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MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

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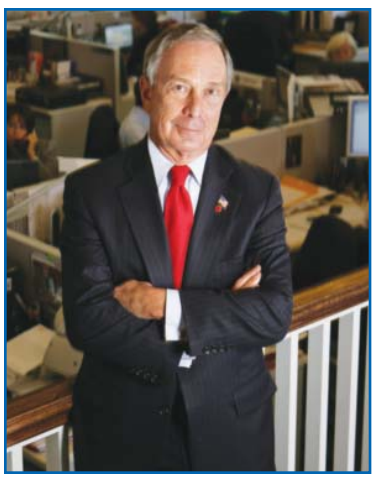
The American & International Societies for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner

HONORING MAYOR MICHAEL R. BLOOMBERG



Michael R. Bloomberg is the 108th Mayor of the City of New York. He was first elected in November 2001, two months after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, a time when many believed that crime would return, businesses would flee and New York might take decades to recover. Instead, through hundreds of innovative new policies and initiatives, Mayor Bloomberg has made New York City safer, stronger and greener than ever.

Today, compared to 2001, crime is down by more than 35 percent. The welfare rolls are down nearly 22 percent. High school graduation rates are up more than 40 percent since 2005. Ambulance response times are at record lows. Teen smoking is down more than 50 percent. More than 755 acres of new parkland have been added. The Mayor's economic policies have helped New York City avoid the level of job losses that many other cities experienced during the national recession. Today, New York City has more private-sector jobs than at any point in history.

Born on February 14, 1942, in Boston and raised in a middle-class home in Medford, Massachusetts, Michael Bloomberg attended Johns Hopkins University, where he paid his tuition by taking loans and working as a parking lot attendant. After college, he went on to receive an MBA from Harvard Business School. In 1966 he was hired by a Wall Street firm, Salomon Brothers, for an entry-level job.

He quickly rose through the ranks at Salomon, overseeing equity trading and sales before heading up the firm's information systems. When Salomon was acquired in 1981, he was let go from the firm. With a vision of an information technology company that would bring transparency and efficiency to the buying and selling of financial securities, he launched a small startup company called Bloomberg LP. Today, Bloomberg LP is a global media company that has over 310,000 subscribers to its financial news and information service. Headquartered in New York City, the company has more than 15,000 employees worldwide.

As his company grew, Michael Bloomberg started directing more of his attention to philanthropy, donating his time and resources to many different causes. He has sat on the boards of numerous charitable, cultural and educational institutions, including The Johns Hopkins University, where, as chairman of the board, he helped build the Bloomberg School of Public Health into one of the world's leading institutions of public health research and training.

In 2001 he ran for mayor of the City of New York and, in a major upset, won the election. He was reelected in 2005 and 2009. During his three terms, Mayor Bloomberg has turned around a broken public school system by raising standards, promoting innovation and holding schools accountable for success. He has spurred economic growth and job creation by revitalizing old industrial areas and strengthening key industries, including new media, film and television, bio-science, technology and tourism. The Mayor's Five Borough Economic Opportunity Plan has helped bring the City through the national recession as quickly as possible and helped avoid the level of job losses that many experts had forecast and that other cities experienced. He has also launched new, cutting-edge programs that encourage entrepreneurship, combat poverty and help people acquire the skills they need to build careers.

His passion for public health has led to ambitious new health strategies that have become national models, including a ban on smoking in all indoor workplaces, as well as at parks and beaches. Today, life expectancy is 32 months longer than it was before Mayor Bloomberg took office. He has also created a far-reaching plan to fight climate change and promote sustainable development. His belief that America's mayors and business leaders can help effect change in Washington led him to launch national bipartisan coalitions to combat illegal guns, reform immigration and invest in infrastructure. And he has been a strong champion of the City's cultural community, expanding support for artists and arts organizations and helping to bring more than 100 permanent public art commissions to all five boroughs.

Mayor Bloomberg is the father of two daughters, Emma and Georgina.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ELI ZBOROWSKI, *Z"L*

Eli Zborowski was born in *Zarki*, Poland. He joined the Jewish underground, serving as a courier to the ghettos of western Poland. His father was murdered by Poles in 1943. Eli was then forced to take on the responsibilities for the family as an adult. His remaining family survived the war in hiding. Following the war, Eli met Diana Wilf in *Feldafing*, a displaced persons camp. She was a survivor from *Drohobycz*, Poland. They were married in *Feldafing* in December 1948. Diana stood by his side and was an equal partner with Eli for 57 years. She passed away in 2004.

Eli Zborowski founded the American and International Societies for Yad Vashem in 1981 and served as the organization's Chairman from its inception, guiding it to raise over $100 million for the benefit of Yad Vashem, Jerusalem. He established the Diana and Eli Zborowski Interdisciplinary Chair for Holocaust Studies and Research at Yeshiva University. Eli also endowed the Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

In 2006, he married Dr. Elizabeth Mundlak, and they worked together to continue his dreams of Holocaust remembrance and education.

Eli was the proud father of two children and seven grandchildren.

IN THIS ISSUE

The American and International Societies for Yad Vashem cordially invite you to attend their

ANNUAL TRIBUTE DINNER

Sunday, November 10, 2013 — 8 Kislev, 5774

Sheraton New York Hotel and Towers
811 Seventh Avenue at 52nd Street
New York City

See pages 8–9 for more info

ON TRANSITIONS

Rabbi Eric M. Lankin, DMin.
Executive Director/CEO of the
American Society for Yad Vashem

For the family and friends of Eli Zborowski, *z"l,* his passing at age 86 on September 10, 2013, was a tremendous loss. His love and concern were a profound source of strength for them throughout his life. For his second family, the community and staff of the American Society for Yad Vashem (ASYV), Eli's death was also profoundly felt, as he was the founder and volunteer chair of ASYV for over 31 years. The Society and the Holocaust survivor community had an outstanding leader with vision, courage and fortitude, and his death created a terrible void.

Our upcoming Annual Tribute Dinner on November 10, chaired by Barry and Marilyn Rubenstein, will include an acknowledgement of Eli's most significant contributions to ASYV, to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and to Holocaust remembrance. This will give us the opportunity to reflect on the impact of his leadership over his many years of most dedicated service.

We are grateful that the outstanding leadership team of Leonard A. Wilf, our Chair, and his Executive Committee and Board managed the process of transition with direction towards the future. The staff that had been nurtured by Eli's leadership, continued on a daily basis to keep the organization functioning at full capacity, including organizing and conducting our Annual Tribute Dinner last November and the myriad of other activities that define the ASYV year.

Personally, I feel very fortunate to have gotten to know Eli briefly the summer before he died. In the hours we spent together in the office, he shared some of his experiences during the Holocaust, and his thoughts about our Jewish future, what ASYV and Yad Vashem had meant to him, and some of his concerns and struggles faced by the organization. Although he said his body was tired, his mind was sharp, his comments were incisive, and his legacy remains intact.

Today, I sit in his chair as Executive Director/CEO of ASYV. I do not pretend to fill Eli's shoes, but instead, I spiritually stand on his shoulders to face the future. Eli's imprint on every aspect of ASYV and its commitment to Yad Vashem is a gift that he has left me. I inherited a strong and visionary organization with devoted volunteer leaders and staff.

As the new professional leader, the future calls me to respond in my own way, guided by my training and experience. I have dedicated my professional career to a better Jewish future. For fourteen years, I served as a congregational rabbi on the front lines, teaching and spiritually guiding wonderful Jews and strengthening congregations and the communities we served. And for fourteen more years, I have served on the national scene in Jewish communal organizations, bringing people together to address the challenges facing Jewish life, guiding national educational programs and developing financial resources to insure our future. At ASYV, I am using everything I have learned, as we review every aspect of how we are functioning to face the challenges of the present and prepare for the future, cognizant of Eli's vision and effort.

We are at a time of great transition as many of our founders who were Holocaust survivors are passing the torch to the second and third generations of their families. At ASYV, we are quite sensitive to this transitional period and are strategically working hard to strengthen our connection to survivor families, the Jewish community and other supporters of our work. In partnership with Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, we are dedicated to providing the most significant leadership in promoting Holocaust education, remembrance and commemoration using the tools available to us in the 21st century.

Please save the date for our Annual Tribute Dinner on Sunday, November 10 in New York City. Not only will we be paying tribute to Eli's memory, as I discussed above, but also recalling the tenth anniversary of the tragic voyage of the space shuttle Columbia that included Israeli astronaut Col. Ilan Ramon, *z"l*. You may recall that on that voyage, Colonel Ramon carried a copy of "Moon Landscape," a view of Earth from the Moon, drawn by Petr Ginz, *z"l,* during the Holocaust in *Theresienstadt*.

We are fortunate that at the Annual Dinner we will have the opportunity to pay tribute to the Honorable Michael Bloomberg, Mayor of New York City, at the end of 12 years of outstanding service to our community, and present him with the Yad Vashem Remembrance Award. Mayor Bloomberg has been a supporter of our important work for many years as a major donor, and served as the United States representative to the opening of the new Yad Vashem Museum on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem in 2005.

I look forward to hearing from you with ideas about how you might like to help us in our important work. Contact me at ELankin@yadvashemusa.org or 212-220-4304 x-201.

HISTORICAL PAPERS FOUND AFTER 46 YEARS

A box of documents covered with dust, which belonged to the Israeli embassy in Prague and was discovered accidentally after 46 years, contains a historical memory which may allow the State of Israel to honor Czech citizens who saved Jews during the Holocaust and have yet to be officially recognized.

Shahar Shelef, the deputy Israeli ambassador to the Czech Republic, received a phone call from a diplomat serving at the Swedish embassy in Prague.

"You're not going to believe this," the Swedish diplomat told him. "We were organizing the embassy and decided to clean up the cellars. We found an old cardboard box with papers of the Israeli embassy from 1967. You may come and take it."

An inquiry revealed that in 1967, after Czechoslovakia severed its diplomatic relations with Israel, the Israeli embassy staff placed some of the diplomatic paperwork inside a cardboard box at the Swedish embassy. The box was placed in the basement, only to be discovered there 46 years later.

Among the pile of administrative documents were three Righteous Among the Nations certificates on behalf of Yad Vashem which were to be handed out along with medals, in an official ceremony, to three Czech citizens who saved Jews during the Holocaust.

As they had to leave in a rush, the Israeli embassy staff did not have time to deliver the certificates, and they were buried in the basement of the Swedish embassy.

Upon receiving the box of documents, the Israeli embassy contacted Yad Vashem and received verification that those three Czech citizens had indeed been registered as Righteous Gentiles.

The son of one of the three Czechs, who lives in Canada, had received a copy of the medal from the Israeli consulate in Montreal many years ago. The other two have yet to be contacted.

"We know that the three Righteous Gentiles are no longer alive," says Shelef. "We will do everything in our power to see their offspring receive the official recognition of the State of Israel, even if 46 years too late."

"WANTED": NAZI HUNTERS TRACK WAR CRIMINALS IN GERMANY

"Wanted" posters have been tacked up across Germany by Nazi hunters who say there are war criminals out there who continue to escape justice almost seven decades after the end of World War II.

"The advanced old age of the perpetrators should not be a reason to discontinue prosecution, since the passage of time in no way diminishes their guilt and old age should not protect murderers," said Efraim Zuroff, the director of the Israel office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, a human rights group that tracks anti-Semitism.

"Every single prosecution is an important reminder that justice can still be achieved for the victims of the Holocaust," he said.

The campaign, "Late. But not too late! Operation Last Chance II," kicked off in July and offers a $33,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Nazi criminals, according to the center.

The posters have appeared in Berlin, *Hamburg* and *Cologne* and show a black-and-white photograph of the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp and state: "Millions of innocents were murdered by Nazi war criminals. Some of the perpetrators are free and alive. Help us to bring them before a court."

Zuroff estimates that about 60 potential war criminals are still alive, including around 50 former guards at Auschwitz in Nazi-occupied Poland.

The campaign to seek out former World War II–era Nazis in Germany was launched by Zuroff following the conviction of John Demjanjuk in *Munich*. Demjanjuk was a Ukrainian-American convicted in 2011 by a German court as an accessory to the murder of 27,900 Jews while a guard at a Nazi extermination camp. He died in a German nursing home in March 2012.

In a legal precedent in Germany, the court held that anyone who was an "overseer" of activity in the concentration camp could be charged with complicity in the murders, even a person who did not directly kill inmates.

Efraim Zuroff talks to journalists as he stands in front of a placard promoting the campaign "Late. But not too late! Operation Last Chance II" in Berlin.

A similar "Wanted" project that began in 2002 in nine countries, including Germany, turned up 605 suspects, 103 of whom were submitted to prosecutors for trial. Zuroff said the latest project would have started sooner, but it took a while to raise money.

"We approached 86 companies and foundations, including all the giants of German industry, but only three were willing to help us," Zuroff said. "The hardest thing in connection to the Holocaust that a country has to do is to put its own nationals on trial."

Zuroff said the subject is still a sensitive one here.

"No one is saying that Germany hasn't done a tremendous amount to atone for the crimes. But in recent years when the problem has been more manageable, you can say that they're doing a better job."

A POLISH WOMAN RECOGNIZED AS RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS

A ceremony in honor of Ms. Danuta Renk-Mikulska, who was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, took place on July 23 at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center.

Ms. Renk-Mikulska received the certificate and medal of the Righteous Among the Nations from the Israeli Consul General to the Midwest, Roi Gilad, and the ASYV Director of Development, S. Isaac Mekel.

Danuta Renk-Mikulska is the fifth member of the Mikulski family to be recognized by Yad Vashem.

Jan and Melania Mikulski lived on the outskirts of *Bilgoraj*, in the Lublin district, with their children Jadwiga, Danuta and Jerzy. Mr. Mikulski, a local forester, had enjoyed good relations with the Jews of the town before the war. During one of the *Aktionen* carried out by the Germans, Rivka Wajnberg and Lila Stern, two young women from the town, fled to the home of Jan and Melania Mikulski,

From left: Rick Hirschhaut, Executive Director of the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center; Roi Gilad, Israeli Consul General to the Midwest; Danuta Renk-Mikulska; S. Isaac Mekel, ASYV Director of Development; Nitza Gilad, programs officer at the Israeli Consulate to the Midwest; and Paulina Kapuscinska, Poland's Consul General in Chicago.

who willingly took them in, treating them with the same devotion they gave their own children. While working in the forest, Mikulski came across brothers Bencjon and Chaim Rozenbaum, past acquaintances, and Pola Kenig. Mikulski helped them find a place to hide in the forest, and from time to time brought them home to sleep. With the arrival of winter, after it became too cold to survive in the forest, Mikulski moved the Jewish fugitives into his home, and all five found refuge in a special hiding place the Mikulskis prepared for them in one of the farm buildings. The Mikulski family treated the Jewish fugitives with warmth and kindness, taking care of all their needs and doing whatever they could to make their stay in the hiding place as pleasant as possible. Fearing that the hiding place would be discovered, the Mikulskis lived in constant terror, which reached a climax when a group of German soldiers established themselves in their home for eight days.

During this period, the Mikulskis greatly feared that the Jews would be discovered, and consequently gave them poison pills, but fortunately, the Germans left without discovering the fugitives. The two young Jewish women and Bencjon and Chaim Rozenbaum remained in hiding in the Mikulski home for about a year, after which they joined the partisans. Chaim Rozenbaum was killed in the ranks of the Polish Army, his brother emigrated to Israel together with Pola Kenig, and the two young women emigrated to the United States. Everything the Mikulski family did to save Jews was motivated by pure altruism, for which they never asked for or received anything in return.

Jan Mikulski, Melania Mikulska and all three of their children were recognized as Righteous Among the Nations.

NEARLY 70 YEARS AFTER LIBERATION, HOLOCAUST MEMORIALS CONTINUE TO PROLIFERATE

BY GIL SHEFLER, JTA

No earth was moved recently at the groundbreaking of one of the nation's newest Holocaust memorials.

Instead, the gatherers stood silently, symbolic shovels in hand, on the immaculate lawn where the privately funded $400,000 monument will soon rise. A succession of speakers delivered somber homilies remembering one of the darkest chapters in human history.

"It was an absolutely unbelievable world that I lived in," survivor Fred Lorber was quoted as saying by local media. "It's hard for me to describe, but whatever time I think about it, it's there. It never left my memory."

The construction of a new Holocaust memorial is hardly unusual. But this was Des Moines, Iowa, home to a small Jewish community and an even smaller number of survivors.

Just 2,800 Jews live in the capital of the Hawkeye State, among them a rapidly diminishing number of survivors like Lorber. Yet local authorities, along with the Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines and Jewish philanthropists, nevertheless felt it important for the city to set aside prominent public space near the state capitol to remember the victims of Nazi persecution and their liberators.

"As time went by and as the last survivors passed away, the study of the Holocaust in the school districts began to wane and the Jewish community felt the memory of it needed to be perpetuated," said Mark Finkelstein, the head of the federation.

The Jews of Des Moines are hardly the first to push for such a project.

Though precise numbers are difficult to come by, Holocaust studies experts say museums and monuments dedicated to the genocide have proliferated across the United States over the past two decades.

Major American cities typically have at least one Holocaust memorial, but now many midsized ones do too, like Richmond, Virginia, Charleston, South Carolina, and El Paso, Texas. Memorials are even found in relatively small cities, like Whitwell, Tennessee, and Palm Desert, California. And more are in the works, including a recently approved monument designed by architect Daniel Libeskind to be built on the statehouse grounds in Columbus, Ohio.

The phenomenon is also not a uniquely American one. Norway, a country with only 1,300 Jews, has two Holocaust memorials.

"There are probably more than 300 Holocaust study centers and museums around the country, and the number of memorials would be hard to track down because of all the small ones," said James Young, a professor of English and Judaic studies at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and the author of a book about Holocaust remembrance.

"Just in Manhattan, there are 80. Multiply that and you probably have thousands."

Young says the single most important factor driving the construction of Holocaust memorials nearly 70 years after the war is the initiative of elderly survivors. With the youngest of them nearing 80, survivors are eager to educate future generations about their suffering and, in so doing, give meaning to their lives.

"It doesn't take a big community," Young said. "If someone is inspired to build a memorial site, it is possible to do so."

One such person was Eva Mozes Kor, 79, who along with her twin sister was subjected to savage medical experiments carried out by Nazi war criminal Dr. Josef Mengele.

In 1995, Kor founded the CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Terre Haute, a small city in western Indiana where she has lived since the 1950s, with the aim of sharing her story with her neighbors.

Each year about 75,000 mostly non-Jewish children visit the

The CANDLES Holocaust museum in Terre Haute, Indiana.

center from nearby rural areas of western and central Indiana. Kor and two other survivors, including her husband, present lectures to the young visitors.

"I want to teach children in the world," she said. "I think [the Holocaust] is not a Christian thing, not a Jewish thing, it's a human thing."

For Jewish leaders, Holocaust memorializing is often a way to build community around a non-religious issue.

"The creation of a Holocaust memorial is likely something everybody can cooperate on," said Jonathan Sarna, a professor of Jewish studies at Brandeis University. "The minute you touch Israel, it's divisive. But for Jews and Christians to get together to commemorate the Holocaust, that can bring them together, especially in smaller communities."

But Holocaust commemoration also has been driven by Christians such as Michael Tudor, a Louisiana lawyer and a Baptist. He came up with the idea of building a Holocaust memorial while jogging past a sculpture by the Israeli artist Yaacov Agam in New Orleans dedicated to the memory of the victims.

If everything goes according to plan, Tudor will break ground on a Holocaust memorial in his hometown of Alexandria (population: 47,000) in November.

"I can think of many reasons we ought to have one even though we are a small city," Tudor said. "There's a real historical tie to the liberation of camps. And we've always had a vibrant Jewish community for a small town. They've been the foundation blocks of our community."

The privately funded $80,000 structure will feature an 18-foot granite obelisk — "because 18 is a symbolic number in the Hebrew tradition," Tudor said — and be engraved with the famous poem "First they came" by the German pastor Martin Niemöler.

The memorial also will remember local U.S. soldiers who participated in the liberation of the camps, as well as the victims and survivors.

"The greatest generation is dying out and people's memories are fading," Tudor said. "You realize, if not now, when?"

Young expects that with the youngest survivors becoming octogenarians, the trend is unlikely to continue indefinitely. Once they pass, the money and motivation for such projects may disappear as well.

"The next generation," Young said, "might be less likely to be doing this."

BOOK REVIEWS

NAZIS AFTER HITLER

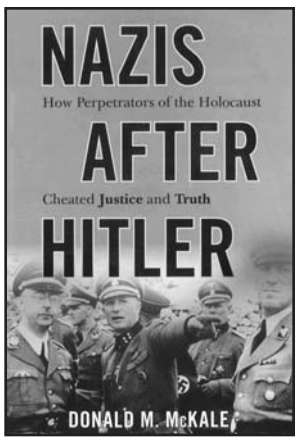
Nazis after Hitler: How Perpetrators of the Holocaust Cheated Justice and Truth.

By Donald M. McKale. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: Lanham, Md, 2012. 405 pp. $39.95.

REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN

"It didn't happen!" "I didn't know anything about it!" "It's all an exaggeration!" "The Jews made it up!" "The Jews caused it!" — these are just some of the excuses Nazis dreamed up to defend themselves when it comes to acts they committed during the war against the Jews. Then there are those who claimed they "were just following orders." Then there is the greater number of Nazis who never paid for their monstrous crimes. And then there is the story of the Cold War that encouraged the Allies to turn a blind eye to everything. Donald M. McKale delves into all of this in his well-researched book *Nazis after Hitler: How Perpetrators of the Holocaust Cheated Justice and Truth*. Finally, and most interestingly, he highlights just how these arguments used by the Nazi murderers would become the arguments used by today's Holocaust deniers.

Thus, for example, McKale tells us of the twenty-one-year-old, notoriously sadistic, "'beautiful golden hair[ed]'" Nazi female guard Irma Grese. She worked at *Ravensbruck*, *Birkenau*, and *Bergen-Belsen*. "Grese beat prisoners;" she shot them; "she set her violent dog on them; she assisted Mengele [the infamous doctor at Auschwitz-Birkenau] in the selections of victims for the gas chambers." Arrested in 1945 by the British, she blamed Mengele for everything; she claimed she only knew "from the prisoners that there were gas chambers at Auschwitz and that prisoners were gassed there;" she denied "nearly all involvement in the mistreatment of camp inmates," and indeed she "claimed to have hidden mothers and children" from certain death, and because of it *"Jewish prisoners caus[ed] her problems"* [emphasis added by this reviewer]. Finally, at her trial Irma bitterly proclaimed she was the victim here of everyone else, even as she and her defense team claimed "vindictive Jews" were out to get all Nazis, guilty or not! True, in the end, Irma Grese was executed . . . but her lies would live long after her, to be resuscitated and "updated" by deniers.



More common, however, are the stories of those who barely paid for their crimes, like the SS general Karl Wolff. "As Himmler's right-hand man and Hitler's close confidant" he traveled with Himmler to inspect the work of *Einsatzgruppen* A, B, and D — all primarily charged with killing Jews. "Wolff participated in the Holocaust in Yugoslavia." In 1942 when there was a shortage of trains to transport Jews to the death camps at *Treblinka*, *Belzec* and *Sobibor* — the *Wehrmacht* claimed it couldn't spare any — he made sure these trains kept running. By 1945, however, Wolff, a power in Italy, realizing Germany was losing the war, cleverly contacted U.S. intelligence and "negotiated [the] . . . surrender [of] all German forces in Italy." Indeed, he would use this last as a major "bargaining chip" to save himself from postwar punishment, even as he denied any crimes against Jews, only later volunteering that crimes that were perpetrated were highly exaggerated and deserved! In sum, he almost got away, what with the Allies increasingly concerned with the Soviets and using former Nazis as Cold War spies. But then in 1961, Wolff actually published his memoirs (!) . . . and because of them spent some little time in jail.

Meanwhile, the aforementioned Dr. Josef Mengele, responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands, often by way of his gruesome experiments at Auschwitz-Birkenau, got away scot-free. Those who helped him included SS men, sympathetic Catholic clergy and corrupt South American governments. Just as "lucky" was Alois Brunner, Adolf Eichmann's "best tool," personally implementing many of his superior's murderous plans. A rabid anti-Semite, he was responsible, among other things, for destroying the Jewish community of *Salonika*, and for the death of countless French and Slovakian Jews. After the war he found refuge in Syria, and a job there "as an advisor to the country's Ministry of Interior on torture and repression techniques."

Indeed, throughout his book, McKale notes again and again how many Nazis got away — hundreds of thousands of them — never brought to justice! Nor did most of them leave Germany! Eventually they got jobs. They even got government positions. For that matter, *Nazis after Hitler* notes that "already in 1949, a U.S. report revealed that in Bavaria alone 752 of 924 judges and prosecutors were former Nazis — or 81 percent." Additionally, many boldly claimed and received pensions. Thus the Allies decided — with the current world situation as it was — rebuilding Germany and the good will of German citizenry was most important. Thus, the Russians, too, had other issues more important to them . . . Thus today's Holocaust deniers would learn they could tell lies and even, gingerly, get away with it!

Needless to say, McKale's book leaves one thinking . . . about many things . . .

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

HOLLYWOOD'S PACT WITH HITLER

The Collaboration: Hollywood's Pact with Hitler.

By Ben Urwand. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 2013. 336 pp. $26.95, hardcover.

REVIEWED BY J. SCHUESSLER, THE NEW YORK TIMES

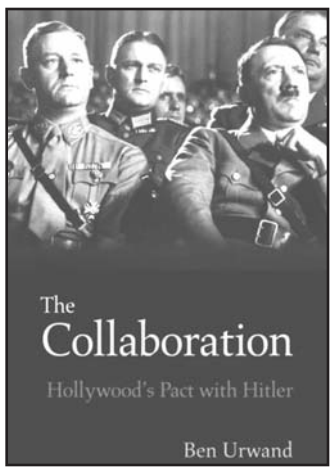
The list of institutions and industries that have been accused of whitewashing their links to the Third Reich is long, including various governments, the Vatican, Swiss banks and American corporations like I.B.M., General Motors and DuPont.

Now a young historian wants to add a more glamorous name to that roll call: Hollywood.

In *The Collaboration: Hollywood's Pact with Hitler*, Ben Urwand draws on a wealth of previously uncited documents to argue that Hollywood studios, in an effort to protect the German market for their movies, not only acquiesced to Nazi censorship but also actively and enthusiastically cooperated with that regime's global propaganda effort.

In the 1930s "Hollywood is not just collaborating with Nazi Germany," said Mr. Urwand. "It's also collaborating with Adolf Hitler, the person and human being."

"I think what this guy has found could be a blockbuster," said Deborah Lipstadt, a Holocaust historian at Emory University. "I found it breathtaking in the audacity of the story it seems to be trying to tell."



Other scholars familiar with the period, however, question both its claims to originality and its insistently dark slant, starting with the title.

"The word 'collaboration' in this context is a slander," said Thomas P. Doherty, a historian at Brandeis University and the author of the recent book *Hollywood and Hitler: 1933-1939*, which covers some of the same ground. "You use that word to describe the Vichy government. Louis B. Mayer was a greed head, but he is not the moral equivalent of Vidkun Quisling."

That the German government meddled in the film industry during Hollywood's so-called golden age has long been known to film historians, and such activity was chronicled in the American press at the time. (*Long Arm of Hitler Extends to Hollywood Studio*, read a 1937 headline in *Newsweek*.)

But Mr. Urwand, 35, offers the most stinging take by far, drawing on material from German and American archives to argue that the relationship between Hollywood and the Third Reich ran much deeper — and went on much longer — than any scholar has so far suggested.

On page after page, he shows studio bosses, many of them Jewish immigrants, cutting films scene by scene to suit Nazi officials; producing material that could be seamlessly repurposed in Nazi propaganda films; and, according to one document, helping to finance the manufacture of German armaments.

Even Jack Warner, praised by Groucho Marx for running "the only studio with any guts" after green-lighting the 1939 film *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*, comes in for some revisionist whacks.

It was Warner who personally ordered that the word "Jew" be removed from all dialogue in the 1937 film *The Life of Emile Zola*, Mr. Urwand writes, and his studio was the first to invite Nazi officials to its Los Angeles headquarters to screen films and suggest cuts.

"There's a whole myth that Warner Brothers were crusaders against Fascism," Mr. Urwand said. "But they were the first to try to appease the Nazis in 1933."

Mr. Urwand, an Australian-born scholar whose Jewish Hungarian maternal grandparents spent the war years in hiding, said his project began in 2004, when he was a graduate stu-

(Continued on page 13)

AUSCHWITZ THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

BY SUSANNE BEYER, SPIEGELONLINE

He was sent to Auschwitz as a boy, and never forgot the images and dreams that defined this period of his life. Now Jerusalem academic Otto Dov Kulka has written an unusual book about his life in a Nazi concentration camp.

His office window looks out over Jerusalem, where the light-colored stone buildings contrast with the fading late-afternoon light. But Otto Dov Kulka's thoughts are far away. "Let's take a virtual journey," he says. On his computer, he opens black-and-white photos that depict the ruins of the crematoriums at Auschwitz — a forest of crumbling chimneys amid tall grass.

Kulka moves the cursor across the chimneys and through the grass. "That's the landscape of my childhood," he says quietly. He was in Auschwitz between the ages of 10 and 11. There is a strange tone in his voice — not sadness, not rage, but something that sounds like longing. It seems almost strange to ask the question: Is he homesick for Auschwitz?

This 1944 photo shows Nazis selecting prisoners at the entrance of the extermination camp.

"Well, yes!" he exclaims. "Auschwitz was my childhood! I learned to become a humanist at Auschwitz."

Kulka doesn't just say these kinds of things. He also writes them, and in doing so has managed to compose one of the most astonishing books ever written about Auschwitz: *Landscapes of the Metropolis of Death: Reflections on Memory and Imagination*.

It's a cumbersome title in a genre that already has many books and eyewitness accounts. Despite a few glowing reviews, Kulka's book has not attracted the attention it deserves.

AN ACT OF "EXTREME SARCASM"

In his book, Kulka doesn't empathize with the pain of the victims or the motivation of the perpetrators. Like someone looking in from the outside, he considers his childhood days in Auschwitz from the observer's perspective. He completes a self-psychoanalysis of sorts, invoking images and scenes, wondering about their significance, though he knows the questions will have to remain unanswered.

In one such passage, he describes the scene in which he watched his mother walk away for the last time. She was pregnant and being taken to another concentration camp, where she had hoped that she and the baby, conceived in Auschwitz, would survive. But they wouldn't make it; both died shortly before liberation.

"In my mind's eye I see images: one image. These are actually seconds, only seconds, seconds of a hasty farewell after which my mother turned around and started to walk into the distance toward those grey structures of the camp. She wore a thin dress that rippled in the light breeze and I watched as she walked and receded into the distance. I expected her to turn her head, expected a sign of some kind. She did not turn her head … I could not understand. … I thought about it afterwards, and think about it to this day: why did she not turn her head, at least once?"

In another scene, this time at the children's camp at Auschwitz, a Jewish man named Imre teaches the children the *Ode to Joy* from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. "What was his intention in choosing to perform that particular text, a text that is considered a universal manifesto of everyone who believes in human dignity, in humanistic values, in the future — facing those crematoria, in the place where the nonexistence of the future was perhaps the only definite thing? Was it a kind of protest demonstration, absurd perhaps, perhaps without any purpose, but an attempt not to forsake and not to lose … those values which ultimately only the flames could put an end to …?"

"That is one possibility, a very fine one, but there is a second possibility, which is apparently far more likely," he goes on, suggesting that it was an act of "extreme sarcasm."

PUBLICLY SILENT FOR DECADES

In this way, Kulka strings together images and questions, mixing poems into his collage of text, along with photos he took in 1978, during his last visit to Auschwitz. The book is a frenzy of scenes and thoughts, and in that sense a reflection of the searching, associative and erratic way in which people actually experience memory.

The book is all the more astonishing when coupled with the knowledge of who the author is and what he has done until now. As a professor emeritus of Jewish history at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Kulka has spent his entire professional life searching for explanations for the Nazis' crimes.

An undated photo shows Auschwitz prisoners before transport for forced labor.

He has split himself into two individuals: the wide-eyed child from his book, who sees but doesn't understand Auschwitz, and the academic who tries to understand and says: "We must not stop finding explanations for the course of history, because something like the extermination of the Jews can happen again."

Kulka says that he is both the child and the academic, always. "But the two dimensions of thought belong together: That we have images, primal experiences that we can't explain to ourselves, but that we supplement these images with exploration, so that we can come as close as possible to the truth."

He hardly ever showed his second self, the wide-eyed child, in public before *Landscapes*, which was published on his 80th birthday. Very few of his colleagues knew that the professor was an Auschwitz survivor, and that he had testified as a witness at the first Auschwitz trial in *Frankfurt* in 1964. He kept his child self hidden, only letting it come out at night, when he would sit in his office at the university and make recordings about Auschwitz. The book is based on those tape recordings and his diaries.

It's hard to believe that Kulka managed to remain publicly silent about Auschwitz for so long. Now, sitting in his office, he sees the questioning look on my face as I stare at the tattoo on his forearm, where the concentration camp number 148975 is clearly recognizable. He says: "I used to have thicker, blacker hair, and it wasn't as easy to see the number. You know, it was like this: I didn't say anything, and hardly anyone asked."

THE LAW OF THE "GREAT DEATH"

He was born on April 16 in what he calls the "fateful year" of 1933, in the small Czech town of *Nový Hrozenkov*. The Nazis had assumed power there in January of that year, and before long they had passed the first anti-Semitic laws.

His parents, Elly and Erich, spoke Czech and German with him, and he had a German nanny. Otto completed the first grade in a Czech school. It was "a happy year," he says, but then he was expelled. Jewish children were no longer allowed to attend school.

He was sent to the *Theresienstadt* ghetto in 1942. "It was a salvation," he says today, in yet another of his idiosyncratic sentences. "As a child, I was happy to finally be with other children again."

His mother voluntarily signed herself and Otto up for a transport to Auschwitz, not wanting to be separated from other family members. When they left, Otto promised his friends that he would write to them if Auschwitz were better than *Theresienstadt*.

When they arrived in Auschwitz, on September 7, 1943, it was clear that it would be the end. Only one law applied there, "the law of the Great Death," as Kulka calls it.

A NEW LIFE

Sometimes he and other children did something as a dare, which they called "trying out a little death." They grabbed the electric fence, which was almost never live during the day. Once, when he handed his uncle some food through the fence, the barbed wire was electrified, and he still has the scars from the power surge today.

He expected death to come any day. He escaped once, when the murderers left him in the infirmary because he had diphtheria. It saved his life. In January 1945, he and his father were sent on a death march toward the center of Nazi Germany.

On January 24, 1945, Otto Kulka and his father managed to escape during the march. They returned to Czechoslovakia. His father remained in Prague, and in 1949 Otto boarded a ship bound for Israel.

During the voyage, he added the Hebrew name "Dov" ("Bear") to his German name Otto. He didn't know what it meant, but he liked the way it

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SURVIVORS' CORNER

THE STORY OF DR. MENGELE'S DELIVERY GIRL

BY CAMILLA SCHICK,
THE JERUSALEM POST

At 85, Leah London Friedler still has a beautiful face and a charming, almost cheeky smile. Her family had always known she survived Auschwitz, but it was long taboo to mention it in her presence. But a family trauma caused Leah to break her silence, and she led her daughter, Adina Bernstein, to a locked drawer where she showed her a letter of hope she'd written as a teenager, after the death camp was abandoned by the fleeing Nazis. From then on, she revealed more of her letters from Auschwitz, and her story of survival finally unfolded after decades of secrecy.

Leah describes her childhood as a very happy one, being an only child always in the company of a lot of family and friends. "Everything I remember from then is beautiful. I had a very loving mother and father. We were not very rich, but for my grandparents I was the only grandchild, so they always bought me nice clothes. I was a spoiled child," she beams.

But by the age of 16 she had experienced two invasions: the Hungarian occupation of Northern Transylvania including her home city of *Oradea* in 1940, followed a few years later by the Nazis. The arrival of the Hungarians saw the first organized discrimination against Jews in employment and schools. There was also the conscription of 18-year-olds into the army, including her cousins, forcing them into labor and sending them off to the front against Russia. "They didn't come back," she says quietly.

Leah's parents felt something was wrong when they stopped receiving letters from family living in former Czechoslovakia and Poland, but, like so many, they could not imagine what was to come. With the arrival of the Nazis, schools closed, the curfew came down, non-Jews were told to evacuate the Jewish quarter, the Jews were forced to wear the yellow star, and overnight a wooden fence cornering off the ghetto went up, enclosing, she says, 30,000 people.

Leah was living just outside the ghetto with her parents, in a boys orphanage run by her father. When the Nazis came to force the Jews into the ghetto, the caretakers of the synagogue opposite implored her father to look after the Torah scrolls. "But we had to leave too. So my father instructed 12 older boys to each carry a scroll to the cart. One Hungarian officer accused us of trying to make a scene. My father tried to reason. 'Please sir, this is very important for us.' When we arrived at the ghetto entrance they took my father to the SS police headquarters for three days. He never told me what happened there."

She pauses in her narration. "I can only tell what I see myself. What happened to my father, I did not see. I can only give you testimony, not history. Because everybody has heard about such things — in books, films. But I prefer to speak only for myself."

Her father was returned, but after they had just three weeks together in the ghetto, a long train used for livestock pulled up at the local station. "In every wagon they put 80 to 100 people. There were no places to sit. Two buckets — one with water to drink, the other for a toilet. No food. For three days."

Leah pauses to take a sip of water.

"We did not know where we were going; we just knew we were heading north. They only opened the door once, for a half hour, to take out the bodies of those who died along the way. My two grandfathers died on another train."

It was dark when they arrived at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Leah remembers clearly the lamps, the shadowy words "Arbeit Macht Frei" looming above the entrance, and the flurry of worn-down inmates in striped uniforms directing them into lines. Her mother took two small children by the hand, but a woman who had been there for some time warned her in Yiddish to stick with Leah rather than the orphans or else they would lose each other — but to also avoid letting on that Leah was her daughter, or they would be deliberately separated.

"At the head stood the SS guards, and in between was a very elegantly dressed officer. Later I knew him to be Dr. Josef Mengele." Leah demonstrates how Auschwitz's Angel of Death, as he came to be known, had been holding a little stick daintily between his fingers, indicating left and right with it: one way to the gas, the other way to stay alive. She and her mother entered the camp.

After being shaved from head to toe, the women were forced to undress and stand naked in a line, stripped of all dignity and humanity, clutching only their shoes and small bars of soap. "There were a lot of soldiers laughing at us, making jokes. From there we entered a great building with showers." Once outside again they were left to rummage through a large pile of uniforms left behind by previous inmates.

Every day Dr. Mengele then came to their block C to make his "selections." Leah and her mother survived for longer when a Czech friend in charge of their block secured them jobs in the camp's dreaded *revier* (clinic), where Mengele conducted his "experiments" on inmates. While her mother was turned into the number A25401 and worked as a nurse, Leah, touching her shoulder, explains she had worn a badge that read *lieferant* — literally meaning "office boy." Leah remained close to the other female revier workers, every day eating from shared bowls in a line like animals.

"I was a delivery girl for Dr. Mengele," she clarifies. "There were two of us." She pulls up her left sleeve, revealing the number A25402 on her forearm. Three years ago, a woman from Kibbutz *Neot Mordechai* got in touch after reading an article about Leah launching a book of memoirs, compiled by her daughter Adina. "Her number was A25403."

The woman marked with the number A25404 was Dr. Gisella Perl, the Jewish gynecologist who saved the lives of hundreds of expectant mothers in the camp. While heavily pregnant women were sent straight to the gas chambers, those in the first few months of pregnancy were harder to spot.

"Dr. Mengele asked Dr. Perl for the women who were in the early stages," Leah's voice drops. "He wanted to do experiments with the babies. But Dr. Perl, at the risk of her life, took the pregnant women out in the middle of the night with my mother to perform abortions, so as not to put the mothers in the hands of Dr. Mengele, giving them a chance to survive." Leah helped by holding up candles so Dr. Perl could operate in the darkness.

"I only remember one child being born there. Dr. Mengele cared for the mother until the end of the pregnancy, and a healthy baby was born. He gave it one month with the mother. He bought it clothes and nappies. Then he realized this was no place for a baby, saying it's better to take it to the 'children's hospital.'"

"Because I was the lieferant, he gave me the baby to take it to the gate. I heard him tell the mother that 'the ambulance will come to take the baby.' When I got to the gate, the guard told me to throw the baby on the floor. I put the baby on the floor. When I came back the mother asked me frantically, 'What happened to my baby?' And I told her the nurses came to take it. But I knew the baby was no longer alive."

As a teenager Leah wrote in one of her letters while at the camp: "The devil, whom people called 'the doctor'…A man of rare beauty, who with sadistic pleasure made decisions of life or death for the innocent. Usually the decision was death. To the ill patients, he said: 'Why are you crying? You're all going to the healing home!' Those patients knew they were going to the furnace while they were still living."

Leah had not been a delivery girl in any obstetric sense of the word. "When somebody died, it was our job to take the body to the gate. Not only the dead, also the dying." Asked if Mengele ever spoke to her, Leah is matter of fact. "No, he did not speak with me. But we had no name, we were numbers."

Toward the end of the war Leah recalls a blur of shoeless enforced marches and excruciating labor in the freezing Polish winter, which nearly killed her, as the Nazis tried to push them all over the brink. By this point Mengele had fled, and the gassing and furnaces had ceased to exist.

"My heart was very weak. I didn't want to swallow anymore. No coffee, soup, bread. I was at my end. But then my mother spoke to me very angrily. I was ashamed, so I ate. She saved my life, again."

By the time the Nazis tried to force them on a final march, Leah and several others were so ill that they were sent back to their block. "They wanted to make one last furnace. But then God sent us a snowstorm, so they couldn't make the fire. And then they left."

She arrived back home on May 11, 1945. "My daughter Adina was born on May 11 some years later," Leah smiles. "I got off the train. It was Friday afternoon before Shabbat, I was with my mother. There was nobody at the train station. No family, no friends, only strangers. I was very sad. I thought I saw my father, but my father had died in a camp."

As their taxi stopped at a red light a boy rushed up to them, snatched Leah into his arms and kissed her, exclaiming "Thank God you are alive, you came back! How are you?"

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ESCAPE FROM *NOVOGRUDOK*

BY DOREEN RAPPAPORT

On February 4, 1943, a radio smuggled into the *Novogrudok* forced labor camp brought the glorious news to the 250 Jewish prisoners that the Soviets had defeated the Germans at *Stalingrad*. But that same day bought word that the remaining 500 Jews in the ghetto had been murdered. The Jews in the camp knew they too would soon be murdered, and began planning their escape. They decided on digging a tunnel out to the middle of a wheat field 328 feet on the other side of the barbed wire. From there they would try to find their way to the family camp that the Bielski brothers had set up in the *Naliboki* forest ten miles away.

They decided to start the tunnel under the bunk beds in their living quarters in a stable far away from the guards' stations. The SS never came there, fearful that they would get diseased from the appalling conditions under which they had forced the Jews to live. Everyone in the camp, except for one Austrian Jew, suspected of being an informer, was told about the plan.

Berl Yoselevitz, an engineer, worked out the measurements: the tunnel would be five feet below the ground, two feet across and thirty inches high, just big enough for one person to crawl through at a time. He estimated that if they dug three feet a day, they could reach the wheat field by August when the wheat would be four feet tall and provide cover as they emerged from the tunnel.

A lower bunk bed was detached and re-hinged so it could be pulled up and down quickly. The metalworkers made funnels and small shovels from scraps of metal and resharpened the tools every day. The joiners built a trolley track and a trolley with hinges on the sides so dirt could be pushed into the open side. When the trolley was full of dirt, the flaps were closed. People gave up their blankets and the tailors made sixty sacks for holding the dirt.

Idel Kagan at twelve years old.

During the day, only one man dug at a time so he would not be as likely to be missed at work. The diggers crawled on their naked bellies, scooping up earth. Every six feet, they pierced the tunnel roof with a stick to make sure it would not cave in. Yoselevitz constantly checked to make sure they were digging in a straight line. At night, the prisoners formed a living conveyor belt, passing the dirt sacks out of the tunnel, in their living quarters, up a ladder to a loft.

As the men dug further, oxygen grew scarcer. There wasn't enough air to burn an oil lamp. The metalworkers made cone-shaped pipes to bring in air through the tunnel roof. They widened the tunnel for better airflow, but the oil lamps still struggled to stay lit.

Avram Rukovski, a master electrician, scavenged old wires and stole electric bulbs from his workshop, and then jury-rigged a switchboard that controlled the camp's searchlights. To get light in the tunnel, he diverted electricity from the main switchboard, causing a power failure. The Nazi commandant called upon Avram to figure out what was wrong. Avram insisted he couldn't find anything wrong. A Polish electrician called in said he could not find the source of the problem either. The Nazis came to accept the frequent, short power failures as normal.

Holes were made in the ceiling to let the stale air out in the summer. The dug-out earth was piled on both sites of the loft. When the loft was full, double walls were built. Dirt was also buried under floorboards. Rain came. The tunnel roof began to sink. Bunk beds were taken apart to prop it up. The tunnel walls began to crack. More wood was stolen to brace them. A worker caught smuggling wood from his workshop was hanged. But the smuggling continued.

As they dug, they ran out of places to hide the dirt. They mixed it with the garbage and on Sundays, cleaning day, they dumped it into the well. It clogged the well. The Germans ordered them to clean the well. It got clogged again. They cleaned it again. The Germans couldn't understand why the well constantly clogged. They got permission to dig new toilets and filled part of the trenches with tunnel dirt.

In August the wheat was harvested and they saw that the exit now ended in an open field. They dug another five hundred feet. More rain came. The tunnel roof began to sink. Bunk beds were taken apart to prop it up. The tunnel walls began cracking. More wood was stolen to brace them.

By September the tunnel was ready. A hiding place was built in the attic for ten people who were too weak to walk quickly. The hope was that after the escape, the Germans would abandon the camp, thinking it empty, and allowing them to make their way to freedom.

The escape was set for Wednesday, September 26, 1943, at nine p.m., when the guards were usually drunk. Idel Kagan, then fourteen, described his goodbyes to the other prisoners. Idel had tried to escape once before, but had to return because he missed the rendezvous time with the Bielski couriers. His toes had become frostbitten during the escape and had to be amputated.

"Friends came to wish me a successful escape, as if I was the only one escaping. I understood what they meant; they thought I didn't stand a chance. I could sense that they were feeling sorry for me. My feet were somewhat healed by this time, but I could sense people were worried about me. All of them would go away with tears in their eyes. However, I was not afraid.

"We assembled in a long line, waiting our turn. It was very quiet and you could just make out the faces in the semi-darkness. I sat quietly and thought about my family and what had happened to us in such a short time. I was hoping my father, who had been sent to another labor camp, was still

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GOODBYE TO BERLIN: POSTCARDS FROM NAZI GERMANY TELL STORY OF THE *KINDERTRANSPORT*

To mark the 75th anniversary of the *Kindertransport*, which saw 10,000 children escape from Nazi Germany to the UK, a new book brings to light the heartbreaking postcards sent by one Jewish father in Berlin to his son in *Swansea*.

BY DONALD MACINTYRE, THE INDEPENDENT

They are, if nothing else, a tangible testament to a father's love. From February 3, 1939, when "little Heini" arrived in *Swansea* after leaving Berlin for the last time, until August 31, when war made such communication impossible, Max Lichtwitz wrote a stream of postcards to his young son. They have left a unique record of his determination to maintain the parental bond with the boy whose life he had saved by sending him to a strange country and parting with him, as he feared, forever.

What can the journey have been like for a bewildered six-year-old? Henry Foner, as little Heini Lichtwitz would become, remembers the German border guards searching the train passengers and his one small suitcase, the Dutch women on the other side of the crossing handing out "delicious" sausage rolls, a helmeted bobby on the quay at *Harwich*, the large hall where he waited to be collected, but nothing of the painful departure from Berlin. "It's a strange thing; if you talk to people like me, the traumatic memory is of parting with their parents, and I can't remember it at all. It must have been traumatic and I must have forgotten because I remember the journey very well, but I can't remember saying goodbye to my father and my grandmother." (His mother had died two years earlier.)

A postcard from Max Lichtwitz to his son Heini dated February 5, 1939. The card reads: "Dear Heini. I received your letter today and am glad that you received your Easter eggs and that you enjoyed the Seder evening. The weather was very nice here today. Have you been out in the garden? Many greetings and kisses. Your Vati."

The "people like me" to whom Foner refers were the 10,000 Jewish and "non-Aryan" children of the *Kindertransport* who, between December 1938 — in the wake of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom which had terrorized Jews across Berlin — and September 1939, escaped the coming Holocaust, leaving their families in Nazi Europe by train and ferry for Britain, accompanied by youth workers and unemployed Jewish professionals who risked their lives by returning again and again to remove other groups of children to safety.

The young Heinz Lichtwitz, as he then was, was destined for the home of a Jewish couple in *Swansea*, Morris and Winnie Foner. Despite the comforting postcard with "1,000 kisses" his father sent him as soon as he knew he was safely with the Foners, his arrival cannot have been easy. He spoke only German, his new foster family only English and Yiddish.

Yet after just a few months in a local *Swansea* school, when his father telephoned him on his birthday in June — Henry can remember the call standing in the hall of the Foners' home in the Sketty area of *Swansea* — he had forgotten his German. Which is why

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Jocelyn & Gregory Klar
Julie & Reuben Kopel
Alexandra Lebovits
Nicole & Avi Lieberman

Ilana Lifshitz
Iris & Adam Lindenbaum
Jessica & Andrew Mauk
Nicole & Joseph Meyer
Sivan Ochshorn
Dara & David Orbach
Jaci & Gonen Paradis
Elliot Pines
Justin Pines
Mindy & Alan Schall

Aliza & Elie Singer
Jennifer & Mark Smith
Brett Tanzman
Keren Toledano
Ariel & Joshua Weiner
Maeira & Michel Werthenschlag
Cori & Jason Wilf
Orin Wilf
Rachel & Jonathan Wilf
Lolly & Boaz Zborowski

This year's Annual Tribute Dinner commemorates the 10th anniversary of the ill-fated shuttle mission which took the life of Col. Ilan Ramon, *z"l*, the first Israeli astronaut, and destroyed the copy of Petr Ginz's "Moon Landscape" drawing. At the suggestion of S. Isaac Mekel, Director of Development at the American Society, Col. Ramon took "Moon Landscape" with him on this mission. We will be acknowledging Ilan Ramon's brother, Gadi Ramon, and Petr Ginz's sister, Chava Pressburger.

Petr Ginz, *z"l*

Petr Ginz was born in Prague in 1928. A gifted youth, Petr was an artist and wrote essays, short stories and poems. As a result of the German occupation of Czechoslovakia, Petr Ginz was expelled from school in 1940 for being a Jew, and, in 1942, he was deported to *Terezin*. Together with friends in the youth barracks, Ginz edited and published a newspaper called *Vedem* (We Are Leading), in which his drawings, stories and articles appeared, reflecting the wide scope of his interests, including science. His curiosity knew no bounds, helping him cope with life in the ghetto. In the fall of 1944, at the age of 16, he was deported to Auschwitz, where he perished. Ginz's works were given to his father by a friend from the youth barracks. Petr's father donated his works to Yad Vashem when he emigrated to Israel.

Col. Ilan Ramon, *z"l*

Colonel Ilan Ramon was born in Tel Aviv on June 20, 1954. He was an Israel Air Force pilot and the first Israeli astronaut to take part in a space mission. Col. Ramon (and his fellow crew members) died when the space shuttle Columbia exploded upon re-entry on February 1, 2003.

Colonel Ramon graduated as a fighter pilot from the Israel Air Force Flight School in 1974. He earned his bachelor's degree in electronics and computer engineering from Tel Aviv University in 1987. In 1994 he was promoted to the rank of colonel and was assigned to head the Department of Operational Requirement for Weapon Development and Acquisition.

In 1997 Colonel Ramon was selected by NASA to serve as a payload specialist on the space shuttle Columbia. He reported for training in 1998 and remained at the Space Center in Houston until 2003.

Ramon was posthumously awarded the NASA Space Flight Medal, the Distinguished Public Service Medal and the US Congressional Medal of Honor. He is the only non-American to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Colonel Ramon was survived by his wife Rona and their four children. Tragically, his son, Air Force pilot Captain Asaf Ramon, died in 2009 during a training mission.

REPORT FROM YAD VASHEM

AFTER DECADES, FAMILY UNRAVELS HOLOCAUST MYSTERY

BY DONALD SNYDER, NBC NEWS

While Israel recently marked its annual Holocaust Remembrance Day dedicated to the 70th anniversary of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, it's hard to imagine that anyone could still just be learning the fate of their loved ones from that tragic era.

But that's exactly what happened to Amos Cohen, a shipbuilder living in *Haifa*, Israel. He only recently learned the fate of his long-lost relative Rose Kobylinski, who died in a German death march and was buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery in a small village in Poland.

For decades Rose was only a name circled in black on a family tree, meaning she had died in the Holocaust.

The genealogical chart had been drawn up by Cohen's mother, Rose's cousin. Other than Rose's name on the tree, all that Cohen, 64, knew about her was that she had lived in Berlin before being deported to a German death camp.

Nothing else was known — there had been no news about Rose since the Holocaust.

Then, one day, Cohen received a call from Yad Vashem.

"We think we found your relative," the caller said. "And she is buried in the cemetery of St. Anna's Roman Catholic Church in *Swierklany*, Poland."

The search for Rose began in 1990 when Cohen's mother made a formal inquiry, hoping that Yad Vashem might have information about her fate. No information was available.

"It was sad that my mother died never knowing what happened to her cousin, Rose," said Cohen.

When Cohen went to *Swierklany*, a small village in southwest Poland, in April 2010, he pieced together what had happened to her. He recited Kaddish, the Jewish mourner's prayer, in the church cemetery where Rose is buried in a mass grave with nine others, all murdered by the Germans on January 18, 1945.

Amos Cohen stands in front of the grave of his long-lost relative Rose Kobylinski in *Swierklany*, Poland. Her fate at the end of World War II was just recently discovered.

Konstanty Dolnik, the local undertaker, buried the victims in the cemetery in defiance of German orders to bury them in a forest to erase their memories. Dolnik also recorded the numbers tattooed on their forearms.

In 1948, the town erected a monument with a cross to mark the mass grave. Only the numbers recorded by Dolnik identified the grave's occupants. There were no names.

The breakthrough in the search for Rose came when Yaki Gantz, a former member of Israel's domestic security force (the Israeli version of the FBI), became involved. Gantz heads a project called "For Every Number There Is a Name."

"Their relatives now know that their relatives didn't just become ashes at Auschwitz," he said in a phone interview. "They know there is a place where they can come to say Kaddish."

When Gantz learned about the grave in *Swierklany*, he sent the numbers to Yad Vashem with information from the nearby Auschwitz-Birkenau museum.

The museum had just obtained documents that the Russian troops seized when liberating Auschwitz in 1945. This Auschwitz data recently obtained from Russia proved critical in matching many numbers to names.

Krystyna Manka, the now-75-year-old daughter of Dolnik, the undertaker, wept as she remembered the sub-zero January night when the prisoners arrived from Auschwitz during an ice storm.

"It's hard for me to talk about that night," she told NBC News through a translator.

Manka was seven years old in 1945 when the Germans, losing the war, began marching concentration camp prisoners in Poland to Germany in what are known as death marches.

Wearing rags and clogs that bloodied their feet, the prisoners were often shot to death when they could not walk fast enough. They were guarded by German SS men and barking dogs. The Germans spent the night in the village of *Swierklany*. One of the female prisoners stayed in Manka's home that night — although she doesn't know if it was Rose.

"I still remember her beautiful blond curly hair," Manka said. "Her feet were torn by the wooden shoes and the long walk in the freezing cold." They had walked 40 miles, the distance from Auschwitz to *Swierklany*, according to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

Manka's father applied ointment to the woman's feet and dressed the wounds. Manka's mother, fluent in German, convinced an SS guard that treating the wounds would make the woman walk better and not slow the march.

It didn't really matter. The next day, 10 prisoners were shot to death outside the village, including the woman who had stayed in Manka's home.

The residents of *Swierklany* mark this massacre with an annual remembrance service on January 18, and also during religious holidays.

"The fact that the Jews are buried in a Roman Catholic cemetery helps us to recognize that we are brothers," said Father Jan Klyczka, a priest in the village for the last 40 years, in a phone interview.

Local teenagers maintain the grave and learn about a massacre that's hard for them to imagine, said their history teacher, Iwona Barchanska.

Gantz continues to scour the dirt roads and churches of rural Poland, seeking to restore the names of the murdered.

"When a person finishes life, he has a name. He is not a number," said Gantz.

Now, beneath the 1948 monument where there were once only numbers, there is a new memorial plaque with names that include Rose Kobylinski.

AFTER 70 YEARS, NAZI OFFICER'S GRANDSON RETURNS STOLEN BOOKS

BY YORI YALON, ISRAEL HAYOM

Four books stamped with his name, the only tangible keepsake that Moshe Hofstadter has of his father Abraham, who was murdered by the Nazis, were returned to him in a moving ceremony at Yad Vashem.

The return of the books marked the culmination of an unusual sequence of events. Three years ago, Christoph Schlegel, the grandson of a senior Austrian Nazi officer, found several books that had been stamped with the unfamiliar name Abraham Hofstadter in the home of his grandmother. After making inquiries, Schlegel learned that his Nazi grandfather had been stationed in

Moshe Hofstadter at Yad Vashem.

Rzeszow, Poland, in 1941, and had apparently acquired the books from a Nazi storehouse containing stolen Jewish property.

Schegel began to research the name stamped in the stolen books, and eventually found it online in Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names. He learned that Hofstadter, a Jew from *Rzeszow* who was killed in the Holocaust, had been commemorated in a Page of Testimony filled out by his only son, Moshe, the sole survivor in his family.

Schlegel contacted Yad Vashem for help in locating the family so he could return the books. Yad Vashem connected the grandson of the Nazi officer with the survivor, and the two began corresponding.

"It's just a few books I'd like to return to their rightful owner, but I know the feeling of touching an object that belonged to a loved one," Schlegel wrote. He sent the books to Israel, and, 72 years after they were taken, Moshe was presented with them at Yad Vashem.

"This is the only thing I have left of my father," Moshe said at the ceremony. "I am very happy to have the books."

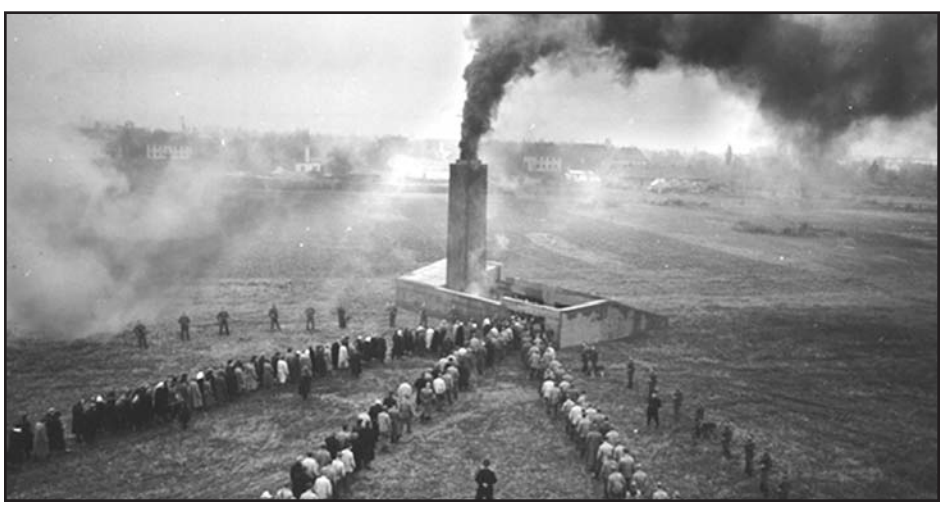
Yad Vashem chairman Avner Shalev said: "Just recently the project to memorialize the names of those killed in the Holocaust on Pages of Testimony was added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. This incident testifies to the uniqueness of the collection of Pages of Testimony, which in addition to memorializing those who perished is also a tool for obtaining information about the fate of many people."

GHOSTS OF SOVIET HOLOCAUST CINEMA FINALLY ESCAPE FROM THE CENSORS' FILES

BY LEA ZELTSERMAN, TABLET

A doctor walks into an operating room and asks if the patient is asleep yet. As he is about to operate, a group of Nazis in uniform marches in — a round of "Heil Hitler" is followed by orders that the doctor put his scalpel down and leave the hospital. In the next scene, the doctor is paraded down a crowded street, still wearing his white uniform but with the word *Jude* scrawled across his chest in thick letters.

We know the doctor is headed to certain death, because that is what happens in Holocaust films. But this is no ordinary Holocaust film. This is a scene from *Professor Mamlock*, a Soviet film released in 1938 that tells the story of a German Jewish doctor living under the Nazis. Part of a small but significant wave of anti-Fascist Soviet films, it was one of the first films in the world to address the issue of Jewish persecution in Nazi Germany and was seen by millions of people in the USSR before it was banned in August 1939, when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a not insignificant number of Soviet Jewish families took the warning of the film to heart and managed to flee ahead of the Nazi invasion.



Still from *Fate of a Man*.

This past April, a newly subtitled print of *Professor Mamlock* was screened at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival, followed by a Q&A session with Olga Gershenson, a professor of Judaic and Near Eastern studies at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and the preeminent name in Soviet Holocaust film history. Wherever a Soviet Holocaust movie is screened, Gershenson is there, leading the discussion and translating the Soviet messaging for contemporary audiences. Her third book, *The Phantom Holocaust: Soviet Cinema and Jewish Catastrophe*, traces the story of a shadow Soviet film industry that only rarely managed to represent the tragedy that filmmakers, directors, and screenwriters sought to warn against or memorialize. While films like *Schindler's List* are often the way Westerners are first exposed to the Holocaust, there are no parallels in Soviet/Russian culture — *Professor Mamlock* was shown briefly after Hitler invaded the USSR, but had disappeared from Soviet theaters by the end of the 1940s.

Gershenson's work is a monumental achievement in giving a voice to the lost Soviet Holocaust films — to the filmmakers, and to also the millions whose fates they attempted to memorialize. As the charges of censorship pile up, and the list of silenced filmmakers grows, the sense of loss is overwhelming. The tragedy of what might have been is most poignant in the details of Gershenson's own research — such as the moment she found the screenplay for *Gott mit Uns* (God Is With Us), with a blank sign-out sheet signaling that no one had touched it in nearly 50 years. ("When I called scriptwriter Grigorii Kanovich in Israel, he nearly fainted. He'd thought it was lost," she told me.)

Or writing about Boris Ermolaev, whose battle to bring his film *Our Father* to the screen cost him his career. Ermolaev now lives in a Montreal nursing home: "The sad irony is that this is a Jewish nursing home," Gershenson writes, "but no one around him is aware of what an amazing film about the Holocaust he attempted to make and what kind of audacity it required back in 1960s Soviet Union."

Or her meeting with Valentin Vinogradov, whose career was destroyed over his film *Eastern Corridor* (one of his later films was literally washed off the film stock by authorities). A believer to the end (he died in 2011), he saw the censorship of his work as an aberration, or betrayal, of the system, not a representation of the system. In Gershenson's judgement, "Up to this day Vinogradov is one of the most important Soviet filmmakers that no one has ever heard of."

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The Soviets had many ways to kill a film, whether it was through subtle means such as self-censorship by the filmmakers themselves and poor reviews in *Pravda*, or outright rejection by Goskino, the central film governing body. Of course, it was never a matter of the Jewish topic being addressed. "Saying out loud that the screenplay's problem lies with its representation of Jews would itself be anti-Semitic," Gershenson writes. "This is why the SRK (a film studio editorial board) was hard pressed to avoid any on-the-record discussion of Jewish topics, while effectively trying to suppress it." Modern filmmakers will shudder to read the details of all seven approval stages each film had to undergo, from the initial idea through to the distribution of the final film.

Still from the film *Professor Mamlock* (1938), directors Herbert Rappaport and Adolf Minkin.

To understand Soviet Holocaust films, it is also important to understand the way that the Holocaust unfolded in Soviet territories. There were no concentration camps in the USSR, and Soviet Jews were not sent westward to the camps in Poland. The vast majority of Jews were rounded up and shot in (or just outside) their towns by the *Einsatzgruppen*. For Russian Jews, *Babi Yar*, not Auschwitz, is the ultimate symbol of the Holocaust.

Jews also fought in the Red Army, often leaving their hometowns before the occupation and returning to nothing but deserted homes and mass graves. Others were evacuated eastward into areas like Tashkent and Uzbekistan. Most Russian Jews today can count being Holocaust victims, Red Army veterans and evacuees among their family wartime experiences.

The evacuation, and the failure of the Germans to fully occupy the country, also meant that a Yiddish culture (newspapers, film, theater) continued to exist throughout the war. As a result, the Jewish response to the Holocaust was immediate — and it was often supported by Soviet officials. The Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, formed by direct order from Stalin, not only documented Jewish losses, but its archives also reveal plans for a number of Holocaust films.

It's often forgotten today, but the Soviets were the first witnesses to many Nazi atrocities — a point also made by David Shneer in his 2011 book on Soviet Jewish photojournalists (*Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust*), many of whom captured some of the most iconic Holocaust imagery known today. The earliest images of concentration camps were taken by Soviet Jewish photographers; similarly, Gershenson is certain that the 1938 *Peat Bog Soldiers* is the first film in the world to show the camps. Another film, the 1945 *The Unvanquished*, directed by Mark Donskoi, became the first Holocaust film to show Jews explicitly as Nazi victims (the mass Jewish execution in the film was actually filmed in *Babi Yar*). The film slipped through before the state machinery had figured out its official stance on the Holocaust, but then it quickly disappeared from screens.

"What we know now is that if not for this severe censorship," Gershenson said, "the way we think about Holocaust cinema today would have been dramatically different, because today when we think about Holocaust cinema, we think about *Schindler's List* or *Shoah*. But there were all these incredible Soviet screenplays."

While the fates of individual films rose and fell with the vagaries of Soviet policies over the decades — the post-Stalin thaw, the clampdown following the Six-Day War and the rise of the immigration movement — common themes emerge in all of them. When the Holocaust is shown at all, it's externalized. This is partly because a Holocaust that happened outside the USSR made for a narrative in which the Soviets were blameless. But other factors were at work — such as the lack of imagery for the rapid *Einsatzgruppen* execution that came very quickly on the heels of the Nazi arrival.

"There was no authentic language for representing the Holocaust there. How do you represent an *Einsatzgruppen* execution? It's just so horrible. It's not even a camp. It's just —" said Gershenson, her voice cutting off mid-sentence. "Imagine a film where all your main characters come out on stage and are executed, and that's it. End of film."

So, Soviet filmmakers had to find ways to code their films for a home

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BEARING WITNESS EVER MORE

The study of the Holocaust is expanding worldwide — for differing reasons.

Across the globe, schoolchildren study the industrialized slaughter of Jews by the Nazis. Holocaust museums in America, Israel and Poland each draw more than a million visitors annually. The UN has passed two resolutions in the past decade to institutionalize memory of the Holocaust worldwide. Yad Vashem, an Israeli museum and remembrance authority, trains 10,000 domestic and foreign teachers every year. "Interest is growing immensely," says Dorit Novak, the director-general. Membership of the Association of Holocaust Organizations (AHO) has increased from 25 in the late 1980s to over 300. Commemorative museums have opened from Germany and France to Brazil and Japan. Of the 16,000 books on the Holocaust listed in America's Library of Congress, more than two-thirds were published in the past two decades.

In its immediate aftermath, the Holocaust went largely unacknowledged. Perpetrators and bystanders preferred to forget. Commemoration began in Israel, where many survivors had gathered. But even there it was done quietly. A 1960 study showed that barely a quarter of schools taught children about the Holocaust. Only when Israelis came to feel an existential threat during successive wars with Arab neighbors did that change.

In 1982, the education ministry made teaching about the Holocaust compulsory for all children. Coverage in history textbooks increased from 20 pages in the 1960s to 450 in the 1990s. Today, every Israeli schoolchild spends a semester studying the history of *Shoah*, along with further coursework in literature, music and art classes. Some 200,000 students and soldiers tour Yad Vashem annually, the soldiers carrying their guns. The state has managed to draw great strength from keeping alive the memory of the murdered.

Yet over time the depiction of mass slaughter has changed. When Israel was meek, it stressed the heroism of the Warsaw ghetto. Now, with reassuringly powerful armed forces, the focus is more on victimhood. Schools teach that "we need a strong army because the world hates us," says Dan Porat, a professor of Jewish education in Jerusalem. Domestic critics have called some Israeli history teaching simplistic. The Holocaust is at times presented as evidence of a lack of Jewish national spirit, they say, rather than an excess of Germany's. Government offices exhibit photos of Israeli air-force jets flying over the death camps of Auschwitz. On Holocaust Remembrance Day, inaugurated five years after the founding of Israel, politicians routinely present the country's foes as would-be annihilators. "All our [current] dangers are viewed through the prism of Auschwitz," says Avihu Ronen, a lecturer in Jewish history at Haifa University.

In the West, it fell to the media to stimulate public discussion of the Holocaust. Early works struck themes familiar to Israelis. *Schindler's List*, a 1993 Hollywood film about a German businessman who bribed Nazi officials to shield his Jewish employees, turns from black and white to color when the survivors arrive in Jerusalem. More recent Western depictions have diverged from the Israeli narrative. Europe's young, now three generations removed from the killing, flinch from guilt imposed by elders. According to Centropa, an educational center in Vienna, students respond best to Holocaust teaching when first told about the Jewish past they have lost. "If they relate through Franz Kafka's 'Metamorphosis,' the Jews of Prague and Weimar culture, they will learn about the Holocaust through the back door," says Edward Serotta,

Centropa's founder. Dutch schools draw pupils in by holding commemorative walks to buildings that once housed Jews.

Unlike Yad Vashem, which portrays Jews as outsiders in Europe who find redemption in Israel, new Jewish museums in Austria and Poland present Jews as an intrinsic part of European heritage and culture. "It shocked me," says Mr. Porat after a visit. "I never thought of Jews as being Poles." The exhibition at Yad Vashem ends with a display of Israel's declaration of independence and the playing of the national anthem, whereas European equivalents emphasize a Jewish rebirth in places where massacres happened (Berlin has the world's fastest-growing Jewish community — from a very low base).

America may have the world's second-biggest Jewish population but, with no death camps to commemorate on its soil, it follows a surprisingly universal path in Holocaust teaching. Museums and syllabuses are often used as pathways to examine genocides in general, focusing on the dangers of "racism, bigotry and intolerance," says Dan Napolitano, director of education at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the largest of America's 30 museums and 70 centers on the subject. An increasing number offer courses for soldiers, lawyers and policemen that warn against the abuse of power.

Discussing the Holocaust in the context of other human horrors is popular in Latin America, Africa and Asia as well. Richard Freedman, who runs the oldest of South Africa's three Holocaust centers, has used Nazi race laws to examine white rule. "There are very close parallels between Germany's establishment of a racial state in 1933–39 and South Africa's apartheid state," he says. In Senegal, a UN official in charge of promoting memories of the Holocaust in Africa has spoken of using it as a way "to develop remembrance about slavery." Argentine pupils examine the Holocaust in the light of who was responsible for their own dictatorship a little more than a generation ago.

Later this year AHO, the world's biggest Holocaust association, is to stage China's first international conference on the topic in *Harbin*. The northeastern city once had a thriving Jewish community, but a more important stimulant for local interest in the conference will be parallels to be drawn, rightly or wrongly, between the Holocaust and Japanese wartime atrocities. The Imperial Japanese Army used the city for experiments on humans, including vivisection and dropping anthrax from low-flying planes, killing an estimated 400,000 people.

Methods developed by early Holocaust centers have become guides for memorials to Asian tragedies. The Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia and a Chinese museum commemorating the "Rape of Nanking" by Japanese soldiers in 1937 have drawn on Yad Vashem. "Israeli people did a great job of teaching the past," says Xiaowei Fu, director of the Judaic studies department at Sichuan University in *Chengdu*. She has tried to drum up interest in the Holocaust with an essay competition offering a cash prize.

In some places, the Holocaust now overshadows the conflict that fueled it. Indian history textbooks devote much of their Second World-War coursework to the slaughter. "Imagine yourself to be a Jew or a Pole in Nazi Germany. It is September 1941, and you have been asked to wear the Star of David," instructs a tenth-grade textbook called *India and the Contemporary World*. Here and in some other places, the Holocaust is seen as the core event of the twentieth century in Europe, and it thus draws millions of tourists to its memorials. Last year, 46,500 South Koreans visited Auschwitz, only a few less than Israel's 68,000.

The main geographic exception to the growing global interest in the Holocaust is the Muslim world, where it is commonly viewed as a dramatization meant to win sympathy for Jews bent on grabbing Arab land. None of the three main UN information centers in the Middle East marks Holocaust Remembrance Day. "I cannot really speak about the Holocaust in Iran," says a UN official in Tehran. Iran's recently retired president called the Holocaust a myth. In parts of Paris with a lot of Muslims, some schools have reportedly removed mention of the Holocaust from the syllabus for fear of appearing pro-Israel. "I know of cases in which the teacher mentioned Auschwitz and *Treblinka*, and students clapped," wrote Georges Bensoussan, a French historian, in a 2004 study of immigrant schools.

Nonetheless, Western Holocaust centers are making inroads in the Muslim world. The Internet allows circumvention of local censors. The Aladdin Project, a Paris-based initiative, has staged Holocaust lectures from Beirut to Baghdad, praising Arabs who offered refuge to Jews fleeing persecution in the fifteenth century. The UN's Palestinian refugee agency, which runs schools for the children of Arabs who fled Israel at its founding 65 years ago, repeatedly tried to teach Holocaust classes but was thwarted by Hamas.

It is not only Westerners who want to talk about the Holocaust in Middle Eastern schools. Morocco may become the first Arab country to put Holocaust teaching on its syllabus. King Mohammed VI has long sought American congressional support by wooing Jewish groups. Members of the Berber ethnic minority also champion it to win support for their struggle to reverse 1,400 years of Arabization; they have taken Holocaust courses at Yad Vashem and translated teaching material into their vernacular, Tamazight. "We're trying to relate the Jewish physical genocide to our cultural one," says Massin Aaouid, a Marrakech travel agent who helped to organize a Holocaust road show in southern Morocco two years ago.

Perhaps the biggest threat to remembrance of the six million Jews killed by the Nazis is trivialization. "The Holocaust has lost its specificity," says Eckhardt Fuchs, a German academic preparing a study of textbook coverage worldwide. Politicians in America and elsewhere routinely employ the Holocaust as a rhetorical device to denote evil. The term has cropped up in comic books and heavy-metal music. Even in Israel, mentions are increasingly casual; farmers upset at diminishing returns from tomato concentrate have called ketchup their Auschwitz. Israeli politicians flock to Holocaust survivor beauty contests. A joke popular among Israeli schoolchildren asks, why did Hitler kill himself? (Answer: he read his gas bill.) In Britain, some teachers use the Holocaust as a lesson against bullying, reducing Nazis to schoolyard thugs. Treating it as a neat moral issue, warns Paul Salmons, a British academic, could devalue study of the Holocaust regardless of its proliferation.

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AUSCHWITZ THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

(Continued from page 5)

sounded. Today he finds his name choice amusing. “I look nothing like a bear,” he says. Kulka is short and has a slight build.

Israel was the utopia of a new beginning. “They tried to destroy Jerusalem in Auschwitz, which is why we wanted to build it up again,” he says. He went to a kibbutz at first, where he worked in agriculture. Eventually he began his studies: first early, then medieval and finally contemporary Jewish history.

His professor of early Jewish history, Menachem Stern of the Hebrew University, was murdered by a Palestinian on his way to work, which happened to be the Way of the Cross in Jerusalem. The killer later testified that he had wanted to kill a Jew, any Jew.

From then on, Kulka’s life was shaped by the conflicts between Palestinians and Jews, like the Six-Day War and the opening and closing of various zones of the city.

RETURNING TO THE RUINS

Kulka married a Slovak Jew who had been persecuted by the Nazis and had fled from Europe, and the couple had a daughter. They didn’t discuss Auschwitz very much at home. His daughter is a clinical psychologist today. When she became a member of the Israel Psychoanalytical Society, she asked her father for the tapes in which he had talked to himself about Auschwitz. Today his three grandchildren question him about Auschwitz.

In 1978, Kulka attended a conference of religious scholars in Poland. On a free day, the other attendees went on various outings, but he told them that he wasn’t going with them because he wanted to go to Auschwitz instead. It made sense to them, the idea of a Jew visiting Auschwitz, so they didn’t ask any questions.

Auschwitz was still a ruin at the time. The tracks were overgrown with grass. Kulka took the photos that now appear in his book, and he asked the taxi driver to take a picture of him, standing in front of the Auschwitz gate. The driver took the photo, but when it was developed, it turned out that half of Kulka’s body was cut off in the image. “A divided Kulka, sliced once in half; it certainly fits,” he says.

He never returned. I asked him whether he would be willing to go there again and point out all the sites he remembered. In his lengthy reply, he wrote: “I have very seriously considered your proposal. It was and remains clear to me that I want to forever preserve for myself the desolate images of the landscape of the metropolis of death, in just the way they had been imprinted on my mind when I returned in 1978. For me, the changes to those images would signify an estrangement from that landscape.”

AUSCHWITZ HOLOCAUST EXHIBITION OPENED BY NETANYAHU

BY WILLIAM BOOTH, THE WASHINGTON POST

For decades, the Communist-era memorial to Jewish victims at the barracks known as Block 27 in the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex of Nazi death camps stood dilapidated and mostly ignored.

“No one visited. They opened the doors, that was it,” said Avner Shalev, chairman of Yad Vashem.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (R) and Rabbi Israel Meir Lau look at the displays in *Oswiecim*.

Key artifacts had gone missing. The history presented in the signage was inaccurate at best and was dominated by Soviet propaganda.

The modest, two-story site was designated the “Jewish pavilion” in memory of the one million Jews who were killed at the complex in Nazi-occupied Poland. But, Shalev said, “there was hardly any mention of the Jews.”

In 2005, then-Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon tasked Yad Vashem with redesigning the memorial. In June, Benjamin Netanyahu, the current prime minister, joined Polish dignitaries and a handful of Holocaust survivors to dedicate a new permanent exhibition in Block 27, called “Shoah,” part of the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum.

“I am standing here today with great pain and great pride,” Netanyahu said. “The leaders of the Allies knew full well what was happening in the death camps. They could have acted, but they didn’t. We, the Jews, know exactly what the lesson is.”

Israel, Netanyahu said, cannot rely on any other country to protect it or to protect the world’s Jews.

He said the murderous anti-Semitism of the Nazi Germany era has been replaced in modern times by religious fanaticism, alluding to Iran, which Israel has accused of trying to create a nuclear arsenal to threaten the Jewish state.

“This is a regime that is building nuclear weapons with the expressed purpose to annihilate Israel’s six million Jews,” Netanyahu said. “We will not allow this to happen. We will never allow another Holocaust.”

After the war, the Poles decided to keep the extermination camps at Auschwitz II and *Birkenau* essentially untouched. At Auschwitz I, they grant-

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HOLLYWOOD’S PACT WITH HITLER

(Continued from page 4)

dent at the University of California, Berkeley. He came across an interview with the screenwriter Budd Schulberg vaguely mentioning that Louis B. Mayer used to meet with a German consul in Los Angeles to discuss cuts to his studio’s movies. Smelling a dissertation topic, he began digging around.

In the German state archives in Berlin, Mr. Urwand found a January 1938 letter from the German branch of 20th Century-Fox asking whether Hitler would share his opinions on American movies, and signed “Heil Hitler!”

Other discoveries followed, including notes by Hitler’s adjutants recording his reactions to the movies he watched each night (he loved Laurel and Hardy but hated *Tarzan*), and a scrapbook in which Jack Warner documented a Rhine cruise that he and other studio executives took with an Allied escort on Hitler’s former yacht in July 1945 as part of a trip exploring postwar business opportunities.

“That was the one time I actually shouted out in an archive,” Mr. Urwand recalled.

He also uncovered detailed records of regular studio visits by German officials, including Georg Gyssling, the special consul assigned to monitor Hollywood, who watched films, dictated scene-by-scene requests for cuts and engaged in bizarre debates. (Did *King Kong*, for example, constitute “an attack on the nerves of the German people?”) And Mr. Urwand found records of a global network of monitors who made sure the cuts were made in all countries, including the United States.

Sometimes entire films were quashed. Previous historians have written about the battle over *The Mad Dog of Europe*, an anti-Nazi film planned in 1933 that some Jewish groups opposed on the grounds that it would stoke anti-Semitism. But Mr. Urwand, who uncovered the only known script, argues that the studios were concerned only with protecting their business with Germany.

“We have terrific income in Germany and, as far as I am concerned,” Louis B. Mayer was quoted in a legal case as saying, “this picture will never be made.”

Hollywood’s “collaboration,” Mr. Urwand argues, began in 1930, when Carl Laemmle Jr. of Universal Studios agreed to significant cuts in *All Quiet on the Western Front* after riots by the Nazi Party, then rising in Germany. (Laemmle, Mr. Urwand acknowledges, would later help hundreds of Jewish refugees secure visas to the United States.)

And it lasted, in his telling, well past November 1938, when *Kristallnacht* became front-page news around the world.

In June 1939 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer treated 10 Nazi newspaper editors to a “good-will tour” of its studio in Los Angeles. Mr. Urwand also found a December 1938 report by an American commercial attaché suggesting that MGM was financing German armaments production as part of a deal to circumvent restrictions on repatriating movie profits.

Mr. Urwand said that he found nearly 20 films intended for American audiences that German officials significantly altered or squelched. Perhaps more important, he added, Jewish characters were all but eliminated from Hollywood movies.

Some of the movies that were never made “would have done a great deal,” he said. “They really would have mobilized public opinion.”

Some scholars, like Mr. Doherty of Brandeis, point out that many movies of the time contained veiled anti-Nazi slaps that any viewer would have recognized. And in private, the studio bosses often went much further.

Steven J. Ross, a professor of history at the University of Southern California, is working on a book that will detail the little-known story of an extensive anti-Nazi spy ring that began operating in Los Angeles in 1934, financed by the very studio bosses who were cutting films to satisfy Nazi officials.

“The moguls who have been castigated for putting business ahead of Jewish identity and loyalty were in fact working behind the scenes to help Jews,” Mr. Ross said.

But Mr. Urwand strongly defended the notion of “collaboration,” noting that the word (and its German equivalent, *Zusammenarbeit*) occurs repeatedly in documents on both sides.

And he bristled at the suggestion that Hollywood had a better record against Nazism than other major industries, to say nothing of the State Department, which repeatedly blocked efforts to expand visas for Jewish refugees.

“The State Department’s record is atrocious,” he said. “But the State Department did not finance the production of Nazi armaments. It did not distribute pro-Nazi newsreels in Germany. It did not meet with Nazi officials and do secret deals.”

“Collaboration,” he added, “is what the studios were doing, and how they describe it.”

GOODBYE TO BERLIN...

(Continued from page 7)
from then on, his father wrote the cards as frequently as ever, but in English. The cards his father sent have now been published, along with other letters and cards, in a book produced by Yad Vashem, entitled *Postcards to a Little Boy: A Kindertransport Story*.

They are a rich document of a program which, when finally approved, was a kind of compromise by a UK

Heinz Lichtwitz, who would become Henry Foner, as he prepared to leave Berlin in February 1939.

government that was at the time resisting demands for an increase in Jewish immigration to British-run Palestine. Not all the children, billeted in homes and hostels across the country, had a happy time.

But Henry Foner, by his own account, was "one of the ones who was lucky. Morris and Winnie Foner brought me up as they would have brought up their own child, and more than that you can say of no one." They made sure he knew them as "Uncle Morris and Auntie Winnie." "They never tried to hide the fact that I had a father and they would say, 'Henry, after the war we'll have to see…'" But Henry was never to see his father again. The last direct communication he had from Max, a lawyer who had worked hard to help other Jews escape from Germany, was a letter sent through the German Red Cross in August 1942, saying: "I'm glad about your health and progress. Remain further healthy! Our destiny is uncertain. Write more frequently. Lots of kisses, Daddy."

Max Lichtwitz was deported to Auschwitz on December 9, and killed a week later. But in 1961, shortly before his 30th birthday, Henry received from a second cousin in the US what Max himself, by then expecting the worst, had called a "kind of farewell letter," written in 1941: "I think my Heini has found a good home and that the Foners will look after him as well as any parents could. Please convey to them, one day when it will be possible, my deepest gratitude for making it possible for my child to escape the fate that will soon overtake me… Please tell him one day that it was only out of deep love and concern for his future that I have let him go, but that on the other hand I miss him most painfully day by day and that my life would lose all meaning if there were not at least the possibility of seeing him again someday."

Henry Foner went on to serve in Egypt in the RAF, graduate — and gain a doctorate from — Leeds University, get married and finally settle in Israel with Judy, his beloved wife for 52 years. There, he worked as an eminent analytical and environmental chemist on the Geological Survey of Israel. He has eight grandchildren. The Yad Vashem book is dedicated — as well as to his wife — "to the memory of my father and grandmother who had the foresight and courage to send me away, and to Morris and Winifred Foner who saved my life and made me part of their family."

ESCAPE FROM *NOVOGRUDOK*

(Continued from page 7)
alive and that we would both survive this living nightmare. My only wish was not to be taken alive by the enemy."

When the Jews emerged from the tunnel, many were met by machine-gun fire. They had no idea that the guards were shooting because they had seen the light from the tunnel, but had mistaken it for the lamps of partisans who had come to free the Jews.

The next day the Germans and local collaborators combed the woods. They caught and shot about seventy people. Forty-four people found hiding in a barn were burned inside. One hundred seventy Jews reached partisan encampments. The Germans abandoned the labor camp and the ten people in hiding found their way to the Bielskis.

Idel (now Jack) Kagan eventually settled in London and raised a family. Determined that the story of the escape would not be lost to history he wrote a book about his experiences. In 1999 he approached Tamara Vershitskaya, the curator of the *Novogrudok* regional museum, about creating a Museum of Jewish Resistance on the site of the former labor camp. He hired an artist to draw up plans and along with Vershitskaya and twenty local people, he approached the mayor of *Novogrudok* for his support. "I think he was sympathetic to the idea since I had always praised the Belorussian people for where a partisan group of 1230 Jews could have survived in." The museum opened on July 24, 2007.

Jack Kagan continues his mission to rescue history: "Last year I visited Costa Rica and saw a small Holocaust museum with a park and photographs of Righteous Gentiles. I took pictures and sent them to Tamara. We now have permission from the new mayor of *Novogrudok* to construct a similar park there."

GHOSTS OF SOVIET HOLOCAUST CINEMA FINALLY ESCAPE FROM THE CENSORS' FILES

(Continued from page 11)
audience. German and Polish Jewish characters were made to look more like Soviet Jews. In *Professor Mamlock*, the German Jewish Mamlock is mockingly called "Itzik," a typical Russian reference to a *shtetl* Jew. More often, films hinted at Jewishness without including Jewish characters.

"I call it Holocaust without Jews. You have all these striped pajamas and concentration camps and chimneys," Gershenson explained. "If you know the actual history, you think 'Wow, these people are all Jews.' "

Sometimes, she writes, nothing remained of the original Jewish story — "On censors' orders, screenplays were changed and entire plot lines disappeared. Jews were written out of Soviet films. Nonetheless … these films remained obsessed with Nazi genocide and retained a measure of 'residual Jewishness.' " For example, a 1965 Belarus production called *All These Years* briefly shows a family led to their deaths in a ravine, the scene backed by a Yiddish soundtrack. In

Still from *The Unvanquished* (1945), director Marc Donskoi.

Eastern Corridor, produced in 1965 and one of the few films to explicitly address the Holocaust, a Yiddish plea is uttered by a character during the drowning execution scene. (Like *The Unvanquished* 20 years earlier, it too quickly disappeared from theaters.)

This all echoed the official Soviet response to the Holocaust, which was to universalize suffering and thus conveniently avoid mentioning the specific group of Soviet citizens who were targeted for being Jewish. Some 27 million Soviets died in the war — "So in Soviet discourse, those three million were just 'peaceful Soviet citizens,' " Gershenson said. Why talk about Jewish victims as a unique group when every victim was another "peaceful Soviet citizen"?

This was the case in *Steps in the Night*, a 1962 Lithuanian film. It was originally based on the true escape of 64 prisoners — 60 of them Jewish — from a Nazi prison. Gershenson found four versions of the screenplay in the archives. In the first, a single token Jewish prisoner was included. The final film had no Jewish characters — the heroes were all strong-jawed Soviets in the finest socialist-realism tradition.

Gershenson sums up this loss best when she writes of the 1964 *Goodbye, Boys!* (which was screened in Toronto in 2012 for the first time in decades): "In an alternate reality, in which he had not been constrained by Soviet policies and restrictions, (director Mikhail Kalik) would have included images representing the Holocaust on Soviet soil. … In the only reality we have, *Goodbye, Boys!* was made and even distributed, but in some ways it remained a phantom, a phantom of a film that could have been."

The story of this phantom film industry is not a redemptive story — there's no sudden, post-Soviet flourishing of Holocaust cinema. Decades of repression and propaganda had done their work too well, and Holocaust films continued to follow the existing formulas. Russia is one of the few countries in the world where *Schindler's List* was a box-office flop.

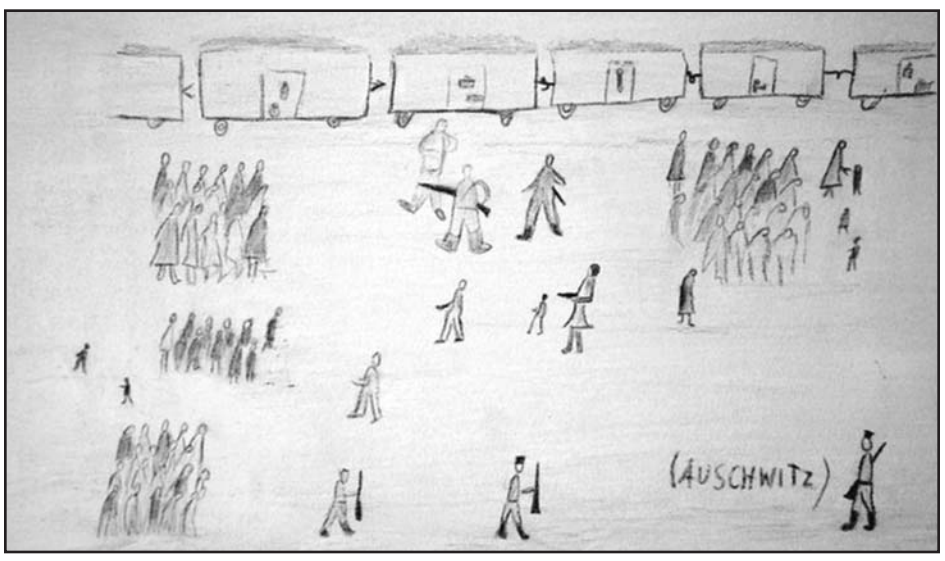
"If we start talking about the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, it's very uncomfortable," Gershenson explained. "Because then everyone is implicated. Maybe not in Moscow, but certainly in places like Kiev and *Kharkov* and all these other areas. The story of wartime collaboration or nonresistance is a very complicated story. The executions, the ghettos — it was impossible without local assistance. Today, even people with conscience don't want to talk about it because it's so uncomfortable."

In the very act of writing *The Phantom Holocaust*, Gershenson brings the story full circle, writing, as it were, the next chapter in Soviet Jewish Holocaust cinema. Two of the scripts she uncovered have found a new life — the 1965 *Stalemate* was transformed into a Moscow theater production in 2010, and a well-known Russian filmmaker, Oleg Gaze, is now seeking funding to produce *Gott mit Uns*. Generations of Soviet censors are, one hopes, turning in their graves.

AUSCHWITZ HOLOCAUST EXHIBITION OPENED BY NETANYAHU

(Continued from page 13)

ed to some of the nations of Europe a barracks building, for it to memorialize what had happened to their citizens here, and so there is an Austrian block, a Hungarian block, and on and on. Block 27 was designated the "Jewish block."



A child's drawing chosen by artist Michal Rovner for the "*Shoah*" exhibit. Rovner chose more than 100 of 6,000 collected images to be shown on the room's white walls.

When the Israelis decided to remake Block 27, they were faced with several challenges. The barracks are small, only about 10,000 square feet, and the enormity of the Holocaust — in facts, figures, emotion — is huge.

"Our challenge was to create a new language to explain to the visitor the more comprehensive idea of the Holocaust," said Shalev, who served as curator of the exhibit.

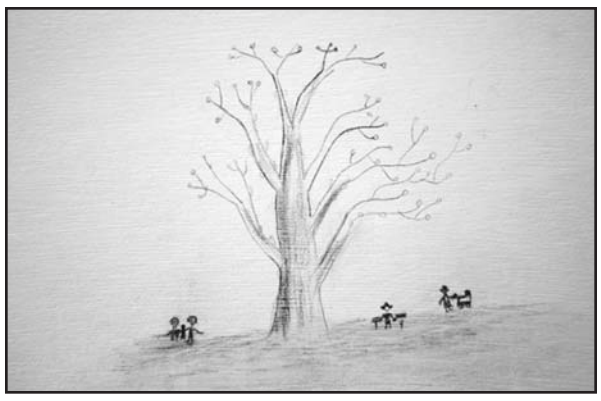
Or as the Holocaust survivor Aharon Appelfeld put it: "to deconstruct the horror — into images and sounds."

One of the most moving elements in the exhibit, said visitors on this first day, is a room filled with pencil tracings of children's drawings, selected and etched by Israeli artist Michal Rovner.

The drawings were collected from diaries and other artifacts, all drawn by the children taken to the camps — and presented at waist level, where a child might scrawl on the wall. In the spare white room, the drawings depict increasingly disturbing images.

First, there are crude renderings of happy times — a girl with a flower or a family celebrating the Sabbath. Then there is a soldier brandishing a weapon and taking a girl into a forest, and the soldier returning alone. Later, trains arriving at the camps, then gallows, graves.

The artist spent a year studying the archives of children's drawings, and their reproductions are very spare, very simple. The curator of the exhibit spoke of their tenacity and fragility, "like hovering souls."



A child's drawing chosen by artist Michal Rovner for the new exhibit at the Auschwitz death camp devoted to 1.5 million Jewish children who were killed in the Holocaust.

Another powerful image is created by the monumental "Book of Names," which stands about 6 feet tall and measures 46 feet long and contains the printed names, home towns, and dates and places of birth and death of 4.2 million Jews who died during the Holocaust, gathered over the past 60 years by researchers at Yad Vashem.

There are empty pages yet to be filled, as Yad Vashem is still collecting names from old census data, reports by families and other research. In three years, the center expects to have documented five million names. The others might be lost to history.

The main exhibition at Auschwitz is the state museum, which is now applauded by Jewish scholars as being accurate and presenting the full story of the Holocaust in Poland.

The remaking of Block 27 is part of that revision. "It is remarkable in the sense that it represents the reassertion of the Jewish story, long ignored, even here," said Marian Turski, chairman of the council at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

When visitors exit the Block 27 barracks, they do so through a simple side door. And there right in front of them are the rusting barbed-wire fences erected more than 60 years ago.

THE STORY OF DR. MENGELE'S DELIVERY GIRL

(Continued from page 6)

"I did not know him!" Leah leans forward like a child revealing a secret. "He said he was called Yossi, and that he was related to one of my classmates." She flashes that mischievous grin. "He's now my husband."

Leah and Yossi migrated to Brazil, where they lived happily for four decades. But Dr. Mengele apparently had the same idea. Leah heard the reports of the manhunt for Auschwitz's most notorious doctor, as Mossad tracked him throughout South America. She feared bumping into him on the street or at the bank one day; feared that he would come after her. "Dr. Mengele had a very good memory for faces, he remembered thousands of people."

But he never came. He evaded capture for more than 30 years, and is believed ultimately to have died in South America.

Leah remained silent throughout, until just a few years ago. She genuinely thought nobody would be interested in her story. Her daughter explains that for the first few years Holocaust survivors, even in Israel, remained silent. Nobody wanted to talk about it, she says, to burden people, to upset people. It's only really in the last two decades or so that survivors have started opening up.

But those years of silence have been left behind in a life now being lived through recollection and education. Profits from Leah's book go toward helping children with special needs, the antithesis of the crimes Mengele committed on such children. She also lectures in high schools and to young Israeli soldiers. And, with 22 grandchildren and 44 great-grandchildren, Leah London Friedler is the living embodiment of the survival of the Jewish people.

Excerpts from Leah's letters written at Auschwitz:

Auschwitz — February 22, 1945

Dear Jori,

Ten months passed, and this is my first letter to you. Perhaps I will never deliver this letter to you, but first I must know if, after these horrible 10 months, I should even direct this first letter to you at all.

Did you even know what it was like for me in these 10 months of imprisonment? Nazi imprisonment? It's not right for 17-year-old girls, because even among the strongest, healthiest men, only a few survived. But these devils, whom I was ready to choke with my own hands, each and every one of them, and never give them any mercy, they made up all of this for us. The bodily torments were horrible, yet the torments of the mind were so much more horrifying. When the intimidating SS man hit my arm with a baton until it was covered in black stripes, dripping blood, the pain was so bad, but my pain was so much sharper when they hit a pole across my mother's back. So much more shocking was to see the disgrace of the hunger than to experience the pain of hunger in tear-filled eyes.

You only think you know hunger, but you don't know it at all. Hungry were those who set with great passion upon a piece of bread left on a truck for moving dead bodies, just after it unloaded. A truck that only minutes before had led our best friends to the gas chambers and the crematoria.

But I don't want to talk about what I went through now, I am still too close to it. Now I am writing and writing because I'm struck with longing.

Maybe you know and understand what that means; I miss my city of birth, the city where I spent 17 beautiful years, the place that was my home, my school, my friends, and all the beauty of my youth and childhood years.

The place where I figured out my first book through slow reading.

The place where I was first joyful at the awakening of spring...

The place where bread baked by my mother was waiting for me...

The place where my father blessed me with his hands on my head.

I miss that place where I knew you, where I hoped you would return, and the place where maybe now you are the one hoping for my return...

For my old home I am longing, and from here I crave to get away....

Far, far away, as fast as possible, to never again see this cursed place, the entrance hall to hell.

....

From the end of August until mid-October 1944, I experienced the worst atrocities ever. I saw one by one my friends from home and from here, girlfriends from my class, their mothers or sisters, exterminated, ruined, or dragged to the gas and the furnace. Then I was working in the revier, and these two words, "revier work," contain all the horrible atrocities. Because you had to know there was nothing worse than this.

Auschwitz — February 27, 1945

My dear Mother!

I am pondering what sort of gift I would give you. I'm thinking hard but I can't think of any smart ideas, for the choices aren't many. You know... I don't have anything...

Yet in any case, now I notice that there is one treasure that I will have, that in the most meticulous search while we were standing naked for washing, they did not take away from me. That is the single quality that never, no one and nothing would ever take away from me. Yet I have in my capacity to give it to whoever I want, if I feel the person is worthy of it. That is my heart and the innocent love that is in it. This I managed to maintain all along, and now I would like to hold your hand and pass to you my pure love, so that you feel, know what you mean to me.

THE HOLOCAUST AND "HATIKVAH": A SONG OF HOPE IN A TIME OF DESPAIR

BY RAPHAEL MEDOFF

A national anthem written more than 50 years before the birth of the state for which it was composed, "Hatikvah" has served as a source of hope and inspiration for Jews who have found themselves in the most dire of circumstances. During the darkest hours of the Holocaust, Jews defied their tormentors by singing the song's powerful lyrics.

"THE SS COULD NOT STOP THEM"

Filip Muller was a *Sonderkommando* in Auschwitz — a Jewish slave laborer who was kept alive because he helped take corpses from the gas chambers to the crematoria. One of the very few *Sonderkommandos* to survive the Holocaust, Muller later described the remarkable behavior of one group of Czech Jews who were being marched toward the gas chambers and were told what was about to happen:

"Their voices grew subdued and tense, their movements forced, their eyes stared as though they had been hypnotized… Suddenly a voice began to sing. Others joined in, and the sound swelled into a mighty choir. They sang first the Czechoslovak national anthem and then the Hebrew song 'Hatikvah.'"

Enraged SS men tried to halt the singing by beating the Jews into submission, Muller wrote. "It was as if they regarded the singing as a last kind of protest which they were determined to stifle if they could." But the SS was unable to stop them. "To be allowed to die together was the only comfort left to these people… And when they sang 'Hatikvah', now the national anthem of the state of Israel, they were glancing into the future, but it was a future which they would not be allowed to see. To me the bearing of my countrymen seemed an exemplary gesture of national honor and national pride which stirred my soul."

Overwhelmed by feelings of remorse, Muller tried to join the group as they entered the gas chamber, but they pushed him back out. A woman implored him, "Your death won't give us back our lives. That's no way. You must get out of here alive, you must bear witness to our suffering and to the injustice done to us."

"DESPITE IT ALL THEY SANG"

Jan Michaels was a 23-year-old Polish Jewish pilot who was shot down in 1944 and imprisoned near what he called "a forced labor camp in Silesia" (German-occupied southwestern Poland). Michaels managed to escape, and his eyewitness testimony about the mistreatment of the Jews reached the West in November of that year.

Michaels reported that 300 Jews between the ages of 18 and 25 were being held in the slave labor camp. "The prisoners, who came from France, Holland and other European countries, were forced to work inhuman hours in the freezing cold, although they received little food and were clothed in rags," according to news reports relaying his account. "Persons who became ill feared to report to the camp infirmary because they knew that it meant death."

The liberation of the *Bergen-Belsen* concentration camp in April 1945, a day on which Holocaust survivors sang "Hatikvah."

"Despite their mistreatment, the youths maintained their morale," Michaels said, and he "could frequently hear the strains of 'Hatikvah' coming from the camp."

"AM YISRAEL CHAI"

BBC Radio reporter Patrick Gordon Walker was on hand when the British Second Army liberated the *Bergen-Belsen* death camp in April 1945. On the first Friday after the liberation, Walker broadcast an account of a British Jewish army chaplain, L. H. Hardman, leading what Walker called "the first Jewish service that many of the men and women present had taken part in, for six years — probably the first Jewish service held on German soil in absolute security and without fear, for a decade."

"Around us lay the corpses there had not been time to clear away," Walker reported. "People were still lying down and dying, in broad daylight…. A few hundred people gathered together, sobbing openly in joy at their liberation and in sorrow at the memory of their parents, brothers and sisters that had been taken from them, gassed and burned."

"These people knew they were being recorded, they wanted the world to hear their voice. They made a tremendous effort, which quite exhausted them. Listen."

Walker evidently assumed that what he heard was part of the traditional Sabbath prayer service, but the survivors actually sang "Hatikvah." At the conclusion of the song, a voice — perhaps that of the chaplain, L. H. Hardman — declares: "Am Yisrael Chai, the children of Israel still liveth!" (The broadcast can be heard on YouTube.)

Mrs. Oran Aviv (formerly Helen Einhorn), an Israeli health care practitioner originally from San Francisco, has identified her mother, Cesia Frommer Einhorn, among the survivors on Walker's recording. Just days earlier, Mrs. Frommer had "contemplated running and killing herself on the electric fence of the camp," Mrs. Aviv notes on her Web site.

But there she is on the BBC recording, "belting out the song with her operatic voice, full of determination, wanting the whole world to know that despite all that she and others had suffered though, they had not lost their hope and still dreamed of returning one day to Zion. Where did my mother's amazing strength come from? How did she find this strength and hope, despite the atrocities she witnessed and suffered, despite the death march from Auschwitz to *Bergen-Belsen*…?"

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