# MARTYRDOM & RESISTANCE

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# HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND MEMORY: PRESERVING THE PAST AND GUARDING THE FUTURE

## *ASYV FIFTEENTH ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE ON HOLOCAUST EDUCATION*

The Education Department of the American Society for Yad Vashem and its Young Leadership Associates held its fifteenth annual professional development conference on Holocaust education. This year's conference was dedicated to the memory of Eli Zborowski, *z"l*, Founding Chairman of the American Society. Our annual Dinner this year, on November 10th, will also pay tribute to the life of Eli Zborowski.

The Association of Teachers of Social Studies/United Federation of Teachers, the School of Education of Manhattanville College, and the Educators Chapter of the Jewish Labor Committee/UFT Jewish Heritage Committee co-sponsored the program this year. Participants in this year's program, which included educators from all five boroughs of New York City and from the tri-state area, received in-service credits for completing the conference. The program also included a display of the educational unit developed by the International School of Holocaust Studies, "*Keeping the Memory Alive": International Poster Competition*.

Abbi Halpern, who co-chairs the Young Leadership Associates with Jeffrey Wilf, welcomed the participants and spoke about being part of "a family built by both the memories of horrible losses at the hands of the Nazis as well as the strength of the blessing of surviving." Abbi continued: "Our grandparents have instilled in every generation of the family the importance to carry on the torch that has been passed to us. We must always remember, we must ensure the indelible correct history; and most importantly, together with educators like all of you, we must tell the story and teach its lessons forevermore."

Abbi emphasized how having such close contact with Holocaust survivors has presented her with opportunities to hear survivors' memories, particularly those imparted to her by family members who survived the horrors of this period in history and have now dedicated their lives to ensure the Holocaust victims are not forgotten.

She added that "my husband Jeremy and I pass it on to our children as well, and our eldest daughter Brianna — the 'fourth generation' — has already volunteered to help. She and her siblings are blessed by still having their great-grandparents around them, a unique privilege, experienced by very few.

**Top row, left to right: Kimberly Mann, manager of the Holocaust and United Nations Outreach Programme; Barry Levine, ASYV Young Leadership Associates (YLA) member; Abbi Halpern, YLA Co-Chair; Caroline Massel, Founding Chair, YLA; Jeremy Halpern, ASYV Executive Board member; Marlene W. Yahalom, PhD, Director of Education; and Jessica Mauk, YLA member. Bottom Row, left to right: Barbara Wind, Director, Holocaust Council of Greater MetroWest; Carolyn Herbst, Past President/Past Chairperson of the ATSS/UFT.**

"Through teaching we warn about the consequences of extreme and baseless hatred and prejudice. We educate to promote tolerance in the hope that through our efforts, future generations will make sure that the Holocaust, a low chapter in human history, will not repeat itself."

This conference, organized by Dr. Marlene W. Yahalom, Director of Education of the American Society, has proven to be a strong vehicle to promote the mission of Holocaust remembrance and commemoration through education over the years. The conference was created in 1999, by Caroline Massel, Founding Chair of the Young Leadership Associates of the American Society.

Kimberly Mann, manager of the Holocaust and United Nations Outreach Programme, spoke about the collaborative efforts of the United Nations and the American Society over the years and the many educational opportunities available for educators on this meaningful and important topic. She encouraged those attending the program to take advantage of these valuable educational opportunities.

Carolyn Herbst, Past President/Past Chairperson of the ATSS/UFT, emphasized that this conference is a valuable resource for increasing awareness and sensitivity to intolerance and injustice. In her remarks to the conference participants, she emphasized the importance of learning from the lessons of the Holocaust and applying these lessons to teaching about human rights issues. Carolyn remarked on the challenge of teaching this topic without reducing the topic to numbers and statistics, and emphasizing the human elements of the events — victims, rescuers, perpetrators, and bystanders. Barbara Wind, Director of the Holocaust Council of Greater MetroWest, presented on *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto: Diaries of Emanuel Ringelblum*.

Our program and theme, "Holocaust Documentation and Memory: Preserving the Past and Guarding the Future," offered educators strategies on how to incorporate Holocaust studies into their lessons plans and curricula to enable students to realize the importance of documenting the Holocaust to meet the challenges of Holocaust denial. The workshop topics complemented the theme of the program: "Sensitizing Students to Learning about the Holocaust"; "Using Survivor Testimonies in the Classroom"; "Using Primary Sources in the Classroom"; and "Ripples from the Holocaust — Learning About the Second Generation."

This year's program was dedicated to the memory of the Founding Chairman of the American Society — Eli Zborowski. Dr. Yahalom remarked how it was Eli's inspiration and vision to create a Young Leadership division to the American Society and to have members of the second and third generation of Holocaust survivor families work together toward continuing the legacy of Holocaust remembrance by promoting awareness through education as one way of many to honor the memory of the victims who perished.

"For Eli, Holocaust education was a conversation between generations — the prewar generations of Jewish Europe, the generation of the Holocaust victims, and the generations of children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors, who have accepted the responsibility, obligation and legacy of this mission, to partner with educators like you to preserve and disseminate Holocaust history through programs such as this conference." Dr. Yahalom also acknowledged the inspirational leadership of ASYV Chairman Leonard Wilf, and how "through his dedication and commitment to the American Society, we are able to secure, promote, and sustain Holocaust education through our work and through programs such as the Professional Development Conference."

Dr. Yahalom spoke about the "importance of empowering educators to transmit the lessons of the Holocaust to their students through education. As an institution, Yad Vashem is a symbol of both destruction and rebirth. Through education, these parallel messages are conveyed to the community at large. One of

*(Continued on page 12)*

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Preserving the past and guarding the future........................................................1, 12**
**Six million Holocaust victims remembered..............................................................2**
**Corner of Holocaust history told through innocent's eyes......................................4**
**My diary of a Nazi death camp childhood..................................................................6**
**Youngest Holocaust survivors look to next generation............................................7**
**Gala of the Young Leadership Associates of the ASYV.........................................8-9**
**How Nazis escaped justice in South America..........................................................11**
**75 years after *Anschluss*, Nazi "shadows" haunt Austria.......................................12**
**How the press soft-pedaled Hitler............................................................................13**
**A Holocaust pageant that was too "political" for FDR............................................15**
**American Society for Yad Vashem Annual Spring Luncheon.................................16**

# SIX MILLION HOLOCAUST VICTIMS REMEMBERED

Israel dedicated its annual memorial day for the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust to mark 70 years since the Warsaw ghetto uprising, a symbol of Jewish resistance against the Nazis in World War II that resonates deeply in Israel to this day.

ממשלת ישראל

**Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (center) lays a wreath during a ceremony marking Israel's annual day of Holocaust remembrance, at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.**

At the opening ceremony at nightfall, President Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu both linked the desperate Jewish revolt of 1943 to the warrior mentality that enabled the establishment of Israel five years later.

“There was a never a rebellion like it. They were so few and their bravery remained as a model for so many,” Peres said at Yad Vashem, Israel’s official Holocaust memorial, before hundreds of Holocaust survivors and their families, Israeli leaders, diplomats, and others.

“A clear line exists between the resistance in the ghettos, in the camps, and in the forests, and the rebirth and bravery of the state of Israel. It is a line of dignity, of renewed independence, of mutual responsibility, of exalting God’s name,” he said, “as a ray of hope which was not extinguished even during terrible anguish. The ghetto fighters sought life even when circumstance screamed despair.”

Netanyahu called the uprising “a turning point in the fate of the Jewish people,” where they transformed from helpless victims into fearless warriors.

Six million Jews, a third of world Jewry, were killed by German Nazis and their collaborators in the Holocaust.

The 1943 Warsaw ghetto uprising was the first large-scale rebellion against the Nazis in Europe and the single greatest act of Jewish resistance during the Holocaust. Though guaranteed to fail, it became a symbol of struggle against impossible conditions, illustrated a refusal to give in to Nazi atrocities, and inspired other acts of uprising and underground resistance by Jews and non-Jews alike.

While the world marks International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, the date of the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp, Israel’s annual Holocaust memorial day coincides with the Hebrew date of the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

The Israeli flag flew at half-staff and a military honor guard stood at one side of the podium as poems and psalms were read and the Jewish prayer for the dead was recited.

Peres, an 89-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate, also linked the Nazi genocide to Iran’s suspected drive to acquire nuclear bombs and its leaders’ repeated references to the destruction of Israel and its denial of the Holocaust.

“The civilized world must ask itself ... (how) it is still possible for the leadership, like that of Iran, to openly deny the Holocaust and threaten another Holocaust,” he said. “Those who ignore the threat of a Holocaust against one nation must know that the threat of a Holocaust against one nation is a threat of a Holocaust against all nations.”

He spoke a day after the latest round of international talks aimed at halting Iran’s nuclear development program failed to reach an agreement.

Netanyahu also cited the Iranian threats to destroy Israel and vowed that there will never be another Holocaust.

“The murderous hatred against the Jews that has accompanied the history of our people has not disappeared, it has just been replaced with a murderous hatred of the Jewish state,” he said. “What has changed since the Holocaust is our determination and our ability to defend ourselves.”

On April 8, Israel came to a standstill as sirens wailed for two minutes. Further ceremonies included the public reading of names of Holocaust victims at sites around the country, including Israel’s parliament.

Sunday night’s main ceremony at Yad Vashem included six survivors who lit six symbolic torches to commemorate the six million dead. A video segment on each one’s personal story was presented.

On the same day in Poland, thousands from across the globe marched solemnly at the former Nazi Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp to honor the six million Jews killed in the Holocaust during World War II.

The mournful wail of the shofar — a traditional Jewish ram’s horn symbolizing freedom — marked the beginning of the March of the Living, held this year for the 22nd time since 1988 in this southern Polish town where in 1940 Nazi Germany built Auschwitz, its most notorious death camp.

Eleven thousand people, including hundreds out of an ever-dwindling number of elderly Auschwitz survivors, and young Jews from as far away as Australia or Brazil, along with two thousand young Poles, passed through the infamous “Arbeit macht frei” (Work Will Set You Free) gate at the Auschwitz camp, before starting the two-mile trek to the Birkenau camp.

RBEIT MACH
MARCH OF THE
2013

**Participants walk through the gate of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in *Oswiecim*, Poland, on April 8, 2013.**

“I am here because I believe that my grandparents’ death was not in vain. We should live in peace and harmony,” David Olidolt, a 16-year-old who travelled from Israel, told AFP as he marched through the former camp grounds, this year still covered with a blanket of snow.

“It is really important to come here and see — to be among the survivors,” said Miriam White, who accompanied nearly 200 Jewish youngsters from Los Angeles, California.

“I am here for one more reason — because my father was from Poland,” the 45-year-old told AFP.

**Holocaust survivor Baruch Kopold lights one of the six torches at the ceremony at Yad Vashem.**

“Participating in the march is a tradition at our school,” Weronika Rogas, a 17-year-old Polish student from the nearby town of *Tychy*, told AFP, adding that the event was a lesson in tolerance and respect for cultural diversity.

Israeli army chief Benny Gantz and World Jewish Congress president Ronald Lauder were also among the marchers who flock to the site each year around April 19, marking Holocaust Remembrance Day in Poland.

It is held in commemoration of the outbreak in 1943 of the doomed Warsaw ghetto uprising by Jewish partisans against the Nazis, the first rebellion of its kind during World War II.

More than one million people, mostly European Jews, perished at Auschwitz-Birkenau, operated by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland from 1940 until it was liberated by the Soviet Red Army on January 27, 1945.

The site was one of six German death camps set up in occupied Poland, a country which was home to prewar Europe’s largest Jewish community.

Many Auschwitz victims were sent to its gas chambers immediately after being shipped in by train. Others were worked to death as slave laborers.

Among the camp’s other victims were tens of thousands of non-Jewish Poles, Soviet prisoners of war, gypsies, and anti-Nazi resistance fighters from across Europe.

Upwards of 200 people, including Holocaust survivors, also participated in a similar march honoring Holocaust victims on the outskirts of the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, where Nazis and local collaborators massacred 70,000 Jews during World War II.

## HOLLAND SEEKS EU HERITAGE LABEL FOR NAZI CAMP

The Dutch government has asked the European Commission to recognize the Peace Palace and the former Nazi transit camp *Westerbork* as heritage sites.

The Peace Palace in the Hague, which houses the International Court of Justice, was opened 100 years ago “to prevent the kind of war to which the camp so painfully attests and must continue to do so,” the Council for Culture, a government advisory body, wrote in a recommendation to the Cabinet.

The Cabinet adopted the recommendation and requested that the European Council give the two locales the European Heritage Label — a designation reserved for “sites which have played a key role in the history and the building of the European Union,” according to the European Commission.

In total, nearly 100,000 Jews, or 70 percent of Holland’s pre-Holocaust Jewish population, were transported from *Westerbork* to Nazi extermination and concentration camps, including Auschwitz, *Sobibor*, *Bergen-Belsen* and *Theresienstadt*, according to Yad Vashem. The premises of the former Nazi camp have been made a national memorial.

According to Yad Vashem, *Westerbork* was established in October 1939 by the Dutch government to detain German Jewish refugees who had entered the Netherlands illegally.

Meanwhile, the municipality in whose jurisdiction *Westerbork* lies, *Midden-Drenthe*, reportedly has rejected a plan to place memorial cobblestones in front of the homes of Holocaust victims — an ongoing project taking place in municipalities across Europe for the past 20 years.

The public broadcaster NOS quoted unnamed city officials as saying the municipality “does enough to commemorate the Holocaust already.”

## SWISS HOLOCAUST RECORD BETTER THAN BELIEVED

Swiss authorities turned away only 3,000 Jewish refugees during the Holocaust and not 24,500 as believed, French Nazi hunter and historian Serge Klarsfeld said.

Klarsfeld told Switzerland’s *Der Sonntag* newspaper that the figure of 24,500 came from imprecise archive material processed by the authors of the 1999 Bergier report on Switzerland’s Holocaust-era record. The Bergier commission, which named the figure of 24,500, did not possess information that specified the rejection of Jews or the reasons for denying people entry, Klarsfeld said.

Recently, the Swiss SRF television station aired a documentary that suggested the Swiss government turned down refugees despite knowing of German leader Adolf Hitler’s extermination plan and the existence of German concentration camps as early as 1942, the year the Nazis decided on the Final Solution.

Klarsfeld called on Switzerland to create a new commission to examine the question of the acceptance and rejection of Jewish refugees at the Swiss border during the war years.

“The number of 24,000 is totally wrong,” Klarsfeld told Swiss public radio. “It’s unfair to let international opinion believe that 24,000 Jews were turned away from Switzerland and died because of that when the figure of people denied entry is closer to 3,000.”

Klarsfeld also noted that 30,000 Jews were admitted into Switzerland at the same time.

“It should be known how many Jews managed to find refuge in Switzerland and how many were turned away and what happened to them.”

Klarsfeld is famous, along with his wife Beate, for their success in tracking down the infamous Gestapo commander Klaus Barbie in Bolivia in the 1970s. The 77-year-old now devotes himself to researching the destiny of French wartime Jews.

# PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AT YAD VASHEM

President Barack Obama visited Yad Vashem Friday, March 22, 2013. He visited the Hall of Names, the Museum of Holocaust Art, participated in a memorial ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance, and visited the Children's Memorial, before signing the Yad Vashem Guest Book. President Obama was accompanied by President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau.

In the Yad Vashem Guest Book, President Obama wrote, "We are ever mindful of the incredible human cost of the Holocaust — an evil unprecedented in the annals of history. And yet we recognize, through this place, the triumph of the Jewish people and the human spirit, and vow to be ever vigilant in preventing such horror from ever happening again."

**Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, US President Barack Obama, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, and Israeli President Shimov Peres in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem.**

In remarks at the conclusion of the visit, President Obama said, "And to them I will give my house and within my walls a memorial and a name, an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

"President Peres, Prime Minister Netanyahu, Chairman Shalev, Rabbi Lau, thank you for sharing this house, this memorial with me today. Thank you to the people of Israel for preserving the names of the millions taken from us, of blessed memory, names that shall never be forgotten. This is my second visit to this living memorial. Since then I've walked among the barbed wire, the guard towers, of *Buchenwald*. Rabbi Lau told me of his time there, and we reminisced about our good friend Elie Wiesel and the memories that he shared with me. I've stood in the old Warsaw ghetto with survivors who would not go quietly.

"But nothing equals the wrenching power of this sacred place where the totality of the *Shoah* is told. We could come here a thousand times and each time our hearts would break. For here we see the depravity to which man can sink, the barbarism that unfolds when we begin to see our fellow human beings as somehow less than us, less worthy of dignity, and of life.

"We see how evil can for a moment in time triumph when good people do nothing, how silence abetted a crime unique in human history.

"Here we see their faces and we hear their voices. We look upon the objects of their lives, the art that they created, the prayer books that they carried.

"We see that even as they had hate etched into their arms, they were not numbers. They were men and women and children, so many children, sent to their deaths because of who they were, how they prayed, or who they loved. And yet here alongside man's capacity for evil, we also are reminded of man's capacity for good — the rescuers, the Righteous Among the Nations who refused to be bystanders. And in their noble acts of courage, we see how this place, this accounting of horror, is in the end a source of hope, for here we learn that we are never powerless. In our lives we always have choices. To succumb to our worst instincts, or to summon the better angels of our nature; to be indifferent to suffering wherever it may be, whoever it may be visited upon, or to display empathy that is at the core of our humanity. We have a choice to acquiesce to evil or to make real our solemn vow — 'never again.' We have a choice to ignore what happens to others or to act on behalf of others and to continually examine in ourselves whatever dark places there may be that might lead to such actions or inactions. This is our obligation, not simply to bear witness, but to act. For us in our time, this means confronting bigotry and hatred in all its forms, racism, especially anti-Semitism. None of that has a place in the civilized world, not in the classrooms of children, not in the corridors of power. And let us never forget the link between the two. For our sons and daughters are not born to hate. They are taught to hate. So let us fill their young hearts with the same understanding and compassion that we hope others have for them.

"Here we hope, because after we walk through these halls, after you pass through the darkness, there is light — the glorious view of the Jerusalem forest, with the sun shining over the historic homeland of the Jewish people, a fulfillment of the prophecy: 'You shall live again, upon your own soil.' Here on your ancient land, let it be said for all the world to hear; the State of Israel does not exist because of the Holocaust, but with the survival of a strong Jewish State of Israel such a Holocaust will never happen again.

"Here we pray that we all can be better, that we can all grow like the sapling near the Children's Memorial — a sapling from a chestnut tree that Anne Frank could see from her window. The last time that she described it in her diary, she wrote: 'Our chestnut tree is in full bloom; it is covered with leaves. It is even more beautiful than last year.

**President Obama lays a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance at Yad Vashem in memory of the 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust.**

"That's a reminder of who we can be. But we have to work for it. We have to work for it here in Israel, we have to work for it in America, we have to work for it around the world. To tend the light and the brightness as opposed to our worst instincts.

"May God bless the memory of the millions. May their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal life, and may each spring bring a full bloom even more beautiful than the last."

## GERMAN CASINO RETURNS NAZI-LOOTED ART TO JEWISH HEIRS

A German casino will return a 300-year-old Dutch painting despoiled by the Nazis to German-Jewish art dealer Max Stern's estate, one of his beneficiaries announced.

"It's the first time that a German organization has returned a painting to us," said Clarence Epstein, director of special projects at Concordia University in Montreal, one of three schools to which Stern bequeathed his collection.

"It is proof that Germany is starting to accept that righting the plundering of artworks is important and a priority for them."

Since 2002, Concordia has sought to recover more than 400 paintings lost to Stern at the hands of the Nazis through a forced sale in 1937.

Stern himself shuttered his Dusseldorf gallery in December of that year, and fled to London before settling in Canada.

The bulk of his estate following his 1987 death was bequeathed to Concordia, McGill University in Montreal, and Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Dutch portrait painter Juriaen Pool II's "The Masters of the Goldsmith Guild in Amsterdam in 1701" is a large-scale painting of some of Amsterdam's most important citizens, and the ninth Nazi-looted artwork to be returned to the university heirs.

It is to be repatriated at a ceremony at the Amsterdam Museum, which recently opened a children's wing in a space that was once occupied by an orphanage where Pool was raised.

The painting itself had been moved from Dusseldorf to the Heinemann Gallery in *Wiesbaden* in 1937. In the years after the Second World War it was bought by a casino in southern Germany, where it has been ever since.

Epstein refused to identify the casino, which has requested anonymity.

But he said the return of the painting is the fruit of six years of research by the Max Stern Art Restitution Project, with support from the Holocaust Claims Processing Office of the New York State Department of Financial Services.

It all started in 2004 when Sotheby's auction house contacted Epstein's office regarding the status of the painting.

This eventually led to the discovery of a letter that Stern wrote in 1937 in the Netherlands Institute for Art History.

A photograph of the painting accompanied Stern's letter requesting information about the portrait, leaving no doubt as to its ownership, according to Concordia.

This revelation convinced the casino to return the painting to Stern's beneficiaries.

The Max Stern Art Restitution Project is now focused on recovering some 40 other paintings it has identified as once belonging to one of Canada's most important art dealers and collectors. Talks with a dozen people or groups, including German museums, are progressing, Epstein said.

He praised the German government for providing resources to museums to help identify Nazi-looted artworks, but lamented "recurring problems" with auction houses and private galleries.

## HOLOCAUST-ERA BOOKS OF ESTHER UNVEILED

Three Books of Esther kept in the attic of a house in the Warsaw ghetto during World War II have been returned to Jewish hands.

In honor of Purim, the Shem Olam Institute for Holocaust education, documentation, and research unveiled the rare holy items, which were in Polish possession for dozens of years and were located and brought to Israel in the past year.

**Book of Esther kept in ghetto.**

The three Books of Esther are said to be at least 77 years old and are part of a collection of Holy Scriptures, Passover Haggadot, and different prayer books preserved throughout the years in the attic of a building in the ghetto.

The building was one of the only ones to survive the war and was renovated later on. Yet its upper part remained intact, apparently due to the fact that there was a hidden space that had not been discovered.

Several years ago the attic collapsed, and the holy books were found under the rubble. A small and hidden synagogue was also discovered on the premises with many ritual objects.

At first the items were handed over to the Polish police, but Shem Olam officials operating in the country managed to get their hands on them. Most of the books were found burnt, but the three Books of Esther had survived.

"During the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto, the Germans likely passed by the houses with flame-throwers and set fire to the buildings," says Shem Olam Director Rabbi Avraham Krieger. "This building was torched too, and so was part of the attic."

According to Krieger, "One of the books was in a metal cylinder, and may even have been in the center of the fire and nearly melted, and another Book of Esther was found almost intact."

Another collection of Books of Esther obtained by the Shem Olam Institute, along with a variety of ritual objects, was found in the *Łódź* ghetto, in a building used during the war as a conference hall. The hall's wooden floor broke about a year ago, and the treasure was found underneath.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THROUGH SOVIET JEWISH EYES: PHOTOGRAPHY, WAR, AND THE HOLOCAUST

Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust.

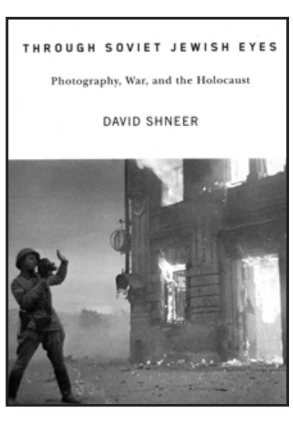
By David Shneer. Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, New Jersey, 2012. 283 pp. $32.50 paperback.

*REVIEWED BY DR. DIANE CYPKIN*

*"At its core, this book is about how these photographers visually told the story of a war that targeted all of them as Soviet citizens and as members of the 'Jewish race.'"*

David Shneer's volume entitled *Through Soviet Jewish Eyes: Photography, War, and the Holocaust* promises a fascinating and unique perspective . . . and delivers! Indeed, it presents us with much more than we could have imagined. For even as it diligently examines the work of these leading Soviet photojournalists, and just as diligently tries to discover if being Jewish affected their wartime work, Shneer's book goes way beyond that. In the end, it reveals just how and why the photographic fact of the Holocaust as a particularly Jewish tragedy was communicated during the war — or not communicated.

Thus, for example, we are introduced to Warsaw-born Dimitrii Baltermants (1912–-1990), a photographer who "helped launch what might be called a new genre of photography: the Nazi-atrocity photo essay." It all happened when at the very end of December 1941, Baltermants was sent to *Kerch*, a small peninsula in southern Russia. One of the first places to be liberated, it was also one of the first places to expose Nazism's ruthless war against the Jews! In sum, Baltermants's camera documented the bestial "work" of Hitler's *Einsatzgruppe* there.(Interestingly, Holocaust imagery would appear much earlier in the Soviet world than in the West!) In later years, still during wartime, this "dean of Soviet photographers" would also gain well-deserved fame for his celebration of the Russian soldier with his "heroic photograph of the Soviet army fording the Oder River."


THROUGH SOVIET JEWISH EYES
Photography, War, and the Holocaust
DAVID SHNEER

We meet Evgenii Khaldei (1917–1997), originally from eastern Ukraine, who "became one of the preeminent photographers of liberation working for the Soviet press in Eastern Europe." The best of his liberation photography was taken in Budapest. Most interesting among these — for both the story behind the photo and the photo itself — is his "Jewish Couple," the Jewish stars on each of their coats revealing how the Nazi world branded them and in so doing tried to cast them out of the greater human race! At the same time, according to Shneer, Khaldei's photo celebrating the Russian soldier, entitled "Raising the Red Flag over the Reichstag," was the "most important photograph of the war, and [Khaldei's] entire career." Moreover, "modeled on and serv[ing] the same function in the Soviet Union as that of Joe Rosenthal's" iconic "Old Glory Goes Up on Mount Suribachi, Iwo Jima," it also became, "like Rosenthal's photo, the subject of articles, books and even a Hollywood movie" owing to the controversy surrounding it. (Controversy continues to swirl around Rosenthal's photo.)

Then there is the "supreme battle photographer" born in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, Georgii Zelmanovitch (1906–1984) — after 1934, Georgii Zelma. Before the war, in the 1930s, he was sent to *Birobidzhan*, the new "home" the Soviets decided should be created by a new back-to-the-land Soviet Jew. Zelmanovitch's photographs there "celebrate[d] the people carrying out the building" and even "highlight[ed]" their "Jewishness." Later, during the war, Zelma made his name as the photographer at *Stalingrad* and was responsible for taking the picture that became "an icon of Soviet heroism:" his "photograph of soldiers charging up Mamayev Hill in the center of *Stalingrad*," titled "Assault."

After reading the above, it would be very easy to jump to the mistaken conclusion that each of these outstanding photojournalists was equal parts Jew and Soviet; that each, when it came to the particularly Jewish part of this equation, enjoyed the same depth of religiosity; that each felt driven to tell the particularly Jewish side of any story! But the fact is that even among these three — and Shneer writes about many more in his absorbing work — there are some more religious Jews, there are some assimilated, and then there are some who are very assimilated. That would affect how their work was presented to the public. Add to this the very real punishment power the Communist Party had over these photojournalists, directing them as to what to photograph and how to caption it for their own good, and we have a story here which is highly complex, nuanced, and eye-opening!

Finally, one of the truly fascinating realizations the reader will take away from reading Shneer's work is that when it came to identifying or, more specifically, not identifying Nazism's obvious war of annihilation against the Jews, sadly, while their reasons may have differed, the Soviet Union and the United States were not so very different!

In short, *Through Soviet Jewish Eyes* should be of tremendous interest to students of the Holocaust and those interested in photography and photojournalism as a historical development in the Soviet Union and as a communication tool generally.

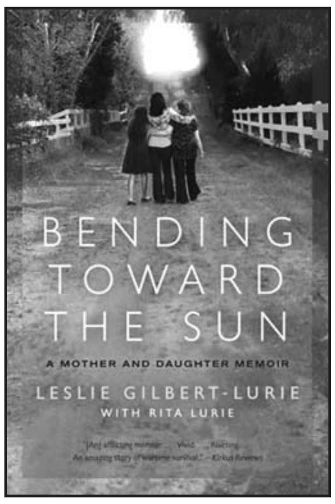
## BENDING TOWARD THE SUN

Bending Toward the Sun: A Mother and Daughter Memoir.

By Leslie Gilbert-Lurie. HarperCollins Publishers: New York, 2010. 357 pp. $14.99 paperback.

*REVIEWED BY LYNN ELBER, AP*

The dark well of the Holocaust has yielded up another wrenching account. *Bending Toward the Sun: A Mother and Daughter Memoir* is intimately told by a Polish survivor, Rita Lurie, and her American daughter, Leslie Gilbert-Lurie.



Rita Lurie was born Ruchel Gamss in 1937 in southeastern Poland, into a home she recalls as secure and loving. Her idyll was already a false one, with anti-Semitic assaults proliferating as Nazi Germany dispersed its power across Europe.

When German troops began the forced removal of Jews from Lurie's region, members of her extended family — including aunts, uncles, and cousins — fled their village in 1942 and found shelter a few miles away with a Polish farmer and his fearful wife.

The group, crowded into a 4-foot-high attic that had a single window for light, reached 15 in number. They expected only a brief stay. Instead, they endured starvation, sickness, and death in that cramped space until 1944. Despite her young age, Lurie's memories of her emotions and moments of horror are acute.

There are parallels to Anne Frank's ordeal, if not her singular diary. Lurie also was spared Frank's concentration camp imprisonment, instead emerging from hiding with her shrunken family to trek through Europe and finally to America. While her once-dynamic father struggled in the unfamiliar new world, Lurie was confronted by the ill health, both mental and physical, that were World War II's legacy for her. As her daughter picks up the narrative, we learn that her descendants claim a share of that cruel heritage as well.

Gilbert-Lurie recounts the protectiveness she and her siblings felt toward their beautiful but fragile mother, and how her past fueled her fears and insecurities as she grew up in Southern California.

Gilbert-Lurie achieved career success as a lawyer and media executive and vowed to protect her own children from the family's ghosts, but they haunt her daughter, Mikaela. The teenager's voice is part of the emotionally rich *Bending Toward the Sun*.

The book touches on intriguing descriptions of research into how trauma may be passed on, including the theory that fearful memories could be transmitted generationally through biochemistry.

*Bending Toward the Sun*, in which the expected push-and-pull of the mother-daughter relationship is warped by brutal history, illuminates both the strength and the fragility of that bond and of the human spirit.

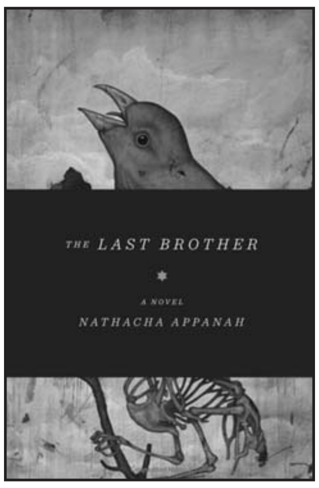
## CORNER OF HOLOCAUST HISTORY TOLD THROUGH INNOCENT'S EYES

The Last Brother.

By Nathacha Appanah, translated from the French by Geoffrey Strachan. Graywolf Press: Minneapolis 2011. 208 pp. $14.00 paperback.

*REVIEWED BY HOWARD SELZNIK, JWEEKLY*

With memories of World War II fading, how can anyone understand the experiences of a child affected by the Holocaust? How can one imagine the feelings of a 10-year-old orphan whose journey to Palestine is interrupted by the British and who is imprisoned on the island of Mauritius?



Nathacha Appanah offers a child's perspective on this sorry episode in history in her splendid short novel, *The Last Brother*, told in flashback by one of the characters who has reached old age.

The recently published English edition of the book is based on the little-known story of 1,500 Jewish Holocaust survivors who were imprisoned in Mauritius from 1940 to 1945 after their ship was refused entry to Palestine.

In the book, young David Stein of Prague is sent to a prison on the island in the Indian Ocean after being rescued from a concentration camp in Europe. Not only does he not make *aliyah*, but David is taken even farther away from "Eretz," some 600 miles east of Madagascar.

The British excuse: quotas on immigration to Palestine and lack of documentation for immigrants. There would be no room for David and his fellow refugees who, furthermore, would be illegal if they landed.

David soon meets Raj, the son of a prison guard. Poor, confused Raj, raised in insularity on a sugar plantation, doesn't even know what being Jewish means. Raj lives in splendid isolation on a volcanic island, where little news of the outside world filters in.

As Raj narrates the story, his childhood naiveté about the world shows. There is so much unsaid. There is so much he doesn't know.

Throughout the book, readers get clues about the war's impact on the Jews in Europe. David's parents probably died in death camps or were otherwise murdered by the Nazis. But this is not stated. After all, no one can expect a young boy to understand the horrors of Jewish Europe in the 1930s and '40s.

As such, Appanah's writing is subtle and deftly understated, inviting the reader into the boys' minds. We want to shout at them, "David's parents were murdered because they were Jews! What part of that don't you understand?" Either boy would probably answer, "All of it."

Raj and David meet up again in the prison

*(Continued on page 14)*

# DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLES HOW THE PHILIPPINES RESCUED 1,300 JEWS FROM THE HOLOCAUST

*BY CARMELA G. LAPEÑA/DVM,*
*GMA NEWS*

As a little girl during the Holocaust, Lotte Hershfield could not quite understand what it was all about.

At five years old, she would see benches that would say “Dogs and Jews not allowed.” She remembered being terribly frightened by the Nazis’ big police dog when they came to her family’s house and took their Jewish books away. She recalled her mother crying bitterly, telling her that her father was away on a business trip, not divulging that he had been arrested at the *Breslau* town hall.

In contrast, she was excited as they fled Germany on board a ship. “It was sort of an adventure and I felt somewhat secure. I had my brother there and I had my parents there. I knew I was going to a new country, it was somewhat exciting,” said Hershfield, who was among over a thousand Jews who came to the Philippines.

“You saw how the doors were basically closed to all of us except the Philippines, and how the Filipino people are a very warm people, they’re a very friendly people,” Hershfield said in *An Open Door*, a documentary about the Jewish rescue in the Philippines. The documentary is the third film in filmmaker Noel M. Izon's World War II trilogy “Forgotten Stories.”

For almost nine years, she stayed in the Philippines, which she remembered fondly. “I was very impressed because we rode up Dewey Boulevard into Pasay. Lovely beaches, beautiful banana trees, and there were polo grounds I remember… We learned Filipino songs and there were quite a few performances, art was very important,” she said.

By the time the war was over, the Philippines had become her home. “I really did not want to leave. That was my home, that was all that I knew. I was there from the time I was seven,” she said.

Unknown to many, the Philippines provided refuge for 1,300 Jews who fled Germany after the Nazi regime passed the Nuremberg Laws. “With the implementation of the Nuremberg Laws and the depriving of German Jews of their German citizenship, this enabled the government to confiscate businesses, confiscate homes, to appropriate all their assets,” Holocaust historian Bonnie Harris explained in the documentary.

**Jewish refugees in the Philippines.**

Filmmaker Izon noted that after Jews were declared stateless by the Nazi regime, 47 nations convened in France in 1938 to deal with Jewish refugees, but not one nation during that conference changed its immigration laws to make them more accommodating of Jews. “They all washed their hands and said there was nothing they could do,” Izon said in an interview with Wisconsin Public Radio.

“The Philippines was not represented. But the Philippines, because it was a Commonwealth, held a quasi-autonomous status. And they were able to interpret some of the immigration laws especially with the power given to the Philippine President, he was actually allowed to issue visas directly,” he explained.

The Nuremberg Laws were issued in 1935, the same year that the Philippines was inaugurated as a Commonwealth. Most of the Jewish rescue in the Philippines happened between 1935 and 1941, according to Izon.

Sharon Delmendo, author and Commonwealth historian, explained that Quezon, although Catholic, developed an affinity for Jews because he felt that there was a sort of symbolic brotherhood between Filipinos and Jews.

“The Filipinos were the recipients of racial discrimination and bigotry on the part of many Americans, at that time when the Jews were similarly recipients of bigotry by the Nazis. So even though Quezon had extremely important and critical political and economic issues to wrestle with at this time, he was willing to take a stand to help the Jews,” said Delmendo, who co-produced the documentary.

Izon noted that Quezon ran for the Commonwealth presidency on a platform of opening up the Philippines to the world.

According to Izon, “When President Quezon initially heard of the Jewish plight in Europe, he had said he was willing to actually reserve visas for up to a million or more and that whatever land was needed he would make sure that the leases were turned over to the Jewish settlers.”

“Having grown up quite a bit of my life in the Philippines, there truly is a genuine sense of hospitality. It’s in the DNA. People are friendly, they want to welcome you, they want to make you feel at home. You could go to the poorest house and they could just be having canned goods or whatever but they’d always invite you to eat with them,” Izon said.

However, the U.S. State Department was not very comfortable with such large numbers, as they were concerned the Jews might use the Philippines as a back door to the U.S. They were also concerned that the experiment would fail. So they decided to limit the number and, truth be told, there was quite a bit of anti-Semitism within the American government at that time.

“They were not really all that interested in any kind of experiment that involved saving Jews,” Izon said.

He noted that Quezon may also have had some pragmatic reason in mind when he let the Jewish refugees in. That they were a new talent pool, in terms of what possible contributions they could make to the country and the economy, was not lost on the Philippine government. “I don’t think that one can be totally altruistic with these things… but at the end of the day he risked a lot of political capital…. In fact there were some anti-Semitic factors in the Philippine legislature and he publicly rebuked them,” Izon said.

Quezon may not have been able to save millions, but the rescue’s impact goes on for generations.

“Roosevelt and Churchill saved Western civilization but President Quezon, and so few people know that, of the Philippines, saved 1,200 Jewish souls. As many as Schindler and maybe even more. And that is the epitome basically of Judaism. It says if you save one soul you save mankind,” Hershfield said.

# PAIN REMAINS FOR SLOVAK HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

*BY ROB CAMERON,*
*DEUTSCHE WELLE*

Few survivors were still alive as Europe commemorated the liberation of Nazi concentration camps on January 27. In *Kosice*, Slovakia, for example, Edita Salamonova is thought to be one of four who survived deportation.

Edita Salamonova perched on the brown sofa in her modest 1970s apartment and rolled up her sleeve. A small, neat, soft-spoken woman who recently celebrated her 89th birthday, Edita lives alone on the 10th floor of a *panelak* — a Communist-era concrete tower block — on the edges of *Kosice*, Slovakia’s gritty second city.

She struggled with her blue polka-dot pinafore to expose not — as expected — the row of tattooed numbers, a permanent reminder of her arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau in April 1944 - but a terrible scar high up on her right arm, the flesh torn and pinched and messily stitched together.

“They shot me here...” she pointed, “...and here.”

It was at this point that her voice began to break. She was describing how one day in the closing weeks of the war she and her sister had escaped from one of the numerous work camps they’d been sent to in Germany, Latvia and Poland. The Red Army was closing in, and they’d seized their chance. Unfortunately they’d stumbled across an SS patrol, who had opened fire – injuring Edita and killing her sister.

“I thought I could protect her,” she said, her eyes gazing at a spot on the wall. “But she was hit in the chest.”

Edita’s children and grandchildren are regular visitors, but mostly she’s left alone with her books, photographs, and memories of life in *Kosice* before the war, and what happened afterwards.

“Life was good here,” she said.

“We didn’t differentiate by nationality. Things started changing in ‘38, when we became part of Hungary. Our young men were sent to work camps. Jewish people began losing their jobs. And there was this ... fear of what would happen next.”

**Salamonova is one of the last survivors in *Kosice*.**

Until 1938, *Kosice* had been a thriving city in eastern Czechoslovakia. Hungarians, Germans, Slovaks and Jews — 12,000 of them, 20 percent of the population — lived alongside one another in relative harmony.

Then came the Munich Agreement, under which Czechoslovakia was dismembered, and the area around *Kosice* transferred to Hungary. For several years the country’s Fascist leader Admiral Horthy refused Berlin’s demands for the deportation of Hungary’s Jews. In March 1944, with Hitler’s patience exhausted, Hungary was occupied by the Germans. At the age of just 19, life for Edita Salamonova was about to change forever.

“On April 18th, 1944 — it was a Friday — there was a knock on the door. They said, ‘Pack up your possessions, tomorrow we’re coming to pick you up,’” said Edita, her voice quavering with emotion.

“We said, ‘but where are we going?’ They said, ‘It’s nothing, it’s a work camp.’ So we thought we were going off to work and were waiting outside the house the next morning,” she continued.

“They took us to the Pushkin synagogue. You can’t imagine the scenes there — people crying, shouting, children, the sick — all crammed into the synagogue. We survived the night, and the next day, Sunday morning, we were marched down to the brick factory.”

*Kosice’s* brick factory had been transformed into a concentration camp for 14,000 Jews from the city and surrounding villages. From there Edita, her sister, their parents and several relatives were loaded onto cattle wagons bound for Auschwitz.

“We travelled for three days. The train kept stopping at various stations, and each time they would want something from us. First it was gold, then it was furs, then ladies’ underwear. Each time something,” she told *DW*.

“Finally, in the early hours of the morning, we arrived at Auschwitz. We were ordered out — men in one line, women another. That was the last time we ever saw our parents. And standing there was Mengele. And he sorted us into two groups, pointing with his stick, without a word. Left... right.”

The infamous Dr Josef Mengele was sorting the new arrivals according to whether they were fit to work. Those who were not — including Edita’s parents — were sent to the gas chambers.

“They took us to a different part of the camp —- *Birkenau* — because Auschwitz was full. There was a woman walking alongside us — a Czech woman, I don’t know how she ended up with us Slovaks,” Edita remembered.

“She pointed at this huge plume of smoke in the sky and said, ‘That’s where your parents have gone.’ I said to her: ‘For the love of God, what do you mean, “that’s where my parents have gone”?’ ‘Well, that was the crematorium,’ she explained.”

Edita - her head shaved, and dressed in prison uniform - experienced the horrors of Auschwitz for just three days. She was loaded into another train and sent to a work camp in Riga, Latvia, piling earth

*(Continued on page 14)*

# SURVIVORS' CORNER

## MY DIARY OF A NAZI DEATH CAMP CHILDHOOD

***Helga Weiss was sent to four Nazi concentration camps, along with her mother. Like Anne Frank, she kept a diary. Only now has it been published.***

*BY KIRA COCHRANE, THE GUARDIAN*

In 1944, Helga Weiss came to terms with the idea of dying — with one important condition. She was only 14 years old and had never been strongly religious, but as she waited in a queue at Auschwitz she prayed she wouldn't die after her mother. She couldn't face being left alone.

Helga is one of only 100 children to survive Auschwitz out of the 15,000 sent there from the concentration camp at *Terezín*, north of Prague. Altogether, between 1941 and 1945, she and her mother were sent to four camps: *Terezín*, Auschwitz, *Freiberg* and *Mauthausen*.

The first was *Terezín*, where they spent three years, sleeping two or three to a bed that was really too small for one, with little to eat and to keep out the cold. But sharing with her mother made the impossible bearable. "We had only one blanket," says Helga. "But we covered ourselves with our coats. We were together and it was a great help."

She closes her eyes, and folds her arms tightly about herself.

We are in Helga Weiss's living room on the fourth floor of an apartment building in Prague. At 83, she still climbs the steep stairs each day and is a lively, friendly presence, surrounded by family photographs and paintings produced during her career as an artist. Her late husband, Jírí Hošek, was a musician who played double bass with the Czech Radio Symphony Orchestra, and her son, Jírí, is a cellist, as is her granddaughter Dominika.

Helga was born in this flat and it has always been her home, apart from the four years she spent in Nazi concentration camps. It was ransacked and occupied during the war, but there are echoes of life as it was before the war. The piano in the corner, for instance, sits where her father's once did.

Otto Weiss was a talented aspiring musician, but as a soldier in the First World War, he sustained hand and arm injuries and went on to work in a bank. He married his wife, Irena, and in 1929 Helga was born. Those early years were happy. Otto encouraged his daughter musically, but she had no obvious talent for it; her gift was for art. She still has one of her very early sketch pads, which shows she chose subjects "perhaps other children don't. I always painted what I saw — a man in a meat store," for instance.

**Helga Weiss in the Prague apartment she has lived in since she was born, apart from the years she was imprisoned by the Nazis in concentration camps.**

As war loomed, the eight-year-old Helga began to keep a diary in words and pictures. The first pages record the growing Nazi threat: air raid alarms, arrests, the expulsion of Jewish children from state schools, adults — including her father — losing their jobs, yellow Stars of David that had to be sewn on clothes, and the constant, claustrophobic talk of "transports." It was because of the political situation, says Helga, that she remained an only child — a decision her father made.

In December 1941, soon after Helga's 12th birthday, the authorities came for the family. They were sent to *Terezín*, a walled 18th-century garrison town, also known during the war by its German name, *Theresienstadt*. Many of Helga's uncles and aunts were sent there too. *Terezín* was essentially a vast camp used as a transit hub for tens of thousands of Jews sent to Auschwitz and *Treblinka*.

Helga and her mother had no idea what lay ahead. They thought the war would soon be over. "We were allowed 50 kg of luggage, so we took just our clothes and something important to us. I took two very small dolls, a pad, watercolors, and crayons," she says.

At *Terezín*, Otto was sent to the men's barracks and Helga stayed with her mother. Later, a *Kinderheim* — children's home — was set up, and though she was frightened to leave Irena, Helga moved into a room with girls of her own age. Conditions were slightly better there, and the group "tried to stay human beings and be young," she says. They organized dances and celebrated birthdays and religious holidays — they once made a potato gateau as a treat, from food scraps they had managed to save.

One of Helga's happier sketches shows the girls gathering round a food parcel, jostling to see the contents. But the first drawing she made is a jolly picture of two children building a snowman — she smuggled it through to her father, who sent back a crucial message: "Draw what you see."

She took his advice and began to record life in the camps. The pictures show queues for food; a bleak, basic washroom; a girl ill with tuberculosis; the crowded waiting room in the emergency clinic; people on stretchers; and bread transported in a hearse marked "Welfare for the young."

Another drawing marks the birthday of her friend Francka. The girls had been born in the same maternity ward, and the sketch shows them as babies in 1929, in their shared bunk bed in 1943, and in 1957, wheeling prams together. The last drawing is accompanied by a note to say that Francka died in Auschwitz before her 15th birthday.

Despite the horrors and strictures of *Terezín* — starvation rations, disease, the lice and bedbugs that crawled across their faces — there was a thriving cultural life. Many musicians had smuggled in instruments, and one sketch shows families gathered around a violin trio giving a concert in a dormitory.

At *Terezín*, Helga met her first boyfriend, Ota, an orphan and chemistry student. He was in his mid-20s; she was not yet 15. "It was a half-childish love," she says. "We walked together and held hands ... and I remember the exact place in Terezin where we first kissed." She beams. "But nothing more happened than kissing."

In September 1944, the Germans announced that 5,000 men would be sent to build a new ghetto. Helga's Uncle Jindra would be in the first group, her father and Ota in the second. Helga describes the day her father left in her diary, the corners of his mouth twitching as he tried to smile, hands shaking as he held her. Then he was gone.

Three days later, she and Irena left. Just in time, she got her diary and a novel and some poetry by her father to her Uncle Josef, who worked in the records depart-

*(Continued on page 13)*

## "HIDDEN CHILDREN" FOUND DECADES AFTER HOLOCAUST

*KRISTEN ZAMBO,*
*THE JOURNAL TIMES*

Adam Paluch doesn't remember the day he and his twin sister were ripped from their mother's arms by Nazi guards, and in desperation, she jumped off a building to her death.

Taken to a Nazi death camp in 1942, the then-three-year-old Jewish boy became the subject of medical experiments. These, he said, left him unable to walk — and still with no memory of his life before July 1944.

"I remember the liberation (that day)," Paluch, 73, said at the Racine Public Library. "I remember the Russian soldiers found me in the lavatory and put me in a raincoat. Because I could not walk."

But his twin sister, Ida Paluch Kersz, 73, recalls the memories of that separation day, speaking of them almost as if they were razor-edged photographs.

The Jews had been herded into the ghetto in *Sosnowiec*, Poland. "And then they came and took away the children from the mothers," Paluch Kersz told more than 60 people gathered at the Racine Public Library.

She and her twin brother and their older sister were ripped from their mother's arms.

"She ran across the street to a building. We followed her, we ran after my mother," Paluch Kersz said. "...She ran two flights up and just as we watched, my mother jumped from the window to her death."

Their father was fighting Nazi soldiers with the Polish Army during the Holocaust, she explained. So her aunt "snatched us away into hiding," she said. Yet they still were confined in the fenced-in ghetto.

Some time later, she was walking by the barbed-wire fence with her aunt. A man called her aunt's name from outside the fence. Her aunt ran a produce store, which was closed. That man had gone to deliver produce to the store, and finding it closed, asked around. Paluch Kersz said he was told all the Jews were in the ghetto.

Seeing the little girl with the aunt, the man asked who the child was, Paluch Kersz said, because he knew her aunt had boys.

"And she told him that I am maybe now an orphan and I'm an extra mouth to feed," she said. But he told her, "'I am going to take this child with me.' And he told her, 'I'll never return her to you.' So they waited until it was night. And she handed me over the barbed wires to (him)."

That man, who was Catholic, secreted the little girl away, taking her by train to his home, where he lived with his pregnant wife. When they arrived, it was Christmas Eve.

"He knocked on the door and he said, Josephine ... I brought you a Christmas gift. He opened the coat and I was the Christmas gift," Paluch Kersz said.

They christened her Irena. The couple had been high school sweethearts, and had run away from their home in Russia and eloped, relocating to Poland, she said.

"They told neighbors that I was a child out of wedlock," she said. "The danger to the Polish people of hiding children was death. The whole family could be shot."

It would be about 52 years, however, before Paluch Kersz would find her twin brother, who was sent to a Russian orphanage and adopted after soldiers liberated his camp.

"This is why we talk about it," said Paluch. "We don't want it repeated again."

After Paluch Kersz reunited with her father after the war, and then moved with her husband and daughter, Ester, to Illinois, a friend sent her a Jewish newspaper clipping about other "hidden children" who had survived the Holocaust. The article included pictures — and one man struck Paluch Kersz. He looked just like her grandfather. She contacted the reporter, which led her to Paluch's phone number in Poland.

Paluch Kersz said that at first, Paluch didn't believe she was his twin. He asked for her date of birth, and told he "for sure you're not my sister. I was born in 1942," citing his Christian birth certificate as proof.

"I said, 'So does mine,' " she said.

"Before she found me, I didn't know I had a sister," said Adam Paluch, who on Jan. 28 gained his U.S. citizenship, with his twin by his side. "When she found me, I become crazy. I left Poland and came here (in 1995). Now I can say life is beautiful, like in the movie."

But the twins still are searching for their sister, who was 10 years older.

"I believe in miracles. Miracles happen. They happened to me," Paluch Kersz said.

# YOUNGEST HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS LOOK TO NEXT GENERATION

*BY RICK ROJAS,*
*LOS ANGELES TIMES*

She was an orphan, a 14-year-old Jewish girl, when she went to the Berlin train station on a summer day in 1939, leaving behind all that she had ever known.

She had already experienced loss: her parents claimed by illness, her brother taken by the Nazis. Now Dora Gostynski was about to get on a train that would take her and hundreds of other Jewish children to safety — but they had to go without the comfort of their parents.

She remembered the other children's sobs as they embraced their parents, who had made the agonizing decision to give their children a chance at life, even if meant never seeing them again. And she remembered the parents who relented when their child didn't want to leave them. They walked away from the train station, and back into a world of danger.

"There was like an ocean of people and an ocean of tears," she said.

She was escaping Nazi Germany through the rescue mission *Kindertransport*, which carried about 10,000 youths to Britain and elsewhere for shelter during the Holocaust. Many — more than 60%, according to various estimates — never saw their parents again.

As they grew older, they sought out one another, drawn by a wrenching, shared experience. They founded the Kindertransport Association, and *kinder* from around the world have gathered every other year for the last two decades.

The *kinder* are among the youngest Holocaust survivors, yet even they are now mostly in their 80s, a group thinned by the passing years. With each gathering, there are whispers that it could be the last.

At the most recent gathering, in an Irvine hotel, a much older Dora recalled the train station on that day more than 73 years ago. She recognized one of her classmates, a girl named Fritzy Hacker. Fritzy's mother hugged each of the girls tightly before they boarded the train together. "She said goodbye to the two of us like she was my mother too," she said.

But Dora couldn't stop thinking about her sister, Ida. They had applied for the *Kindertransport* mission together. But as they waited for word to arrive, her sister had turned 17. She missed being able to qualify by two months.

As the train chugged toward the Dutch border, she and Fritzy told themselves they were going on a field trip. The other passengers wept. She thought of her sister. She didn't know if she would ever see her again.

Dora — now Doris Small — is 89, and a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She was one of the remaining *kinder* who had come to share their stories of survival with one another and their children in the hope that their history isn't forgotten after they are gone.

"My generation is dying off," said Michael Wolff, who at 76 is one of the youngest. He was 2 when his mother handed him over to a teenage girl to carry him to Scotland. When his father visited him months later, he did not recognize him.

The conference in Irvine represented a passing of a torch to the survivors' children and grandchildren to maintain the *Kindertransport* story. The gathering drew three dozen survivors, and for the first time, the gathering was organized by the second generation — "KT2," as they are called. More than half of those attending were the survivors' children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren.

The conference reflected the push to connect generations, with sessions on writing memoirs and ethical wills, and conversations in which moderators prompted open dialogue after years of silence. It was time for their children — and the world — to know their legacy.

"This is a story of survivors," said Wolff's son, Jeffrey, who was the conference chairman. He said they are "strong characters because they had to adjust, they had to adapt, they had to survive."

They were linked by traumatic experience, but the gathering, in some ways, had the feel of a high school reunion.

They reconnected with people they hadn't seen since they were children. The *kinder* and their children walked around with scrapbooks, flipping through pages of black and white photos hoping to identify the other children on their ship.

There was also a message board, where the *kinder* and their descendants left notes in hopes of finding others on the same voyage or tracking down those they haven't heard from since the war.

*Did anyone stay in Cornwall during war and after in orphanage/hostel? Pls contact Linda*

And in underlined red letters: *Does anyone know a Fritzy Hacker from Berlin, Germany?*

**Holocaust survivor Doris Small, center, with daughter Miriam Saunders, 60, left, and granddaughter Jenniffer Veno, tells her offspring: "If I didn't go through this and if I didn't survive, you wouldn't be here."**

Doris Small still searches for her friend all these years later.

She lives in Broomfield, Colorado, now. She's supposed to use a walker, but she tends to leave it behind. She keeps her hair a light shade of brown. A toothy, impish grin frequently creases her face.

After her husband, a concentration camp survivor, died four years ago, she became involved in the Kindertransport Association. This was her second conference, attending this time with her daughter and granddaughter.

It was a history once kept quiet, but she has grown confident now in sharing her past.

"You should have seen the heavy breaths I took," she said, recalling the moment her train cleared the German border. "I remember it like yesterday."

They arrived in England and the children filed into a large room lined with benches where they would be assigned to their homes. It was the last time she saw Fritzy.

A number of *kinder* were fortunate and were assigned to families who accepted them as their own, while others went to less embracing households where they were used as common laborers. Some were packed into orphanages.

Dora went to live in London with an elderly couple who owned a factory making men's trousers. They sent her to work and didn't enroll her in school. The days blended together.

"I didn't know what month it was," she said. "Every day was the same: Monday, Tuesday...."

She woke up one day in the hospital, possibly because of exhaustion or malnutrition. She didn't know how she got there, or why. "Father Christmas came through the hospital, and that's how I know it was close to December."

Her sister had made it to England and was living with a family as a maid. The two sisters kept in touch through letters after they were separated. After Small was released from the hospital, the sisters found a little room in a rough London neighborhood and got sewing jobs in a factory.

After the war ended, she and Ida left for the United States. Her sister, now 91, lives nearby in Colorado.

"I still hate tea," Small said. "It reminds me of England."

The Holocaust cast a shadow that has hung over generations. Small's daughter, Miriam Saunders, recalled growing up in a German-Jewish enclave of New York's Washington Heights neighborhood where no one seemed to have grandparents. She would wake up to her father's nightmare screams. She knew there was something the adults around her were keeping secret.

"I didn't know why they did the things they did," Saunders, 60, said. "They lived in fear, but I never knew why."

It was years before Small and her husband spoke of the past. They joined a group of Holocaust survivors when they moved to Long Island and, slowly, they began talking. Small's 35-year-old granddaughter, Jenniffer Veno, said she was nearly a teenager before her grandmother told her about the trains that carried the children from their homeland and their families.

The Smalls began sharing their stories in schools. At one school, the students questioned her for almost two hours and doted on her. "They asked for my autograph!" she said. "I felt like a celebrity!"

She does it because it's therapeutic. Telling her stories, her daughter said, is what has kept Small sane.

But it never became easy. When one class seemed disinterested, she vowed never to speak to a class again, but she relented because she doesn't want her history to die with her. She has six great-grandchildren, ranging in age from 5 to 20. It's critical that they know.

"If I didn't go through this and if I didn't survive," Small said, "you wouldn't be here."

Two generations — her daughter and granddaughter — flanked her as she recounted her life. They assured her that the youngest generation would know that their great-grandmother's story of survival is also their own.

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# SEARCH BEGINS FOR HOLOCAUST REFUGEES RESCUED BY "UNSUNG HERO"

A global search has been launched for Holocaust refugees saved by a little-known Portuguese diplomat stationed in France during the Second World War — a man described as "one of the great unsung heroes" of the era by renowned Canadian writer Peter C. Newman, who credits the maverick consul Aristides de Sousa Mendes with helping his own family escape the Nazi death chambers.

Sousa Mendes has never received the kind of attention given to Oskar Schindler.

So while the Oscar-winning 1993 film *Schindler's List* rightly shone a Hollywood spotlight on that story, Sousa Mendes's "courageous" actions to help at least 10,000 Jewish and other refugees flee a fallen France in 1940 — and possibly twice that number or more — remain largely under the radar, said spokesman Harry Oesterreicher of the Seattle-based Sousa Mendes Foundation.

While hundreds of those given "life-saving visas" by Sousa Mendes have been identified — including such notable figures as the Spanish artist Salvador Dali and *Curious George* authors Hans and Margret Rey — thousands of other refugees never knew who cleared their way to freedom, and their descendants remain in the dark, Oesterreicher said.

That's why the organization has announced what it calls "an unprecedented search for the rescuees" who were issued visas by Sousa Mendes in June 1940 despite direct orders from Portugal's government at the time not to do so.

As a result, the foundation noted, he was later tried in Portugal and "harshly punished . . . Aristides de Sousa Mendes died in 1954 in poverty and official disgrace, and almost erased from history."

The Austrian-born Newman, 11 years old when he and his family were making their dramatic dash to immigrate to Canada amid the horrors of war, recounted in his 2004 autobiography *Here Be Dragons* how the "forgotten saint" Sousa Mendes was key to their successful attempt to get out of France in the wake of the German invasion, eventually reaching Canada.

"Lisbon did not accept Jews," Newman writes in the book, "but this edict was ignored by . . . Sousa Mendes, a devout Catholic with an enlightened attitude who had decided to help the frightened refugees as a humanitarian gesture."

Newman, a former editor of the *Toronto Star* and *Maclean's* and one of the country's leading authors of Canadian political and corporate history, said he returned to *Bordeaux*, France, a few years ago to visit the city where his family received their visa from Sousa Mendes.

He made a point of searching for the historical marker commemorating the Portuguese consul's "humanitarian courage" in 1940.

"The plaque is placed so high on the building that it's impossible to read it from the street unless you have a ladder," said Newman, now 82. "I don't know if that was done because they didn't want anybody to read about what happened or if it was done to keep the plaque from being defaced."

Either way, it was symbolic of the relative obscurity of the Sousa Mendes story. Newman applauded the foundation's bid to seek out other rescuees and their families, and spread knowledge of a hero who died "unheralded and unrecognized."

# YAD VASHEM: THE SHINING LI

## *Gala of the Young Leadership Associates*

**YLA Board and Committee.**

# GHT OF THE NEXT GENERATION

## *of the American Society for Yad Vashem*

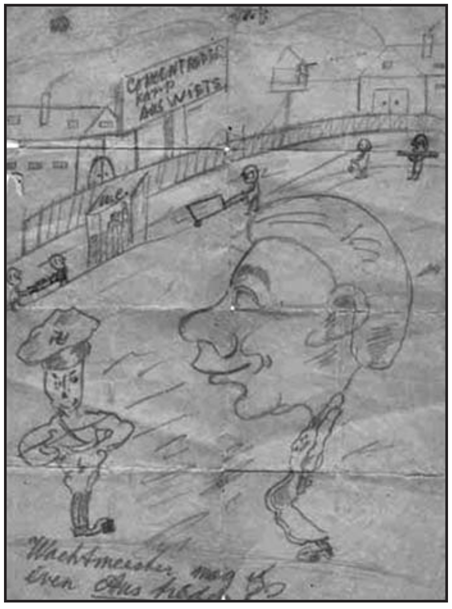
# REPORT FROM YAD VASHEM

## “SO THEY MIGHT KNOW”

*BY YEHUDIT SHENDAR*

Just before Holocaust Remembrance Day 2012, in the wake of the national “Gathering the Fragments” campaign, Iris First (née Coezijn) came to the Museum of Holocaust Art at Yad Vashem. She was carrying a book, and inside it an age-worn sheet of paper. “I waited a long, long time, before deciding on this moment,” explained an emotional First, pointing at the image in the caricature drawing. “I kept it to myself for years and years, hiding it from the children up on the top bookshelf…. This is my father, this is totally my father.” The caricature is more than a piece of Holocaust art to be added to the Museum collection. Its uniqueness is embodied in the spine-tingling fact that the drawing, as well as the man who carried it on him, survived Auschwitz. Neatly folded, it was tucked inside the prisoner’s clothing until he was forced on a death march and up to his later liberation. Upon making *aliyah*, the former prisoner held on to the drawing and kept it safe. Who was that prisoner, and what was his story?

Amsterdam, February 21, 1947: Jozef Coezijn, native of the city, born in 1923, delivered a statement to Dr. Simon Goldestijn at the National Institute for War Documentation. Just two years after liberation, Coezijn reported in a dry and factual manner his experiences during the Holocaust. Here are some brief excerpts from his testimony: “I was sent to *Budy*, some eight kilometers from Auschwitz. There I worked at an agricultural camp. We were 500–600 people. We got beaten a lot. My brother was one of those who died from all the beatings. I stayed over half a year at *Budy*, and then I was transferred back to Auschwitz… I was put into a *kommando* digging gravel, and stayed there for about 2–3 weeks… We were then subjected to a medical check-up, and I was sent to *Golleschau*. That was a cement factory. We were 1,200 men. I remained there for over a year and a half. They needed strong guys. Although thin, I was healthy and looked okay. We were forced to hew rocks out of mountain slopes and load them onto wagons. The work was impossibly difficult… I stayed there until the Russians approached in October 1944. We set off on a march. After marching 90 kilometers in two days, we boarded a train. We were told that we were going to *Dachau*. En route, the train was attacked by planes, and I jumped off together with a friend of mine, a guy from France…. One morning, there was a knock at the door, and of course we thought that the Nazis had come — but it was the Americans. I took the train to *Namen* near *Dodinne*, where we got off and were returned to our motherland.”


CEMENTFABRIK KAMP AUSWITS
Wachtmeester, mag ik even Aus treden

The horrifying fate that befell the Jews of Holland during the Holocaust is exemplified in all its gravity in the story of the Coezijn family. Jozef’s fourteen siblings, aged 6–26, along with their 50-year-old father, were all murdered. Jozef (Jopi, as his friends called him) was cast into the proverbial “pit” — the *Golleschau* camp, infamous for its unparalleled cruelty amid the 40-some satellite camps of Auschwitz — and survived. During his three years of imprisonment and bone-crushing forced labor, he stood strong as a young and healthy man, of pleasant temperament. His friends said he was the “joker” in their midst, and his sense of humor gave a boost to everyone.

That is exactly how he is depicted in the caricature. A prewar photograph of him further sharpens the amazing likeness that the anonymous artist was able to capture with his pencil. With shaking legs, he approaches the guard, asking to “go out for a bit” — i.e., to the latrine marked by the WC sign denoting its location nearby. The airplane hovering in the skies gives some indication to the fact that the drawing dates sometime toward the end of the war, when Allied forces converged upon the factories in *Buna*, seeking to cripple the German military industry. Jopi immigrated to Israel, married an Israeli-born girl of Moroccan descent, and refused to talk to his children about his traumatic past. “He never told me,” says Iris. “Before this piece of paper crumbles into pieces, I brought it here — so that people may see, so they might know.”

## FRENCH WOMAN WHO SAVED JEWS IN WWII HONORED

*BY SAM SOKOL,*
*THE JERUSALEM POST*

Yad Vashem unveiled the name of a new member of the Righteous Among the Nations in March in a Jerusalem ceremony attended by French Ambassador Christoph Bigot. Serge Marignan accepted a medal and certificate of honor on behalf of his grandmother, Jeanne Albouy, who hid and protected the Wulek family, refugees from Poland who had settled in France prior to the WWII.

Survivor Claire Kohlman, now the matriarch of a large ultra-Orthodox family in *Bnei Brak*, was only two years old when her father Wilhelm Wulwek was arrested as a foreign national in 1940. After his release, the Wulwek family moved to the *Gard* district in southern France and met Jeanne Albouy, whose own husband was then a prisoner of war in Germany.

According to Yad Vashem, Albouy searched for a safe place for the Wulwek family, finding them a hiding place in her cousin’s empty house in the village of *Sinsans*.

Wilhelm, his wife Mélanie, and their children Victor and Claire were later joined there by Mélanie’s brother Julius Heller. The children were registered at a local school and the father worked at an agricultural job.

However, after the Nazis occupied southern France in 1942, the family was in “constant danger,” according to a recounting of the Wulwek family story provided by Yad Vashem.

When the Nazis carried out sweeps in the adjacent village, “my parents had to hide,” Kohlman told *The Jerusalem Post*.

“People used to tell them [that the Nazis were coming] and they went to hide during the night in the fields [and] in the forests, and Jeanne took my brother and me [into her] house and we were sleeping there, eating there; we were hidden there by her.

“Whatever they had to eat they gave to us also.”

Speaking to an assembly of members of her large extended clan, the French ambassador, and the Marignan family, Kohlman said that Albouy “showed you can maintain your humanity” even under harsh circumstances.

“She hid us for three years and worried about us. Many times Nazi soldiers arrived and searched in the area, and mother and father went to hide. We were partners to everything in their lives for these years, and we felt like one family. Jeanne, you did the good and right thing for years.”

“I’m very moved,” she told the *Post*, noting that now, with the passage of years, she can “understand even more than before all that they did for us; that they put themselves in danger to save us.”

Albouy and her daughter Lucette “never asked” for recognition and “I never thought of that,” Kohlman said. However, she believes that it was important that Marignan submitted his grandmother’s name for recognition.

“We believe in the next world they see that and understand that we didn’t forget,” she said.

During her time in hiding, Kohlman recalled, she was once confronted by a German soldier who began to badger her with questions.

“I wanted to scream but I couldn’t. I was like paralyzed. I remained like a stone,” she recalled, until “a woman came and told him [she] didn’t speak German,” at which point he left her alone.

Contemporary Europeans could learn a lot from her story, Kohlman believes.

When she was in school in France, she says, she learned about the French values of liberty and equality and is now sad that these lessons are being forgotten with the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe.

In a similar story, Marignan’s mother, around 15 at the time, was caught by the Germans, breaking curfew, and was interrogated for an hour. However, Marignan said, she did not give up the fact that she was hiding Jews in her home.

**Serge Marignan, French Ambassador Christoph Bigot, and Claire Kohlman.**

“I’m very moved,” he told the Post, noting that “there are extreme anti-foreigner movements in Europe today,” and that people should think about the heroism of people like his grandmother, who risked her life to save others who were different.

“This is something that today we should think about,” he said.

Bigot, speaking with the *Post* after unveiling Albouy’s name, engraved on a memorial wall, said that the Holocaust represented a “very tough part of our history.”

“You had people with zeal who collaborated [and] at the same time, you had these people whom we honor today, who, in modesty, saved lives.”

France, at the time, he said, had “two faces,” both of heroism and collaboration, and “this is something that still haunts our conscience for days, years, and centuries. It’s part of us and that is why it is so important to remember to let the memory pass to the next generation, and to know in certain circumstances you have to disobey, you have to rebel, you have to listen to your heart and not to whatever can be dictated to you.”

The two families had nothing in common, he noted, but their “special human bond.”

Irina Steinfeld, director of the Righteous Among the Nations department at Yad Vashem, noted that only those who risked their lives are eligible for this honor, even if they helped Jews in other ways.

Last year, she noted, Yad Vashem recognized over 450 righteous individuals and one can say that this “number is very big and very small at the same time. In taking a risk for a good deed, the righteous are not just good people, people who did good deeds. The righteous are more than that.”

It would be “self-righteous,” she noted, to demand that everybody take such extreme risks. “You don’t have the right to demand that people should sacrifice themselves and be willing to pay such a dear price.”

“What I take away from this are these very special moments, these stories, but what I take away especially is when I look at the people around them. You had Jews who were persecuted, you have the people who were willing to pay a price to save them, and then you have the perpetrators [and] people who were indifferent. I think that what we should do is look at the people who are indifferent, and this is what we should take away: not to be indifferent.”

It is important, she said, “to look around us and not to permit that a group of people will become invisible, as the Jews did.

“People felt no obligation towards them and this is what we should take away, that we don’t have the right to permit people to become invisible.”

# HOW NAZIS ESCAPED JUSTICE IN SOUTH AMERICA

*BY FELIX BOHR, SPIEGEL ONLINE*

After World War II, dozens of Nazi criminals went into hiding in South America. A new study reveals how a "coalition of the unwilling" on both sides of the Atlantic successfully stymied efforts to hunt and prosecute these criminals for decades.

All it took was a transposed number — 1974 instead of 1947 — for Gustav Wagner to be allowed to stay in Brazil. It was a mere slip of the pen by the man who had translated the German document into Portuguese that prompted Brazil's supreme court to deny West Germany's request to extradite the former SS officer. And yet Wagner stood accused of complicity in the murders of 152,000 Jews at the *Sobibor* extermination camp in German-occupied Poland.

Josef Mengele, the notorious concentration camp doctor at Auschwitz, also benefited from mistakes and delays because French officials with Interpol, the international police force then headquartered in Paris, refused to conduct international searches for Nazi war criminals. And, in the case of SS Colonel Walther Rauff, who helped developed mobile gas chambers used to kill Jews, it was an official with the German Foreign Ministry who sabotaged his own government's extradition request to Chile for 14 months.

As a result of these breakdowns, all three of these Nazi thugs were never tried in German courts after the war. Wagner, the "beast" of *Sobibor*, died in São Paulo, Mengele drowned in Brazil, and Rauff died of a heart attack in Chile. Of the hundreds of guilty Nazi officials and mass murderers who had fled to South America after the surrender of Nazi Germany, only a handful were ever held to account.

How could so many criminals manage to go unpunished, even though they were clearly guilty? It's a conundrum that mystifies academics to this day.

Historian Daniel Stahl has conducted research in European and South American archives in the process of writing a new book entitled *Nazi Hunt: South America's Dictatorships and the Avenging of Nazi Crimes*. The work supplies a certain and disgraceful answer to what has long been suspected: that there was a broad coalition of people — across continents and within the courts, police, governments, and administrations — that was unwilling to act or even thwarted the prosecution of Nazi criminals for decades.

Stahl believes that the motives for being part of what he calls a "coalition of the unwilling" differed widely. West German diplomats sabotaged the hunt for Nazis out of solidarity. French criminal investigators feared that cooperation might expose their own pasts as Nazi collaborators. And South American dictators refused to extradite former Nazis out of concern that trials of war criminals could direct international attention to the crimes their own governments were then committing.

**Rauff with a Chilean police officer after his 1962 arrest.**

It wasn't hard for this coalition to torpedo the hunt for Nazis. Countless players — in politics, the judiciary, the government, and the administration — had to work together in order to arrange and execute successful criminal prosecutions. Indeed, a small mistake or minor procedural irregularity was enough to foil the arrest of the criminals.

Stahl leaves no doubt that the West German judiciary was especially guilty of serious lapses. His findings confirm that it neglected to forcefully pursue Nazi murderers for decades.

Walther Rauff, for example, was able to travel between South America and Germany after the war as a representative of various companies. But he never ran into any difficulties because his name didn't appear on any lists of wanted criminals. It wasn't until 1961 that the public prosecutor's office in the northern city of *Hanover* issued a warrant for Rauff's arrest on almost 100,000 counts of murder.

Finding Rauff's address in Chile wasn't a problem, and the German Foreign Ministry instructed Ambassador Hans Strack in Santiago to request extradition of the Nazi war criminal. But Strack, who had also worked at the Foreign Ministry before 1945, ignored the instructions from the ministry in Bonn and allowed the case to drag on for 14 months.

It wasn't until after justice officials in *Hanover* notified federal colleagues that they were "extremely disconcerted" over the fact that the embassy was treating the case "with such hesitancy" that the government disciplined the recalcitrant ambassador. Strack, a known opponent to redressing the crimes of Nazi Germany, finally applied for Rauff's extradition, which led to his arrest in late 1962.

But by then, it was too late to punish Rauff because murder came under the statute of limitations in most South American countries at the time. Chile's supreme court denied Germany's request to extradite the former SS colonel. Despite international protests, Rauff continued to live as a free man in Chile for decades.

In other cases, a lack of cooperation by Interpol thwarted the pursuit of Nazis. Stahl uncovered one particularly revealing document, the minutes of a meeting of Interpol's executive committee from May 1962. A short time earlier, the World Jewish Congress had asked Interpol to participate in the global search for Nazi war criminals. Interpol's then-secretary general, Marcel Sicot, responded angrily. Why should war criminals be prosecuted, the Frenchman is quoted as asking in the minutes, "since the victor always imposes his laws, anyway? No international entity defines the term 'war criminal.'" In fact, Sicot regarded the criminal prosecution of Nazi crimes as "victor's justice."

In 1960, there were rumors that Josef Mengele, the concentration camp doctor known as the "Angel of Death," was hiding in Brazil or Chile. The German Justice Ministry advised the Federal Criminal Police Office to conduct a manhunt — but without involving Interpol. Officials in Bonn were apparently trying to avoid bothering international investigators with the case, but Mengele's hiding place was never found.

Stahl attributes Interpol's failure to arrest Nazis and their collaborators to the wartime past of many French police officers. "As henchmen of the Vichy regime, (they) collaborated with the Nazis until 1944," Stahl writes. "They stood opposed to the criminal prosecution of Nazi crimes."

Stahl also notes that one of the major obstacles in the hunt for Nazi criminals was the fact that South American dictators wanted to cover up their own crimes. On June 22, 1979, the German ambassador in Brasilia wrote that the extradition of someone who had committed war crimes almost 40 years earlier would "bolster the demands of those who insist that all crimes should be prosecuted, including those committed by the military and the police."

In Germany, a new generation had entered the government bureaucracy — one that wasn't afraid to use unconventional means to put Nazi criminals behind bars. In 1982, the *Munich* public prosecutor's office initiated proceedings to apply for the extradition of Klaus Barbie, the former chief of the Gestapo in *Lyon*, France. Fearing that Barbie could be acquitted in Germany for lack of evidence, Justice Ministry officials asked their Foreign Ministry counterparts to hint to Bonn's French allies that "they should also seek Barbie's deportation, specifically from Bolivia to France."

When Paris agreed, the Foreign Ministry instructed the German embassy in La Paz, the Bolivian capital, to "encourage such a development with suitable means."

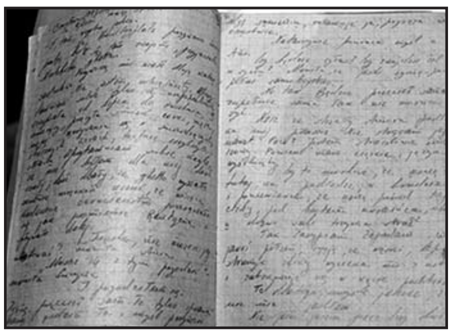
In early 1983, Barbie was deported to France. The notorious "Butcher of Lyon" died in a hospital in that city in 1991.

# RARE HOLOCAUST DIARY UNVEILED

***President Peres receives chilling journal in Polish language, published 70 years after start of Warsaw ghetto uprising. Another diary describes activity of anti-Nazi resistance groups.***

*BY NOAM DVIR , YNETNEWS*

"At night, we will be led to *Treblinka*. It's the last time I see the blue sky." A copy of a rare diary from the Holocaust was presented to President Shimon Peres at the Ghetto Fighters' House Museum.


**Twenty-eight pages in Polish about Holocaust.**

The document was published in honor of the 70th anniversary of the "January uprising," which took place at the Warsaw ghetto and served as the first significant act of resistance against the Nazis.

During the ceremony the president referred to the Warsaw ghetto uprising, which erupted in April 1943, as "one of the Jewish people's greatest acts of bravery." He added that he was "overwhelmed by the inconceivable courage."

The diary's author, a Jewish lawyer born in 1906, describes routine life in the Warsaw ghetto:

"The body of a woman shot last night by a Ukrainian is lying in one of the halls. Her four-year-old son crawls next to her body. He touches his mother's bleeding body and pulls her hair. Her stiffness amuses him. He pushes a finger into her half-open mouth, touches the glazed eyes that cannot see. Suddenly he starts crying. A pitiful cry."

After a selection process at *Umschlagplatz*, the Warsaw square where Jews gathered for deportation to the concentration camps, the writer was sent to *Treblinka* in April 1943. His fate remains unknown.

Ahead of the move to *Treblinka*, he wrote in his diary:

"I look at the clear sky of the month of April. At night we will be led to *Treblinka*. When the dawn breaks, I will no longer be alive. It's a simple calculation — this is the last time I see the blue sky between the clouds."

Of his murdered family he wrote:

"April 19, 1943. In a week I will be 37 years old. Oh, well, what difference does it make? I am told that my mother has been shot. I'm not shocked. She suffered for nine months, surviving the death of her daughter, the death of her husband, and the need to hide in stinking and suffocating holes.

**Chilling testimony of life in Warsaw ghetto.**

"I suddenly realize that I wasn't sensitive enough toward her, that the ghetto robbed me of my softness and sensitivity, and that the cruelty controlling everything has been absorbed into me like x-rays."

The 28-page diary, which was written in Polish, arrived at Ghetto Fighters' House in the 1970s and was kept in the archives for years, waiting to be translated and interpreted.

Segments from another diary were also read during the ceremony. It was written by an anonymous fighter, who according to archives sources belonged to the Jewish Combat Organization or the revisionist Jewish Military Union.

The fighter's diary describes the construction of bunkers and the preparations of the resistance forces which fought the Nazis.

"Wednesday, April 28, 1943. The 10th day in the bunker. The bombings and shooting have stopped. And the people are bathing, handing out coffee, and cooking food. Everything is being done quietly, in complete silence, and in accordance with the instructions of the bunker leader. We must survive. We are fighting for justice and for the right to live."

These two documents are part of the collection of Adolf Avraham Berman, who was a resistance activist and courageously collected pieces of information during the war, together with his wife Batya.

The two kept the collection after the war until they arrived in Israel, where they handed the documents to the museum. The diary has been posted on the museum's website to allow free access to the wide public.

# 75 YEARS AFTER *ANSCHLUSS*, NAZI “SHADOWS” HAUNT AUSTRIA

*BY MATT LEBOVIC,*
*THE TIMES OF ISRAEL*

As a little girl in 1940, Gita Kaufman escaped Vienna with her family at the last possible moment.

Austria had been under German control for two years, following the bloodless *Anschluss*, or union, of March 12, 1938. The annexation was a boon to Nazi anti-Jewish policy, as the largely affluent Jewish community of Vienna fell into German hands.

Members of the Weinrauch family, including future filmmaker Gita, center, remained in Vienna until after World War II was underway.

Jews had lived in Austria since Roman times, and almost 200,000 called the alpine republic home before the *Anschluss*. Vienna, the capital and crown jewel of the former Austro-Hungarian empire, was adored by native Jews such as Herzl, Freud and Buber. Fellow Austrian Adolf Hitler notoriously despised the city for its decadence and racial impurity.

Kaufman remembers an early childhood in Vienna filled with classical music and visits from relatives throughout Europe. All that changed 75 years ago Tuesday, when the Nazis turned their sights on Austria’s Jews.

Immediately after the *Anschluss*, Jews lost employment and were stripped of property, civil rights, and dignity. To dampen protest, the Nazis sent 6,000 of Austria’s leading Jewish citizens to *Dachau* and *Buchenwald*, where most died.

Largely unknown to Kaufman at the time, her father worked ceaselessly to get the family out of Austria. No Jewish emigration “list” was too obscure for him to pursue, as illustrated by his correspondence with family members around the world.

The wartime letters from 11 members of Kaufman’s family form the basis of her new documentary, *Shadows From My Past*.

Written between 1939 and 1941, the letters document the Kaufman family’s escape to the US, as well as efforts to save relatives trapped in Nazi-occupied Europe. Kaufman’s parents were Polish citizens, and most of their relatives were left to their fate in Poland.

“These letters from my family members all over Europe made their shadows real as I read them,” Kaufman told *The Times of Israel*. “The letters came back to my parents during the years after the war, having traveled the world looking for people who were no longer alive.”

Kaufman did not know of her father’s efforts to save her family at the time, but she remembers the situation for Austria’s Jews becoming progressively worse. One year after the *Anschluss*, Kaufman’s father — Nachman Weinrauch — was arrested by the Gestapo.

Kaufman describes her father’s arrest and torture in the documentary, including how Gestapo agents beat him and forced him into the frozen Danube River. A retired kindergarten teacher and youth orchestra conductor, Kaufman will never forget the powerlessness she felt during those final months in Vienna.

“Making this film made me realize what a loving and intelligent father I had,” Kaufman said. “He saved our family with his connections and his letters, and I did not understand that growing up. He was quiet and hard of hearing, and people did not always appreciate him.”

On the same day the Weinrauch family was to be deported to *Dachau*, the priceless US entry visas arrived.

Within months of the family’s 1940 escape, most of central Europe had been conquered by Germany, and the first Jewish ghettos were established. The death camps had yet to open, but Kaufman’s letters from relatives trapped in Poland show they knew what was in store for them.

“Don’t give the family any rest,” Polish relatives wrote to Kaufman’s mother, Cele Weinrauch, about their situation. Desperate to flee Poland, family members recounted ongoing atrocities against Jews — in veiled terms to avoid the censor.

“It was hair-raising that a big family could be so indifferent,” Kaufman said of her frustration reading the pleas from Poland alongside responses from “complacent” family members in the US, some written after intended recipients had been deported.

Kaufman spent more than a decade making *Shadows*, a labor of love for her and late husband Curt Kaufman, who directed the film. Juxtaposed with the letters and old family photographs are two dozen interviews Kaufman conducted in Austria.

Her most famous subjects were two of Austria’s post-Holocaust icons — Kurt Waldheim and Simon Wiesenthal.

Kaufman grilled former Nazi officer and United Nations chief Kurt Waldheim about Austria’s claim to have been Hitler’s “first victim.” With *Mauthausen* camp survivor and Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal, she asked about Austrians’ disproportionate participation in the genocide.

Both Waldheim and Wiesenthal have since died, giving a sense of the film’s decade-long production.

From the archbishop of Vienna to a bevy of politicians and artists, Kaufman left no stone unturned in asking national figures about their country’s role in the Holocaust, on camera.

Austria’s current president, Heinz Fischer, addressed the topic during his interview with Kaufman.

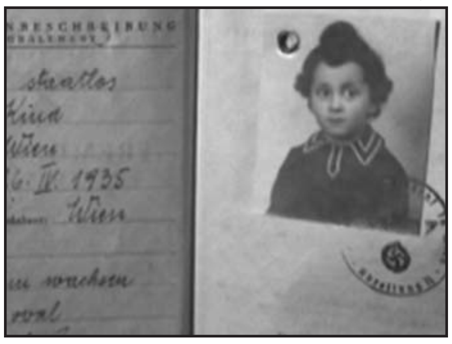
“On the one hand, Austria and Austrians were victims,” Fischer said. “On the other hand, they were also contributors, and many Austrians were involved in the crimes and the terror of the Nazi system.”

Fischer is one of several Austrian leaders who helped advance Kaufman’s film, including by introducing an earlier, “less cinematic” version into Austrian schools in 2010. Entirely based on the family letters and without interviews, the German-language documentary was the brainchild of Kaufman’s husband.

Curt Kaufman — like his wife — was an artist who worked in many forms, including children’s books and visual arts. In 1987, he authored the critically acclaimed children’s book *Hotel Boy*, a frank look at child homelessness. He created illustrations and wrote the story with his wife, who could relate to being temporarily homeless.

Kaufman credits her husband with “always being ahead of his time,” and giving her the confidence to become a writer. Her experience combining text and illustrations with him for children’s books helped her envision the *Shadows* screenplay, Kaufman said.

“This film would never have been made were it not for Curt,” she said. “He had the vision and pushed me to do it. He taught himself film editing to get this done.”



Kaufman’s childhood ID bears the swastika.

Just as the documentary entered final editing in December of 2011, Curt Kaufman passed away. He had been diagnosed with esophageal cancer five months earlier, giving the couple little time to reflect on four decades of marriage, much less complete the film.

“I thought it was the end of the film when Curt died,” Kaufman said.

Since her husband’s death, she has worked to finish the documentary as a testament to his legacy. A film intended to recall her lost family in Europe brought Kaufman closer to their memory and — in the past year — to her late husband as well.

Kaufman also updated the film to reflect new trends in European anti-Semitism, asking several interviewees to compare the political atmosphere for Jews following the *Anschluss* and today.

“Unemployment in Europe might bring this dark period back,” Jorg Haider, the former chairman of the right-wing Austrian Freedom Party, told Kaufman, rather nonchalantly.

Other interviewees pointed to the growth of Vienna’s Jewish community and its new institutions as potential lightning rods for anti-Semites.

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## HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTATION AND MEMORY...

*(Continued from page 1)*

the ways in which we provide teachers with enrichment about this subject is to provide resources to teach about this subject, but also to offer connections between this subject and other fields of study. In this way we hope to raise awareness and make the information more relevant to students. As educators we are aware how the events of the Holocaust include a wide array of challenges to teachers and students because of their complexity, horror, content, and obligation to remember that the subject presents.“

**Pedagogical workshop for participants: "Sensitizing Students to Learning about the Holocaust."**

She added that “our own awareness of Holocaust survivors should include the changing image of Holocaust victims who survived and who perished. For those who perished, we need to consider how they want to be remembered. For those who survived, we should realize how they have been transformed from victims to heroes. They are our eyewitnesses to history, and their resistance efforts are symbols of the strength and of the resilience of the human spirit.” As one way of honoring survivors who emerged from this destruction, Yad Vashem designated the theme of this year’s commemoration of the Holocaust as *Defiance and Rebellion during the Holocaust: 70 Years Since the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*.

Dr. Yahalom told the participants that “as educators, by sharing the responsibility of teaching the lessons of this event to future generations, you make a positive and meaningful contribution to Holocaust education and remembrance, since your efforts help secure the historically valid memory of this event for the future. Documenting the Holocaust and preserving its memory is the driving force behind Holocaust history. As educators we are aware how the events of the Holocaust include a wide array of challenges to teachers and students because of the complexity, horror, content and obligation of remembrance this subject presents. To meet these challenges, we offer teachers connections between this event and contemporary issues. In this way, we hope to raise awareness and make the information more meaningful and relevant to our students.“

She concluded that when we teach students about the Holocaust, we try to provide a human perspective. “Studying the Holocaust allows us to see the range of human behavior: the beauty and the horror, the hope and the despair, the thoughtfulness and the thoughtlessness, and the kindness and cruelty of which human beings are capable.”

*For more information about ASYV educational programs and events and its Young Leadership Associates, contact Dr. Marlene Warshawski Yahalom, Director of Education — mwy@yadvashemusa.org.*

# HOW THE PRESS SOFT-PEDALED HITLER

*BY RAFAEL MEDOFF, JNS.ORG*

"There is at least one official voice in Europe that expresses understanding of the methods and motives of President Roosevelt — the voice of Germany, as represented by Chancellor Adolf Hitler."

That incredible statement was the opening line of a flattering feature story about the Nazi leader that appeared on the front page of the *New York Times* in 1933, and was typical of some early press coverage of Hitler, who rose to power 80 years ago on January 30.

Hitler's ascent caught much of the world by surprise. As late as May 1928, the Nazis had won less than 3 percent of the vote in elections to the *Reichstag*, Germany's parliament, and the Nazi party's candidate for president received barely 1 percent of the votes in March 1929. But as Germany's economic and social crises worsened, the Nazis rose to 18.3 percent of the vote in the parliamentary election of July 1930. They doubled that total two years later, becoming the largest party in the *Reichstag*.

Negotiations between the Nazis and other parties then produced a coalition government, with Hitler as chancellor. The Nazis celebrated with a huge torchlight parade through the streets of Berlin on the night of Hitler's appointment, January 30, 1933.

Relatively little was known in America about Hitler, and many leading newspapers predicted that the Nazis would not turn out to be as bad as some feared.

An editorial in the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* on January 30 claimed that "there have been indications of moderation" on Hitler's part. The editors of the *Cleveland Press*, on January 31, asserted that the "appointment of Hitler as German chancellor may not be such a threat to world peace as it appears at first blush."

Officials of the Roosevelt administration were quoted in the press as saying they "had faith that Hitler would act with moderation compared to the extremist agitation [i]n his recent election campaigning... [They] based this belief on past events showing that so-called 'radical' groups usually moderated, once in power."

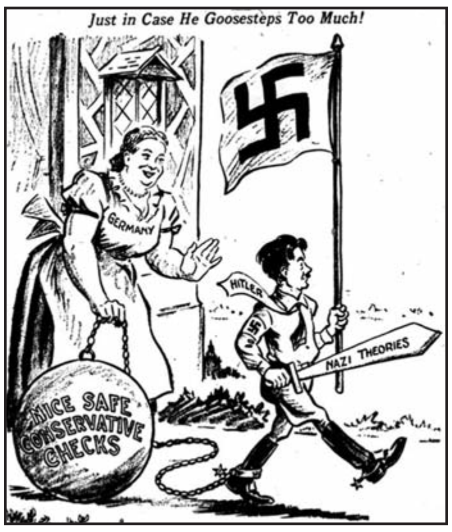
In the weeks to follow, however, events on the ground contradicted those optimistic forecasts. Outbursts of anti-Jewish violence were tolerated, and often encouraged and assisted, by the Nazi regime.

In early March, for example, the *Chicago Tribune* published an eyewitness account of "bands of Nazis throughout Germany carr[ying] out wholesale raids to intimidate the opposition, particularly the Jews." Victims were "hit over the heads with blackjacks, dragged out of their homes in night clothes and otherwise molested," with many Jews "taken off to jail and put to work in a concentration camp."

The following month, the *New York Evening Post* reported that the Nazis had launched "a violent campaign of murderous agitation" against Germany's Jews: "An indeterminate number of Jews... have been killed. Hundreds of Jews have been beaten or tortured. Thousands of Jews have fled. Thousands of Jews have been, or will be deprived of their livelihood. All of Germany's 600,000 Jews are in terror."

The Hitler regime was determined to eliminate the Jewish community from German society. During the Nazis' first weeks in power, violence and intimidation were used to force Jewish judges, attorneys, journalists, university professors, and orchestra conductors and musicians out of their jobs.

A law passed on April 7 required the dismissal of Jews from all government jobs. Additional legislation in the months to follow banned Jews from a whole range of professions, from dentistry to the movie industry. The government even sponsored a one-day nationwide boycott of Jewish businesses, with Nazi storm troopers stationed outside Jewish-owned stores to prevent customers from entering.


Just in Case He Goosesteps Too Much!
GERMANY
HITLER
NAZI THEORIES
NICE SAFE CONSERVATIVE CHECKS

**Cartoonist Keith Temple, in the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, echoed the naive but widespread belief in the West that conservative leaders in the German political and industrial communities would restrain Hitler's radicalism.**

Nevertheless, in July 1933, nearly six months after Hitler's rise to power, the *New York Times* ran a front-page feature about the Führer that presented him in a flattering light. For Hitler, it was a golden opportunity to soften his image by praising President Roosevelt, as well as a platform to deliver lengthy justifications of his totalitarian policies and attacks on Jews.

The article, titled "Hitler Seeks Jobs for All Germans," began with Hitler's remark that FDR was looking out "for the best interests and welfare of the people of the United States." He added: "I have sympathy with President Roosevelt because he marches straight toward his objective over Congress, over lobbies, over stubborn bureaucracies."

The story was based on an interview with the Nazi leader by *Times* correspondent Anne O'Hare McCormick. She gave Hitler paragraph after paragraph to explain his policies as necessary to address Germany's unemployment, improve its roads, and promote national unity. The *Times* correspondent lobbed the Nazi chief softball questions such as "What character in history do you admire most, Caesar, Napoleon, or Frederick the Great?"

McCormick also described Hitler's appearance and mannerisms in a strongly positive tone: Hitler is "a rather shy and simple man, younger than one expects, more robust, taller.... His eyes are almost the color of the blue larkspur in a vase behind him, curiously childlike and candid.... His voice is as quiet as his black tie and his double-breasted black suit.... Herr Hitler has the sensitive hand of the artist."

Whatever her intentions, articles like McCormick's helped dull the American public's awareness of the dangers of Nazism. The image of a pro-American moderate undermined the chances for mobilizing serious international opposition to Hitler during the early months of his regime.

# MY DIARY OF A NAZI DEATH CAMP CHILDHOOD

*(Continued from page 6)*

ment at the camp. He bricked them into a wall to hide them.

Helga and her mother were sent to Auschwitz, where they joined the notorious queue as they arrived: older women and mothers with young children to the left, those deemed able to work to the right. To survive, it was essential to end up on the right. Prisoners who knew the fate that lay ahead on the left whispered warnings: "Don't say you are too young, don't say you are ill — say you are able to work. Don't say you belong together, that you are mother and child," remembers Helga.

She resolved to say she was older than 14; her mother would pretend to be younger. In fact, the SS man didn't ask questions and sent them both to the right. "He pointed — I don't know if it was luck, fate, a miracle. I have friends who are still alive — they are the same age as I am — but their mothers were [sent to the left]. So I was lucky twice. Not only that I was not sent, but that I was together with my mother."

Next day, at roll call, the women were addressed in German. "The speech was very long — I asked my mother to translate. She said, 'Oh, he says we are in an extermination camp.'"

Helga laughs explosively, a sound still full of shock and incredulity. They hadn't known about the gas chambers, the death camps. "We arrived and saw smoking chimneys — we thought it was a factory."

Other prisoners enlightened them — the smoke was rising from the camp crematorium. They were told to strip naked and their heads were shaved. Helga didn't recognize her own mother until she heard her voice.

Her 10 days at Auschwitz were worse than the three years at *Terezín*, but Helga suspects it was harder still for her mother. She remembers being outside, shaved head freezing, and Irena reaching over to cup her bare scalp. It was all the comfort she could offer.

**Helga with her parents, Irena and Otto, and her paternal grandmother, Sophie.**

From Auschwitz, they were sent to *Freiberg*, a sub-camp of *Flossenbürg* concentration camp, where they worked as slave labor for five months, polishing aeroplane parts. Then came a 16-day transport by rail to *Mauthausen* in Austria. Irena was so weak she could hardly stand and both suffered from frostbite, lice, and constant, raging thirst. Rumors flew about the war's end and some women escaped, but Helga couldn't be sure her mother was fit enough to try. In one four-day period they had nothing to eat but two potatoes, half a cup of tea and two spoons of sugar.

Along the route, news arrived that Berlin had fallen.

At *Mauthausen*, they went without food for five days. Had there been just one more day before peace was declared, Helga suspects her mother would not have survived. Days later, on May 5, 1945, the camp was liberated by the Allied forces.

She and Irena returned home to Prague and began to look for Otto. His name didn't appear on the registration lists for any of the camps other than *Terezín*. In the first months, they found it unbearable to be alone together in the flat, which was so full of memories of their life together before the war. In the evenings they walked the streets together until it was time to sleep.

Helga continued her *Terezín* diary, recording everything that happened after they moved on. It's written in the present tense because she was still caught up in the experience, she says.

The diary has been published as she wrote it in the 1940s, as it was found at the bottom of a drawer. The sheaf of yellow papers was given to Venetia Butterfield, a British publisher who heard about it in 2010 when Helga came to London for a concert to commemorate *Terezín*.

In the prologue of the book, Helga explains that although "the writing is childish, the style prolix, naïve," she felt editorial changes would have affected the authenticity of the story. "May readers treat this diary charitably and accept it for what it is," she writes; an important record of life in the concentration camps, which adds to the memories of other child diarists, including, of course, Anne Frank.

Irena didn't want Otto to be declared dead, but after a year the certificates were sent out, regardless. Helga believes someone may have known what happened to him, but didn't want to tell them. Some stories just weren't passed on. Her Uncle Jindra, for example, was sent from Auschwitz to *Mauthausen* and experienced such cold that his legs had to be amputated. He died as a result. His wife knew he had died and where, but was never told those details.

There was no question of Helga and her mother living apart after the war. Irena remained single and when Helga married, her husband shared the apartment with them. Irena helped with Helga's son and daughter, and lived until she was 84. Last year, Helga's daughter remarked that Irena had never smiled. "I never thought about it, but maybe she didn't. Maybe she had no reason."

The legacy of the war has affected her children, she says. Her daughter can't bear to hear of anything ugly, and her son is "terribly anxious," she says. "When I am alone, I have to contact him twice a day."

But one of her granddaughters has been exploring her Jewish roots, and it is probably this younger generation that will benefit initially from Helga's extraordinary journal of survival.

# POLES RELEASE FILM ADMITTING RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANTI-JEWISH MASSACRE

*BY NISSAN TZUR,*
*THE TIMES OF ISRAEL*

The first Polish film to portray the country's gentiles committing crimes against their Jewish neighbors has hit movie theaters, generating both enthusiastic praise and threats of violence against one of the stars.

*Aftermath*, written and directed by Polish filmmaker Wladyslaw Pasikowski, is based on the events of the infamous *Jedwabne* massacre of July 1941, in which nearly all of the town's Jews were beaten to death or burned alive. Long blamed on the occupying Nazis, the slaughter was later revealed to be the work of ordinary Polish citizens.

A joint production between Poles and filmmakers from Russia, Holland, and Slovakia, the fictional *Aftermath* tells the story of a Polish man who returns home after many years abroad to discover a dark secret about his family's past — his brother's participation in an anti-Jewish massacre. Although the town's name and other details have been changed, the movie is widely understood to be about *Jedwabne*, and won the Journalists' Prize last year at the Gdynia Film Festival, Poland's most important movie event.

***Aftermath* star Maciej Stuhr claims he has received death threats after playing a Polish Catholic who learns about the wartime slaughter of Jews in his hometown.**

More than 200,000 Poles attended screenings in the first two weeks after the film's release, a solid outcome for a country of Poland's size.

Vividly reimagined by the film, the *Jedwabne* massacre was carried out with German encouragement, but was planned and performed by Poles. Of the town's roughly 1,600 Catholics, an estimated 50 percent of the men participated in the killing — first by beating, stabbing, and bludgeoning *Jedwabne's* 1,600 Jews, then by locking the survivors in a barn and burning them alive.

For decades, a plaque in the town claimed Germans had carried out the violence — a claim everyone who remained in *Jedwabne* knew to be false. But in 2001, Jan Gross, a Princeton historian with Polish-Jewish origins, published *Neighbors*, in which he presented evidence that the massacre had been planned and perpetrated by Poles rather than Nazis. The revelations caused bitter recriminations and significant soul-searching across Poland, a country that has long chosen to overlook its citizens' sometimes spirited participation in the Holocaust.

Days before *Aftermath* went into wide release, the film's Warsaw premiere attracted an impressive number of public figures, who praised the film and described it as a step forward in Poles' acknowledgement of their history.

Critics largely agreed, with Giuseppe Sedia, in a review for the *Krakow Post*, likening its production values to those of "the best Hollywood thrillers," and saying the movie effectively mirrors Poles' complex relationship with their wartime past.

"The tormented relationship and lack of mutual understanding between [the brothers] can be read as metaphor for the Polish-Polish war" over how to remember the period, he wrote.

Reactions among the general public have been decidedly more mixed, with some extolling the film's willingness to take on a shameful episode, and others arguing that it paints an unfair portrait of average Poles.

Some have gone as far as to threaten one of the film's stars, claiming *Aftermath* slanders Poland. Maciej Stuhr, who plays one of the brothers, has said he's been struck by a wave of hostility since the movie's release. Online attacks have dismissed him as "a Jew, and not a Pole anymore," and have even included threats against his life.

"I knew that there would be a storm — it was inevitable," he told Polish news channel TVN24. "We're not dealing with this tragic history, and that's what the film is about."

Pasikowski, the film's director, has remained largely silent since the film's opening, declining to give interviews and relying on a statement provided at the premiere.

"[The story] is one of the most painful chapters in Poland's history," he told reporters. "We already have a huge number of movies on the horrors committed by the Germans and the Soviets, and I think it's time to show the terrible things we did ourselves."

# CORNER OF HOLOCAUST HISTORY TOLD THROUGH INNOCENT'S EYES

*(Continued from page 4)*

infirmary and develop a deeper bond. Although they are from different parts of the world and speak different languages, they have much in common.

Both have tragically lost family, David in the Holocaust and Raj in a typhoon and flood. Both come from unstable, fragile places, David from anti-Semitism that crushes Jewish life and Raj from an island where severe weather crushes buildings and people. Both are confined, David in a prison camp, and Raj in his drunken and abusive father's household. Both are refugees from the absurdities of the adult world.

It's no surprise that they concoct a plan to escape. Unfortunately, their journey through the Mauritian forest ends abruptly and tragically. Only Raj survives, and he doesn't understand why. In his old age, Raj develops survivor's guilt and tells his story in flashback to show how that syndrome developed.

Raj finally finds closure at age 70, cured of polio but convinced that God cursed him with fragile health for his role in David's death. David never reaches "Eretz," but Raj vows to keep his memory alive: He promises to tell his son the story so that David, and the Holocaust, will be forever remembered.

# NEW ISRAELI STUDY FINDS SIGNS OF TRAUMA IN GRANDCHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

*BY DAN EVEN, HAARETZ*

One of the most controversial subjects in academic research on the Holocaust is the trauma's impact on future generations. A new study carried out by Haifa University argues that Holocaust trauma signs can be identified among third-generation grandchildren.

The study, carried out by Dr. Miri Scharf and Prof. Ofra Mayseless from Haifa University's Education Department, detects unprocessed, indirect signs of post-trauma, or problems in communication and interaction systems, among second- and third-generation descendants of Holocaust victims.

The study is based on in-depth interviews conducted with 196 Israelis who are second-generation descendants, and are considered functioning adults who do not suffer from psychological disturbances, and their children, third-generation descendants, a group with an average age of 18. The researchers identified three experiential patterns of distress that are liable to be passed down from generation to generation.

## THREATENING REALITY

Initially, the research discerned a tendency to focus on matters connected to survival. Second-generation participants in the study testified that their Holocaust survivor parents were emotionally engaged in a survival struggle in which the world was viewed as a threatening reality filled with unexpected events; the parents continually prepared themselves for the unknown.

Some participants in the survey said that their parents were overly protective, and prevented them, when they were children, from going out on outings or visiting friends.

Many participants recalled that their parents were worried that they (the children) would suffer harm, or die suddenly. As a result, many second-generation participants developed fears about harm being caused to their parents, or about their parents' deaths. In addition, fears among the parents were expressed via preparation for some future calamity — parents would hoard food and other items, and would make efforts to feed their children so that they would gain weight and be immune to danger.

The study argues that these survival concerns are often passed down from generation to generation, and can now be documented among teenagers who belong to the third generation.

These teenagers testified that the survival worries of their second-generation parents focused mainly on anxieties about hunger and the development of disease. According to the researchers, despite the fact that second-generation daughters mainly considered their parents' anxieties a nuisance, some of them passed down the very same anxieties to their own children.

## LACK OF SUPPORT

The researchers compiled testimony provided by second-generation participants, relating to the perceived lack of emotional support given to them by their parents. Some participants in the study reported that their parents were unable to develop warm, supportive relationships, when they needed such support in their childhood years.

Survivor parents were perceived by some second-generation children as being inaccessible, cold, and distant. And even though these second-generation participants described their parents' inaccessibility as being problematic,

*(Continued on page 15)*

# PAIN REMAINS FOR SLOVAK HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR

*(Continued from page 5)*

onto trucks. After several months there she was sent to a different camp, in Poland.

There she remained until January 1945, when the Germans — panicked about the rapid Soviet advance — ordered the camp's evacuation. Somehow Edita, her sister, and two friends managed to hide underneath bales of straw. The next day — the camp deserted — they made a run for it, heading across frozen fields to the next village. They had the misfortune of running into an SS unit, a stroke of bad luck that left her sister dead and Edita badly wounded.

Delirious from fever and in urgent need of medical treatment, eventually Edita fell into the hands of Red Army soldiers, who found her a doctor. She spent several long months recuperating in hospital in *Lubawa*, Poland, before finally making a tortuous journey home to *Kosice* — sick, emaciated and with no news of her family — in September 1945.

The only other ones to survive were her cousin, and her brother — who had also been through the camps, and who burst into tears when he saw her. Everyone else was gone.

Today, Edita Salamonova is part of a dwindling Jewish community in *Kosice*, numbering a few hundred people, with a few dozen Holocaust survivors among them.

Interest in the fate of *Kosice's* Jews was reignited last summer when Britain's *Sun* newspaper tracked down Laszlo Csatary, the Hungarian police commander accused of setting up the ghetto and organizing the deportations, living peacefully in Budapest.

**Csatary may never have to face justice for his role in deporting Jews.**

It's conceivable Edita might be called to testify against him if he's extradited to Slovakia. But it's not likely, as Csatary is now 97 and could die at any moment.

Edita herself is indifferent to his fate. As she says, nothing will bring back her parents. Or, most painful of all, her sister.

# A HOLOCAUST PAGEANT THAT WAS TOO "POLITICAL" FOR FDR

*BY DR. RAFAEL MEDOFF,*
*THE JEWISH PRESS*

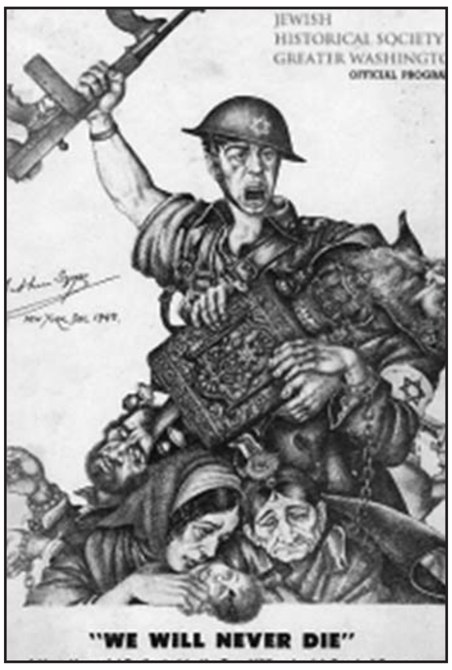
Seventy years ago, 40,000 New Yorkers watched as Jewish activists and Hollywood celebrities joined hands to bring news of the Holocaust to the vaunted stage of Madison Square Garden. But a requested message of greeting from President Franklin D. Roosevelt never arrived, because the White House decided the mass murder of the Jews was too "political" to touch.

In January 1943, a Gallup poll asked Americans, "It is said that two million Jews have been killed in Europe since the war began. Do you think this is true or just a rumor?" Although the Allied leadership had publicly confirmed that two million Jews had been murdered, the poll found only 47 percent believed it was true, while 29 percent dismissed it as a rumor; the remaining 24 percent had no opinion.

The failure of the news media to treat the Nazi genocide as a serious issue contributed to the public's skepticism. To some extent, editors were following the lead of the Roosevelt administration, which, after issuing a condemnation of the mass murder, made no effort to publicize the tragedy or aid Jewish refugees.

Ben Hecht, the newspaper columnist and Academy Award–winning screenwriter, responded in the way he knew best: he picked up his pen and began to write.

With his outsized dramatic sense in high gear, Hecht authored a full-scale pageant called *We Will Never Die*. On a stage featuring forty-foot-high tablets of the Ten Commandments, it would survey Jewish contributions to civilization throughout history, describe the Nazi slaughter of the Jews, and culminate in an emotional recitation of Kaddish, the traditional Jewish prayer for the dead, by a group of elderly rabbis.



**The program cover for *We Will Never Die* brought a Hollywood flair to real-life events.**

"Will it save the four million [Jews still alive in Europe]?" Hecht wrote on the eve of the opening. "I don't know. Maybe we can awaken some of the vacationing hearts in our government."

Hecht was involved with a small group of Jewish activists led by Hillel Kook, a Zionist emissary from Palestine who operated under the pseudonym Peter Bergson. The Bergson Group booked Madison Square Garden for the evening of March 9 and set about trying to convince the established Jewish organizations to cosponsor *We Will Never Die*.

Bergson's well-meaning attempt at Jewish unity flopped. A meeting of representatives of several dozen Jewish groups, hosted by Hecht, deteriorated into shouting matches. It was an example of what the historian Henry Feingold has described as the sad tendency of some Jewish organizations to "allow themselves the luxury of fiddling while Jews burned."

**Hundreds of performers, including Frank Sinatra and Edward G. Robinson, helped raise awareness of the Holocaust as it unfolded by joining the cast of *We Will Never Die*.**

Hecht succeeded, however, in persuading some of Hollywood's most prominent Jews to volunteer their services. Actors Edward G. Robinson, Paul Muni, Sylvia Sydney, and Stella Adler assumed the lead roles; Kurt Weill composed an original score; Moss Hart agreed to serve as director; and famed impresario Billy Rose signed on as producer.

It was Rose who decided to approach Roosevelt. Through White House adviser David Niles, Rose asked the president for a "brief message" that could be read aloud at the pageant. Nothing bold or controversial, of course — something that would say "only that the Jews of Europe will be remembered when the time comes to make the peace."

Rose assured the White House, "There is no political color to our Memorial Service."

But apparently even the very mention of the Jews was "political" in the eyes of official Washington. White House aides warned the president that sending the requested message would be "a mistake." Despite Rose's assurance, "it is a fact that such a message would raise a political question," Henry Pringle of the Office of War Information advised.

What Pringle meant was that publicizing the slaughter could raise the "political question" of how America was going to respond to the Nazi genocide. And since Roosevelt had decided the U.S. was not going to take any specific steps to aid the Jews, raising that question would be embarrassing. Hence Rose was informed that the "stress and pressure" of the president's schedule made it impossible for FDR to provide the few words of comfort and consolation the Bergson Group sought.

None of this deterred the irrepressible Ben Hecht and his comrades from making sure the show would go on. More than 20,000 people jammed Madison Square Garden on the frigid evening of March 9. Since there were so many people gathered on the sidewalks outside who were unable to enter the packed hall, the cast decided to do a second performance immediately after the first. The second show, too, filled the Garden.

Editor and children's book author Miriam Chaikin, who at the time was a member of the Bergson Group's office staff, attended the first performance. "The atmosphere was electric," she recalled. "People in the audience were stunned by the pageant — and by the whole idea of Jewish issues being presented in such a place. In those days, it just wasn't done. It really brought home the suffering of Europe's Jews in a very powerful way, which really shook people up."

"If there was a dry eye at Madison Square Garden Tuesday night, it wasn't mine," wrote reviewer Nick Kenny in the New York City daily *PM*. "It was the most poignant pageant we have ever witnessed."

The Bergson Group did, in fact, take the show on the road. In the months to follow, *We Will Never Die* was performed before sellout crowds in Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington. All together, more than 100,000 Americans attended the performances.

More than 200 members of Congress, numerous members of the international diplomatic corps ("ambassadors from everywhere," Hecht called them), six justices of the Supreme Court, and Eleanor Roosevelt attended the Washington event. It was not the first time the famously independent first lady failed to toe the president's line.

Mrs. Roosevelt was so moved by the performance that she devoted part of her next syndicated column, "My Day," to the pageant and the plight of Europe's Jews. For millions of American newspaper readers, it was the first time they heard about the Nazi mass murders.

Shattering the wall of silence surrounding the Holocaust was the first crucial step in the process of mobilizing the American public against the slaughter. Throughout 1943, Bergson and Hecht organized a series of public rallies, full-page newspaper ads, and Capitol Hill lobbying efforts that culminated in the introduction of a congressional resolution urging the creation of a U.S. government agency to rescue Jewish refugees. The public controversy caused by Congressional hearings on the resolution, combined with behind-the-scenes pressure from Treasury Department officials, convinced President Roosevelt to establish that agency, the War Refugee Board, in January 1944.

The War Refugee Board's activities, which included financing the rescue work of Raoul Wallenberg, helped save the lives of an estimated 200,000 people during the final 15 months of the war. Seventy years ago, *We Will Never Die* helped set in motion the process that led to the saving of those lives.

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# NEW ISRAELI STUDY FINDS SIGNS OF TRAUMA IN GRANDCHILDREN OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

*(Continued from page 14)*

some of them were perceived by their own children as being remote and cold.

Out of 30 women in this second-generation group who testified that their parents were cold and distant, 20 of them have teenage children who complain of similar experiences with their parents. The same dynamic was reported by 14 children of 30 second-generation fathers.

Finally, the researchers identified a tendency among second-generation participants to try to please their parents, and make them happy; this trait has been passed along to third-generation teenagers.

As the researchers put it, "the child's need to worry about his or her parents' happiness represents a way of trying to draw closer to his or her parents."

## PROBLEMS AREN'T EXTREME

The authors conclude that this new study reinforces findings in previous research studies about the generational transference of Holocaust trauma.

Yet, while the personal narratives provided by second-generation participants feature reports of deep emotional distress, this study did not find extreme behavioral problems among the third-generation teens. Scharf and Mayseless claim that their findings have important implications with respect to the mental health of second- and third-generation descendants.

They say that health care professionals should be aware of ways in which trauma is passed along through generations. The findings were published in November 2011, in the Qualitative Health Research journal.

Scharf notes that "Holocaust trauma includes extreme, difficult experiences, and it bears mention that survivors did everything they could to cope with these experiences.

"A strong majority of them managed to raise exemplary children and grandchildren, and I am full of admiration for them."

The issue of intergenerational transference of trauma is controversial in academia. In the 1980s, preliminary findings about the impact of the Holocaust upon the third generation were presented by Dr. P.A. Rosenthal, a child psychiatrist from New York, and his wife Dr. S. Rosenthal.

The two called on the psychiatric community to develop a psychohistorical approach to care for third-generation descendants of Holocaust survivors.

A research study conducted five years ago at the Ruppin Academic Center argued that eating disorders among third-generation female students can be linked to eating problems suffered by their second-generation mothers, and also to the extent to which their grandparents exposed them to Holocaust realities.

But a study published in June 2008 by a team of Israeli researchers, headed by Haifa University's Prof. Avi Sagi-Schwartz, cast doubt upon the influence of the Holocaust upon third-generation descendants.

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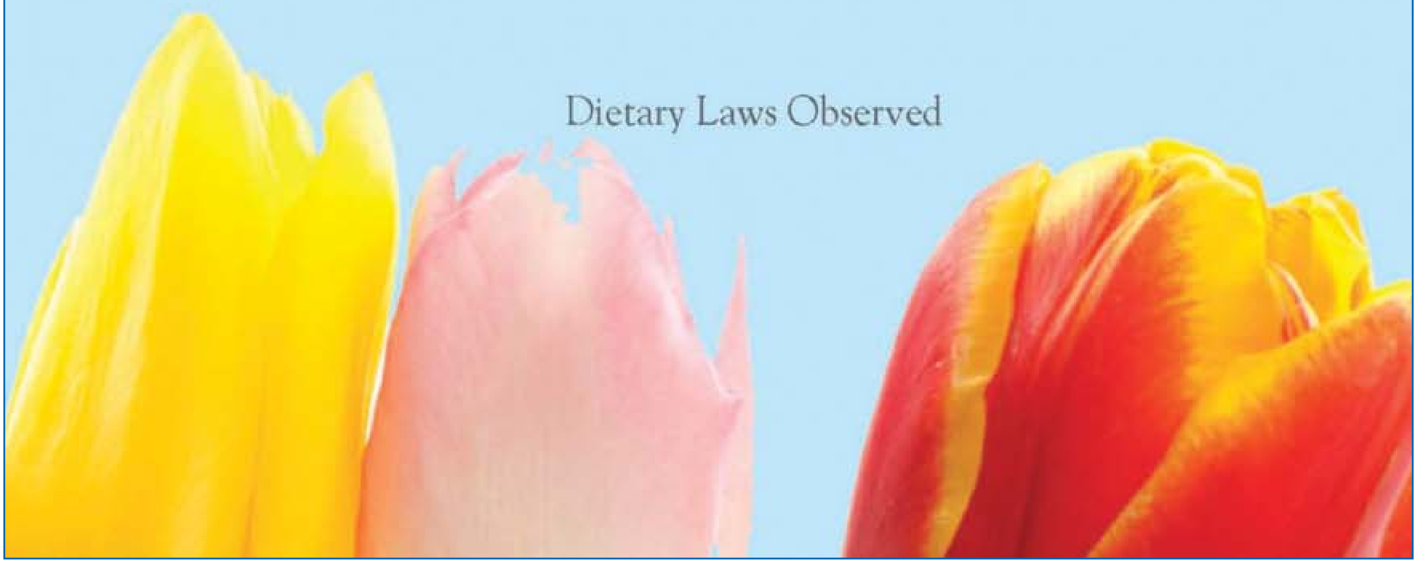

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