichmann’s story, this exhibit sends a clear message to the international community and to each visitor that passes through these halls,” said Ambassador Ron Prosor. “I hope that as you stand here, we understand what we must stand against... Eichmann’s trial did more than expose the past and pose the world a critical lesson for the future.”

But perhaps that lesson has not yet been fully learned or understood, said Peled, with a not-so-veiled reference to Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. “Every year, just a few meters from where we are sitting, there is a president of a UN member state that stands on the podium of the General Assembly and denies the Holocaust while his government threatens to carry out another one.”

The UN has also designated 27 January – the day Auschwitz was liberated in 1945 – as Holocaust Remembrance Day. It has been 50 years since the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, but memories have not faded. Tamar Haasner-Raveh, lawyer and daughter of Gideon Haasner, the trial’s chief prosecutor, remembered when she was 14 years old, the day her father was appointed to the case and Eichmann entered her life.

“My father shared with us his doubts about whether he could represent the victims without being a survivor himself,” she said. But he found the inner strength to do so, as reflected in his opening remarks of the trial. “As I stand here before you, judges of Israel, to lead the prosecution of Adolf Eichmann, I do not stand alone.”

The trial was broadcast live, receiving extensive international media attention, and was open to the public. Eileen Aultz, a New York exchange student studying at Hebrew University at the time, attended the proceedings for several days.

“I clearly remember the image of this man with headphones (for translation from Hebrew to German) sitting very still behind a glass booth. He never moved a muscle,” she recalled.

Mickey Goldberg was a member of Israeli Police Bureau 6, which was set up to prepare witnesses for testimony.

“Eichmann never accepted blame or showed any remorse for his acts, not during the investigation, not during the trial and not before his death,” she said. “On the day of his execution, at which I was present, he refused to confess.”

Adolf Eichmann was convicted on 15 criminal charges, including crimes against the Jewish people and humanity. He was sentenced to death on June 1, 1962. His body was cremated after it was hanged at the site where it was scattered at sea, beyond Israel’s territorial waters, in order to prevent his burial place from being discovered. The execution of Adolf Eichmann is the only time that Israel has enacted a death sentence.

The 50th anniversary of the trial of Adolf Eichmann is the only time his government has voted to relax strict secrecy laws to try to deal with unclaimed accounts. Switzerland’s UBS and Credit Suisse reached a $1.25 billion deal with Switzerland to relax its banking laws in certain areas and pledge to pursue tax evasion as well as outright fraud.

Swiss banking secrecy has come under renewed pressure in recent years, forcing Switzerland to relax its banking laws in certain areas and pledging to pursue tax evasion as well as outright fraud.

Swiss private bank Wegelin over allegations it had helped hide money.

GETTY MUSEUM TO RETURN 17TH CENTURY DUTCH PAINTING LOST IN THE HOLOCAUST

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ecret files recently uncovered in South America reveal as many as 9,000 Nazi bank accounts hidden in Swiss banks during World War II, the Daily Mail reports. Approximately 5,000 went to Argentina, 1,500 to 2,000 went to Brazil, and another 500 to 1,000 fled to Chile. The rest hid in Peru, Panama and Uruguay.

The files also reveal that Argentine president General Juan Peron sold 10,000 blank passports to the Germans in order to facilitate their travel. And the documents exposed new details regarding the “rat lines,” or escape routes, used by around 500 to 1,000 fled to Chile. The rest hid in Brazil, another 1,500 to 2,000 went to Brazil, and another 500 to 1,000 fled to Argentina.

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BOOK REVIEW

THEY DARED RETURN: THE TRUE STORY OF JEWISH SPIES BEHIND THE LINES IN NAZI GERMANY.

They Dared Return: The True Story of Jewish Spies Behind the Lines in Nazi Germany.

By Patrick K. O'Donnell

Reviewed by Dr. Diane Cypkin

Much has been written about Jews as victims during the war. Not nearly enough has been written about Jews as fighters. Patrick K. O'Donnell's volume They Dared Return: The True Story of Jewish Spies Behind the Lines in Nazi Germany is thus very welcome and important, and tells a unique and little known story.

In They Dared Return we read about Jews, lucky enough to escape the Nazis, who came to America and enthusiastically joined the American armed services to do all they could to fight them. The “star” of O’Donnell’s book is Frederick Mayer, a Jew, born in 1921 in the city of Freiberg, Germany. Interestingly, when Hitler came to power Mayer’s father thought he and his family would be safe, despite the growing anti-Semitism around him. After all, this long-time patriot stubbornly believed, he had been a lieutenant and a decorated war hero in the Kaiser’s army. That must mean something! That must protect them! Mayer’s mother didn’t feel that way, and something! That must protect them! Mayer and these men finally found their meaningful place in the OSS as intelligence operatives and just plain spies. In this role, they worked closely with and were aided by German prisoners of war who, after the “Sonderfremdarbeiter” had been deemed trustworthy, and wanted to help the Allies to victory. At the same time, in this role, they were often in the “field” on their own and had to rely on their own wits and just plain chutzpah! Finally, in this role, if they were caught they could expect to be put to death. In short, these men had to have nerves of steel – for what they frequently succeeded in doing was often more than an army could. Indeed, they could save an army! Mayer and these men were what may very well have been “one of the most successful OSS missions of the war.”

O’Donnell conscientiously insists this is not fiction. For, his work, is a “barely escaped from Nazi Germany” Mayer and these men finally found their meaningful place in the OSS as intelligence operatives and just plain spies. In this role, they worked closely with and were aided by German prisoners of war who, after the “Sonderfremdarbeiter” had been deemed trustworthy, and wanted to help the Allies to victory. At the same time, in this role, they were often in the “field” on their own and had to rely on their own wits and just plain chutzpah! Finally, in this role, if they were caught they could expect to be put to death. In short, these men had to have nerves of steel – for what they frequently succeeded in doing was often more than an army could. Indeed, they could save an army! Mayer and these men were what may very well have been “one of the most successful OSS missions of the war.”

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BY CHRISTOPH GUNKEL, SPIEGEL
Hermann Göring was one of the Nazi party’s most powerful figures and an adament anti-Semitism. But his younger brother Albert, a world famous pianist, was a mander of the German air force and Hitler’s closest confidant.

Youngest of the Third Reich, Albert Göring was arrested once again, this time by Americans. Again he gave a matter of fact statement, but this time it had the opposte effect.

“The results of the interrogation of Albert Göring...constitutes as clear a piece of rationalization and ‘white wash’ as the SAC (Seventy Army Interrogation Center) has ever seen,” American investigator Paul Kubala wrote on September 19, 1945. “Albert’s lack of subtlety is matched only by the bulk of his obese brother.”

Kubala’s interpreter, Richard Sonnenfeld, was likewise skeptical. “Albert told a barebells truth. I had trouble believing,” he commented.

A MEMBER OF THE RESISTANCE?

The life of Hermann Göring’s older brother Albert is indeed a fascinating story, filled with history and the enduring legacy of one of the most famous and controversial figures of the 20th century. In this article, we delve into the life of Albert Göring, who, despite his brother’s role in the Nazi regime, managed to resist and survive during the darkest chapters of history.

While his prominent older brother Hermann was known for his authoritarian, bombastic personality, Albert was a more reserved and thoughtful figure. He was a member of the resistance against the Nazi regime and played a crucial role in saving lives during World War II. His story is a testament to the power of perseverance and the human spirit.

Theodor Herzl, the founder of Zionism, once said, “The Jew is a people...He suffers...He rises...He dies.” Albert Göring’s story is a shining example of resilience and hope.

In the free world of the post-war era, Albert became a symbol of the human spirit’s ability to triumph over adversity. His music and his life were a beacon of hope and freedom for those who struggled under the yoke of totalitarianism.

The music of Albert Göring provided comfort and solace to those in need, and his story serves as a reminder of the power of art and the human spirit to overcome even the darkest of times.

BY CAROLINE STOESSINGER, CNN

At age 108, Alice Herz-Sommers is the world’s oldest survivor of the Holocaust. She was imprisoned at Theresienstadt, which was conceived by Hitler as a “model” concentration camp. 

Her — a pianist. In between sum- mer 1943 and the camp’s liberation at the end of the war, she learned more than she could ever imagine. In the Theresienstadt, most were solo recitals culled from memory from her ex- tensive repertoire. She has survived for more than a century with a profound faith in humanity intact and a smile on her face. As music is her kind of prayer, Alice still practices piano – Bach, Beethoven, Schu- bert – for three hours every day.

I got to know her in London, where she now lives, through mutual friends who are musi- cians, historians, and Holocaust survivors. Here are seven lessons she has taught me.

1. Hatred only begets hatred

Alice recognizes that anyone, anywhere, and at any time can hold hatred and, worse, can infect others with its venom. Hatred that may begin with one person, like a single pebble cast into a lake, can spread out incrementally to larger and larger groups, and even to entire nations. “When I hear some of these actions and our words,” she says. “And each of us must vigilantly guard against prejudice and hatred in our dealings and with the words that fall from our lips. No one is ex- empt. Hitler could not have come to power without Hokh because others had also believed such things.”

2. Love your work, no matter the situation

Reinhard Heydrich, Hitler’s “hangman,” and his underlings understood that adding musical and artistic events to Theresien- stadt could be a huge publicity stunt, to prove to the outside world that all was well for the Jews.

They ordered the prisoners to form a Freizeitgestaltung, or Free Time Commit- tee, to organize concerts, lectures, and other events. They printed posters advertising the programs. Prisoners had no money, so tickets were free. So many musicians had been sent to Theresienstadt that for a time before the members were shipped to their deaths in Auschwitz, four symphony orchestras could play there simultaneously.

The artists in the camp refused to perform for the Nazis. Alice says, “Music is our way of remembering our inner selves, our values.”

The Nazis failed to understand the power of music to provide comfort and hope to the performers and their audi- ences was stronger than the terror of their Nazi masters. Every composition that was not Fascist literature was a victory in their eyes. Their work played there, became a moral victory against the enemy.

The surveillance

On Alice’s third day in Theresienstadt, she was told to play a recital the following day. “But I need to practice,” she re- sponded.

The next morning, Alice found the room where she had been assigned the 9:00– 10:00 practice slot. With no time to waste, she began to work on her Chopin studies, only to find that the pedal did not work and that several keys stuck repeatedly. Refusing to be defeated, she quickly adapted to the piano’s limitations and began to play with abandon, losing herself in the music. “At least I was making music and that always made me happy,” she says.

Despite the conditions in the camp and the inappropriate, broken-down, legless in- struments provided for concerts, emotion- ally she may have given her finest performances. “I was so happy with Schu- bert’s sonatas in Theresienstadt.

4. In routine there is hope

Unlike the plight of the hunger and thirst, Alice’s rou- tine life of working her obligatory factory job, performing, caring for her six-year-old children, and giving music classes to a few children continued in the camp. Every day was a new beginning, and there was always a reason to hope.

5. “I am richer for the memories, even harder to reach for perfection, for the pow- er of music, for the riches of my mind.” Alice knew that no one could rob her of her music in her heart, and she says today.

While performing, the prisoners could nearly forget their hunger and their sur- roundings. The terror of finding their names on a deportation list for Auschwitz, the fear of dying of starvation, typhus, and other diseases had become a reality. “Music was our food, our religion, and our hope,” she says. “Music was life. We did not, could not, would not give up.”

Complaining does not help; it makes everyone feel bad

Alice is anything but naïve and is acutely aware of the evil that has always been present in our world. “I know about the bad,” she says.

6. Faith is stronger than fear

As she faces the last years of her life, Alice says, “I will not waste time with fears of death and worries about the unknown. ‘We come from and return to infinity,’” she says.

7. Things are as they are supposed to be,

Alice says, “I am still here, never too old to breathe to wonder, to learn, and to teach.”
Survivors forever

I THOUGHT I WAS THE LAST JEW LEFT

BY ROY MANDEL, YNET NEWS

Yoram Sztykgold was only three when Nazis occupied his homeland. He remembers the dog that almost turned him in, sitting in a German officer’s lap, and the moment everyone burst into laughter when Yoram’s family was told they were safe.

“From that moment on, I have never said anything about my personal story, doubting there is any reason to understand why anyone would be interested in hearing about unusual courage. I didn’t tell anyone I was a survivor. I lost my parents, my grandmother, my older brother, my younger sister.”

His grandfather worked in real estate and another that made hospital equipment. “I don’t know why they didn’t help more,” he says. “They were friends of the family, people we should have been able to count on.”

But, now, in the last years of his life, Yoram is ashamed. One of the 198,000 Holocaust survivors who were floated on the sea of dead that is the Jewish state, he feels the weight of being part of the memory of that time, that place.

“When I was a child, I loved to play in the sand and hid there when I was afraid. I longed to return to the place of my family and friends.”

If there is any hope, it is through the memory. “I am a grownup person today and I forget,” he says. “I wanted to begin a new life in Israel, surrounded by friends and family.”

Yoram was Moshe and Helena’s youngest child. His sister, Wanda, was four years older than him. His grandparents had lived in Warsaw with servants, nannies, and a cook, who were eventually bought the tiny house in Jaffa by a wall and turned into a ghetto.

When the Nazis occupied Poland in 1939, the Sztykgold home was included in the area of Warsaw which was surrounded by a wall and turned into a ghetto. The Nazis looted the expensive belongings and ordered the family to move into the kitchen. The rest of the huge house was turned into a laundry for the German army’s undergarment.

Yoram remembers the strong sanitization smell. He would spend days in the hideout his father created inside the room where bundles of linen would arrive, well packed, “like building blocks, in a German order.”

His father placed an oxygen tube between the packages. He later smuggled his daughter Wanda out of the ghetto under a false identity, while little Yoram remained with his parents.

Wanda left, not before teaching her small brother all the Christian prayers by heart, as if she knew that one day he would need them.

“I am a grownup person today and I forget a lot of things, but I still remember those prayers by heart, word for word. It’s something that will never be erased.”

During the first few months, my mother Helena would cover my eyes when we walked on the street,” Yoram recalls. “But you didn’t have to see to understand what was going on.”

“The ghetto was as noisy as a beehive, so crowded that you couldn’t walk on the street, with a terrible stench. Sick people, children dying under the houses, flies everywhere. In the ghetto, I never raised my head as I walked on the street. I always looked down as so not to see what was happening and not to meet the eyes of a German soldier.”

He was always armed with a bag his mother had prepared for any scenario. “There were clothes in there and a bottle of wine and chocolate. Every time I returned home I would discover it was all stolen. People fought to survive.”

WOOLLY BLINDSIDE A ND WE ARE SEARCHING

Yoram remembers how his grandparents’ health and mental condition deteriorated. As two of the richest people in Warsaw, they suddenly found themselves penniless.

He remembers when his grandfather became the toilet cleaner at the factory built in his house, and how his grandmother continued to employ a coager. “There was nothing left to cook, until she died of grief.”

Once, he recalls, the Germans raised a block in the ghetto, his grandfather, in alarm, jumped out of the bathroom with his pants pulled down, asking, “What happened?” while the family members were looking for him.

“It made us burst into laughter in the middle of all the tension. It was surreal,” he remembers.

Yoram resents those who mourn the six million Jews that died without considering the pain of three broken vertebrae, the result of an accident by a Nazi soldier.

“My condition deteriorated because I didn’t eat and didn’t drink. Mother saw me fading away and gave up. She thought there was no use in running, we must get food even if we have to pay for it with our lives.”

“We emerged from the hideout to the street. I looked down and we started to walk toward the road. I looked down and we started to march.”

After Ros and her family were driven from their comfortable middle-class home in Sofia, they spent the rest of the war in extreme fear and hunger. “I never felt like a child, I never had a childhood,” she recalls. “We lived on 300 grams of bread a day. Potatoes were a luxury food.”

But the family were spared the death camps, and after the war they made their way by boat to the place that would soon be called Israel. They landed in Haifa with few possessions and no money or valuables. After a rocky and lonely beginning, Ros married and built a new life. Now a childless widow, she was recently forced to hire a full-time, live-in caregiver – a necessary expense which she simply cannot afford.

“I love this country, but I don’t feel Jewish here. I came here to feel Jewish. Every Holocaust Day, I wish I had a child, and I’m sad I didn’t end up in a country that loves me,” she says.

The problem of impoverished Holocaust survivors is acute but not long-term. Twelve thousand survivors in Israel died over the past year, and the current rate is one death an hour.

Recently the government announced an increase in funds for the needs of survivors from 206 million shekels a year to 225 million. It points out that, despite the overall declining numbers of people who lived through World War II, more people are being defined as Holocaust survivors according to criteria set by the government and are therefore eligible for funding.

Garel says more relatives and Jews in other countries should contribute from their pocketbooks for the care of survivors. “It’s the responsibility of every Jew to give to the few that are remaining. If everyone made a small annual donation, it would make a big difference.”

(Continued on page 13)
BY SUZANNE KURTZ, JTA

Aryan, like the Germans themselves.

According to the study, the so-called Judgus belonged to the Jewish community because of their religious practices, even though they were not recognized as Jews by the authorities. The study was conducted by Jesukas and Abish, who found that the Nazis considered them as Aryan, based on their physical appearance and language. The study also revealed that the Nazis did not consider them to be part of the Jewish community, even though they had similar cultural and religious practices. The study suggests that the Nazis considered them to be part of the Aryan race, which was considered superior to the Jewish race. The study also highlights the complexity of identity and the ways in which it can be used to manipulate and control people. The study is an important contribution to the understanding of the Holocaust and the ways in which it was used to create and maintain power relationships.
CELEBRATING THE ST
PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE AMERICAN SOCIET

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Matthew Levy; Sima Katz, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree; Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem; and Marilyn Rubenstein, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Chair.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem, delivers his address at the Annual Spring Luncheon.

Rochel Berman, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Guest Speaker, delivers her speech at the Annual Spring Luncheon.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem; Adam Lindenbaum; Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree; Stella Skura, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Co-Chair; Cheryl Skura; Mrs. Lindenbaum; and Elizabeth Zborowski, Cultural Director, American Society for Yad Vashem.

Matthew Levy introducing his grandmother, Sima Katz, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree.

Young Leadership Associates.
TRENGTH OF WOMEN

TY FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem; Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree; Cheryl Skara, mother of and introducer of Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree; and Marilyn Rubenstein, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Chair.

Rita Levy, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Co-Chair, speaks before the audience at the Annual Spring Luncheon.

Marilyn Rubenstein, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Chair, opens the Annual Spring Luncheon. Sima Katz, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree (seated third from left), and her family.

Iris Lifshitz Lindenbaum, 2012 Annual Spring Luncheon Honoree; and Eli Zborowski, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem (center), with a group of Young Leadership Associates.

Gloria Jacobs; Celina and Marvin Zborowski; and Doris Gross.
In April, the Israeli launch of the book A Life of Leadership: The Life Story of Eli Zborowski—a survivor of the Holocaust and one of the key torchbearers of its memory—took place at Yad Vashem. Speaking emotionally before a packed room in the Yad Vashem Synagogue—where Juditacs from destroyed synagogues of Europe are on display—Zborowski’s voice shook as he recalled his parents, Moshe and Zisel, and the role models they were for him.

Zborowski, who was born in Tarni, Poland, found himself as the head of the family when his father, a successful leather merchant, was murdered by the Poles in 1942. Yet it was also Poles who gave a place of refuge to other members of his family. Zborowski was a member of the Jewish Combat Organization, acting as a courier between ghetto fighters and Polish partisans. After the war, he rescued more than 100 orphans and assisted them in living in a youth village in the Feilding DP camp.

He subsequently moved to the United States, using his successful career in business and dedicated his life to Holocaust remembrance and education.

Zborowski, who was separated from his family for 18 days, was reunited after the war. They were among the first ones to arrive in Israel in 1948. After the war Weiss made aliya and lived in a small building in the heart of Jerusalem. He married Zisel and his parents, Moshe and Zisel, and the role models they were for him. Zborowski, who was born in Tarni, Poland, found himself as the head of the family when his father, a successful leather merchant, was murdered by the Poles in 1942. Yet it was also Poles who gave a place of refuge to other members of his family. Zborowski was a member of the Jewish Combat Organization, acting as a courier between ghetto fighters and Polish partisans. After the war, he rescued more than 100 orphans and assisted them in living in a youth village in the Feilding DP camp.

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THE INSPIRING STORY OF ELI ZBOROWSKI

BY GREER FAY CASHMAN

THE JERUSALEM POST

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BY RANDY HERSCHAF AND ERENNA DOBNIK, AP

E ven after decades of in-depth Holocaus research, excruciating details are only now emerging about more than 1,100 German-run ghettos in Eastern Eu- rope where the Nazis murdered hundreds of thousands of Jews. And there were about 200 more ghettos than previously believed, said Martin Dean, editor of the recently published En-

EXCRUCIATING DETAILS EMERGE ON JEWISH GHETTOS

BY OFER ADERET, HAARETZ

O n the eve of Holocaust Remem- brance Day, the Simon Wiesenthal Center announced three new names had been added to its list of most wanted Nazi war criminals. All three have a Canadian connection and two are currently in Canada. The Wiesenthal Center, based in Los Angeles, which tracks Nazi war criminals and anti-Semitism, has given Canada falling marks on pursuing Nazis within its borders. The two suspects in Canada are Vladimir Katriuk, said to have been the commander of a Croatian army unit that committed mass murder in Belarus, and Helmut Oberlander, who allegedly served in one of the mobile killing units of a Ukrainian army unit that committed war crimes, which the Wiesenthal Center hopes will lead to a reconsideration of his case. Oberlander likewise has had his Canadian citizenship repeatedly revoked on ac- count of his Nazi past, but then restored, and it is now pending again. The Einsatz- gruppen, to which he was al- legedly deployed, are believed to have killed more than 25,000 people, mostly Jews. The third wanted man is Laszlo Csatary, who as a police commander in Hungarian-occupied Slovakia is alleged to have played a key role in the deportation of 15,700 Jews to Auschwitz in the spring of 1944. After the war he, too, fled to Canada. The Canadian government stripped him of citizenship in 1997 and he left the country voluntarily, and is now living in Hungary. “Despite the somewhat prevalent assumption that it is too late to bring Nazi mur- derers to justice, the figures clearly prove otherwise,” said Efraim Zuroff, the cen- ter’s director in Israel. “We are trying to ensure that at least several of these crim- inals will be brought to trial during the coming years. While it is generally as- sumed that it is the age of the suspects that is the biggest obstacle to prosecution, in many cases it is the lack of political will, more than anything else.”

In this ca. 1941–1942 photo, people walk on a commercial street in the Lodz ghetto near a sign forbidding entry. Poland. (AP Photo/Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933-1945, Volume II. It’s part of a long-term effort to document every site of organized Nazi persecution, beyond the well-known Warsaw ghetto and extermination camps like Auschwitz. It “gives us information about ghettos that would slip into historical oblivion and be forgotten forever if we didn’t have this volume,” Holocaust scholar Lawrence Langer said. “Who knew there were more than 1,000 ghettos?”

More Jews died during World War II in Poland and the western Soviet Union — today’s Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania — than the estimated 1 million gassed in Auschwitz, Langer said. “The people are dead, but at least we have the memory of the place where they lived and some knowledge of who killed them,” said Langer, an 83-year-old pro- fessor emeritus of English at Boston’s Simmons College. The museum fields inquiries daily about survivors’ families using the new informa-

In this October 26, 1943, photo, Jews are gathered at an assembly point in the Kaunas ghetto in Lithuania, for a deportation action, most likely to Estonia. Another encyclopedia on World War II ghettos was published in 2009 by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel’s official mem- orial to Holocaust victims. The Encyclo- pedia of the Ghettos sums up the story of each ghetto for either lay readers or re- searchers.

The two-part tome compiled by the U.S. Holocaust museum and pub- lished in early May by Indiana University Press includes more listings, with exten- sive scholarly footnotes and bibliogra- phies. The two projects “are complementary,” says Dan Michman, the head of Yad Vashem’s Center for Holocaust Research, who wrote the introduction to its encyclopedia. The rest of the seven- volume U.S. project is ex- pected to be completed in the next decade, tracking more than 20,000 sites of wartime persecution of both Jews and non-Jews.

The new volume covers ghettos from Moscow to today’s German border, and St. Petersburg to Yalta, in Ukraine. The next volume will cover camps and ghettos run by states aligned with Nazi Germany, like Vichy France, Romania, Hungary, Slo- vakia, Italy, and Croatia.

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In this July 1941 photo, civilians drag a Jewish man through a street in Riga, Latvia, as a member of the German police looks on. Schindler during the liquidation of the ghetto there, later working in the enamel factory portrayed in the film Schindler’s List.

SCHINDLER'S LIST

In this July 1941 photo, civilians drag a Jewish man through a street in Riga, Latvia, as a member of the German police looks on. Schindler during the liquidation of the ghetto there, later working in the enamel factory portrayed in the film Schindler’s List.

The recent publication of a new encyclopedia on World War II ghettos comes after several other recent books on the subject. It follows the recent publication of a new encyclopedia on World War II ghettos, the most recent of which was published in 2012 by the Simon Wiesenthal Center. The new volume covers ghettos from Moscow to today’s German border, and St. Petersburg to Yalta, in Ukraine. The next volume will cover camps and ghettos run by states aligned with Nazi Germany, like Vichy France, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Italy, and Croatia.

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CELEBRATING THE STRENGTH OF WOMEN
THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR YAD VASHEM ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

(Continued from page 1)

pride, Eli was disappointed, but very calm and collected. Diplomat that he is, he said to me in Yiddish: "Ere spirt mei in povun yet kane." "What do you mean by 'it's raining'?"

"George and I embarked on this book project several years ago. In a Life of Leadership, we sought to do two things in telling Eli's story: to place his pre-war experience in a historical context; and analyze patterns in Eli's life that can help us understand the scope of his post-Holocaust leadership activities. For example, we traced his interest in children and youth from his travels of teenagers who were orphaned by the Shoah to his establishment of a Youth Village. He started to accompany my father to the bathhouse – when I was about three years old..."

"So what did we learn? Let me share some highlights:..."

"I wish to thank all of you, MY YAD VASHEM FAMILY, for being such a gracious audience. And George and I would like to thank you, Eli, for allowing us to document YOUR remarkable journey..."
“I THOUGHT I WAS THE LAST JEW LEFT”

Continued from page 6)

Yoram recalls the dog he had when the ghetto was established. “A beautiful pedigree dog which we had during our childhood. We managed to decide it was too much, that we cannot continue keeping a pet and feeding it while people are dying of hunger.”

“Father bought poison and decided to put him to sleep. But then Simon Wiesenthal’s center recalled which country they were dealing with. ‘Gorshkov was deported from the US and stripped of US citizenship. That says a lot, doesn’t it?’ Tallinn gave him shelter and tried to hide him here, but then under international pressure the authorities had to initiate an investigation,” Zarenkov reveals.

However, the probe yielded no results. After months of investigation, Estonian authorities closed the case.

The advisor of the office of Estonian Prosecutor General Carol Merzin said that “A well-grounded doubt remains that the Gorshkov mentioned in the materials is not the Mikhail Gorshkov who is at present a citizen of the Republic of Estonia. The case will be closed, as it has been impossible for the investigative team to find any additional evidence.”

The decision raised eyebrows in Israel – a country that the Simon Wiesenthal center recalled which country they were dealing with.

“Tallinn gave the dog to the people who handled his prosecution case about whether they had any doubt about [Mikhail Gorshkov’s] identity. And they said no, none whatsoever,” insists Efraim Zurov.

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The issue is often described as one of "Jewish restitution," but in fact only about 15 percent of the seized property in question is "Jewish restitution," but in fact only about 15 percent of the seized property in question is "Jewish restitution," but in fact only about 15 percent of the seized property in question is...
HOW A TOP NAZI'S BROTHER SAVED LIVES

A Albert Göring used the power of his family name and pulled all the stops to find and free his father, then and only then to make sure he was released immediately," Pfizer's son later testified. That was no isolated incident, and many people had similar testimony to present. (Continued from page 5) president of Tobis-Sascha-Filmindustrie, Austria's largest film production company. Pfizer was Jewish, which gave the Nazis the perfect excuse to ban his studio's films in Germany — so they could subsequently take over the company when it began to falter. When the Gestapo arrested the top-plagued film mogul in March 1938, Albert Göring intervened.

SCRUBBING THE STREETS

While his brother was hard at work perfecting his air force, Albert obtained fake papers, warned friends of impending arrest, and provided refugees with money. Again and again, he defied his name to intimidate public officials. It was a bizarre situation. The overly ambitious Hermann knew about Albert's activities, yet did nothing to stop him. Albert later testified that his brother had told him it was his "own business" if he wanted to help Jews, so long as he didn't get Hermann in "endless trouble." Albert, meaner, discouraged the Jews, yet did nothing to stop him. Albert didn't even get Hermann into trouble. His name had become a burden.

FLEEING TO SALZBURG

But even that isn't the whole story. Göring is also believed to have saved prisoners from the Theresienstadt concentration camp in 1944. "He said, I'm Albert Göring from Skoda. I need workers," Jacques Berbassat, the son of an associate of Albert's, later related. "He filled the truck with workers, and the concentration camp director agreed to it, because he was Albert Göring. Then he drove into the woods and released them." A number of notes turn up in German files that move these stories were not simply made up. The Gestapo's Prague bureau, for example, complained that Göring's office at the Skoda factory was "a veritable nerve center for poor Czechs." The general of the Prague police, SS- Obergruppenführer Karl Hermann Frank, considered Albert Göring "at the very least, a defeatist of the worst sort" and asked permission to arrest him in 1944 on "profound grounds for suspicion."

Now the man who had helped others escape became the persecuted one. Multiple times, Hermann Göring had to intervene on Albert's behalf, all the while warning him that he wouldn't do so for ever — with every German plane shot down, the once untouchable head of the Luftwaffe found his star was on the wane. Shortly before the end of the war, Albert fled to Salzburg, Austria. These two very different men met just once more in an American detention center in August. "You will soon be free," the war criminal Göring is said to have told the younger Göring who saved Jews, on May 13, 1945. "Take care of my wife and my child. Farewell." While Hermann Göring, sentenced in Nuremberg, escaped execution by committing suicide in October 1946, the Americans remained skeptical of Albert Göring. His name had become a "scar" for him. Although the last of a series of caseworkers did recommend his release, Göring was turned over to the Czech Republic for public and tried in Prague for possible war crimes, because Skoda had also manufactured weapons.

BOOK DETAILS GERMAN CITIZENS' ROLE

(Continued from page 4) (Continued from page 4)

TTo answer this question, Blatman says, there were exceptions, a group of people who had become merciless sadists over the years. The concentration camp guards saw themselves as frontline soldiers against the enemy within, and as defenders of the Aryan race and the superior nation. Now that they were no longer working in the camps, they continued their mission, except that they were redefined of their prescribed routines. Worried about being caught by the Allied soldiers in the company of bands of walking skeletons, the men chose to kill the potential witnesses instead. Similar motives also turned many people on the home front into perpetrators when the trains filled with prisoners suddenly arrived in their towns. Mayors, local party officials, and men with the Volkssturm militia were determined to prevent the oppressed concentration camp guards from gaining their freedom in their own backyard and exacting revenge for the injustices they suffered. This is the story of Albert Göring. His name had become a "scar" for him. But many of the marches ended in disaster, as was the case in Gardelegen, a town in east central Germany, where US soldiers found hundreds of charred and mangled bodies in a barn in mid-April 1945. They were the bodies of prisoners from various camps who had been forced inside. It was later discovered that people had volunteered to guard the prisoners, "including ordinary civilians, some of them armed with hunting rifles, who mutated into prison guards of their own volition," Blatman writes. The massacres began when the prisoners were being marched to an empty cavalry school in Gardelegen, where they were housed temporarily, and where adolescents boasted: "We're going hunting, to shoot down the zettas." Men from the Volkssturm militia, police officers, soldiers from a paratrooper division barracked nearby, guards, and civilians helped drive the doomed prisoners into the barn. Then they locked the doors, lit gasoline-soaked straw on the ground and tossed hand grenades into the building. Anyone who attempted to escape the inferno ran into a hail of bullets. Some 25 prisoners survived, while about 1,000 died. A few days later, the victims were given a burial with military honors. The Americans ordered the residents of Gardelegen to attend the ceremony. Some will say that the Nazis were responsible for this crime," Colonel George P. Lynch, chief of staff of the 102nd US Infantry Division, told the Germans. "Others will point to the Gestapo. The responsibility rests with neither. It is the responsibility of the entire German people."
HOLOCAUST FAMILY WEEPS AS LAST PORTRAITS OF VICTIMS GO ON SHOW IN ISRAEL

BY GWEN ACKERMAN, BLOOMBERG

Dorota Milka Semmel fixes us with a resigned grimace. She has a blue kerchief, lined face, and brown eyes. She peers from a portrait painting that occupies most of her face and is surrounded by the faces of other 53 labor camp inmates.

“Dorota Milka Semmel, Miłosławica Camp, 1943” by Arnold Daghani. In April 1943, Semmel and their daughter Zyla were executed together with other 53 labor camp inmates.

About 6 million European Jews were killed in the Holocaust during World War II in a Nazi campaign across Europe that included random executions, plunder, and death camps. Most of the faces that look out from the exhibit’s charcoal, pencil, watercolor, and oil portraits didn’t survive. The blurry lines and downcast glances of the subjects in one such group reflect the precariousness of existence in the camps and ghettos.

The exhibition’s portraits are grouped thematically and into specific categories. The police killed her only sister right after and they were both shot. Right in front of everyone. I just wish there was a way to tell my mother that the painting exists, she says. “I’m crying for her.”

Poland has issued commemorative coins to honor three Catholic Polish families who were killed by the Nazis for having rescued Jews during the Holocaust. The two coins, in denominations of two zlotys, worth about $6.50, honor the Ulma, Baranek, and Kowalski families.

“Peter Hans Edel (Hirschweh), Sachsenhausen, c. 1944-1945” by Felix Cytwin. Edel was an artist who worked on producing money bills during World War II. The two coins, in denominations of two zlotys, worth about $6.50, honor the Ulma, Baranek, and Kowalski families.

Poland’s commemorative 2-zloty coins honoring the Ulma, Baranek, and Kowalski families, when Nazi police, after being tipped off, set fire to houses where Jews were believed to be hidden.

December 1942, the Kowalskis, their five children, and the Jews they were hiding were among at least 34 people killed in just a few strokes. Their subjects added captions to their likenesses such as that done by Max Placek on which Viktor Ullman, the Czech composer who was sent to Auschwitz in 1944, scribbled: “Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.”

With a bequest to the American Society for Yad Vashem helps keep the memory of the Six Million alive...

Please remember us in your trust, will, estate plan or with the planned gift. It’s your legacy... to your family, and your people.

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

Martyrdom & Resistance

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Yefim Krasnyanskiy, M.A., Editor

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