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Dr. Yitzhak Arad is an Israeli historian and retired IDF brigadier general. A veteran of the Nazi-era Jewish resistance movement, he has researched, lectured, and published extensively on the Holocaust. Dr. Arad served as Chairman of the Directorate of Yad Vashem for 21 years (1972-1993), and remains associated with Yad Vashem as Deputy Chairman of the International Council of Yad Vashem.

Dr. Arad was born Itzhak Rudnicki in Święciany, Poland (now Svencionys, Lithuania) on November 11, 1926. In his youth, he belonged to the Zionist youth movement and was educated in Hebrew schools.

During the war, he was active in the ghetto underground movement. In February 1943, at the age of seventeen, he joined the Soviet partisans in the Vilnius Battalion of the Markov Brigade, a primarily non-Jewish unit. Apart from a foray infiltrating the Vilna ghetto in April of that year to meet with underground leader Abba Kovner, he stayed with the partisans until the end of the war, fighting the Germans and their collaborators in the Narocz Forest of Belarus and in eastern Lithuania. He participated in the mining of sixteen German trains leading to and from the Leningrad front.

A rad was 14 years old when Germans occupied his native town of Święciany, which had about 3,000 Jews, at the end of July 1941. In September they told all of the Jews that they were being moved to a ghetto. A total of about 8,000 Jews were taken—not to a ghetto but to an isolated military camp instead. They shot them on the second day. He escaped.

The night before Jews were deported from Święciany to the so-called ghetto, a group of fifteen- to sixteen-year-olds, including Yitzhak Arad, decided to flee to Belorussia. A few days after their arrival in Belorussia they learned that Einsatzgruppen Eight had murdered almost all the Jews from Święciany. Only 250 remained. But after a few months the killing of Jews began in Belorussia and Arad returned to his native town.

There he was captured by the Germans and taken out of the ghetto with about ten others. They were taken to a place outside of town where there was a camp where Germans collected captured Soviet arms. On the first day Arad put a small gun beneath his shirt and was able to bring it back to Święciany that night. Within a month Arad and his friends were able to steal about ten guns, and they started an underground group. In February 1943 they left for the forest, where they operated for about two months and later met with a Russian partisan group, which they joined.

In one of his interviews when reflecting on this period of his life, Arad said:

"There were many problems for a Jew to be with the Soviet partisans. First of all, there were anti-Semitic feelings. Then, a Jew would only be accepted in the ranks of the Soviet partisans if he had his own arms. (Any non-Jew, whether a local peasant or one who had escaped from a prisoner-of-war camp, would be accepted without arms.) Also, there was the image of the Jew as a bad fighter or a coward. So you fought to prove yourself, to say, 'Any- (Continued on page 8)
AUSTRIA PAYS FOR BOOKS LOOTED BY NAZIS FROM JEWISH INHERITORS

The national library decided in 2003 to return 52,403 books looted by the Nazis from their rightful owners. It has succeeded in returning 35,217 so far. And a decision was still pending on a further 8,823 books, manuscripts, sheet music, and cards, Rachinger said. However, a total of 8,363 objects had been determined to be "heirless" where research had failed to yield any indications of their previous owners.

And so it was decided to use them to help people who had not been compensated so far. Austria decided in the 1990s to award a gesture payment of just over 5,000 euros to Nazi victims as an acknowledgment of the injustices suffered.

PROPERTY RESTITUTION TO HOLOCAUST VICTIMS

Forty-three countries have agreed in Prague on a set of recommendations concerning the restitution of the property of Holocaust victims and other victims of Nazi persecution, presented by Czech PM Jan Fischer and U.S. and D.M. Foster, and the Department of State Secretary in charge of Holocaust-related issues, Stuart Eizenstat. The document recommends the principles and compensation for the property of the Jewish victims of the Nazi persecution should be based on.

The states express in it their willingness to consider working out national programs and legislation on the still open restitution issues. The recommendations concern not only the synagogues, cemeteries, schools, and other buildings that served religious purposes before the Nazis confiscated them in 1933-1945, but also private real estate, Eizenstat said.

He said the recommendations also involve the property that has no more owners to be returned to. The revenues from it should serve the survivors with low income. There are about 500,000 such survivors all over the world. About a half of them live below the limit of poverty, Eizenstat said. He said the list of recommendations is not binding, nor does it break the law of the countries that have agreed with it.

Russia disagrees with the recommendations. It will not follow them, the Russian embassy in Prague said in reaction to the disclosure of the document. The Terezin Declaration, which EU representatives signed in Terezin (wartime Theresienstadt with a Jewish ghetto and a slave labor camp), north of Prague, and the closing of the Czech EU presidency in mid-2009, calls for the restitution of the Holocaust victims' property, including private, that was seized by the Nazis.

AUSTRIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY said it would pay 135,000 euros ($164,000 dollars) for thousands of books in its possession that were looted by the Nazis from Jews during World War II. A symbolic gesture, library director Johann Rachinger handed over the books to the Austrian National Fund for the Victims of National Socialism at a special ceremony.

Chairman of Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Yisroel Meir Lau, former Polish president Lech Walesa and former Croatian president Stipefan Mesic. Rachinger said the books would pay 135,000 euros (164,000 dollars) for thousands of books in its possession that were looted by the Nazis from Jews during World War II.

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When former Prime Minister Golda Meir thanked Spanish dictator General Francisco Franco for his "humanitarian attitude" in allowing refugees in his country during the Holocaust, she was not aware that he had ordered his officials to destroy the lists of Jews living in Spain to be handed over to the Nazis.

The list which was published in the El País newspaper, would have sent thousands more Jews to their deaths in the Nazi extermination camps.

Franco, whose apologists and supporters claim he gave protection to the Jews of Spain, ordered his officials during the Second World War to compose a list of some 6,000 Jews, both Spanish and foreign, living in his country.

The list was handed over to the Nazi architect of the "final solution," German SS chief Heinrich Himmler, at a time when the two countries were discussing Spain's possible incorporation into the Axis powers that included Nazi Germany, Italy and Japan.

The Spanish newspaper published the original list, which was recently unearthed in the Spanish government's archives and instructed provincial governors to provide information about all the national and foreign Jews living in the province... showing their personal and political leanings, means of living, commercial activities, degree of danger, and security category.

The governors were ordered to keep a close eye on Sephardic Jews, as their language and appearance enabled them to blend in with Spanish society.

They were also enjoined to keep a close eye on Jewish workers, as a large number of Jews worked in the Spanish industry.

The pledge, subject to congressional approval, was in addition to a $150 million endowment aimed at preserving and promoting Holocaust education and remembrance, and demonstrates America's commitment to Holocaust education, remembrance, and research, a State Department statement said.

The money will help fund a more than $150 million endowment aimed at preserving the site, which has fallen into disrepair.

"The United States strongly encourages other nations who have not already done so to follow Spain's example and contribute to the Auschwitz-Birkenau fund to preserve the site for future generations," the statement said.

"The preservation and continuation of Auschwitz-Birkenau is essential so that future generations can visit and understand how the world can never again allow a place of such horror and perpetuation to exist. It is also an important educational tool to show those who doubt that the Holocaust ever existed that, tragically, it did," the statement said.

With the defeat of the Nazis, France retreated and concealed his cooperation with Adolf Hitler, and became one of the last of all Jews. Lists that remained in the provincial governors' offices, however, found their way to the Spanish archives.

U.S. PLEDGES $15 MILLION TO AUSCHWITZ PRESERVATION

The ceremony, held at the former childre's concentration camp in Vught, in the south of the country, is an annual event to remember the last transport of 3,000 children's concentration camp in occupied Poland in 1942.

He expressed outrage at the comments, but said that they were a pertinent lesson for the participants at the memorial.

"I was shocked to hear the words 'Heil Hitler' in the middle of my speech, especially at such a memorial service," the rabbi said.

"However, in a certain way I was pleased that it was confronted, as it was an important lesson for those present."

We continued the memorial service as it was planned, but the unexpected message was that we should be cognizant of the continuing threat of anti-Semitism. Nevertheles, we regard it as an eye opener and not the anti-Semites win."

The incident happened a few days after the death of the 280-year-old synagogue in Amsforsberg, the town where Rabbi Jakob had been born.

According to results of research released earlier this year, anti-Semitism in Holland has dramatically risen in recent years.

"Their adaptation to our environment and their similar temperament allow them to hide their origins more easily," said the rabbi.

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"They have now indicted another elderly man on charges relating to the Holocaust. Samuel Kunz has been charged with participating in the murder of 434,000 Jews at the Belzec camp in occupied Poland. He is also charged with shooting 10 Jewish prison ers, according to the testimony of another former guard who has since died.

Kunz, who was a guard at the Belzec death camp from January 1942 to July 1943, had previously been questioned several times, in 1969, 1975, and 1980, by German investigators but had not become the focus of interest until his name was included on the Simon Wiesenthal Center's list of most-wanted Nazi suspects.

"The loss of over 6 million Jews at the hands of the Nazi party was a huge loss to the world," said Kunz. "I was a guard at the Belzec death camp from January 1942 to July 1943, and had previously been questioned several times, in 1969, 1975, and 1980, by German investigators but had not become the focus of interest until his name was included on the Simon Wiesenthal Center's list of most-wanted Nazi suspects.

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Kunz was now No. 3 on the Simon Wiesenthal Center's list of most-wanted Nazi suspects.

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TELL ME A STORY, TELL ME THE TRUTH

By Gina Roitman. Tell Me a Story, Tell Me the Truth.

In her old world standards.

Nonetheless, Gina remains (Continued on page 15)

THEREFORE I AM

A HOLOCAUST NARRATIVE

In the Words of Refugee Jews


REVIEWED BY MICHAEL KENNEY

T

Through the Kindertransport program organized by international aid groups, some 530 Jewish children from Vil-

ena arrived in England as refugees in De-

ember 1938.

Among them was the teenage Kitty Pilot, who by the following summer was able to arrange a guarantee of employment that would allow her mother to join her. But by September 1939 it was too late.

“If the war would have started two weeks later, my mother would have made it,” she wrote. When, after the war, Pilot returned to Vi-

ena, she found her mother’s trunk, packed for the hoped-for flight to Eng-

land, which had been hidden with non-Jewish friends.

“She did not find her mother,” write the authors of Flight From the Reich, with affec-

ting understatement.

And as Deborah Dwork and Robert JanVan Pelt write at one point, escape was often a matter of timing, fortuitous circum-

stances – and luck.

Dwork is director of the Center for Holo-

cast and Genocide Studies at Clark Uni-

versity, and Van Pelt, professor at University of Waterloo, Canada. In their third collaboration on Holocaust sub-

jects, they have crafted a powerful narra-

tive that includes both a well-documented account of Nazi anti-Semitic policies – and the halting challenges to them by the Western democracies – and emotionally charged stories of personal loss and thwarted hopes.

By focusing on the refugees – why some successfully escaped while the au-

thors have called the Nazi “machinery of death,” while others either failed, or waited until it was too late – they provide a new dimension to the Holocaust narrative.

There were the schemes to find resettlement areas in An-

tigua – and one backed by the German government involving the French colony of Madagascar.

And there were the letters, too, often bearing news of deaths or deportations – which, in turn, would amount to the same thing.

And well into the early 1940s, the Germans cre-

ated postcards to be sent home from the concentration camps an-

nouncing inmates safe arrival and good conditions. They were, the authors write, “markers of death.”

The authors put the number of Jews murdered in the Holocaust between five and six million, noting that by late 1943, the number being killed had dropped to about 500,000 a year. The Germans, they write, “had run out of Jews to kill.”

There is no firm figure of how many es-

cape, but among the hundreds who did.

(Continued on page 15)
AUSCHWITZ SURVIVOR RECALLS DARING 1944 ESCAPE

BY MONIKA SCISLOWSKA. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.

With every step toward the gate, Jerzy Bielecki was certain he would be blown to bits.

The day was July 21, 1944. Bielecki was walking in broad daylight down a pathway at Auschwitz, wearing stolen SS uniform with his Jewish sweetheart Cybulska by his side. His knees buckling with fear, he tried to keep a stern bearing on the long stretch of gravel to the sentry post.

The German guard frowned at his foraged pass and eyed the two for a pattern that seemed like an eternity — then uttered the inhuman words: “Aryan, Aryan, thank you — and let Jerzy and Cyyla out of the death camp and into freedom.

It was a common saying among Auschwitz inmates that the only way out was through the crematorium chimneys. Those who won the few ever to escape through the side door.

The 23-year-old Bielecki used his relatively privileged position as a German-speaking Catholic Pole to orchestrate the daring rescue of his Jewish girlfriend who was in the death camp.

“It was great love,” Bielecki, now 89, recalled in an interview at his home in this small southern town 55 miles from Auschwitz.

“We were making plans that we would get married and would live together for ever.”

Bielecki was 19 when the Germans seized him on the false suspicion he was Jewish. He was condemned to die.

A tour of one of the rooms in the library presented before us as a Grosse Allee. Here you will welcome to a businesslike document: “We are the only copy he managed to keep to the following objectives:

The next afternoon, Bielecki, dressed in a Polish-language book Bielecki has written, He Who Saves One Life ...

“Far from any settlements, we had to cross rivers,” she wrote. “When water was high ... Jurek carried me to the other side.”

To keep her away from possible Nazi patrols, Cybulska was hidden in a nearby

Daily food intake of Auschwitz prisoners, original Schindler’s list, names of children from eastern Europe to Aryan Germany’s new masters: the largest archive in world of Nazi horrors, and overwhelming response to deniers.

“At Auschwitz, the Nazis just wanted to have taken care of, and mainly — Jews. People were rounded up in January 1943 in the city of Krakow. A devout Catholic, however, his mother, who was living at the time, was overjoyed by the rescue, though wasted away after four years at Auschwitz. A devout Catholic, however, she was dead set against him marrying a Jewish girl.

As their love blossomed, Bielecki began planning an escape. A devout Catholic, however, was as- signed to be forced to march.

It was through the crematorium chimneys, scattered across Europe, arrived in Bad Arolsen, near for work duty. Sweating with fear, he de-

Kassel office to orchestrate the rescue of his Jewish girlfriend who was in the death camp. He gave the following objectives:

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Jerzy Bielecki.

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All of this plunder was collected by con-

The document was overturned on its back, with number 29558 tattooed on her left forearm. She had been designated to be forced to march.

She had been designated to be forced to march. Using a black and white movie. The original is re-

Aeschylus, original Schindler’s list, names of children from eastern Europe to Aryan Germany’s new masters: the largest archive in world of Nazi horrors, and overwhelming response to deniers.

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Roughly 50 men and women in the Warsaw Ghetto chose a special form of resistance. In a secret archive, they documented their path to doom for future generations, chronicling the Nazis' crimes as they were being perpetrated.

David Graber was 19 when he hurriedly scribbled his farewell letter. "I would be overjoyed to experience the moment when this great treasure is unearthed and the world is confronted with the truth," he wrote.

While German soldiers combed the streets outside, Graber and his friend Nahum Grzywacz buried 10 metal boxes in the basement of an elementary school on Nowolipki Street in Warsaw's Jewish ghetto. It was Aug. 2, 1942.

The boxes were dug up more than four years later. By then, Graber and Grzywacz were both dead, murdered like almost all of their roughly 50 collaborators. Only three survived the Nazi terror. They provided the information that led to the discovery of the 10 metal boxes.

The buried treasure consisted of about 35,000 pieces of paper that a group of chroniclers had collected and used to document how, during World War II, the German occupiers had deprived Warsaw's Jews of their rights, tormented and finally, killed them in the death camps. "These materials tell a collective story of steady decline and unending humiliation, interspersed with many stories of quiet heroism and self-sacrifice," writes American historian Samuel Kassow. His book Who Will Write Our History?: Rediscovering a Hidden Archive from the Warsaw Ghetto, which has now been published in German translation, throws a new light on the exceptional source material.

**Nightmarish Body of Text**

Jews also collected documents from diaries elsewhere in Europe during the Holocaust, but the Warsaw archive is the most comprehensive and descriptive collection of all. The Polish capital was home to Europe's largest Jewish community, which became a magnet for many talented scientists and writers. As one female author wrote, she hoped that her account would be "driven under the wheel of history like a wedge." Contributions like hers would turn the clandestine archive into probably the most nightmarish body of text ever written about the Holocaust.

The group called itself Oyneg Shabes, or "Babylonian Joy," because it usually convened on Saturday afternoons, beginning in November 1940. The chief thinker of the group, which included a large number of intellectuals, journalists, and teachers, was Emanuel Ringelblum, a historian born in Galicia in 1890. He had written a doctoral dissertation at the University of Warsaw on the history of the city's Jews prior to 1527, and he was part of the Jewish self-help organization "Alykhah.

"Two weeks before the outbreak of World War II, Ringelblum attended the World Zionist Congress in Geneva as an envoy of the Masorti party Poalei Zion. The other delegates told him it was too dangerous to go back to Poland and urged him to stay in Switzerland, but Ringelblum wanted to be with his wife Yehudis and their nine-year-old son Uri. He had hardly returned home after German troops invaded Poland and captured Warsaw soon after.

In October 1940, the occupation authorities decreed that all Jews were to be moved to a separate residential district. Workers were thus built a three-meter wall around the area. The Germans also relentlessly drove Jews from the surrounding countryside into the Warsaw Ghetto. Before long, a million Jews were living in an area of only four square kilometers (1.5 square miles).

Ringelblum and his fellow members of Oyneg Shabes quickly recognized the dimensions of the drama and began to document it for posterity. They collected decrees, posters, ration cards, letters, diaries, and drawings of horror in Yiddish, German and Polish.

One of the documents specified the average daily calorie allotment for 1941, according to which Germans were to receive 2,613 kilocalories, Poles 699 and Jews only 184. The ghetto residents had to smuggle in food to survive. The archive used wages and prices on the black market to construct market research and prepare sample calculations for a family of four.

**Questionnaires and Essay Contests**

Like ethnologists, the chroniclers went about investigating their environment, scientists studying their own surroundings. They issued standardized questionnaires and conducted hundreds of interviews with Jews and people on the verge of starvation.

Between 1940 and 1942, about 100,000 people died of hunger, exposure to cold temperatures, and disease. In November 1941, Ringelblum, describing the deaths around him, wrote: "The most terrible thing is to look at the freezing children..." The archive held an essay contest to encourage traumatized children to tell their stories. A 15-year-old girl described how her mother had died next to her: "During this time at a red Cross's vaults, until archivists Raymond Schultz stumbled upon the forgotten correspondences nearly seven decades after the events that claimed Bukiet's parents and Stiel. Schultz tracked the Internet to track down Bukiet, coming across an article on the Jewish Web site Chabad.org in 2004.

In 1942, Chaim Meir Bukiet was living with other yeshiva students in Shanghai thanks to the courageous efforts of Chuno Sugihara, the Japanese consul in Lithuania. In the.behalf of the Sixth Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneerson, of righteous memory. There, they secured visas through the benevolent acts of Japanese consul Chuno Sugihara, and traveled across Russia by train.

Your parents in Chmielnik send warm wishes and want you to know they are healthy," Stiel wrote in the telegram. "Please report what news of your health you can share with your parents."

The telegram, sent through The Hague, reached Bukiet three months later, on July 19. He quickly wrote back on the back side of the telegram.

"Delighted about the news. Thank you. I'm healthy, my brothers, too. From Grandfather, good news," he wrote, delivering a coded message indicating that his fellow students were with him, and that the Rebbe had made it safely to New York. "Would be glad to hear from my parents very soon again soon," he wrote.

Bukiet sent the telegram back to The Hague, and the Red Cross sent it to Stiel, but by the time it arrived, he and his family had already been deported by the Nazis to a transit camp, where the Red Cross attempted to forward it. The message arrived on Feb. 27, 1943, just three days after Stiel was sent to Auschwitz and never to return. The telegram made its way back to the Hague, where it sat in a box amidst others documents of horror in Yiddish, German and Polish.

That's the value of 25 worlds! For many fleeing the onslaught of Nazi forces during World War II, and their families throughout Europe and beyond, a simple telegram was the only way to stay in touch with loved ones. They transmitted a descriptive collection of all. The Polish capital was home to Europe's largest Jewish community, which became a magnet for many talented scientists and writers. As one female author wrote, she hoped that her account would be "driven under the wheel of history like a wedge." Contributions like hers would turn the clandestine archive into probably the most nightmarish body of text ever written about the Holocaust.

By Chanie Kaminker, Chabad.org

Warsaw, September, 1946. The document had been hidden under a school on Nowolipki Street since August 1942. After the war one of three of the archivists to survive the war handed over the information that led to the discovery of the 10 metal boxes.

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said that she was not even alive during the something like that? She protested. She I told her that Germans routinely had really did. But I could not help myself: I to the postwar anti-Semi- tism in Germany and Poland, and the resentment felt toward some Holocaust survivors whose own sons and daughters had perished. (When I was older I realized that I was a constant re- minder to them of their inability to save their children. I evidently was being punished for living.) despite all of this and more, I have managed to have a full life, if a deeply scarred one. After several years spent chiefly in a displaced persons camp in Germany, I came to America on a cramped troop ship, the U.S.S. Taylor, and in November 1949 married a different kind of ghetto — Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant. I married and raised two wonderful daughters who have given me five marvelous grandchildren. I have done fulfilling work in publishing, in teaching, and, for 30 years, as a Washington lobbyist. None of this, however, has been thanks to the Germans, who are responsible only for the darkest corners of my life, including, among other things, my regular night- mares, my survivor guilt (why was I spared), my personal sense of ingrati- ation, and attackers. And I, of course, the Germans. That's God's job. Sabina visited local farms asking after the twins who had been Mengele victims. After she hadn't been in years – herself. She visited the Jewish cemetery in Warsaw to find out if, perhaps the most well-worn dictum in favor of letting bygones be bygones. Alexander Pope’s “To err is human, to for- give, divine.” In my case I find it easily dis- missible. This is not only because it would be disgraceful to apply a remark about lit- erary criticism — the line is from Pope’s “1711: An Essay on Criticism,” which is ac- tually a poem — to Germany’s systematic extermination of more than 6 million inno- cent people. Even more, it would be out- rageous to characterize so immense an abomination as “erring.” The deportation of Jews from the Krakow ghetto.
thing you can do I can do — if not better (Continued from page 1)

thing you can do I can do — if not better (Continued from page 1)

thing you can do I can do — if not better
HAIN 65 YEARS LATER

Tribute for Yad Vashem Annual Tribute Dinner

HONORARY CHAIRMEN
Sheldon Adelson
Joseph Wilf
Avner Shalev
H.E. Asaf Shariv
Fred Zeidman
H.E. Gabriela Shalev

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HONORARY CHAIRMEN
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DINNER COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMEN
Elly Krakowski
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Doris Gross
Evah Halpern

DINNER COMMITTEE CHAIRWOMEN
Elly Krakowski

DINNER COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN
Marilyn Rubenstein

DINNER COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRMEN
Elia & Charles Feldman

DINNER COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRMEN
Elia & Charles Feldman

TRIBUTE CHAIRMEN
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Hart & Ernst Hacker
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Yad Vashem Breathing Life into Destroyed Jewish Communities

BY ELI STUTZ, INN.COM

Yad Vashem cannot revive what is lost, but it can help restore its memory. In a new initiative on the Yad Vashem website, the Holocaust Memorial authority is “bringing back to life” Jewish communities that were destroyed, exhibiting them as they were before the Holocaust.

The latest community on exhibit is Munkács (pronounced Munkack), a Jewish community that was the seat of the Munkács Hasidic dynasty which still lives on today in such places as Boro Park, Brooklyn, Williamsburg, and Monsey (all in New York).

Dana Porath, Director of the Internet Department of Yad Vashem, explained the project to Israel National News:

“Yad Vashem marked 68 years since the deportation to Treblinka of the Jews of Munkács, dedicated his life to caring for children, particularly orphans. He believed that children should always be listened to and respected, and this belief was reflected in his work. He wrote several books for and about children, and broadcast a children’s radio program.

In 1912 Korczak became the director of a Jewish orphanage in Warsaw. When World War II broke out in 1939, Korczak first refused to accept the Jewish occupation authorities for selling liquor, meat, candles, and soap, and for grudgingly producing and transporting wood to the port of Danzig. Korczak and the two began working together.

When WWI began, Korczak was recruited by the authorities for humanitarian service in times of crises, and how of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

One of Carter-Chand’s examples is the assistance that Quakers gave to Jews who were rounded up and held for deportation to work camps. In part due to their humanitarian service in times of crises, and in part due to their reputation as neutral, some Quakers were able to move relatively freely among Jews in holding areas. The Quakers provided food and moral support, and were also trusted emissaries for personal correspondence.

Carter-Chand told of an account she found in her research of Quakers waiting on platforms near trains full of Jews for letters that were thrown out at the last moment. Letters sometimes included material wealth, which the Quakers faithfully delivered. “That says a lot, that they were trusted to deliver not only letters but also money,” said Carter-Chand of the Quakers.

Another fellow who presented her ongoing research, Na’ama Shik, is a Holocaust scholar at Tel Aviv University and affiliated with the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem. Sheik’s presentation on her work, titled “Jewish Female Experience in Auschwitz-Birkenau: A Disturbing Look into the Dark World Jewish Women Experienced in the Notorious Camp.”

Sheik also spoke about the 45-minute presentation and discussion that her research is still in progress. She is currently focusing on the issues of women’s rights (Continued on page 15)
MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

September/October 2010 - Tishri/Cheshvan 5771

WOMEN’S ROLE IN HOLOCAUST MAY EXCEED OLD NOTIONS

BY ISABEL KERSHER
THE NEW YORK TIMES

A

mid the horrors of the Holocaust, the

atrocities perpetrated by a few brutal

women were always outstanding, like a

raisons of nature.

There were notorious camp guards like Ilse Koch and Irma Grese. And lesser

known killers like Emka Petri, the wife of an SS officer and a mother who was con-

victed of shooting to death six Jewish chil-

dren in Nazi-occupied Poland; or Johanna

Alfwater Zelle, a German secretary ac-

cused of child murder in the Volotmyr-

Volyshny ghetto in Nazi-occupied Ukraine.

The Nazi killing machine was undoubt-

edly a male-dominated arena. But accord-

ing to new research, the participation of

German women in the genocide, as perpe-

trators, accomplices or passive witnesses,

was far greater than previously thought.

The researcher, Wendy Lower, an Amer-

ican historian now living in Munich, has

drawn attention to the number of seem-

ingly ordinary German women who will-

ingly went out to the Nazi-occupied eastern territories as part of the war effort,

areas where genocide was openly oc-

curring.

"Thousands would be a conservative es-

imate," Ms. Lower said in an interview in

Jerusalem last week.

While most did not bloody their own

hands, the acts of those who did seemed

all the more perverse because they oper-

ated outside the concentration camp sys-

tem, on their own initiative.

have further underlined the importance

of the role of Krakow echelons in the Nazi

killing apparatus.

"In the dominant literature on perpetra-

tors, you won’t find women mentioned,”

said Dan Michman, the chief historian at

Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Ms. Lower, 45, presented her work for

the first time at this summer’s workshop at

Yad Vashem’s International Institute for

Holocaust Research. She has been trying

to decipher what motivated these women

to commit such crimes.

Seventeen years after the film brought

glory to the Holocaust from a gender

perspective, according to experts, and

enjoyed the last dayEROLD KUKLIS/REUTERS

Ms. Lower’s findings shed new light

on the Holocaust from a gender

perspective, according to experts, and

enjoyed the last day

"They challenge so deeply our notion” of

what constitutes normal female behavior,

she said. But the Nazi system, she added,

“turned everything on its head.”

Ms. Lower said she worked for many

years at the Holo-

caust Memorial Mu-

seum in Washington

and is now teaching

and researching at

Ludwig-Maximilians-

Universität in Munich.

She began traveling

to Ukraine in the early

1990s, as the Soviet

archives opened up.

She started in Zhylo-

myr, about 75 miles

west of Kiev, where

the SS leader Hein-

rich Himmler had

his Ukrainian head-

quarters, and where she found original German

files, some burned at the edges, in the

local archive. She noticed the frequency

with which women were mentioned at the

scenes of genocide. Women also kept

cropping up as witnesses in West and East

German investigations after the war.

In an anomalous twist on Christopher R.

Browning’s groundbreaking 1992 book,

Ordinary Men, it appears that thousands of

German women went to the eastern terri-

tories to help Germanize them, and to pro-

vide services to the local ethnic German

populations there.

They included nurses, teachers and wel-

fare workers. Women ran the storeroom

of belongings taken from Jews. Local Ger-

mans were recruited to work as inter-

preters. Then there were the wives of

regional officials, and their secretaries, some of whom saved more than

1,000 Jews.

"If you focus on one person, what about

all the other heroes?” asked Jonathan Om-

stein, director of the Jewish community

center in Krakow.

“Not only do you have the German teachers

and orphanage workers who saved 2,000

orphans in Krakow, but the world just

doesn’t know about them.”

The Emalia Factory, where Schindler manufactured tires, sits on a broad stretch of a

bending road among many plants and work-

shops in the industrial zone of Krakow. As one of the largest, it has a

commanding presence. After the war, the liberating Soviet forces na-

tionalized the factory and turned it into a

telecommunications equipment manufacturer. But eventually the facility was abandoned and fell into

receivership, which is when the city

bought it in 2005.

The new museum, modern exhibits intended to take visitors back in time in

clude life-size photo murals, voiceovers,
digital displays and multimedia touch

screens. The museum also will feature a

Hall of Choices, a sculptural installation

highlighting ethical dilemmas faced by

citizens during the war.

Some visitors may be shocked by the

black-on-white, swastika-like floor tiles in one of the rooms. The company that

produced the tiles refused to do so with-

out first receiving assurance from the government that it would not be commit-

ting some if it went through with the

order, since Nazi symbols are banned in

Poland.

“We used the swastika symbol because it says so much about the occupation,”

Smietana said.

“At first you think how banal it is, but then you start to understand how dangerous it is.”

The exhibit is meant to provoke, as in

the case of the floor tiles, but to many the

“memory factory” will be about the mem-

ory of Schindler.

“A couple of months ago, an Israeli

woman came to me and wanted to know

if it was true that it was her grandfather

who got her and her family out of the camp,” said Zuzanna Mistal, project director for

the new museum. “I was able to tell her yes. It was a beautiful feeling, and it was the

first time I understood how important my work is.”
officer Herman Höfle announced that the Adam Czerniakow that the Warsaw Ghetto man officials had promised Jewish elder of one of the documents in the archive shootings and synagogues burned to the of the country. Refugees told of mass dwellers even had a name for a particularly bed and place her on the ground.”

(Continued from page 6)

The Peltzmans had heard plenty from \( \text{a pharmacist, was widowed at 47 and then to the United States. She married} \)

Beatrice Peltzman, left, with Ghislaine Hennessey at the Warsaw Nursing Station in Lon-

don on an undated war-era photograph.

"Mrs. Hennessey had all these pictures perhaps she will be spared. And if

"I was worried that the names of Norbert

for the convent,” Mr. Peltzman said. “I remember very

"My father went to see them, and he, I will try to get her in the convent,”

Perhaps she will be spared. And if

The ghetto was quickly cleared. Accord-

the henchmen: "There was a solar

able daughter Ninkele,” whose

The ghetto was quickly cleared. Accord-

SMUGGLED EVIDENCE OF THE EXTERMINATION PROGRAM

I n 1942, the chronicles began to re-

of the one-eyed men for the extermin-

40 men, women and children in a 23-by-

He thought he knew the whole story behind it. "We’d all seen it since we were little kids,” Mr. Peltzman said. “My mother had no

...in the scores of the extermination camps. He

The ghetto was quickly cleared. Accord-

A Nam poster announcing death sentences in the

Bomhals, the owner of a movie theater and a

The evening in June, Mr. Peltzman noted to

of the country. Refugees told of mass

sionale architecture of the attic of a Madame Acremant.

For Roger Peltzman of Washington

woman, Beatrice, dressed in the full habit

sions about telling us everything. We

Roger. She died in September at 83.

Perhaps she will be spared. And if

The evening in June, Mr. Peltzman noted to

She made up her mind to come to Paris, but her passport was delayed. "I still

The evening in June, Mr. Peltzman noted to

...in the scores of the extermination camps. He

SUDDENLY EVIDENCE OF THE EXTERMINATION PROGRAM

I n 1942, the chronicles began to re-

ers to the Treblinka death camp began.

The evening in June, Mr. Peltzman noted to

The ghetto was quickly cleared. Accord-

The evening in June, Mr. Peltzman noted to

The evening in June, Mr. Peltzman noted to

Perhaps she will be spared. And if

Perhaps she will be spared. And if

Perhaps she will be spared. And if

Perhaps she will be spared. And if

Perhaps she will be spared. And if
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he 2009 Anti-Defamation League Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents counted a total of 1,211 incidents of antisemitic vandalism, harassment and physical assaults against Jewish individuals, property, and community institutions. This is the most since the ADL began identifying such incidents in 1979.

Using a newly revised methodology for reporting and tracking incidents, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) identified 29 physical assaults on Jewish individuals, 760 incidents of anti-Semitic harassment and threats, and 156 cases of anti-Semitic vandalism during the 2009 calendar year. “A disturbing trend of antisemitic vandalism continued through 2009, and was no different in this regard than in any other year,” said Abraham H. Foxman, ADL National Director. “The continued atrocities are a sobering reality that as Jews have become more accepted in society, there remains a continuing problem of antisemitism in our land. The fact that Jews continue to be singled out for acts of hate on an average of more than two incidents a day, is a disturbing reality that we have to confront.”


According to the ADL press release, 2009 also saw the Internet playing an increasingly dominant role in the dissemination of anti-Semitic messages and content through social networking and content-sharing Web sites. The Internet is not only widely used and exposed online anti-Semitism, it does not include statistics on anti-Semitism in cyberspace as part of the Audit.

The ADL audit comprises data from 46 states and the District of Columbia, including official crime statistics as well as information provided to ADL’s regional offices. The audit compiles criminal acts, such as vandalism, violence and threats of violence, as well as non-criminal incidents of harassment and intimidation.


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ANNE FRANK TREE FALLS OVER

The monumental chestnut tree that stood near the house where Anne Frank lived was felled. The tree was granted a last-minute reprieve after a battle in court.

Parts of the tree were later being offered for sale on Dutch auction website markt-verkoop.nl. The highest offer was 10 million euros ($12.7 million), Reuters reported.

Many clones of the tree have been taken, including 111 plants of sites and the United States and 150 at a park in Amsterdam. It is not clear whether a new tree will replace the original one on the same spot, since it rests on property belonging to a neighbor.

Anne Frank made several references to the tree in the diary that she kept during the 25 months she remained indoors until her family was arrested in August 1944.

"Nearly every morning I go to the attic to blow the stuffy air out of my lungs," she wrote on Feb. 23, 1944. "From my favorite spot on the floor I look up at the blue sky and the bare chestnut tree, on whose branches little raindrops shine, appearing like silver, and at the seagulls and other birds as they glide on the wind.

"Our chestnut tree is now in full blossom. It is covered with leaves and is even more beautiful than last year," she wrote in May 1944, "not long before she was betrayed to the Nazis.

Anne Frank died of typhus in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in March 1945. Her diary was recovered and published after her death. It has become the most widely read document to emerge from the Holocaust.

AUSCHWITZ SURVIVOR RECALLS DARING 1944 ESCAPE

Continued from page 5)

A few weeks later they met at Krakow Airport. He had 39 red roses, one for each year they spent apart. She visited him in Poland many times, and they jointly boarded the ship Exodus.

"Cyla was telling me: leave your wife, come with me to America," he recalls. "She said.

"I lived for one year in Israel, and this was my dream come true. Moving on down the corridor: a brown card with a Nazi secret, the Gestapo. Already in November 1938, the Gestapo had sought to keep a watchful eye on a young German Jew, whose name was Adenauer. For seventeen years later, he was the statesman who passed the selection received in the notorious Auschwitz death camp. For instance, on Monday, July 7, 1942, a ‘hard laborer’ in Auschwitz received 450 grams of bread, 30 grams of margarine, and 125 grams of cheese. If you count the menu for the last two years, this weekly ration seems like a dream come true.

The list of children who boarded the ship Exodus, documents identified by the International Tracing Service located in Bad Arolsen, Germany, contains the比特币称“Reason for arrest: Being Jewish.”

On April 22, 1945, the prisoner Rachmin Gross died in the Buchenwald concentration camp. The letters Sch-J are listed on his card. The archive staff, fluent in the Nazi bureaucratic language, translated the shorthand: “Prisoner without rights.” Rea- son for being held: “Jewish.”

Fourteen years later, this is what Rechmin Feingold died from? This is not listed on the Speisezettel – Auschwitz where he died and to know for the first time the date it happened, just seven days before liberation.

The level of detail and documentation is astounding. Prisoner A-246502 was brought to Auschwitz in the transport on August 19, 1944, a day after her 16th birthday. This prisoner is my grandmother. She was lucky enough to pass the selection. Fortunately, 16 was an age at which it was somehow still possible to survive in Auschwitz.

The last documentation of the masses of people who arrived in Auschwitz and were subsequently sent to their deaths is the list of transports that arrived in the camp. For those who arrived in the camp and were first transported to the camp and only afterwards to their death, the cause of death is listed as “heart attack” or “pneumonia.”

The Nazi obsession with keeping records spared just one detail. In no list of deaths in all of Bad Arolsen will you find the word “gas.”

SARAT'S ADMINISTRATION: JOURNEY INTO NAZI DEATH RECORDS

(Continued from page 5) The archive in Bad Arolsen in 1958. Other documents carry enormously highly important information when facing various distorted and false claims related to the Holocaust. For instance, the claim that the average German would not have necessarily known about the forced labor camps and what was taking place in them. To this end, Flor took out a book list- ing prisoners at Dachau and Buchenwald. On a daily basis, it was listed precisely where each one of the thousands of pris- oners worked – in which village, town, or German city he was forced to work, driven to and prison.Garb.

Residents throughout Germany could not help but see who arrived to perform forced labor next to them, and for an ex- tended period of time, she said. "This little book cancels any possibility for feigning ignorance, and lack of knowledge."

"Spassiezettel – Auschwitz" is written on a document randomly pulled from the shelf. It is the list of food the prisoners who passed the selection received in the notorious Auschwitz death camp. For instance, on Monday, July 7, 1942, a ‘hard laborer’ in Auschwitz received 450 grams of bread, 30 grams of margarine, and 125 grams of cheese. If you count the menu for the last two years, this weekly ration seems like a dream come true.

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First published by Ynetnews.
HOW AUSTRALIA BECAME A HAVEN FOR WAR CRIMINALS

David Humphries, THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

The old woman looked across the courtroom where Ivan Polyukovich was sitting, shackled and alone. This was Gina, born in 1926, a young woman in her 90s. She was born in Poland, but came to Australia after the war. She was one of the thousands of Holocaust survivors who fled to Australia after World War II. Gina’s life was marked by trauma and resilience.

In her memoir, “Who Will Write Our History?”, the story of the Żabotiner Rebbe, a Jewish underground leader in Warsaw, is told. The Żabotiner Rebbe was a key figure in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and his story is one of courage and sacrifice.

The Żabotiner Rebbe was captured by the Nazis in 1943, and taken to a concentration camp. He was eventually transported to Auschwitz, where he died.

In the memoir, Gina describes her experiences as a young girl during the Holocaust. She talks about the terror of the concentration camps, the constant threat of death, and the hopelessness of the situation.

She also describes the impact of language on her life. Gina was born into a Yiddish-speaking family, and the language was a source of comfort and identity. However, the Nazis sought to eradicate Yiddish and other Jewish languages, and forced Gina to learn German as a means of communication.

Despite the challenges she faced, Gina remained resilient. She found solace in her faith, and in the support of her family and community. She also became a teacher, helping to preserve the Yiddish language and culture.

In her memoir, Gina writes, “Language is the key to our survival. It’s not just a means of communication, it’s a means of identity. It’s a means of connection to our past, to our traditions.”

Gina’s story is one of survival, resilience, and hope. It is a testament to the strength of the human spirit, and the importance of preserving our languages and cultures.

WENDY LAWER, who has studied women’s participation in Nazi killings, at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum in Jerusalem, noted that women had a unique role in the Holocaust.

“Women played a crucial role in the Holocaust, especially in the ghettos and concentration camps,” Lawer said. “They were often responsible for feeding and caring for the elderly and sick, as well as for children.”

In her book, “Holocaust Scholars Still Grapple with Difficult History,” Lawer explores the challenges faced by Holocaust researchers in understanding the role of women in the Holocaust.

Lawer notes that the research on women’s role in the Holocaust has been difficult, due to the limited evidence available. Many of the women who lived through the Holocaust were unable to speak about their experiences, either due to the trauma they had experienced, or because they were forced to keep silent.

In her book, Lawer calls for more research on women’s role in the Holocaust, and for a greater understanding of the complexities of their experiences.

“The Holocaust was not just a male phenomenon,” Lawer said. “Women played a vital role in the survival of their families and communities.”

For more information on Gina’s memoir, “Who Will Write Our History?”, and for more information on the role of women in the Holocaust, please visit the Yad Vashem website and the website of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum.
Web site: www.yadvashemusa.org

OUTREACH PROGRAM IN THE HAMPTONS

The American Society for Yad Vashem was delighted to host its first outreach program in the Hamptons on June 8th, 2010, graciously hosted by Leslie Adler, good friend of Martin Rubenstein, ASYV benefactor.

Leslie opened her beautiful home in Sagaponack to 35 friends and Marilyn Rubenstein’s friends, for a lovely luncheon and program to introduce the work of the American Society for Yad Vashem.

The participants came from the local Hamptons area, as well as from New York City, a three hour drive away.

Eli Zborowski, Chairman of ASYV, retold his poignant personal story as a Holocaust survivor, and spoke about the mission of the organization, to support Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are preserved for future generations.

The Guest speaker was Rabbi Avraham Bronstein, Assistant Rabbi of the Hamptons Synagogue. Rabbi Bronstein gave an interesting talk about the connection between the mission of Yad Vashem and the holiday of Tisha B’Av, which our event preceded by one day.

The feedback from the participants was excellent, with everyone talking excitedly about what they had learned, and expressing interest in becoming more involved in our work.

Many thanks to Leslie Adler and Marilyn Rubenstein for a wonderful afternoon, hopefully the first of many in this lovely community.

AN EVENING WITH CURIOUS GEORGE

On June 8th over 100 members and friends of the American Society for Yad Vashem Young Leadership Associates gathered at the Jewish Museum in New York City for An Evening with Curious George – and the Wartime Journey that Saved Him.

This very successful event was chaired by Abbi & Jeremy Halpern and Ilana & Mitchell Kahn. The attendees were treated to a talk by Irena Apelker, American Society for Yad Vashem Education, who spoke of Margaret & H.A. Rey and the famous children’s characters they created, as well as the amazing story of their escape with their stories and artwork from the Nazis in occupied France to South America.

“We were so pleased to see so many of our young people gathered at this event,” said Chairman Eli Zborowski. “The Society looks forward to continuing to provide an educational venue where the Young Leadership Associates can get together and continue to learn about the Holocaust and ways it affected all our lives. I look forward to seeing many more of these types of events.”

POLAND UNVEILS MEMORIAL TO WARSAW GHETTO FIGHTERS

Polish officials unveiled a new monument honoring the last group of Jewish insurgents to escape from Warsaw’s burning ghetto in 1943 as the Nazis crushed the revolt against their brutal rule. It was a doomed struggle, but some managed to survive, and today the act of resistance stands as a source of pride for many Jews, especially in Israel. With the remaining ghetto population facing mass deportations to death camps, the insurgents rose up in April 1943 and managed to hold off the German army for nearly a month before being crushed.

The bronze memorial shows a sewage canal rising vertically from the ground with disembodied hands symbolically climbing their way to freedom. It honors insurgents who escaped the ghetto to the city’s “Aryan” side through a stinking, dark, and claustrophobic sewage canal.

The monument stands on Prosta Street where the last group of about 50 fighters emerged on May 10, 1943. The leader of that escape, Simha Rotem, was honored by officials at the ceremony.

“Are we here today to commemorate the heroic deed of a great Pole and a great Jew,” Foreign Minister Radek Sikorski said. “We must remember that his heroism did not end in 1943. Together with several of his companions, he also took part a year later in the Warsaw Uprising, another ill-fated insurgency, that by the entire city.

Rotem, whose nom de guerre was Kazik, remembered the uprising as “suicidal.”

“We stood no chance; we were convinced that no one would survive this fight. Rotem said. However, after many days of fighting against the Germans, it turned out that the majority of us were still breathing. In spite of impossible conditions, we were prepared to carry on with the fight, but we were threatened with being burned alive.”

At that point, with the battle lost, Rotem said it was necessary to cross the besieged ghetto walls and “get out of this hell.” He recalled that several attempts were unsuccessful before he led the final escape. The events are described in a book he has written, Memoirs of a Warsaw Ghetto Fighter.

Sikorski said that Rotem “had limited contacts with the world outside the ghetto but nevertheless he managed to do something which seemed virtually impossible — to organize the transport and to contact the sewage workers, without whose cooperation covering those few kilometers (miles) in the sewage canal would have been impossible.”

One of the monument’s designers, architect Krzysztof Stefanaki, said the hands are meant to recall the drama of the fighters’ escape as well as the “horror and scene of terror.”

END