

# YAD VASHEM

Vol. 95, Summer 2021

JERUSALEM



60 Years Later

The Eichmann Trial Revisited ([22-25](#))



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# MARKING THE ONSET OF MASS ANNIHILATION

This year's Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day was held on 7-8 April 2021 under the banner: ["Until the Very Last Jew: Eighty Years Since the Onset of Mass Annihilation."](#)

The [events held on the Mount of Remembrance](#) mixed customary and innovative ceremonies, the latter strikingly marked by ["Generations Light the Way"](#) – a new multigenerational gathering set to become an annual tradition.

[Educational materials](#) developed by the International School for Holocaust Studies (with original

podcasts, testimonial films and historical videos) were uploaded to Yad Vashem's website, and all of Yad Vashem's social media channels in various languages shared a variety of content dealing with the central theme and the [stories of the torchlighters](#).

In addition, **special online lectures and podcasts** were offered to the public in Israel and

abroad. On the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, Yad Vashem held [a conversation with Géraldine Schwarz](#), a German-French journalist, author and documentary filmmaker based in Berlin. During WWII, Schwarz's German grandparents were neither heroes nor villains; they were merely Mitläufer – those who followed the current, and afterwards wished to bury the



The six torchlighters with family members taking part in the "Generations Light the Way" initiative, launched this year

past. The conversation covered the creation of collective memory, the responsibilities of perpetrator societies, the question of how one remembers the past, and the role of history in safeguarding democratic societies.

For Hebrew speakers, Dr. Yohai Cohen, Director of the Guiding Department in Yad Vashem's Commemoration and Community Relations Division, gave a fascinating talk on visual documentation of the onset of mass murder in 1941. Yad Vashem Senior Historian Dr.

David Silberklang was the guest speaker on Yad Vashem's Podcast "Making Memory," with an [episode](#) on the beginning of the "Final Solution" and the significance of the systemized mass murder.

At the end of June, **an online symposium** was held marking 80 years since ["Operation Barbarossa"](#). Dr. Silberklang spoke on the campaign and the path to the "Final Solution"; Masha Pollak Rosenberg, Director of the International School's Educational Guiding Department, gave an

address on ghettos in the shadow of death in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union; and Curator and Director of the Museums Division's Art Department Eliad Moreh-Rosenberg reviewed artistic representations of the Shoah amongst Soviet Jewry. The symposium ended with an interview with cinematographer Boris Maftsir, who spoke about his series ["Searching for the Unknown Holocaust."](#) The symposium was generously sponsored by the Genesis Philanthropy Group.



# "SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS GOING ON"

## THE FATE OF JEWISH FAMILIES IN 1941

Yona Kobo

A new online exhibition presents stories of Jewish families and their fate in the wake of "Operation Barbarossa" in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, eastern Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Romania and Yugoslavia.

"Here, we are well, and it will be even better, so we hope," wrote Jacob Bernstein on a postcard sent in May 1941 from the town of Ylakai in northwest Lithuania to his daughter Ida in the

Land of Israel. "Dear Ida, we are very worried about you. For God's sake, write often, we are waiting for good news from you. Mother doesn't sleep, and mentions you all the time." Less than two months

later, in July 1941, the Bernstein family was murdered at the killing pits on the outskirts of Ylakai.

The story of the Bernstein family is one of 12 stories that appear in a new online exhibition that was

uploaded to Yad Vashem's website in advance of Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2021: ["The Onset of Mass Murder – the Fate of Jewish Families in 1941."](#) With the aid of items

With the aid of items from the Yad Vashem Archives and Collections, the names and faces of a few of the men, women and children behind the enormous numbers of victims are revealed



Photo of Menachem-Mendel Bernstein of Ylakai, Lithuania, sent to his sister Ida Lev (née Bernstein) in Tel Aviv. On the back of the photo, he wrote in Hebrew: "An everlasting memento from your dear brother Mendel Bernstein, 20 May 1935." Yad Vashem Archives





Arie Singer, "Vilna,  
3000 Jews were  
Murdered, 2.9.41"  
Yad Vashem Art  
Collection

from the Yad Vashem Archives and Collections – personal letters, artworks, photographs, documents, testimonies, Pages of Testimony and more – the names and faces of a few of the men, women and children behind the enormous numbers of victims are revealed. A few survived the waves of mass murder, and some of them gave Yad Vashem personal items belonging to their loved ones for eternal remembrance.

Exposure to the details of indiscriminate and brutal murder,

including that of newborn babies and young children, is hard to comprehend. Some consolation may be found in the stories of the survivors: those who left before the Germans arrived, many of them in an operation in which the Soviets evacuated masses of civilians from the advancing German army; those who joined the partisans; and those who were saved by selfless persons who were later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. Whoever was left behind, was lost.

In July 1941, the Germans arrived in the Estonian city of Tartu. Shortly before the withdrawal of the Red Army from the town, the Soviets conducted an operation to evacuate the civilians. Several dozen Jews remained in Tartu: mostly the elderly, the disabled, the sick, and those who couldn't bring themselves to wander to an unknown destination. Among those left were Prof. Leopold Silberstein, an expert in Slavic languages and culture, and his wife Malka, a lawyer who studied

## Some consolation may be found in the stories of the survivors: those who left before the Germans arrived

law at the University of Tartu – one of the first women to practice law in Estonia – who was pregnant. The exhibition features their tragic story: in early July 1941, Malka gave birth to a son whose name is unknown. Leopold was shot in August 1941 on the main road between Tartu and Riga. Malka and their baby were also murdered.

Also featured in the exhibition is the story of the Scharf family from Romania. In 1941, Chaya Scharf, a

widow, and seven of her children were scattered in various places across Romania. Her son Shaya and her daughter Etta had immigrated to the Land of Israel in the 1930s. Four of Chaya's nine children were murdered in the Holocaust. Another son was killed with his wife and son shortly after liberation in an accident. Chaya survived.

"I only know one thing: there is something terrible, horrible going on, something inconceivable,

which cannot be understood, grasped or explained," wrote Irina Khoroshunova in her diary in Kiev, between September and October 1941. "Everybody is saying now that the Jews are being murdered... All of them, without exception – old people, women and children... There are more and more such rumors and accounts. They are too monstrous to believe. But we are forced to believe them, for the shooting of the Jews is a fact."

*The author is a researcher and Online Exhibition Coordinator in the Digital Department, Communications Division.*



Score for the song  
"Di Farfirtse"  
(The Deceived).  
Lyrics: Israel Sabeschinski.  
Music: Oskar Strok  
Yad Vashem Archives



# TWO ITEMS, TWO GIRLS, ONE FATE

Iris Bar-Nir

[Yad Vashem's Artifacts Collection](#) preserves simple everyday objects that have become historically and symbolically significant over the years. The items serve as tangible evidence of the events of the Holocaust, helping to document the fate of their owners and commemorating the victims. Two objects that belonged to two girls tell the story of the fate of two out of the one-and-a-half million Jewish children murdered during the Holocaust. They are currently exhibited in the temporary display case in the Visitors Center at Yad Vashem.

## TAMARA PODRIADCHIK'S LUNCH BAG

In 1941, 14-year-old Tamara Podriadchik and her 11-year-old brother Yosef attended a summer camp in Palanga (a seaside resort town in western Lithuania, on the shore of the Baltic Sea). Tamara received instructions from her parents on how to take care of her younger brother. "Give him only one pair of pants, one shirt and a pair of socks," read one letter. "Keep the rest of his

belongings with you." At another time, the parents scolded their children lightly: "You probably buy too many sweets if you already lack money," and in another they try to encourage their children who are far from home: "Many children in Kaunas are jealous of you, it's not a trivial matter – Palanga, sea, forest and other good things [...] Be healthy full of energy, cheerful, eat and drink, dance and jump, Father/Mother Leibusch and Genia."

While they were in the summer camp, the Germans invaded and chaos reigned in the area. Most of the children, including Tamara, were hastily sent back to their families in Kaunas. Tamara's lunch bag and other belongings remained with Yosef, who, along with other children, fled with one of the youth group leaders toward Soviet-controlled territories. The members of the group managed to cross the border and thus survived the Holocaust.

About four months after Yosef's abrupt separation from his sister, Tamara and her parents were



Tamara Podriadchik's lunch bag, courtesy of Yosef Guri (Podriadchik)  
Photo: Elad Zagman  
Yad Vashem Artifacts Collection

**Yosef kept his sister's belongings safe  
as a lasting memorial to his beloved  
sister and parents**

sent to the [Ninth Fort](#), where they were murdered. Yosef kept his sister's belongings safe as a lasting memorial to his beloved sister and parents. He donated them to Yad Vashem in 2017. He passed away at the age of 90 in April 2021.



Tamara Podriadchik  
with her parents, 1928  
Yad Vashem Archives



Bracelet of an anonymous girl,  
courtesy of Arie Segalson  
Photo: Elad Zagman  
Yad Vashem Artifacts Collection

## BRACELET OF AN ANONYMOUS GIRL

The second artifact is a bracelet that tells the story of an anonymous girl who was murdered, like Tamara, at the Ninth Fort in Kaunas.

The bracelet was donated to Yad Vashem by Arie Segalson (later a judge in Israel) who was sent to forced labor at the Ninth Fort murder site, a job that included loading the victims' belongings onto trucks. One day, in a spot between the bushes, he came across the body of a murdered girl, lying on the ground next to

her parents. On her arm was a bracelet; Segalson hurriedly removed it without thinking of the danger involved. He buried it in a hiding place and returned to pick it up later. He safeguarded the bracelet for many years. "I view this bracelet as a silent monument to one-and-a-half million children murdered by the Germans," he said in his testimony to Yad Vashem.

"The bracelet of the anonymous girl bears her memory and that of all the other unknown Holocaust victims," says Michael Tal, Director

— ” —

**These two artifacts bring  
the story of the millions  
of victims of the mass  
murder that eighty years  
ago began the systematic  
extermination of the Jews  
by Nazi Germany**

of the Artifacts Department in Yad Vashem's Museums Division. "Together with Tamara Podriadchik's lunch bag, these two artifacts bring the story of the millions of victims of the mass murder that eighty years ago began the systematic extermination of the Jews by Nazi Germany."

*The author is Associate Curator in the Artifacts Department, Museums Division*

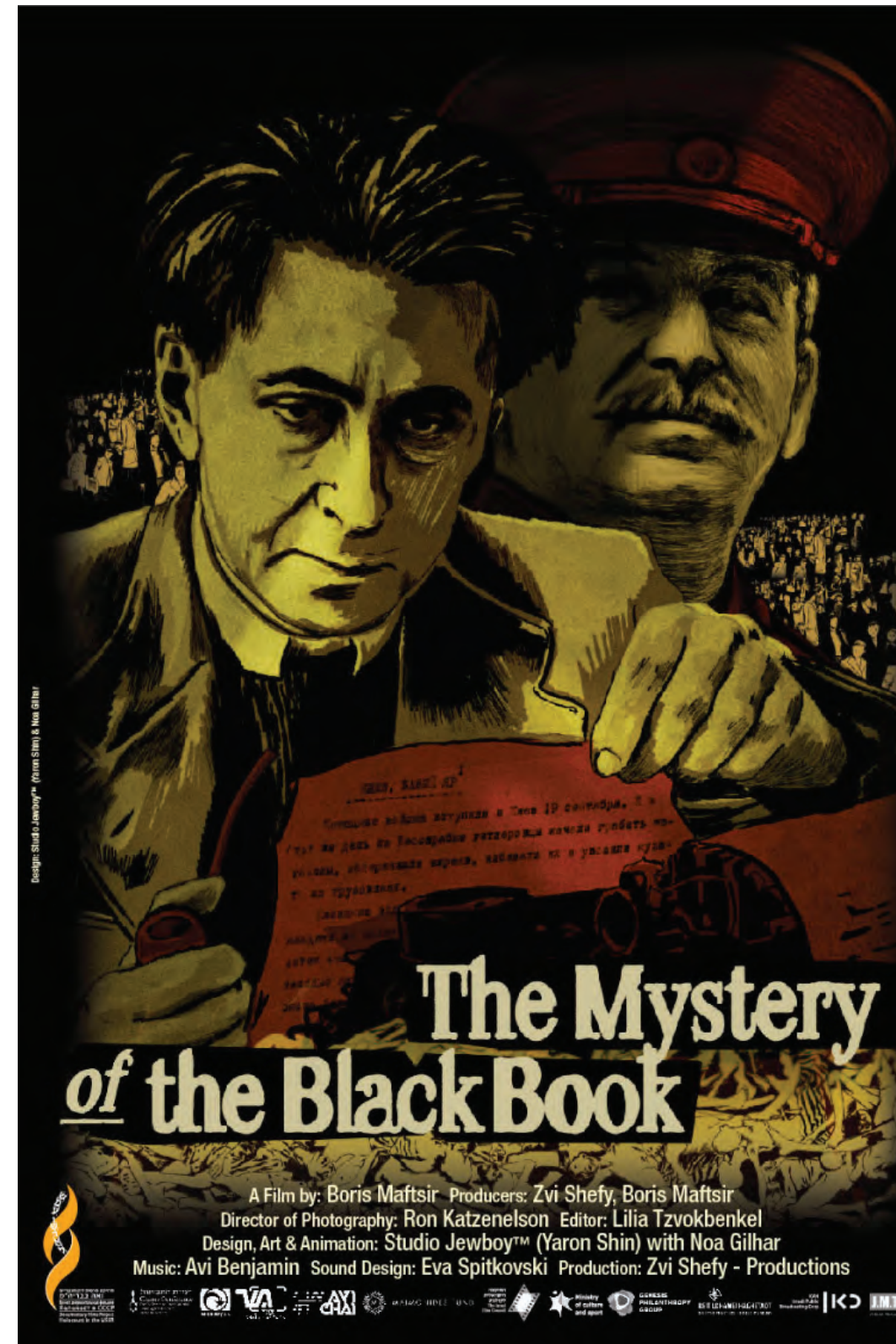


# "THE UNKNOWN HOLOCAUST"

## NARRATIVES AND MYTHS

Liat Benhabib and Mimi Ash

A nine-part documentary series focuses on the Holocaust in the territories of the Former Soviet Union.



During WWII and even more so afterwards, Soviet authorities ignored and actively suppressed information about the uniquely Jewish tragedy that occurred during the Holocaust in Eastern and Western Europe, as well as in the FSU. In the West, the postwar perception of the Holocaust focused on the ghettos and the Nazi extermination camps in Poland, especially on Auschwitz, largely because of the inaccessibility of Soviet archives, which forced scholars to write the history of the Holocaust in the East using German documents. In addition, the Cold War, as well as virulent postwar Soviet antisemitism played their part in suppressing any reliable information on the Holocaust in the territories of the USSR.

Film historian Jeremy Hicks also pointed out that in the FSU, there simply were no images to convey the story of the Holocaust that took place there, which was, for the most part, mass shootings. Since the dissolution of the FSU, scholars have begun piecing together a more complete history of the Holocaust in those territories.





From the film *Drawers of Memory*, directed by Boris Maftsir

**In the unique series, Maftsir and his team brought to light events which, until now, were not part of the collective memory of the Holocaust**

In this context, the nine-part documentary series "[Searching for the Unknown Holocaust](#)" greatly expands the collective memory

of the Holocaust, continuing the tradition created by Claude Lanzmann's monumental film *Shoah* (1985). The series was created by

Boris Maftsir, an Israeli filmmaker and former Prisoner of Zion, whose distinguished career has seen him produce over 200 documentaries and direct over 30 films.

In 2013, Maftsir completed his tenure as Head of the FSU Section of Yad Vashem's [Names Recovery Project](#). Since then, he devoted himself to "Searching for the Unknown Holocaust," which was filmed in Lithuania, Latvia, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Moldova

— ” —

**My task was further complicated by the fact that I was dealing with the basics: having to explain what happened, where it happened, and who the victims and perpetrators were**

and Romania. "All of the films in the series end with a credit expressing my deep gratitude to the staff of Yad Vashem, my source of knowledge and inspiration," he recently declared.

In the unique series, Maftsir and his team brought to light events which, until now, were not part of the collective memory of the Holocaust. "Archival footage from the regions I filmed is practically nonexistent, mainly because of a Nazi Propaganda Office ban on filming atrocities, according to an explicit order issued in December 1941, and because the few Soviet film archives as well as the means of film production and distribution in the FSU were tightly controlled by the government," he explains. "As a result, I decided to follow Lanzmann's cinematic practices – interviewing survivors and local non-Jews who witnessed the atrocities, as well as historians and archivists, against the backdrop of contemporary images of the cities, towns and other sites where the killings took place."

The result is an expansive and detailed cinematic representation of the unique nature of the Holocaust in the FSU, stressing its complexity as well as how it differed from the industrialized mass murder in the extermination camps, the latter having become the overriding symbol of the Holocaust in global postwar consciousness. "My task was further complicated by the fact that I was dealing with the basics: having to explain what happened, where it happened, and who the victims and perpetrators were," adds Maftsir. "Lanzmann, on the other hand, depicted a story that led to a very well-known endpoint: the extermination camps."

The ninth film, *The Mystery of the Black Book*, is based on the [eponymous publication](#) compiled by prominent Soviet Jewish writers Ilya Ehrenburg and Vassily Grossman. Bringing a wealth of archival documents, testimonies and other materials, this last chapter of the series sheds light

on some of the reasons why the story of the murder of the Jews in the FSU was, for the most part, suppressed.

All of the films of the series are available for direct viewing worldwide via the project's website and YouTube channel, and all of them, as well as all of the outtakes filmed by Maftsir and cinematographer Ron Katzenelson, have been deposited at the Yad Vashem Visual Center.

*Liat Benhabib is Director of the Visual Center. Mimi Ash is the Center's Film Research and Acquisitions Coordinator.*



View of a street with wooden houses  
in prewar Bialystok, 1939.

Courtesy: United States Holocaust  
Memorial Museum, Washington D.C.,  
photograph no. 48323



# THE MASSACRE IN BIALYSTOK

## INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

Anne Lepper

A new teaching unit developed by the International School for Holocaust Studies looks at the massacre in Bialystok, focusing on the reactions by individuals, including the perpetrators.



## >> THE MASSACRE IN BIALYSTOK INDIVIDUAL PERSPECTIVES

A few days after the launch of Operation Barbarossa, the hitherto Soviet-occupied city of Bialystok in northeastern Poland – one of the most important and vibrant Jewish centers in the region with a Jewish population of sixty percent – was occupied by a unit of the German Wehrmacht and Police Battalion 309. A murderous

atmosphere against the Jewish population prevailed immediately; within just a few hours, the violence escalated and finally culminated in a massacre. Hundreds of Jewish men, women and children were forced into the large synagogue in the center of the city, which was set on fire with gasoline and hand grenades. Outside, members

of the police battalion, inebriated and equipped with machine guns, kept the building surrounded, in order to prevent any escape. More than 2,000 Jews lost their lives on that day in Bialystok.

A new teaching unit developed by the International School for Holocaust Studies is dedicated to this massacre and its contextualization. It reveals that the individual layers of the story can only be unfolded through an examination of the personal choices and actions of individuals involved. For example, there is the story of Josef Bartoszko, the “*Shabbos goy*” who lived right across the street from the synagogue and during the massacre helped the trapped Jews escape by giving hand signals from his window. He is one of the few examples of gentile residents of Bialystok who actively tried to protect their Jewish neighbors, while a large part of the non-Jewish population welcomed the Germans and sometimes even supported them in their murderous actions.

Not only does the unit feature the victims and local rescuers, it also takes a look at the perpetrators: For instance, Police Lieutenant Buchs, whom witnesses later reported had actively taken part in the burning down of the synagogue and had “grinned constantly” while doing so. This contrasts with the behavior of an unnamed Wehrmacht officer who, according

### Even among the perpetrators there was room for individual agency, as opposed to claims by protagonists that they were unable to do anything but “follow orders.”

to witnesses, apparently tried to contain the violence by shouting at one of the policemen that “he should let the defenseless civilians go, against whom no war was being waged.”

This illustrates that even among the perpetrators there was room for individual agency, as opposed to claims by protagonists that they were unable to do anything but “follow orders.” The differentiated examination of individual actors and their respective decisions and actions on that day thus raises questions: How was it possible that such a lethal dynamic could develop within just a few hours? What prompted Polish citizens to hand over their fellow Jews to the German perpetrators? Why was there anyone among the German perpetrators who decided – openly or secretly – to stay away from the brutal events?

Only a few hundred of Bialystok’s more than 50,000 Jews survived the Shoah. Desperate and traumatized, they endeavored to build a new life after the war, scattered all over the world. Almost sixty years later,

in 1999, one of the survivors, Ben Midler, who by then lived in the USA, admitted: “It is still not easy for me to laugh.” The struggle that survivors had to return to life after the war stands in sharp contrast to how the perpetrators continued to live. After the war, a large number of them were able to resume their prewar existence virtually without rupture. Only a few were sentenced to prison in a trial in 1968, and by 1973 all of those convicted had already been released. In view of this, when looking at the aftermath of the massacre, the teaching unit also addresses the question of why so few of the perpetrators were willing to take responsibility for their own actions on that fateful day.

**The unit was generously supported by ICHIEC and the Adelson Family Fund.**

*The author is Representative of the German-Speaking Countries Section in the Overseas Education and Training Department, International School for Holocaust Studies.*



### New Research Publication on Persecution and Murder

In 2019 and 2020, the first three volumes of the series *The Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by Nazi Germany, 1933-1945* were published by the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem in association with De Gruyter Oldenbourg. Through a thematically comprehensive selection of documents, the series – produced for teachers, researchers, students and other interested parties – illustrates the contemporary contexts, dynamics and stages of the political and social processes that led to the Holocaust. Authentic testimonies by persecutors, victims and onlookers, the vast majority of which appear for the first time in English, are furnished with academic annotations. Further volumes are set to be published by the end of 2021.

**To order these and other Yad Vashem publications:**  
Tel. 972-2-6443511  
[publications.marketing@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:publications.marketing@yadvashem.org.il)  
Or purchase through our online store: [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org)



The new teaching unit on the massacre in Bialystok puts the actions of the individuals involved into context



# THE EICHMANN TRIAL REVISITED

## INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

Leah Goldstein

To mark sixty years since the [Eichmann Trial](#), the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem, together with three institutes at Tel Aviv University, held an online conference that focused on the international aspects of the historic proceedings. The conference was attended by historians and researchers from Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Israel and the United States. In a special interview with *Yad Vashem Jerusalem*, Prof. Roni Stauber, Academic Director of the Wiener Library, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Jewish History at Tel Aviv University and Member of the Yad Vashem Academic Committee, explained the background of the conference, the topics examined and aspirations for further research.



### Why did you choose to hold the conference right now?

As is well known, the trial had a considerable effect on Israeli society and especially on the crystallization of Holocaust consciousness, and therefore studies published in Israel mainly emphasized the internal Israeli context. On the other hand, the research I conducted in recent years on Israeli-West German relations revealed to me an extensive preoccupation with international law, as well as complex diplomatic and intelligence aspects in the shadow of the Cold War. These issues, in the absence

of archival sources, have received little publicity, and even then, only very briefly in research, although they are of interest to the wider public. In addition, in recent years, more emphasis has been placed among jurists on the impact of the Eichmann trial on international law. In light of all of this, we thought it would be useful to mark sixty years since his trial by discussing the research conducted on these lesser-known topics.

### What topics were discussed at the conference?

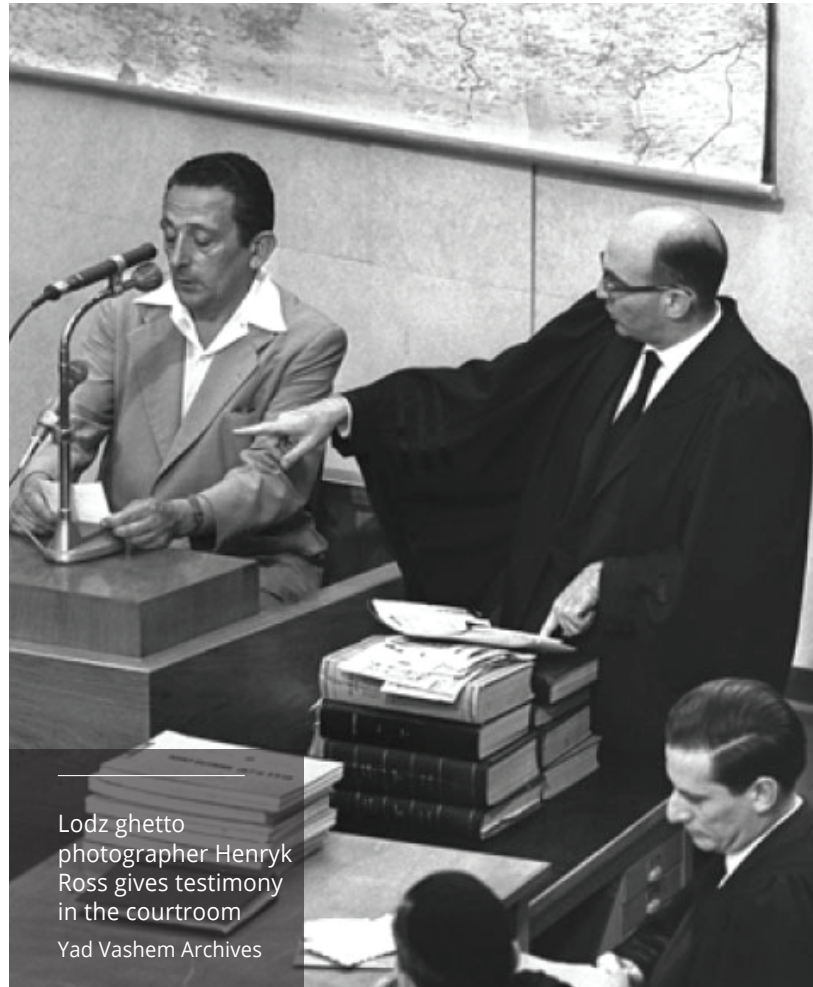
The conference examined diplomatic, legal and media issues

International press  
clippings during the trial  
of Adolf Eichmann, 1961

Yad Vashem Archives

that arose against the background of the preparations for and during the trial (1960-1962). The lecturers discussed the contribution of the Eichmann Trial to international law and the historiography of the Holocaust, as well as its impact on Holocaust consciousness in various countries. We looked at West Germany's attitude towards the trial, its impact on the development of Holocaust consciousness in Germany, and the attitude of the Germans towards the past.





Lodz ghetto  
photographer Henryk  
Ross gives testimony  
in the courtroom  
Yad Vashem Archives

Another focus point was the rise of antisemitism in Argentina against the background of the trial, and the great influence that it had on Holocaust consciousness in the Netherlands.

Three lectures focused on the complex relationship of Eastern European countries vis-à-vis the trial. The lecturers pointed to the reservations that existed in countries such as Poland

and Hungary from cooperating with the Israeli prosecution – compared to Yugoslavia, which transferred many documents to Israel. The Soviet Union's attitude to the trial began with support for its existence, but later with reservations due to Israeli-West German relations. We also examined the problematic attitude of the Soviet Union to the question of the uniqueness of the Holocaust

— ” —  
We looked at West  
Germany's attitude  
towards the trial,  
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towards the past

as well as the cooperation of sections of the population in its various republics in the murder of the Jews. Three more lectures expanded on the media as well as later cinematic attempts to engage in the trial. The lecturers pointed to the great media interest aroused by the trial, both at the time as well as years later, among film directors who tried to deal with the drama in various ways that were influenced from their point of view on the trial. Another lecture examined the place of the issue of gender in the trial in light of the development of research in this field in recent years.

The closing session of the conference was presented by four scholars, who discussed the points of contact between history and law. They examined the unique aspects of the trial and its impact on international law dealing with genocide and war crimes. The influence of various personalities, such as witness Rachel Auerbach and prosecution consultant Jacob Robinson, on the conduct of the trial, was also highlighted.

**How would you sum up the conference and what are your hopes regarding the topic?**

The lectures highlighted issues that have not hitherto been widely discussed in research, such as the place of the trial in Eastern Europe and its impact on Holocaust consciousness in Western Europe. I sincerely hope that these aspects will come to the forefront of research to be published in the coming years.

*The conference was held in conjunction with the Minerva Center for Human Rights at Tel Aviv's Buchmann Faculty of Law, the Wiener Library for the Study of the Nazi Era and the Holocaust and Polin – the Institute for the History of Polish Jewry, and with the generous support of the Gutwirth Family Fund.*

Hundreds of journalists  
came from around the world  
to cover the trial  
Yad Vashem Archives





# THE EICHMANN TRIAL: >> ONLINE ACTIVITIES

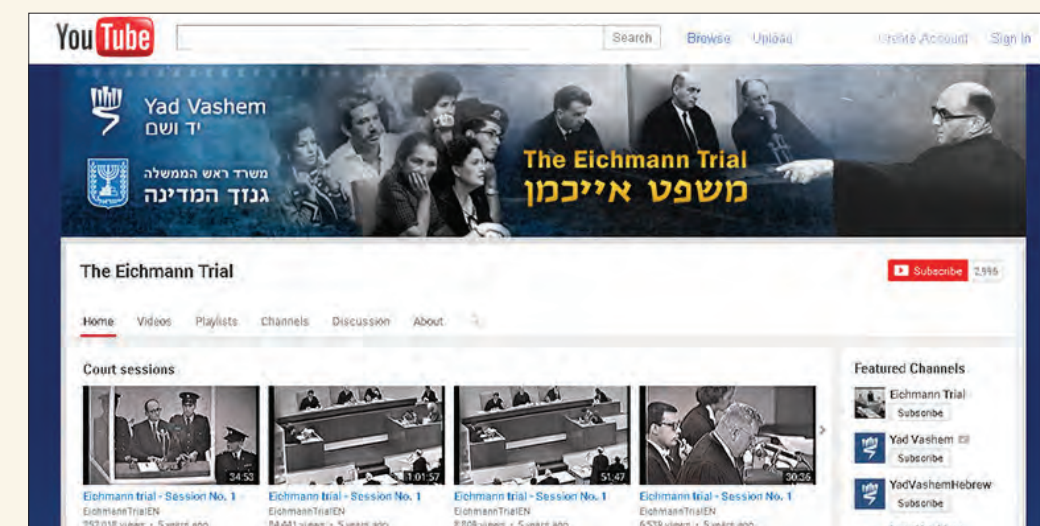


Yad Vashem's website features an **online exhibition** on the Eichmann Trial, including a biography of Adolf Eichmann; his flight to, and capture in, Argentina; the trial, verdict, sentencing and public opinion; the witnesses; and his execution. Related resources include [The Eichmann Trial Channel](#) – a joint effort between Yad Vashem and the Israel State Archives – containing over 200 hours of trial sessions and a compilation of testimonies.

>> The film *The Eichmann Show* (2015, BBC, directed by Paul Andrew Williams) was viewed by 500 people as the third film in the 2021 season of Yad Vashem's **Film Club**. *The Eichmann Show* relates the efforts of American TV producer Milton Fruchman and TV director Leo Hurwitz to document on video the "trial of the century" despite fierce opposition from a surprising array of bodies.

Visual Center Director Liat Benhabib opened the event with a short presentation on the audiovisual documentation and broadcast of

Yad Vashem offered the public in Israel and abroad a number of activities to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Eichmann Trial.



the trial. She gave a longer lecture on the topic at the [online research conference regarding international aspects of the trial](#).

>> Limor Bar-Ilan, Head of the Guiding and Community Relations Division, gave an [online lecture](#) for the Hebrew-speaking public entitled "Six Million Accusers: 60 Years Since the Eichmann Trial." Using original photographs, documents and testimonies presented in the trial, the lecture dealt with changes in Israeli

society with the announcement by then Prime Minister David Ben Gurion of the capture of Eichmann, the trial itself and its aftermath. Over 400 people in Israel and abroad watched the lecture.

>> As part of their ongoing online training, graduates of the [Gandel Holocaust Studies Program](#) for Australian Educators heard renowned historian and Nazi hunter Dr. Efraim Zuroff speak about Nazis who ran away to Australia as well as new cases he is currently working on. This was

followed by a workshop delivered by the Gandel Program Educational Supervisor Yael Eaglstein, together with Gandel Graduate Sam Waldron, on the value of bringing the story of the perpetrators into the classroom.

>> Three hundred members of **Israel's Police Forces senior leadership** participated in a special event for Holocaust Remembrance Day, which focused on 80 years since the beginning of the "Final Solution" and 60 years since the Eichmann Trial.



# "SAFELY IN, SAFELY OUT"

YAD VASHEM BIDS FAREWELL  
TO SHULAMIT IMBER

Leah Goldstein

”

**With her unique sensitivity and passion, Shulamit has been responsible for Yad Vashem's educational philosophy both at home and abroad. She has developed programs that educate about the Holocaust without traumatizing students, and places their wellbeing as paramount. 'Safely in, safely out' is her mantra – and her work at Yad Vashem constantly reflected that.**

Helen Kon, Yad Vashem UK Foundation



Shulamit Imber during a training session at the International School for Holocaust Studies

At the beginning of May, a [special online event](#) was held to mark the retirement of Shulamit Imber, Pedagogical Director of the International School for Holocaust Studies and Fred Hillman Chair in Memory of Janusz Korczak. In conversation with Jane Jacobs of the International School, Imber reflected on over three decades in which she pioneered Holocaust pedagogy and steered its programming in Israel and around the world, as well as the challenges that lie ahead.

**Creating a New Philosophy**  
Imber arrived at Yad Vashem after developing her unique brand of pedagogy as a history teacher – including interdisciplinary teaching and focusing on the human story. At that time, there was little material to teach about the Holocaust, let alone teacher training or indeed any formulated philosophy. From her first “seminar” (to which she was forced to invite her friends through lack of interest from other educators), today thousands of teachers from Israel and around

the world participate annually in courses led by the International School, which are tailored to their countries’ individual histories and needs.

When incoming Chairman of the Directorate Avner Shalev came to Imber in the early 1990s with the idea to open a school to train educators how to teach the Holocaust, she jumped at the chance to develop her pedagogy even further. “The difference between a historian and an educator is that the historian talks



>> "SAFELY IN, SAFELY OUT"  
YAD VASHEM BIDS FAREWELL TO SHULAMIT IMBER



When it comes to the Holocaust period, here, too, it is vital to break away from teaching only about the methods of murder. "The question really becomes not how the Jews died, but how they lived," she states. "What happened to families, community leaders, children? From here we can proceed to the moral dilemmas and 'choiceless choices' they were forced to tackle, and how so many managed to bring light into a world of darkness despite the chaos they were forced to endure." Different units

”  
**If you want to know what was lost, you have to know what existed beforehand**

on healthcare workers, educators and other professionals in the ghettos and camps assist teachers in delivering this message.

The final pillar – the story of the survivors – is also vital to

comprehending the story. "Abba Kovner once said that he wouldn't be surprised if after the Holocaust, the survivors only thought of revenge," she recounted. "But when survivors talk of revenge,

”  
**The individuals, families and communities were each worlds in and of themselves. This is what people can empathize with and take with them into their own lives**

about the past, but the educator has to give the past meaning," she famously pronounced. From then on, she dedicated herself to giving meaning to the incomprehensible numbers and sickening images that had previously been used to educate students of all ages and backgrounds about the most catastrophic event to take

place in modern human history.

"Meaning is not gleaned from piles of bodies or statistics," says Imber, "but rather in the individuals, families and communities that were each worlds in and of themselves. This is what people can empathize with. This is what they can take with them into their own lives."

### Three Pillars

Imber's now famous educational philosophy rests on three pillars: Jewish life before WWII, the daily struggles of Jews during the Holocaust, and the return to life by the survivors.

"If you want to know what was lost, you have to know what existed beforehand," she explains. "That means understanding who the Jews were before they were victims. How did they live in the modern world? What music did they enjoy, which hobbies did they chose? Realizing that they were human beings just like us – with a wide variety of occupations, lifestyles and interests – is so important, and helps the learner connect and empathize with them."



Meeting with Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks z"l



they speak of their children and grandchildren." This is indeed a tremendous testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the significance of Jewish continuity.

## Holocaust Education for All Ages

Imber also spearheaded the development of age-appropriate Holocaust education, which became part of the national curriculum of Israel's Ministry of Education. "Children in Israel hear the siren sounded on Holocaust Remembrance Day, and from kindergarten they know it means something very sad," she explained. "So we developed the 'spiral' method of teaching – talking gently to younger children about one child survivor's experience, as well as the actions of Righteous Among the Nations. As their cognitive development progresses, they can be exposed to the narratives of families and communities. Later on, in high school, they can learn the greater complexities and difficult issues they are now ready to hear. Our aim is to bring students close to the topic, without bringing trauma into the classroom."

## Worldwide Reach

Today, teachers from some 60 countries across six continents benefit from the vast range of

**Today, teachers from some 60 countries across six continents benefit from the vast range of material, workshops and seminars created by the International School**

material, workshops and seminars created by the International School. "It is vital to give our graduates a solid background regarding the Holocaust – not just Nazis and camps, but also ghetto life and other topics that our courses offer," emphasizes Imber. The School also provides a [wealth of tools](#) – kits including artworks, poetry and music, as well as online films and learning environments – that assist classroom teaching. "Our graduates talk of our seminars as 'life-changing experiences,'" she says. "They leave with a passion to pass on what they have learned to their students in a way that is impactful and relevant to their everyday lives."

## Looking Ahead

"There is no doubt that as the survivor generation dwindles, hearing personal testimony, looking a survivor in the eye, is

something we will miss greatly," reflected Imber. "Anyone who participates in a meeting with a survivor feels their moral authority, which creates an obligation in each one of us to remember what happened, and understand its meanings today. Survivors were our 'backbone' in developing our educational philosophy, and they will never be replaced."

Despite this, Yad Vashem has been working for decades to [document and film survivor testimony](#), which are being used more and more in the absence of those who experienced the Holocaust firsthand. "New advances in technology are of course welcome, but they must be approached with great caution," she warns. "We must remain wary of trivialization, because just as meeting a survivor shapes our consciousness, so will what students are exposed to. In the



Educational seminars at the International School are described as "life-changing experiences"

end of the day, the right influence and inspiration is paramount."

Teaching the trauma, without traumatizing the students remains Imber's legacy. "Over the years we've created hundreds of projects – what I like to call 'my children' – and many of them never came to fruition if we weren't certain they would have the correct impact. Every teacher that comes through our doors reaches numerous minds. The Holocaust is not like any other topic and must be

**Teaching the trauma without traumatizing the students remains Imber's legacy**

treated with caution, but also with the utmost care and devotion."



# GRADUATE SPOTLIGHT

ANGELIKA SCHLACKL | AUSTRIA 

James Joseph McIntosh

Since 2013, independent historian Angelika Schlackl has been a guide at the memorials of the Mauthausen concentration camp and its sub-camp Gusen, where she has met Holocaust survivors now living in Israel and the United States. Schlackl found their testimonies captivating, and they spurred her interest in the history of the death marches from the Mauthausen concentration camp to its sub-camp Gunskirchen in Austria, which took place from March-April 1945.

At a 2014 Yad Vashem seminar for Austrian educators, which is coordinated annually in cooperation with the Austrian Ministry of Education, she studied Yad Vashem's educational philosophy of using survivors' personal stories to teach young pupils about the Holocaust, which bolstered her resolve to uncover the identities of the victims of the death marches. She contributed her historical and pedagogical expertise to help develop *Weg von hier...* (Away from Here...), an age-appropriate children's book focusing on the personal story of Ilse Mass, a Jewish girl from Linz, Austria, who fled with her family and survived the war in Shanghai,



Angelika Schlackl

China. Yad Vashem provided a grant to help publish the book, which has been received with great enthusiasm.

In 2014 she also participated in a graduate network seminar supported by the Federal Republic of Germany in the Below Forest, a small memorial and educational site in northern Germany that

commemorates the death marches. As the Allies advanced closer to German territory at the end of the war, the Nazis began to shut down concentration camps and transfer the prisoners to Germany. The transfers involved forced marches under brutal conditions, and the guards routinely harassed and killed

prisoners who were too weak or sick to keep walking. Schlackl saw several historical parallels between the Below Forest in Germany and the Gunskirchen High Forest in Austria, but the latter had only an untended plaque to commemorate the horrors of the past. On her way home from Germany, she began to envision



**Thanks in no small part to her tenacity and that of her research team, in March 2020 Austria declared the former camp site of Gunskirchen a protected memorial site**

a more educational alternative at Gunskirchen.

The stories of the survivors of Gunskirchen continued to preoccupy her. Although the conventional narrative held that the victims of these death marches were Hungarian Jews, Schlackl learned that many of the survivors were actually from Polish, Romanian, Slovakian and Ukrainian territories annexed by Hungary during WWII. "I sensed how hurt they felt that their stories had never found their way into the historiography of Gunskirchen," said Schlackl, who began looking for an explanation of this discrepancy.

Schlackl spent a great deal of time on the wooded grounds of the former Gunskirchen camp with an archaeologist, and the more they worked, the more convinced they became that the forest deserved official protection. In the course of her research, she discovered that the Jewish community of Linz

had complained in the 1970s that graves in the forest had been repeatedly desecrated, and in 1979 the Austrian government had decided to exhume and reinter the victims in the Mauthausen Memorial.

Based on her thorough study of earlier documents, Schlackl revealed credible proof that far more victims were buried in Gunskirchen in 1945 than were reinterred in Mauthausen. Thanks in no small part to her tenacity and that of her research team, in March 2020 Austria declared the former camp site of Gunskirchen a protected memorial site. With the help of Yad Vashem's [Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names](#), she is currently cross-referencing lists of prisoners in an attempt to determine how many Jews survived the 55-kilometer death marches from Mauthausen to Gunskirchen. Additionally, she has led tours and developed an interactive Google Map of the

route of the death marches, and helped create a traveling exhibition of pictures of survivors and memorial plaques along the route.

Schlackl's tireless research has facilitated the restoration of the names and identities of many victims of the Holocaust, a well-deserved – albeit belated – honor to their memory. "I learned to listen to the voice of survivors and to look for answers to their still-unresolved questions," she explained. "It is especially

important for me to get to know these people, call them by their names and hear their life stories, as well as to investigate those names that so far have not been connected with the history of Gunskirchen."

*The author is Administration and Production Editor of "Yad Vashem Studies" in the International Institute for Holocaust Research. He previously worked in the International School for Holocaust Studies.*



Prisoner tag from Gunskirchen belonging to Mordka Blum, who was born in Wodzislaw, Poland

”  
**I learned to listen to the voice of survivors and to look for answers to their still-unresolved questions**



# TRACING THE FATE OF HILDE KOCH

Leah Goldstein

The new volume of [\*Yad Vashem Studies\*](#) (49:1) covers a range of academic research on Holocaust-related topics. In one particularly fascinating account, Dr. Edel Sheridan-Quantz investigated the fate of Hilde Koch, a German children's book illustrator, during the Shoah.

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Dr. Sheridan-Quantz studied Geography and German, eventually earning her PhD in a comparative study of eighteenth-century Dublin and Berlin. She went to Germany in the 1990s with a post-doctoral scholarship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation to study the commercial development of Hanover city centre in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. "This roused my interest in the vanished families of the many Jewish entrepreneurs who had shaped the modern city and then fled from the Nazis or were murdered in the Holocaust," explains Dr.

The cover of the picture book illustrated by Hilde Koch Neuberger in the Gurs internment camp, 1941

*Les Animaux*





Sheridan-Quantz. “One of these businesses was the printing works of Adolf Molling, but information about the firm was scarce. The expansion of the internet in the early 2000s as well as documents relating to the economic aspects of the persecution of German Jews in the State Archives of Lower Saxony helped me reconstruct the history of the company and their international printing and publishing activities. Among Molling’s picture books, three books illustrated by Hilde Koch in 1921 stood out. Her vibrant illustrations made me curious to know more about her as the only unknown woman among well-known male artists.”

In her article, Dr. Sheridan-Quantz describes how she eventually found an address for Hilde Koch, which through the Frankfurt City Directory for 1921 led her to a Julius Koch living at that address. Searching on Yad Vashem’s Names Database, she discovered [Pages of Testimony](#) for Julius Koch, his daughter Hilde Koch Neuberger and her husband Otto Neuberger. Indeed, Dr. Sheridan-Quantz made good use of Yad Vashem’s archival resources: There she also found Hilde’s letters to her sister Leonie, as well as summaries of the deportation transports from France to Auschwitz.

### The principle of ‘leaving no stone unturned,’ or the exhaustive examination of every possible source and clue, is central to the practice of microhistory

“After that I simply followed up every single clue revealed by these resources – I wrote to the archives in Frankfurt and Mannheim (where Hilde lived after her marriage); I scoured the academic literature on German book illustration; and I searched genealogical websites to trace Hilde’s family tree – always in the hope of finding and connecting with a living relative. Every tiny new discovery gave me a new starting point for further searches. I wrote to the French archives in the regions that Hilde passed through on the journey from Gurs to Auschwitz, and I visited the State Archives in Karlsruhe where the files relating to the robbery and restitution of the Jews of Mannheim are kept. This principle of ‘leaving no stone unturned,’ or the exhaustive examination of every possible source and clue, is central to the practice of microhistory.”

“The amount of detail I discovered exceeded my wildest hopes,” she

explains. “It was surprising that the fragments of Hilde’s life story revealed such a level of complexity, in spite of their incompleteness. There are so many points of departure for further discussion in what we now know of Hilde’s life – the questions around her education and professional training as an upper middle-class Jewish woman, the use of Christian imagery in her work, the degree to which her professional life may have been a secret from her family, and the remarkable way in which she reclaimed her identity as an artist on her Camp Gurs registration card.”

In 2018 Dr. Sheridan-Quantz finally connected with Hilde’s niece Miryam Nachsatz, Leonie’s daughter, who lives in central Israel. “This was more than merely academic satisfaction,” she relates. “Miryam sent me scans of numerous family photographs of Hilde, Leonie and their



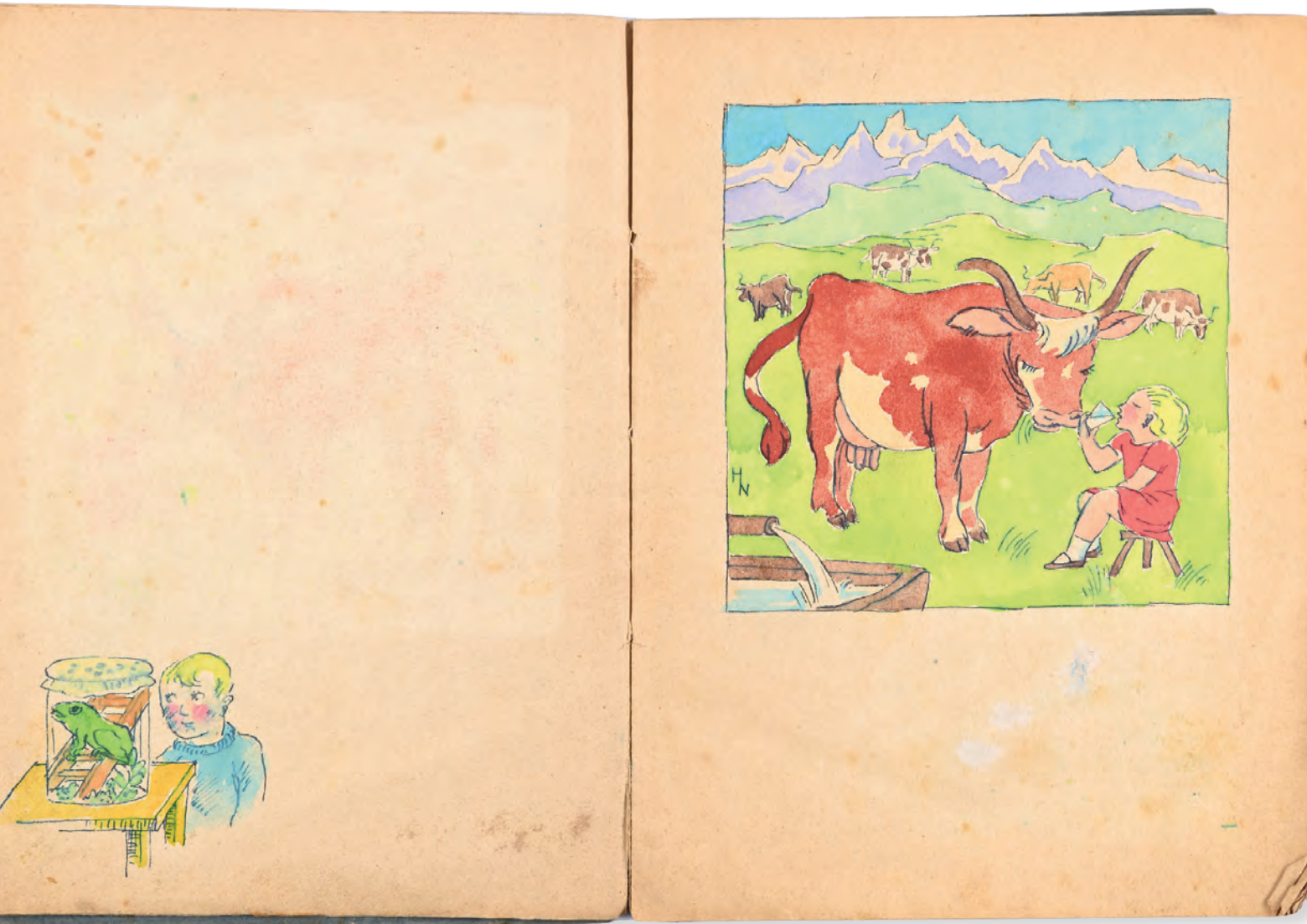
Hilde Koch Neuberger,  
late 1930s  
Yad Vashem Archives

parents Clementine and Julius Koch. Miryam had also inherited from Leonie the artworks that Hilde managed to save before she was deported in 1942 – but she did not know that Hilde had published any of her works. Our

conversations changed Miryam image of Hilde and mine – Miryam learned of Hilde’s ‘secret’ life as a professional illustrator, I discovered a new breadth of creativity not reflected in the published work.”

Since 2017, Dr. Sheridan-Quantz has been employed as a researcher for the city of Hanover, and one of the tasks most important to her is to research miniature biographies for *Stolpersteine* (stumbling stones), concrete cubes in the pavement bearing brass plates that memorialize people persecuted by the Nazis. “Many of these individuals are ‘insignificant’ in the sense that they had no public presence – they were mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, daughters and sons, friends, associates, business partners, employees, casual labourers,” she explains. “Most of them left few traces in the sources available to us, but I try to recreate the circumstances of their lives in as much detail as possible, so that visitors gain a sense of their humanity, their place in the city and the reality of their lives.”





From the picture book  
created by Hilde Koch  
Neuberger for her niece  
Miryam

Yad Vashem Artifacts Collection

— ” —

Yad Vashem is the most appropriate home for items like these.... through her drawings, and this very important article, we have somehow brought her back to life

## Who Was Hilde Koch?

Hilde Klara Neuberger (née Koch) was born in Frankfurt am Main on July 17, 1896 to Julius and Clementine Felice (née Metz). Her younger sister Leonie Hermine was born in 1899.

In 1920, when she was 24 years old, Hilde illustrated children's books, three of them printed by Jewish-owned publishing houses in Hanover. In 1921, Hilde became a member of the Frankfurt-Offenbach Group of the German Graphic Artists' Association. In 1924 her mother, Clementine, died. In 1934, Hilde married Otto Neuberger (b. 1886), a widower with two children, both of whom immigrated to the Land of Israel in 1939. That same year, Hilde's 77-year-old father, Julius, moved in with her and her husband in Mannheim.

In October 1940, the Jews in Baden, including Hilde and Julius, were deported to the Gurs detention camp in France. Otto Neuberger, who had suffered a stroke, was allowed to stay in the Mannheim Jewish Hospital. Julius Koch died in Gurs in November 1940. Otto was deported from Mannheim to Terezín in August 1942, where he died in March 1943. In 1942, Hilde was deported from Gurs to Vénissieux and Drancy, and finally to Auschwitz – where she was murdered.

In February 2019, Hilde's niece Miryam Nachsatz donated to Yad Vashem the manuscript picture book "Les Animaux," which Hilde had created for her in the Gurs detention camp in 1941, as well as some other pieces of artwork Miryam had inherited from her mother. "It was so difficult for me to hand over the artworks, the only surviving remnants left by my

aunt, who I never had the honor of knowing," said Miryam. "But I could see they were getting old, disintegrating, and I wanted them to be kept safe by Yad Vashem, the most appropriate home for items like these. I feel that through her drawings, and this very important article written by Edel [Sheridan-Quantz], we have somehow brought her back to life."



Sketch created  
by Hilde Koch  
Neuberger  
during the war  
Yad Vashem Art  
Collection



## SAVED FROM A KILLING PIT

**Pavel Natarov, a Ukrainian policeman during the Holocaust, was recently recognized as Righteous Among the Nations for saving a young Jewish girl who survived a mass murder of the Jews in her hometown.**



Left: Raisa Agranovich with her mother before WWII  
Right: Raisa after the war  
Yad Vashem Archives



Raisa (Raya) Agranovich lived with her parents in the town of Seredina Buda in eastern Ukraine (on the Russian border). With the invasion of the Germans into the USSR in June 1941, her father Lev Agranovich was recruited to the Red Army. The town was occupied by the Germans in October 1941.

On 16 November, all the Jews of the town were taken for registration at the local police station, and then to be executed at a killing pit nearby. Raisa fell into the pit but was not wounded. The murderers did not realize that she was still alive, and

when night fell she crawled out and returned by foot to the town. She knocked on several doors, but the owners refused to let her in. However, at the house next to the police station, the door was unlocked and when she entered, she saw a policeman she had met earlier, during the registration process.

The man, Pavel Natarov, was living in the house. He ordered the owner and her children to take care of Raisa. They washed off the blood and dressed her frostbite wounds. The next day Raisa became ill and

stayed in bed for about a month, as she recalls. Towards the spring of 1942, Natarov married Maria Zhitkova, and the couple moved in with Zhitkova's parents. They took Raisa with them, and Natarov even got hold of fake documentation in the name of Nina Natarova, his niece as it were. Natarov and his young wife cared for Raisa with love. There were rumors that the Zhitkov household was hiding Jews, but they died out with time. The family warned the young girl, who had "Jewish features" not to wander around outside.

In the spring of 1943 the town was liberated by partisan forces, after fierce fighting in the region. Just before the partisans entered, Natarov was arrested by the Germans and taken away. When the Soviet partisans took control of the town, Maria's mother sent Raisa to them and instructed her that when she arrived at the partisan camp, to tell them she was Jewish. The partisans took Raisa with them to the forest. After a while they transferred her, wounded, to the Soviet rear.

In 1944, Raisa's aunt found her by chance in an orphanage. In 1945, her father, Lev, arrived back home and was reunited with his daughter. Raya immigrated to Israel from there in 1995.

For all of her adult life, both in the Soviet Union and in Israel, Raisa endeavored to find her rescuer, including turning to the newspaper in Seredina Buda as well as the local municipality. With their help, she found Maria, Natarov's wife, with whom she stayed in contact. "I did find out that he died in 1992 and was buried in the city of Dnepropetrovsk," recalled Raya. "The people of the town didn't remember much about him, however, because he lived a very solitary life. I am delighted that his heroic deeds have finally been recognized."



Sewing machine used by Adolf Goldstein in the factory of Righteous Among the Nations Julius Madritsch in Krakow, Poland

Yad Vashem Artifacts Collection

### New Online: Artifacts Connected to Righteous Among the Nations

Many artifacts preserved in Yad Vashem's Artifacts Collection serve as tangible evidence of the extraordinary stories of the Righteous Among the Nations. A few of the items are directly connected to the rescue action, such as the bicycle with which false papers were smuggled, the wardrobe in which a child hid, or the boat on which Jews were secretly taken to a safe haven in another country. Others are mementos from the rescuers safeguarded by the survivors who owe them their lives, or objects that help tell the rescue story.

Recently uploaded to the [Yad Vashem website](https://www.yadvashem.org/en/artifacts) are some of these artifacts, as well as the moving stories behind them.





# “LAST ACT OF GRACE”

COMMEMORATING THE RIGHTEOUS WHO LIVED AND WERE BURIED IN ISRAEL

Gershon Pinchevski

— ” —

It was only when I arrived in Israel that I discovered my true purpose in life. Here I feel the importance of the restoration of the State of Israel and the eternity of the Jewish people.

Sister Marguerite Bernes, Righteous Among the Nations

In recent months, the International School for Holocaust Studies, in collaboration with Israel's General Security Service (GSS), conducted a unique project to commemorate the [Righteous Among the Nations](#) who linked their fate to the State of Israel and the Jewish people. The project

succeeded in locating the names and burial places of 112 Righteous who lived in Israel, after which in-depth research and meetings with the families of the rescuers and survivors resulted in a great deal of information being gathered about the rescue operations, the lives of the rescuers

in Israel, and their unique activities.

The initiative involved some 550 GSS volunteers who, in addition to the busy routine work, engaged in an almost military operation of discovery and investigation in order to resolutely turn over every stone in the investigation of the Righteous



## >> "LAST ACT OF GRACE"

COMMEMORATING THE RIGHTEOUS WHO LIVED AND WERE BURIED IN ISRAEL

and their stories. The volunteers were guided by the IDF and Security Forces Department of the International School, and assisted by Yad Vashem's Righteous Among the Nations Department and the Archives Division.

The culmination of the project took place on Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2021, when dozens of memorial ceremonies were held for the first time in cemeteries across the country, attended by GSS volunteers,

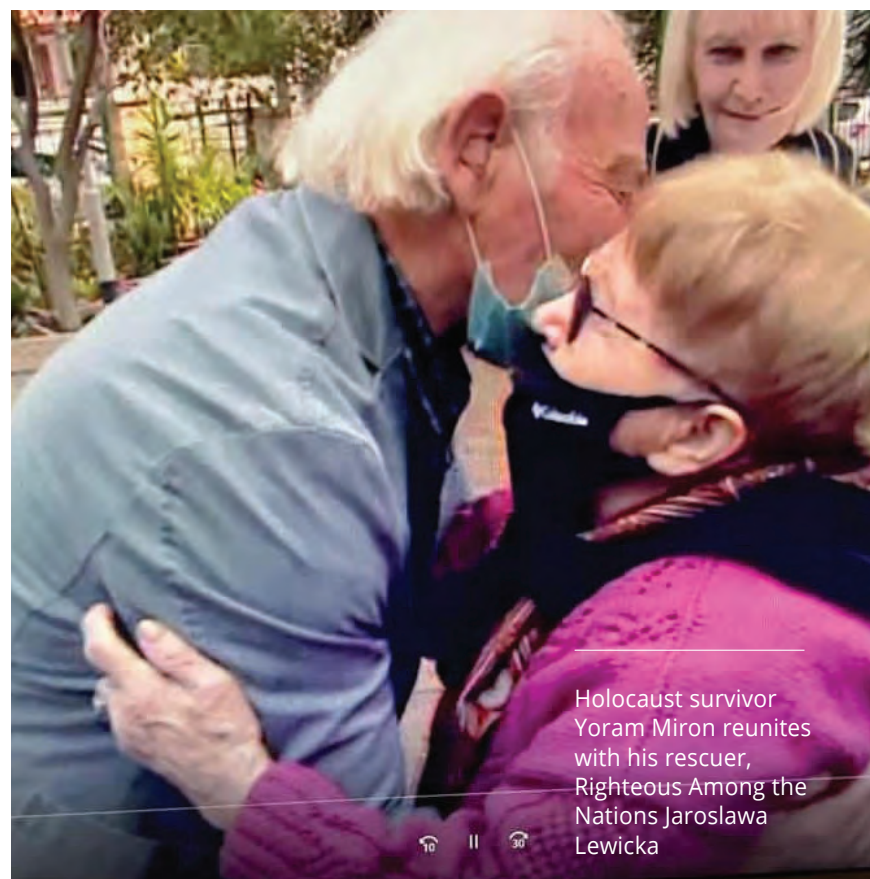
representatives of rescuers and survivors, Yad Vashem staff, a priest who led the prayer services, and the Albanian Ambassador to Israel. Simultaneously, two commemorative ceremonies were held in cemeteries abroad with the participation of members of the families of the Righteous. The graves of the Righteous were marked with commemorative plaques with the inscription "Hesed Aharon (Last Act of Grace)," and an indication that the grave belongs to a Righteous Among the Nations.

In the impressive research work, a great deal of information led to moving revelations, such as the unveiling of the grave of the Righteous Among the Nations from Poland, Prof. Pawel Horbaczewski, who donated his body to science and was buried in the Holon cemetery in 1982 without a tombstone. In a heartwarming ceremony, in conjunction with the Tel Aviv Burial Society, Yad Vashem and the GSS, a tombstone was finally placed on his grave.

Another rare and emotional event occurred when the volunteers of the project organized a meeting between Jaroslawa Lewicka, one of the two Righteous Among the Nations living in Israel, with Yoram Miron, the child she saved in the Holocaust. Neither knew that the other lived in Israel and without "Last Act of Grace" they probably would never have met.

"We are still so moved from the reactions provoked by the project," said Osnat Nir, Director of the IDF and Security Forces Department. "These include the families of the rescuers and survivors, the volunteers, and even the Yad Vashem staff who were privileged to be involved in the revelation of these stories of these beacons of light and morality who lived in Israel."

*The author is a guide in the IDF and Security Forces Department, International School for Holocaust Studies, and the initiator of the "Last Act of Grace" project.*



Holocaust survivor Yoram Miron reunites with his rescuer, Righteous Among the Nations Jaroslawa Lewicka

## US SECRETARY OF DEFENSE VISITS YAD VASHEM

U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III visited Yad Vashem on 12 April 2021. He was accompanied by Israel's Alternate Prime Minister and Defense Minister Benny Gantz, and Acting Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Ronen Plot. Following a tour of the ["Flashes of Memory: Photography during the Holocaust"](#) exhibition, guided by Jonathan Matthews, Secretary Austin participated in a Memorial Ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, and signed the Yad Vashem Guest Book. "It was a very moving experience to be able to visit this honorable place," Secretary Austin wrote in the Guest Book. "Thank you for allowing me to participate in the ceremony." At the conclusion of the visit, Ronen Plot presented Secretary Austin with the Yad Vashem Menorah, a six-branched candelabra. Secretary of Defense Austin added: "I am truly humbled and honored to have the opportunity to pay tribute to the over six million innocent souls that perished in the worst mass atrocity of the twentieth century. May their memory be a blessing and the lessons of the Holocaust never be forgotten."





# DR. YITZHAK ARAD

(1926-2021)



Yitzhak Arad z"l  
as captured by  
photographer  
Martin Schoeller

**Yad Vashem mourns the passing of  
[Dr. Yitzhak Arad](#), Holocaust survivor and  
partisan, historian and former Chairman of the  
Yad Vashem Directorate and Vice-Chairman of  
the Yad Vashem Council.**

Yitzhak Arad was born Yitzhak Rudnicki in Święciany, Poland (now Svencionys, Lithuania) in November 1926. In his youth, he belonged to a Zionist youth movement and was educated in Hebrew schools. At the outbreak of WWII, he lived with his family in Warsaw. After three months in the occupied city, he and his city sneaked back to Święciany, which was now part of Soviet territory. His parents remained in Warsaw and were murdered during the Holocaust.

With the German invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, and the occupation of his town, he found himself once more under German rule. When at the end of September 1941 the Jews of his town were taken to the killing pits, he fled. After months of wandering between towns and forests in Belarus, he returned to the small ghetto that had been set up in Święciany, where he was put to work in a munitions warehouse. He and a few of his friends began to smuggle arms and formed an underground movement.

**Arad took part in many  
partisan acts, including  
laying mines and blowing  
up 13 trains, for which  
he received the highest  
partisan award**

In March 1943, they escaped to the forests, where they joined the partisans. Yitzhak took part in many partisan acts, including laying mines and blowing up 13 trains, for which he received the highest partisan award.

In December 1945, Dr. Arad immigrated to *Eretz Israel* on the illegal immigrant ship Hannah Szenes. He served in the Israel Defense Forces; his last appointment was IDF Chief Education Officer. He retired in 1972 as Brigadier General.

Dr. Arad served as the Chairman of the Directorate of Yad Vashem for 21 years (1972-1993), and he remained associated with Yad Vashem until his last days, serving as Deputy Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council. He researched WWII and the Holocaust, and was published extensively as an author and editor, in Hebrew, English, and Russian. In his academic career,



Dr. Yitzhak Arad addressing senior  
IDF staff at a Yad Vashem seminar for  
Holocaust Remembrance Day, April 2021

Arad lectured on Jewish History at Tel Aviv University and was a guest professor at Yeshiva University, New York. In 2004, he was awarded Yad Vashem's annual Buchman Memorial Prize for his book, *The History of the Holocaust: Soviet Union and the Annexed Territories*. In 2009, Nebraska University Press and Yad Vashem published Arad's *The Holocaust in the Soviet Union*, a book that earned the Jewish Book Council's National Jewish Book Award. His last book was [It Happened on Our Planet: Morality and Existential Dilemmas Among Jews in the Reality of the Holocaust](#), which was published by Yad Vashem in 2020.

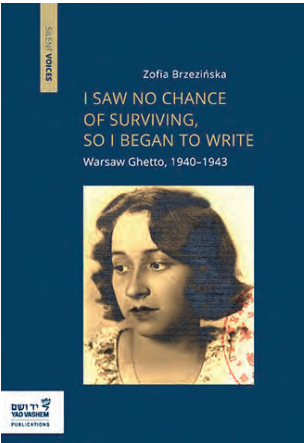
That year, Dr. Arad also participated in a [joint commemorative photography project](#) between Yad Vashem and world renowned photographer Martin Schoeller entitled "Survivors: Faces of Life after the Holocaust." As part of this project Dr. Arad stated: "What happened in the past could potentially happen again, to any people, at any time. Be very clear about this: Do not count yourselves among the murderers, and may you never find yourselves among the victims."

Yad Vashem extends its deepest condolences to his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. May his memory be for a blessing.



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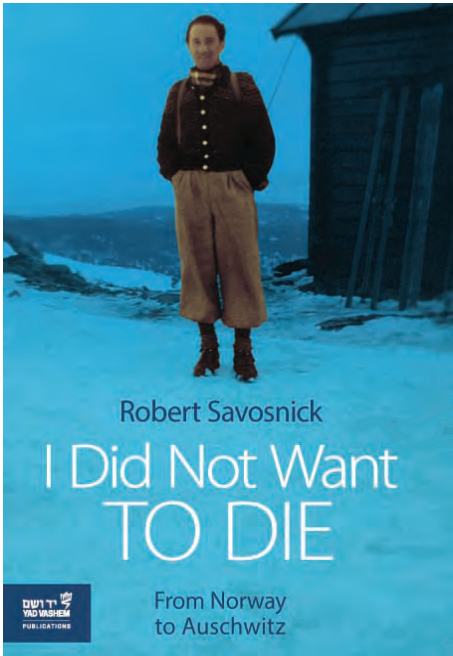
*Silent Voices* is a new series of texts that were written during the Holocaust, some of which had been stowed on archive shelves, known only to scholars. The first volume discloses Elisheva (Elka) Rubinstein's account

of the suffering and systematic eradication of the Jews in Lwów during the Holocaust, written in the form of letters to relatives; the second volume presents Zofia Brzezińska's account of the events in Warsaw.



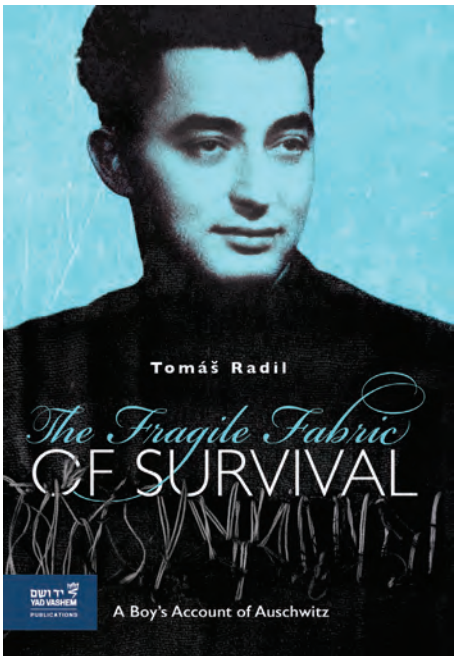
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Miriam Offer  
NIS 168 NIS 126

This book traces the actions of the Jewish physicians, nurses and other practitioners to cope with professional and ethical challenges in the Warsaw ghetto during the Holocaust. Fighting two wars – against the Nazis and the death sentence imposed on the ghetto residents as well as epidemics – they risked their lives to maintain the health of the Jews, and even conducted unique research and established an underground medical school.



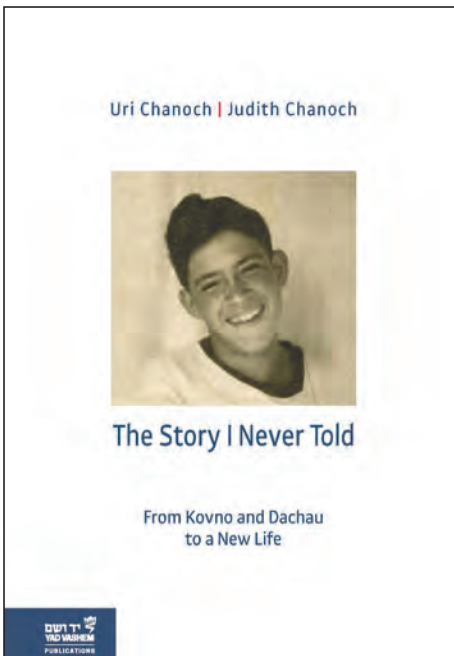
**I Did Not Want to Die:  
From Norway to Auschwitz**  
Robert Savosnick  
As told to Hans Melien  
~~NIS 94~~ NIS 68

On 26 October 1942, Norwegian student Robert Savosnick was arrested; later on, he was deported on the SS Donau. The next two and a half years of his youth were lost in an existence of torture and brutality. Savosnick spent a year incarcerated in Auschwitz, and a further ten months clearing the ruins of the Warsaw ghetto. He was taken on a death march, eventually arriving in Dachau, and was liberated in the subcamp of Allach.



**The Fragile Fabric of Survival:  
A Boy's Account of Auschwitz**  
Tomáš Radil  
~~NIS 98~~ NIS 74

Born in Bratislava, Tomáš Radil grew up in Párkány, a small border town on the Danube that became part of Hungary in 1938. When the Wehrmacht occupied the country, thirteen-year-old Tomáš was deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau, where he found himself alone among a group of teenage boys. The book depicts the brutal conditions that Radil had to endure, and provides a sensitive insight into the unique social structure of the camp.



**The Story I Never Told:  
From Kovno and Dachau to a  
New Life**  
Uri Chanoch and Judith Chanoch  
~~NIS 84~~ NIS 63

Uri Chanoch describes his happy childhood in Kovno prior to the incursion of the Soviet forces into Lithuania and the subsequent German occupation. After surviving constant hunger and escaping death in the ghetto, he was deported to the Dachau-Kaufering concentration camp. As the war ended, he immigrated to *Eretz Israel* and enlisted in the Palmach. Judith Chanoch has continued her husband's mission by bringing his memoir to light.



# "A PRIVILEGE AND AN OBLIGATION"

In the fall of 2017, Kai Diekmann, former editor-in-chief and publisher of *Bild*, was elected Chairman of the Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany. However, Diekmann's relationship with Yad Vashem – and indeed the State of Israel – began long before this appointment. He has been a friend and supporter of the World Holocaust Remembrance Center for years, cooperating on various projects and initiatives for more than a decade.

In a special interview with *Yad Vashem Jerusalem magazine*, Diekmann recalled how he became involved with Yad Vashem, and the strides he has made as Chairman of the German Friends Society in recent years:

## When did you first connect with Yad Vashem?

In 2008, *Bild* acquired [some original blueprints of the](#)

[Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp](#). The German Federal Archives and Ministry of Interior wanted to hold onto the historical documents, but I believed they belonged in Yad Vashem, and I began to reach out to the institution. I eventually got to Dr Haim Gertner, then Director of Yad Vashem's Archives Division. He sent senior staff members out to see the plans. At first, they just wanted a copy, but I told them,

"No, you should have the source." Of course, I made sure to give a facsimile copy to the German Federal Archives. In August 2009, I presented the [blueprints](#) to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who was visiting Berlin, and he passed them on to Yad Vashem. This was the beginning of a deep and longstanding friendship and partnership with Yad Vashem.



Kai Diekmann at the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus, 2019

## Which Yad Vashem activities that you participated in are you most proud of?

In 2012, I decided to take a delegation of editors from the mainstream German media to visit Jerusalem, for an intensive weeklong educational seminar at Yad Vashem. This initial seminar

evolved into a partnership with Yad Vashem's Communications Division and the International School for Holocaust Studies.

I have organized a number of delegations to Yad Vashem – for up-and-coming journalists and senior editors alike. In 2016 we took a group of editors-in-chief from a

dozen major German newspapers and magazines, who called the visit a "life-changing experience." These seminars are a "deep dive" into Yad Vashem: They're not just tours of exhibitions, but mainly discussions and lectures on contemporary Holocaust research and education. When the seminars coincide with Holocaust Remembrance Day, we also participate as an official delegation, which you can imagine is a very moving experience.

Through these visits I became more and more familiar with Yad Vashem and its wide range of activities in, including its world class [Holocaust Art Museum](#) on the Mount of Remembrance. This is how the idea came about to feature items from the Yad Vashem Art Collection as part of a unique exhibition in Germany. ["Art from the Holocaust"](#) was inaugurated at the German Historical Museum to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2016.

I was also instrumental in the creation of ["Survivors: Faces of Life After the Holocaust,"](#) a cooperative project between Yad Vashem and award-winning portrait photographer Martin Schoeller. These heartrending images of 75 Holocaust survivors and their





At the opening of the "Survivors: Faces of Life After the Holocaust" exhibition in Essen, Germany, January 2020

— ” —

**If it were not for Germany, there would be no Yad Vashem. That means we need to take a very unique responsibility to ensure the Holocaust and its messages are never forgotten**

Deutsche Bahn, Deutsche Bank, Volkswagen and Borussia Dortmund – also pledged their support for the Moshal Campus, in an effort to preserve the memory of the Holocaust and the commemoration of its victims.

[Their recent adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism](#) is a continuation of this commitment, their support for Yad Vashem, and Germany's responsibility, past and future, in the fight against racism and antisemitism.

The Holocaust was an unprecedented breach of a moral civilization in human history. I consider it an honor and at the same time a matter of course to put myself at the service of Yad Vashem. Commemoration, Documentation, Research and Education — these are the foundational pillars upon which Yad Vashem rests. It is a privilege and an obligation for me to strengthen them and encourage others to join the efforts to keeping the memory of the Holocaust relevant and alive for generations to come.

messages to the next generations act as both a monument as a reminder to learn from history.

## **Why did you decide to take on the chairmanship of the Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany?**

If it were not for Germany, there would be no Yad Vashem. That means we need to take a very unique responsibility to ensure the Holocaust and its messages are never forgotten. That is why it was important for me to really get involved with Yad Vashem. I am proud that the German Friends

Society supports numerous projects in Israel and Germany in the area of Shoah remembrance and documentation, as well as in educational and academic fields.

In late 2019 I was able to recruit Ruth Ur as the Managing Director of the German Friends of Yad Vashem. As a result, our work has gone from strength to strength in terms of visibility and professionalism.

## **What more can Germany do to further Holocaust remembrance?**

As stated, I have always believed that we as Germans have to take

seriously our responsibility that arises from our history. The rift that the Shoah created between the Jewish people and Germany is a dark stain on the German nation.

Of course, it is crucial that Germany continues to support Yad Vashem, and I am delighted that last year Chancellor Angela Merkel not only pledged support for the new Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus at Yad Vashem, but also renewed Germany's backing for its vital work through 2031.

In April 2019, with my encouragement, five major German companies – Daimler,



German journalists visit the Holocaust History Museum during a Yad Vashem educational seminar



## JACK BELZ WITH JAN AND ANDY GROVEMAN

Jack Belz and his beloved late wife Marilyn became Yad Vashem Benefactors in 2000. Jack and his daughter and son-in-law, Jan and Andy Groveman, all American Society for Yad Vashem Board Members, looked back on their deep friendship with Yad Vashem, and the work that has so inspired the family to remain steadfast supporters of the World Holocaust Remembrance Center for so many years.

**How did your relationship with Yad Vashem begin?**

**Jack Belz (JB):** I remember Marilyn and I visiting during our first trip to Israel in 1960. Despite its modest campus, we were immediately struck by its obvious commitment to recording the history and atrocities committed against the Jewish people during the period of the Holocaust, and even before.

**Jan and Andy Groveman (JAG):** We also visited Yad Vashem on our first trip to Israel, which was in 1982. One thing is for certain: When you visit Yad Vashem for the first time, you immediately know it won't be your last.

**What areas of Yad Vashem's activities are the most meaningful to you?**

**JAG:** Yad Vashem's mandate is about Holocaust remembrance and passing on its legacy. To that end, the myriad of activities Yad Vashem performs are truly awe-inspiring: from the Holocaust History Museum and the various exhibitions, to the Children's Memorial and other monuments. Their unrivalled Archives are especially important, as their contents are the physical proof of what happened. Most importantly, Yad Vashem has the unique ability to convey on a very personal level

the tragic, and yet often inspiring, stories of individuals, their families and the communities in which they lived.

**JB:** The setting of Yad Vashem on Jerusalem's Mount of Remembrance allows it to house a large number of exhibition halls, repositories and restoration areas, as well as unique memorials and sculptures. When you first walk through the Visitors Center, you realize that you are not just in an important place for the Jewish people, but also for the entire world. The serene forested areas and plazas give you an opportunity to reflect on what you've seen.

**Tell us about a particularly significant experience you had at Yad Vashem.**

**JB:** This must be when we decided to support the Yad Vashem Library. I recall standing outside the Library in the Family Plaza and viewing the breathtaking views of modern Jerusalem. We then toured the Library interior and went down to the Archives. This was our first realization of the enormous body of books and writings related to the Shoah. It was inspiring that we were able to participate in this very important undertaking. I would also add that having five generations of my family – including my own dear parents Philip and Sarah Belz z"l – involved with this vital institution is something that makes me very proud.

**What do you think would surprise others to know about Yad Vashem?**

**JAG:** The most surprising element about Yad Vashem is the warmth, compassion and commitment of all the people who work there, irrespective of their position. Their knowledge, expertise and ability to convey to others what actually happened in such a personal and meaningful way is something to truly be admired.

**JB:** I agree. I am so inspired by the enormous devotion of [former Yad Vashem Chairman] Avner Shalev, [former International Relations Division Managing Director] Shaya Ben Yehuda, and [current US Desk



Jack and Marilyn (z"l) Belz with Jan and Andy Groveman

Director] Jeremy Weiss, as well as countless others who have devoted their adult lives to bringing the significance of this great place to everyone, everywhere. I look forward to visiting Yad Vashem soon, together with my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren – *midor ledor*, from generation to generation.

**What do you think is a major challenge that faces Holocaust remembrance in the future?**

**JB:** The Holocaust was a terrible period in history which seems distant but was also very recent. The atrocities that faced the Jewish people then, and now, are part of

a long chain going all the way back to the time of the Crusades. I am afraid that we will never be able to completely eradicate this threat, but we must always be inspired to try to do so to the best of our ability and opportunities.

**JAG:** One of the greatest challenges today is motivating and educating societies that are becoming increasingly insular. We must ensure that future generations will be educated and motivated not only to remember what happened and how, but also to use that knowledge to make a real change for the good, wherever they live.



## U S A



On 26 April and 10 May, Yad Vashem and WIZO USA co-hosted two fascinating lectures: "Women of Valor: Jewish Women in the Holocaust" by Yad Vashem guide and Holocaust

educator **Liz Elsbey**; and "To Try and Build a Life: Jewish Women Survivors after the Holocaust" by **Dr. Naama Shik**, Director of the e-Learning Department at Yad

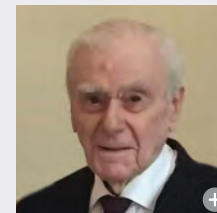
Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies. These lectures provided unique insights regarding the unprecedented challenges Jewish women faced during the Holocaust, affecting their identity, motherhood and many other aspects of their lives. The coordination of the events was assisted by **Hannah Rubenstein**, Honorary President and former Chairperson of WIZO Los Angeles, and a member of the **American Society for Yad Vashem's** Western Regional Advisory Board; and **Rachel Shnay** of the WIZO USA Governing Board of Directors, American Society Board Member and Co-Chair of the American Society Young Leadership Associates.



In recent months, the American Society for Yad Vashem has been invited by the Diversity and Inclusion departments of various corporate groups to address Holocaust remembrance and the perils of

antisemitism in America and the world at large. Ralph Lauren and Tapestry (parent company to Coach, Kate Spade and Stuart Weitzman) had the privilege of being addressed by survivors **Gladys**

**Halpern** (pictured) and **Toby Levy**, respectively. These women offered firsthand testimony of their experiences in the Shoah and communicated clearly the need and ability to live in a world without hate. **Dr. Robert Rozett**, Senior Historian at Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research spoke with the Angi (Angie's List) home services community about antisemitism and Holocaust denial. Hosted and/or coordinated by the American Society's **Adina Burian**, **Barry Levine** and **Jaqueline Levine**, all of these impactful programs helped further Yad Vashem's mission to remember the past and shape the future.

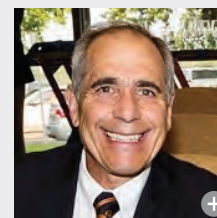


Yad Vashem mourns the passing of **Steven S. Schwarz, z"l**. Born in March 1922 in Czortkov, Poland (now Ukraine), Steven was the eldest son of Szmelko and Anna Schwarz. After the Germans murdered his father, mother and middle brother Leopold in 1942, Steven, his wife Eta (Tina) and his youngest brother Henryk went into hiding for the remainder of the war.

Steven and Tina immigrated to the United States in 1956. There, he and Henryk established a successful

real estate development business and a philanthropic lifestyle that provided a better life for thousands of families. Along with Henryk, Steven, a Yad Vashem Benefactor, endowed the Exhibitions Pavilion of the [Museum Complex](#). Through the Schwarz Foundation, Steven was also actively involved in supporting educational opportunities for less privileged Israeli children and young adults by offering numerous scholarships to various educational institutions around the country.

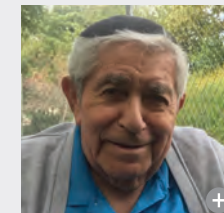
Despite not having children of his own, Steven will be greatly missed by his dear family, including Henryk and his wife Rochelle; his niece Ann Schwarz and her husband Marko Ruso; his nephew Elan Schwarz and his wife Casey; and his great-nephews Zakary, Daniel and Leopold, and great-niece Grace.



Yad Vashem mourns the recent passing of Yad Vashem Sponsor **Roger Sofer z"l**, at the age of 71. Born in Queens in 1949, he later moved to Houston where he started a successful financial planning firm. Although his

career brought him many awards, his success was more defined by the many personal relationships he nurtured. His charismatic personality and indelible spirit were woven into all aspects of his life.

Among Roger's greatest passions in life was his love of Israel. He was a devoted supporter of Holocaust remembrance and specifically Yad Vashem's collection of survivor testimonies. Yad Vashem extends heartfelt condolences to his wife Linden and sister Elyse, as well as his children and grandchildren. May his memory be for a blessing.

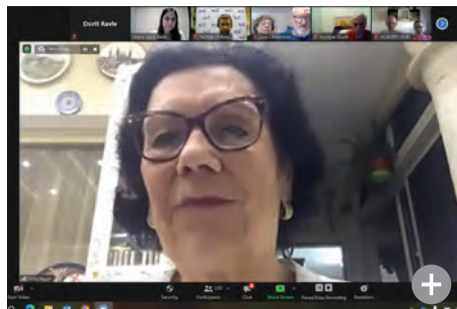


Yad Vashem mourns the passing of **Milton Steinberg z"l**, a strong advocate for Holocaust remembrance and education and a supporter of Yad Vashem through the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation.

Milton survived Hungarian slave labor, and the Mauthausen and Gurskirchen concentration camps. Liberated in 1945, he made his way to the US where, together with fellow survivor Henry Tenenbaum, he built successful swimwear and real estate businesses. Married for 69 years to Lillie, a survivor of Auschwitz who was among the first 2,000 people to arrive at the death camp on the second transport, the Steinbergs built a life that revolved around family, community and philanthropy. Yad Vashem sends its deepest condolences to his daughters Susan Steinberg (Riegelhaupt) and Arlene (Lu) Steinberg (Schulder). May his memory be for a blessing.



## LATIN-AMERICA, SPAIN, PORTUGAL AND MIAMI



Together with the International School for Holocaust Studies, the International Relations Division's Latin-American, Spain, Portugal and Miami Desk organized a virtual event on the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, visiting the monuments of the Yad Vashem

campus through a tour entitled "The Design of Memory."

Desk Director **Perla Hazan** (pictured) and the International School's **Eliana Rapp Badihi** gave the opening words, which were followed by a lecture given by **Yechiel Chilewski**, also from the International School. Around 260 people from Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala, Venezuela, Panama, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Miami, Venezuela and Israel participated in the event.



Representatives from Spanish-Speaking Friends Associations attended the Holocaust Remembrance Day Wreath-Laying Ceremony, including (from left): **Nicole Lerner** and **Daniela Fincheltub** from Miami; **Stefania Lachman** and **Ruth Rabinow** from Costa Rica; **Enaj** and **Esther Derzavich** from Israel-Mexico;

**José Benbunan Gozlan** from Spain; **Menachem, Merav** and **Sara Yisrael** from Israel-Venezuela; **Haya Feldman**; and **Ilan Ejzycowicz** from Brazil. They were joined by Director of the Latin American, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** (right).

## MEXICO



**Esther** (center) and **Enaj Derzavich** (right) attended the Holocaust Remembrance Day Wreath-Laying Ceremony, and were joined by Director of the Latin American, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** (left).

## VENEZUELA



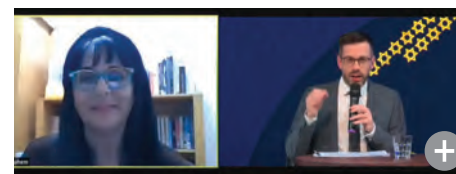
**Merav, Menachem** and **Sara Yisrael** attended the Holocaust Remembrance Day Wreath-Laying Ceremony and were joined by Director of the Latin American, Spain, Portugal and Miami Spanish-Speaking Desk **Perla Hazan** (left).

## CHRISTIAN FRIENDS WITH ICEJ



In February 2021, the **Christian Friends of Yad Vashem** together with **ICEJ (International Christian Embassy Jerusalem) USA** and **ICEJ Canada** launched a yearlong monthly webinar series, entitled "Life, Hatred and Hope." The webinar is supported by an

anonymous donor of ICEJ USA, whose assistance, along with other friends of Yad Vashem, enables the continuation of its worldwide educational activities. More about the webinar and registration for upcoming lectures is available [here](#).



To mark Holocaust Remembrance Day, March of Life, in cooperation with the Christian Friends of Yad Vashem, ran an International Names Reading event in 100 locations across 25 countries. Members of the German parliament read names of Holocaust victims from their area. The event raised funds for the [Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project](#). Christian Friends Director **Sari Granitza** spoke at the main virtual event about the importance of commemoration of each victim and its relevance today.



The State Opening Ceremony for Holocaust Remembrance Day was the first official in-person ceremony held at Yad Vashem since the outbreak of the COVID pandemic, albeit with limited attendance according to Ministry of Health regulations. The Christian Friends of Yad Vashem was honored to have representatives of ICEJ take part in the official Wreath-Laying Ceremony, during which **Sari Granitza** (right) and **Corrie van Maanen** (left), representative of the ICEJ, laid a wreath.

## AUSTRALIA



Yad Vashem mourns the passing of **Alex Boyarsky z'".** Alex immigrated to Australia from Shanghai with his parents, Russian immigrants, when he was nine years old. Highly intelligent and well read, Alex had a great love of music and philosophy. He worked hard, became an engineer, and started his own business at the age of 25. He went on to develop many properties in Australia and the US, including the Jewish Community Centre in Perth. His beloved wife Vera cared for him devotedly in his final years, which were sadly marred by ill health.

Alex believed that everyone has a responsibility to help improve the wellbeing of others. In addition to being Yad Vashem Benefactors, for whom Holocaust education is vital, the Boyarsky family members are patrons of the arts, major donors to the Jewish community as well as medical and scientific research, and deeply committed supporters of Israel and Jews in need worldwide.

Yad Vashem extends its deepest sympathy to Vera, their children Andrew and Taryn Boyarsky, and Michelle and Jeremy Light, and their grandchildren. Alex's name and memory will continue to be honored for posterity at Yad Vashem.



# YOUR SUPPORT HELPS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The activities, projects and events which you have just read about are made possible in large part thanks to the generous support of our donors. In these difficult times, when there is a global pandemic and a worrying rise in antisemitism and Holocaust denial around the world, Yad Vashem is doubling its efforts to commemorate the Holocaust, disseminate its universal implications and strengthen Jewish continuity. Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for your generosity in supporting its vital work and welcomes both new friends and established supporters as partners in our shared mission.

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