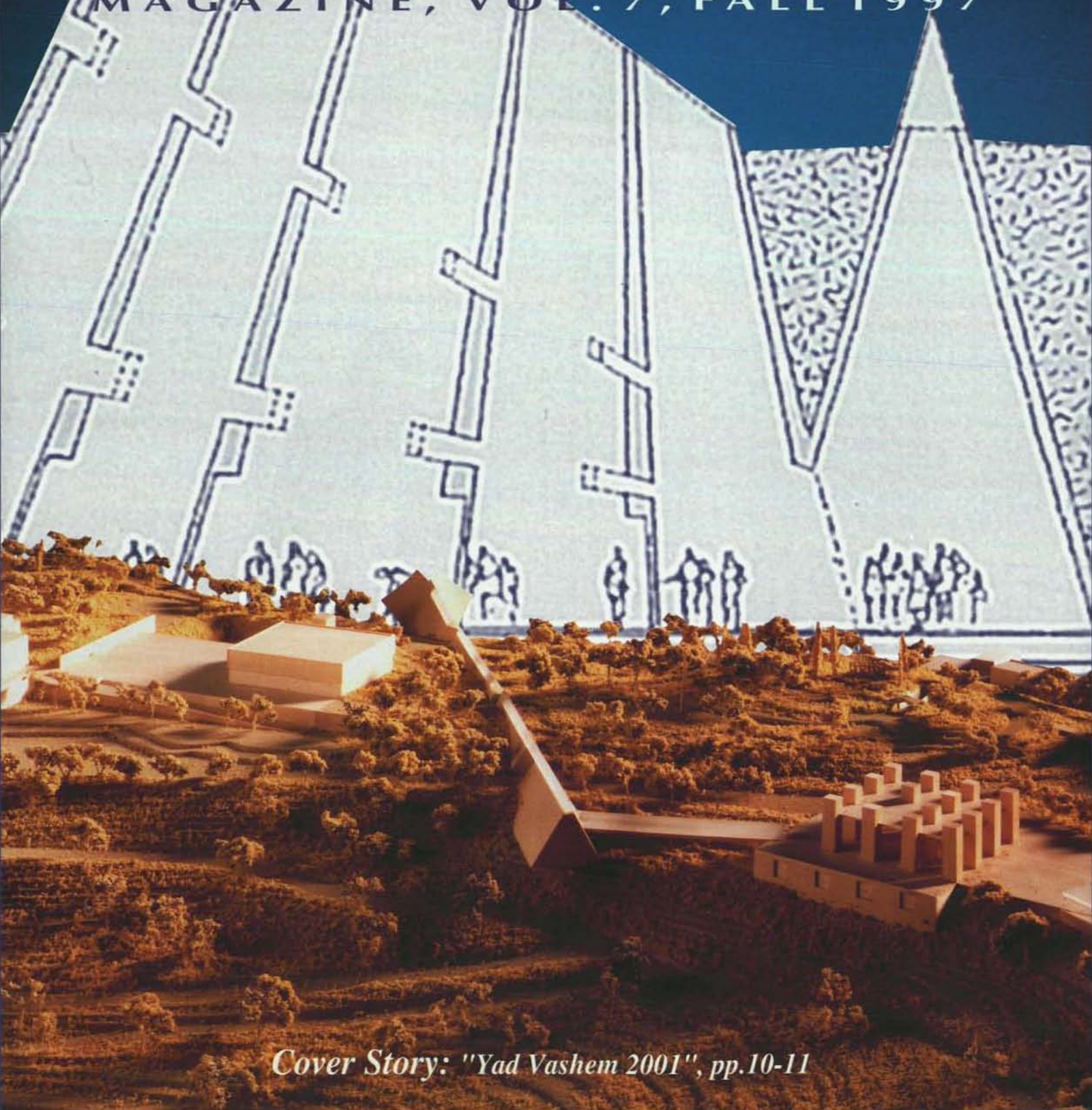


# Yad Vashem

JERUSALEM

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*Cover Story: "Yad Vashem 2001", pp.10-11*

**A**s this century draws to a close, a century bathed in blood, where peace and prosperity was proportionally the legacy of the few, we look to the new millenium with hopes for enlightenment, tolerance and security. The Holocaust took place and nothing and no one can change that fact. But by studying it from all possible perspectives, with the most advanced technology available, and the expertise of the most sensitive and knowledgeable educators, we stand a chance of safeguarding, in our small way, a better future. That is Yad Vashem's intention and thus major efforts are being invested to create a comprehensive infrastructure which will provide the answers to our children's questions in the next century. Yad Vashem 2001 includes the building of facilities, the training of teachers, the preservation of documents, and the creation of a multitude of forms to disseminate knowledge and communicate the message of tolerance, pluralism and initiative to do good. Sadly, the Holocaust, unique in the history of humanity, serves as a warning and as a symbol of the ultimate evil that was and can be.

In this issue, we present Yad Vashem's involvement in Israel's celebration of its fiftieth year as a state; we read of the efforts made by three people to learn about their parents and we accompany a young archivist in his quest for knowledge. In addition, we explore the complex relationships of survivors and Israeli sabras in the beginnings of the state and one such survivor is profiled. We present the plans of the new museum and honor the American Society's major support. This and much more.

Yad Vashem  
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Cover: A model and perspective of "Yad Vashem 2001" new museum complex by architect Moshe Safdie.

# THE SURVIVOR'S

By Avner Shalev

**T**he 50th anniversary of the State of Israel affords us the opportunity to reevaluate both historically and nationally, the founding of the State, the first five decades and future challenges.

We are required to reassess different aspects of our history, amongst them the legacy of the Holocaust, and in particular the Holocaust survivors' contribution to the establishment of the State.

Many survivors, escaping from the horrors, chose to rebuild their lives in Eretz Israel and to join in the struggle to establish the State. Having survived one war, they took it upon themselves to fight in another.

Immediately after the Holocaust, the majority of the Jewish people expressed their desire to participate in the revival of Jewish communal life. Zionist groups, already formed in the DP camps, set up synagogues and communities. Meetings with *shlichim* from Eretz Israel encouraged the survivors to realize their dream of building a life in Israel.

Amidst great economic hardship, the survivors came and settled in different parts of the country. An estimated 230,000 survivors immigrated to Israel during this period. With little assistance from the newly established State, they made new lives. They enlisted in the fighting units, built cooperatives and wherever they went, Jewish life flourished.

In my opinion, this is one of the most important periods in contemporary Jewish history: Jews, who lost their entire families in the Holocaust, left their native lands and returned to the home of their ancestors, where

they fought heroically and struck roots. This period in history should be recounted in full, over and over, for years to come.

The *she'erit haplaita* (the survivors) went from the fight for existence to a fight to rehabilitate themselves and they succeeded. They requested nothing and received nothing. Their only wish was to be part of the founding

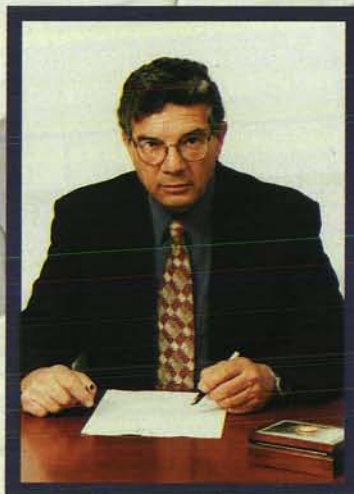
of the State. They were the first to awaken the memory of the Holocaust. They experienced the difficult mourning period for the loss of their loved ones in Europe, survived the trauma, and established a new generation here, with a Jewish-Israeli identity.

Today, 50 years after the establishment of the State, an identity is being shaped amongst Israelis of all ages. The shaping of this identity is laden with complications and complexities. The memory of the Shoah is an element of this identity,

which encompasses a wide and varied selection of people - religious and secular, Ashkenazic and Sephardic, veterans and new immigrants.

At Yad Vashem, we are witness to this phenomenon daily. More and more Israelis from all walks of life visit the Mount of Remembrance, seeking to remember and never forget. They try to come to terms with the personal and national tragedy, and find a way to reach the survivors, many of whom have only recently begun to talk, after years of silence.

In other words, members of the second and third generation, together with Israelis with no personal connection to the Holocaust, are trying today to understand and analyze what happened. The younger generation feels an ever-increasing empathy and commitment



Avner Shalev

# ROLE IN THE NEW STATE

## Events at Yad Vashem in the Fiftieth Year

By Alisa Lehrer

**T**he historical museum at Yad Vashem is planning to open a special exhibition in honor of the jubilee year in the summer of 1998. The exhibition will span the lives of the Holocaust survivors from the end of the second World War in 1945 to the Eichmann trial in Jerusalem in 1961. It will focus on the integration and contribution of the survivors to the establishment and building up of the newly well as the meeting of cultures between the Holocaust survivors from Europe and the Israeli *sabras*.



founded State of Israel, as

Another event planned is an international conference organized by the Yad Vashem International Center for Holocaust Studies in Yad Vashem. The four day conference, in January 1999, is titled, "The Place of the Holocaust in Jewish History" and will focus on three main issues: whether and how the Holocaust influenced the historian's perspective on other periods of Jewish history, how the Holocaust is interpreted from different Jewish perspectives and a comparison of different Jewish communities' reactions to the Holocaust during the Holocaust period. Following the conference, two additional conferences are planned abroad. Yad Vashem will publish a collection of the lectures at the end of the three conferences.

The International School for Holocaust Studies is hoping to launch two new projects for the fiftieth year. The first is the traveling Pedagogical Center, equipped with educational materials, which is soon to be put into operation in schools throughout the country. The second project is the production of a new CD-ROM package following the success of the multimedia program "Return to Life" which recently won an international prize. The new CD-ROM has been designed to give the adult user an in-depth knowledge of the Holocaust. It presents the Holocaust chronologically with the aid of authentic documents and testimonies. The CD-ROM contains an extensive database of diaries, pictures, and documentaries from Yad Vashem's Archives and Library. It also enables the user to "visit" sites of Yad Vashem on the computer and read debates from the academic world on the important questions raised by the Holocaust.

Yad Vashem, in association with the survivors' organizations, is organizing a pilgrimage for survivors, their children and grandchildren, from memorials around the country to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Yad Vashem is producing a special pin (in the picture) marking Yad Vashem and the State of Israel's jubilee year. The pin was designed by artist Amitai Kav.

**“ ... This is one of the most important periods in contemporary Jewish history: Jews, who lost their entire families in the Holocaust, left their native lands and returned to the home of their ancestors, where they fought heroically and struck roots. This period in history should be recounted in full, over and over, for years to come. ”**

to perpetuate the legacy of the Holocaust. In this respect, Israeli society is undergoing a significant process of nurturing the memory and the hope, and integrating them naturally into the life of the individual, the people and the State, today and in the future.

*The writer is Chairman of the Directorate of Yad Vashem.*

# IN SEARCH OF



At the family's gravestone in East Berlin

Wasserstein, Adolf	09.04.1887	25.01.1942
Wasser, Fani	30.08.1878	14.02.1942
Wassermann, Etich-Jac	31.12.1887	26.07.1942
Wassersch, Leo-Josaf	28.05.1879	04.01.1941
Wasserschki, Wolf	20.10.1904	28.06.1942
Wasserfarg, Lehn	15.10.1882	22.12.1939
Wassermann, Elias	23.07.1890	22.02.1940
Wassermann, Moise	06.06.1890	21.03.1940
Wassermann, Paul-Earl	12.06.1881	09.04.1940
Wajsbrod, Chaim	04.04.1889	22.02.1940
Webber, Renzon	21.07.1899	23.04.1940
Wedel, Louis	13.05.1891	14.12.1928
Wepfshausen, Heinerich	15.01.1874	24.06.1940
Wassermann, Sora	23.11.1897	22.03.1941
Waller, Ludwig	08.02.1881	14.11.1938
Waller, Lisa	22.02.1874	04.10.1939

The remembrance plaque in Sachsenhausen



The Wasserman family before the war



From L. to R.: Klari, Leora, Bernhard, and Tzafra Wasserman

By Michal Morris Kamil

A plaque saying, "Eizehu hacham haroeh et hanolad" (Who is wise? One who foresees what the future holds) hangs on the classroom wall of the Moses Mendelssohn Jewish day school which Bernhard Wasserman

attended nearly 60 years ago in East Berlin. Bernhard, his wife Klari and two daughters, Leora and Tzafra, returned to Germany in May 1996, equipped with a videocamera and tape, to retrace scenes of a childhood, a community and a culture, which were savagely

## THE WASSERMAN FAMILY: WE CONFRONTED THE PAST TOGETHER

Bernhard Wasserman was born in 1923 in Berlin. His parents, Moische and Leonora, ran a grocery store and a wholesale trade in eggs. Bernhard was arrested in 1938 as a Polish national, but was saved from deportation by a friendly policeman. Bernhard fled Germany with his cousin, Arnold Hüttner. After a hazardous and risky journey, the boys arrived in Holland, where they were placed in a children's refugee camp. From there they were sent to England on a *Kindertransport*. Bernhard's father, Moische, and uncle, Elias, were incarcerated in Sachsenhausen in September, 1939, and were both murdered in early 1940. Their ashes were sent in two urns to Leonora. In October 1941, she and Bernhard's sister, Toni, were deported to Lodz, and gassed at Chelmno in May 1942.

Klari Ordower, rebelling from her orthodox background, joined the Jewish socialist *Hashomer Hatzair* youth movement. In 1939 she left Austria for England on the *Kindertransport*. In that year, she obtained a visa for her mother, Fani (nee Bodek), but it was too late. Her father survived the Holocaust, but until today, Klari does not know what happened to her mother.

In August 1997, the Wassermans sat together with their two daughters in their north Tel Aviv apartment and discussed the significance of the trips to Germany and Austria:

**Tzafra:** My parents hardly ever discussed their past. There were pictures of my father's childhood, and relatives who provided specks of information and constantly told me that I looked like my grandfather Moische.

**Leora:** More than ten years ago I reached a breaking point and begged my parents to tell me what had happened. Not just the heroic part of my father's escape. I needed more. I felt that it was my only heritage, all I have and that if I could have a complete picture, it would help me complete a picture of myself.

**Klari:** I deliberately never spoke about my past. The period in England following the *Kindertransport* was the most important time of my life, the formative years of my intellect and perception, in which Zionism and Socialism became central to my life. But I loved Vienna, it was my home. I don't think my daughters can ever understand how I felt about that city. I'm so mad about what *they* (the Nazis) took away from me.

**Bernhard:** I, too, hardly spoke about my past. I repressed as much as possible. I somehow felt that I didn't do enough to help my parents and sister get out. Even now, there are moments when I feel that I have failed. During a visit to Germany in 1958, I went looking for relics of my past. Experts at Sachsenhausen told me about my father's and uncle's deaths. On my second visit to Germany, we looked for the graves. In the graveyard there were stones which were overturned, facing down. As I approached one very large stone, covered with branches and leaves, I stopped, feeling that this was it. With the help of a few locals, we turned the stone over. My father's and uncle's names were engraved on the stone. It was a shattering moment. That stone's power was that it also united me with the memory of my mother and sister who had it erected before they themselves were sent to their deaths. We had the stone restored and added an inscription in memory of my mother and sister.

**Tzafra:** I only found out about my father's feelings in May 1996, when I was 41, as we stood by this gravestone. It was a most meaningful moment, the essence of this entire phenomena. Understanding what my father had withstood, what he bore on his shoulders... There is still a lot unknown but the trips to Berlin and Vienna were a very special experience. We had a chance to confront the past, and be together. We are very close.

# ROOTS

destroyed during the Holocaust. In mid-1997, the Wasserman family repeated this journey to Vienna, tracing Klari's roots and early life. Both trips were undertaken thanks to the perseverance and initiative of Tzafra and Leora, the couple's two daughters.

While the Wassermans visited Vienna, Tova Azulai, her daughter Ori and sister-in-law Rivka, accompanied her father, Aryeh Finkelstein, as he wandered through the Polish city of Lodz, painstakingly retracing his youth. Tova had initiated a visit once before with her mother in 1988, on the 45th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The visit was extremely moving for Tova, both personally and as a Jew, as she and her mother were part of an official delegation headed by former Minister of Education, Yitzhak Navon, on a first formal visit to Poland. Tova recalls her feelings as she watched her mother march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, "My mother, who is not a healthy woman, was like a lion on that walk, setting the pace for the youngsters who marched with her. She had superhuman strength and watching her, I suddenly understood the secret of her survival and endurance."

Visits like these, to Poland, Germany, Prague and many other places in central and eastern Europe have become more and more prevalent in the past decade. They provide the content, meaning and depth for those Holocaust survivors insistent on communicating to their children and especially their grandchildren, not only details of their personal experiences and backgrounds, but also knowledge of a vibrant and rich Jewish world, annihilated in the Holocaust. Many books and films of the past few years recount personal journeys back to the sites of Jewish life in the Diaspora. Many organizations of Holocaust survivors from different communities have organized commemorative trips back to their place of birth, holding ceremonies and erecting memorials, many times with the cooperation of the local authorities.

These visits have many benefits. Many circles can be closed, and yet for the next in line, those circles are just opening. For many, the knowledge brings a strengthening of roots.

## TOVA AZULAI: MY GENERATION WAS BORN INTO A CHASM

Tova Azulai (nee Finkelstein) is Deputy Spokesperson of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport. Her mother, Fela Szapsyk, was born in Warsaw and as a member of the Betar youth movement, took part in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. While trying to escape to the Aryan side through the underground sewage system she was caught and sent to Majdanek where she spent four months surviving by the skin of her teeth. Constitutionally strong, she was transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau as a slave laborer. On the death march in January 1945, she escaped and hid in a haystack on a farm near Katowice, aided by a local farmer. Fela was to return to Warsaw with her daughter Tova, more than forty years later. Aryeh Finkelstein, from Lodz, volunteered at the age of seventeen, for work in Germany. In September 1942 he returned to Lodz and he and his family were spared the big Aktion of September that year. In February 1944, he was again sent to the labor camp of Skarzysko and from there to Czestochowa, Buchenwald, the Silesia region and finally to Theresienstadt where he was liberated in May 1945. He narrowly avoided death several times; once he switched the number on his prison uniform and thus avoided the firing squad. Aryeh returned to Lodz to discover that his parents and eight brothers and sisters were all murdered in Auschwitz, three weeks before the Russian liberation of Lodz.



From R. to L.: The father, Aryeh Finkelstein, the daughter, Tova Azulai, and the granddaughter, Ori, in Warsaw

### **Tova recalls her feelings following her trips to Poland with her parents:**

"For years, despite repeated efforts, my father never spoke about his past and refused to set foot again in Poland. My mother talked about the Holocaust and what happened afterwards but she found it difficult to describe her earlier life and experiences. In 1988, we decided to go to Warsaw and retrace her past. My entire life I have felt that I myself have to deal with the past, as part of a process of continuity and as a personal responsibility and commitment. Strangely, on my first visit to Poland, I remember feeling that I was at home and at peace with my soul. It was a feeling of linking up with a Jewish history of a thousand years, a place where the *Tzaddikim* (righteous) are buried, and an entire Jewish culture. When I accompany Israeli youth on their trips to Poland, I want them to understand this historical and cultural wealth alongside the Holocaust. In every corner of the Polish landscape, Jewish roots are buried.

On returning to Lodz with my father, it was imperative that we both see his home. All my life there was a void when trying to imagine the inside of his home, or the street where he played as a child. There are neither pictures nor stories. My generation was born into a chasm and was left with no images to help us picture a past. These joint trips help to fill the void and unite with the memory of the families we lost in the Holocaust."

In many cases, half-a-century was needed to take this next step in one's life, and many times due to the children's encouragement

and support. The Wasserman family and Tova Azulai provide insight into this process.

# The Mystery

*A Postcard Written in Invisible Ink Dated 1943 from*



Saul Greenstein of the Yad Vashem Archives

A postcard from 1943, written in invisible ink, was discovered in the P-33 section of the Yad Vashem Archives. The postcard is part of the collection of the late Holocaust survivor, Theodore Feldman, which was given to Yad Vashem by Feldman's

daughter, Ms. Elisheva Izri. Feldman, a zealous collector, prepared the collection for an exhibition and wrote that the hidden text on the postcard includes a testimony describing the horrors of the Auschwitz death camp. Feldman, who passed away five years ago, took the secret of the postcard with him. This postcard is a rare and singular finding, in particular because this manner of writing was always meant to be destroyed after the text was deciphered and read.

Saul Greenstein of the Yad Vashem Archives was determined to uncover the story behind the postcard, and has so far made extremely interesting discoveries. The person to whom the card is addressed is a Jacob Rosenblum, who resided in a Jewish neighborhood in Bucharest, Romania. The writer of the card was a Jewish woman by the name of Lola Bergman, who, according to the address on the card, was in Krakow. Greenstein examined the list of cards of the International Red Cross Tracing Service, founded in 1944 (Arolsen), most of which are in the Yad Vashem archive. The list includes the name of Lola Bergman, a Polish-Jew residing in Krakow, who was deported to the Plaszow camp in 1943, from there to Auschwitz, and was finally liberated at Bergen-Belsen. The date on the card, however, is August 20, 1943, a date of which it is known that the majority of the Jews of Krakow, and Lola amongst them, were already at Plaszow.

The postcard contains a brief text in regular ink, written as a love letter, followed by a signature. At the bottom of the card is a date and the name of the place. The address side of the postcard bears a number of stamps and signatures of the censor. Both sides of the card contain the text written in hidden ink.

The hidden text is signed by a man by the name of Otto. Greenstein believes that the text was invisible prior to receipt of the card by the addressee. The type of ink and the manner of its exposure are still under investigation.

Parts of the secret text are not sufficiently clear, so Greenstein turned to Dr. Joseph Almog, head of the Israel Police's Department of Identification and Forensic Science, who took infra-red photographs of the card with the aid of the laboratory staff. The photographs facilitated the reading of the hidden writing.

Greenstein noticed a number of things upon his first reading of the text: a line and a half were written in cursive writing, while the rest is written in block letters. This was apparently due to the writer's lack of confidence in his cursive writing as he could not see what



Otto Küsel (center) and members of the Polish underground

he was writing. Greenstein's hypothesis is that the blind writing led to spaces between letters, or to their duplication in some words, and to a lack of punctuation in certain parts. He also found difficulty explaining certain spelling errors. One can perhaps surmise that the person who wrote the text copied it from cursive handwriting, and was not fluent in German. It is also possible that they are not errors, but rather codes. This possibility is further reinforced by the fact that the first paragraph is written in the form of a rhymed poem. Greenstein wondered why the writer would have wasted valuable ink on unnecessary words, especially in light of the fact that he mentions ink in the list of things he needs. The word *Hungertod* (starvation), for example, includes the word "hunger" within it. Why

then did the writer repeat himself and use terms similar in meaning? It is possible that this duplication hides a message of some sort beyond Feldman's assumption that it is a description of the death camp. On the other hand, one might ask why Otto would be writing in code when he is in any case writing in ink which is invisible to the post office workers and the censor. Perhaps Otto was concerned that his postcard might be deciphered by the censor. If so, however, why did he not encode the fifth paragraph, which includes important information on the activities of the underground?

According to Greenstein, the fascinating aspect of the postcard is the identity of its author. To what organization did she belong? What was her connection to Romania? According to the text, the addressee and the address, one might conclude that she was a member of one of the Jewish underground organizations in Krakow; but which one, and how can this be proven? The activity of nearly all the underground organizations involved distribution of flyers and smuggling Jews. How is one to understand the postcard's mention of a *flugzeugsttzpunkt* (an airfield), *leuchtpistole* (flair pistols), and *geheimtinte* (invisible ink)? These seem to indicate a well-organized and well-equipped group. Throughout his research, Greenstein found no mention in any book of the use of invisible ink by Jewish underground organizations. So Greenstein looked elsewhere.

The name Otto led Greenstein to German prisoner "Küsel Otto," who was imprisoned in Auschwitz as a criminal – a classification which granted him greater rights than Jewish and other prisoners in the camp. Küsel was brought to Auschwitz in May 1940, and was able to escape in December 1942. Following his escape, he joined the Polish underground in Warsaw, but was captured by the Gestapo, and returned to Auschwitz, and finally to Flossenbürg. Greenstein hypothesizes that the contents refer to the activities of the Polish underground, which is known to have included underground bases in Budapest, Kaunas and Bucharest. A number of its emissaries conveyed information regarding the annihilation of Jews and of German terror in Poland to the Allies. Jan Karski was the best known emissary. The Polish underground established secret

# of the Postcard

## the Yad Vashem Archives Contains a Description of a Concentration Camp

landing sites in Poland for the Allies, and distributed flyers prepared by its members.

In his book *Fighting Auschwitz*, Josef Garlinsky reports that a number of escapes from Auschwitz took place in 1943. The escapees joined the Polish underground or the partisans, who were in possession of the appropriate equipment. This may offer an explanation for the flair pistol mentioned in the postcard. Such pistols were used for night-time signaling in the event of such escapes.

Nevertheless, Greenstein does not rule out alternative paths of investigation – among them the connection with the Austrian underground, whose activity also fits the descriptions in the postcard. An example is the Otto Haas Organisation, an Austrian socialist group. In their activities against Hitler and the Third Reich, Haas and his organization conveyed coded messages in invisible ink on newspaper clippings, and took photographs of clippings using a secret camera.

Greenstein reports that Haas and two activists from his group were tried. Haas was indicted as early as 1942, and the mysterious numbers on the other side of the postcard are extremely similar to the numbering of the legal files of the period in Vienna. After repeated comparisons, Greenstein has concluded that Haas handwriting is very similar to that which is on the postcard. Furthermore, the sign used by the Otto Haas Organisation to indicate that a postcard or letter contains hidden text was the writing of titles and place names at the end of the text rather than at its beginning, in contrast to hundreds of other postcards Greenstein examined on which such details appear at the beginning of the text.

In spite of Greenstein's comprehensive and in-depth research, he points out that it is difficult to reach clear-cut conclusions with regard to the postcard's origins or its author. It appears that underground organizations such as the two mentioned above used invisible ink. It is known that many Jews were recruited to non-Jewish underground groups and organizations. The question remains, however, what connection the author of the card, Lola Bergman, and the addressee, Jacob Rosenblum, might have had to the underground's activity. They may have been members in the

organization itself, or – who knows – perhaps their names were used merely as a ruse to mislead the censors. Perhaps one can reach a more far-reaching conclusion, such as the possibility that this was a case of cooperation between two or more different underground organizations.

Professor Yehuda Bauer, Director of Yad Vashem's International Center of Holocaust Studies, comments on the value of this card:

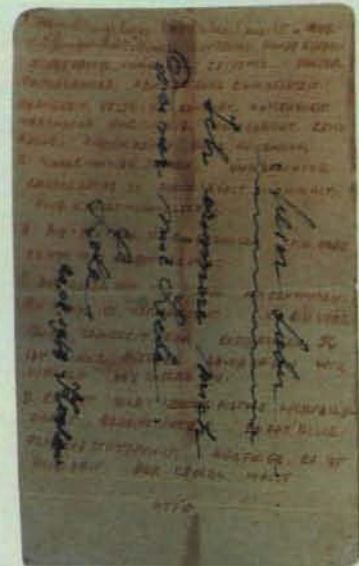
"Documents of this nature are very rare as they were meant to be destroyed upon receipt. This card contains what appears to

be an eyewitness account of a concentration camp from the inside. In addition, it proves that there were people on the outside who knew a great deal about the life of those incarcerated. Finally, the final paragraphs add to our knowledge on the activities and modes of communication of the resistance movements, although a lot of information pertaining to the card is still missing."

Many questions remain unanswered, and the road before archival scholar Saul Greenstein remains long and fascinating.

### The hidden text

1. Vernichtungslager Das Andere tauscht. AUS. Walpurgisnacht: HUNGER, HUNGERTOD, HUNDE KUCHEN HAFERGRUTZE, HUNDELEBEN, EPIDEMIE, FOLTER FOLTERKAMMER, ERNIEDRIGUNG EHRLOSIGKEIT, HEFTIGKEIT, HETZE, HEI DENA[N]GST, HOLLENAUGST VERGASUNG, HINRICHTUNG, HOCH GERLICH, ERMO RDUNG, EINESCH ERUNG HALLE, HÖLLENQUAL.
2. KINDER VON VIER JA[H]REN, UND DARUNTER. RAUBERBAUDE ES DURCH I ESELT EINEN KALT. FLUG SCHRIFT-HIMMELSCHREIEND
3. DIE ZEITUNG IST GINGEGANGEN ICH HABE ES VON IHM SELBST GEHÖRT
4. DAS FIEBER HAT IHM [S]IEHR MITGENOMMEN. DIE [WU]NDE IST VERHARSCHT. ICH BIN UBER SEIN[E] KRAUKHEIT SEHR ERSCHROCKEN. K IST [S]EINER AUFGABE GEWACHSEN WIR WERDEN DAS UNSERE [T]UN.
5. ES HAT EILE: LEUCHT PISTOLE LICHTBILD. GER T. GEHEIMTINTE. ES HAT EILLE: FLUGZJEUIG STITZPUNKT, HRFOLLE, ES IST HOHE ZEIT DER KESSEL WOLLT OTTO



### Translation of the hidden text

1. DEATH CAMP THE REST DECEIT FROM THE NIGHT OF THE WITCHHUNT: HUNGER, STARVATION, DOG FOOD OAT PORRIDGE, A DOG'S LIFE, AN EPIDEMIC, TORTURE TORTURE CHAMBER, DEGRADATION, DISRESPECT VIOLENCE, INCITEMENT, TERROR, FRIGHT KILLING BY GAS, EXECUTION, UPPER COURT (or) GALLOWES, MURDER, INCINERATOR, AGONIZING HELL.
2. CHILDREN OF FOUR AND UNDER A BAND OF THIEVES COLD A DECLARATION CRYING TO THE HEAVENS
3. THE NEWSPAPER ARRIVED I HEARD IT FROM HIM
4. THE HEAT AFFECTED HIM ALOT THE WOUND HAS HEALED. I WAS VERY AFRAID OF HIS ILLNESS. K IS FULFILLING HIS MISSION WE WILL DO WHAT WE HAVE TO.
5. URGENT: SIGNAL PISTOLS, CAMERA, INVISIBLE INK. URGENT: AIRBASE, CONTINUOUS LISTENING, THE TIME HAS COME THE KETTLE IS BOILED OTTO



# THE RED CROSS:

Vital documents of the Red Cross Activities during the Second World War were presented to Yad Vashem

By Shaul Ferrero

The attitude of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva towards the Jews persecuted by the Nazis had already aroused much controversy during the war.

The ICRC, a non-partisan organization dedicated to the pursuit of humanitarian goals, located in a neutral country and enjoying immense moral prestige, was generally perceived by the helpless and abandoned Holocaust victims to be a last resort against their persecutors. In this hope - as is well-known - they were largely disappointed. It remains to be seen whether the basic cause of this disappointment was only the attitude of the ICRC or possibly also a profound misconception of its role and a gross overestimation of its ability to intervene.

The essential function of the ICRC, a committee composed of about thirty Swiss dignitaries, was to insure the implementation of the international conventions of the Red Cross concerning the relief of war wounded, initiated by the Geneva convention of 1864. The protection of the ICRC, which was extended in 1929 to include prisoners of war, was nonetheless restricted until the Second World War, to military personnel, and did not include the civilian population.

The 15th International Conference of the Red Cross in Tokyo, in 1934, adopted a draft convention concerning the protection of foreign nationals stranded in enemy territory, used as hostages or interned by a belligerent country. However, this was never ratified by any state prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. Nevertheless, during the war, the ICRC applied this draft with some success against belligerent countries in order to change the status of civilian internees to that of prisoners of war.

This type of protection did not aid those individuals persecuted for racial or political reasons by their own state. The national associations of the Red Cross were, it seemed, better placed to intervene in these questions

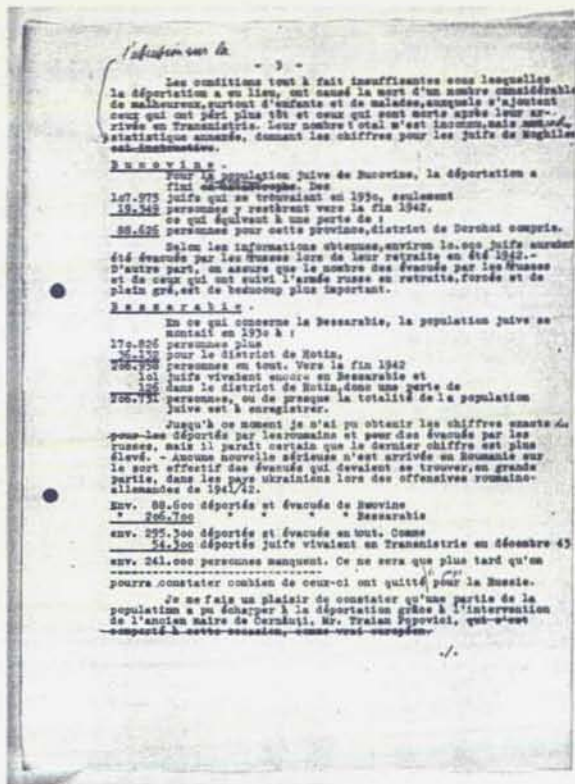
of internal policy, basing themselves on humanitarian principles. However, these national organizations of the Red Cross were largely controlled by their respective countries, including those who themselves were responsible for violation of human rights. Germany was an especially glaring example of this. The ICRC's means of intervention on behalf of civilian victims of persecution during the Second World War was thus severely

dispatch of parcels (food, clothes, medicines); information concerning the fate of the detained persons. Although this sort of action could have some effect on the fate of certain categories of civilian victims, it had practically no impact on the fate of the Jews. Apart from some rare occasions, notably in the case of the model ghetto of Theresienstadt, the Nazis never allowed the ICRC delegates to visit the German concentration camps where the Jews were held. Similarly, very few Jews received parcels in the camps or ghettos. The Nazis also steadfastly refused to transfer any sort of information concerning the fate of the deported Jews.

The archives of the ICRC, particularly the G59 series [of which Yad Vashem has a microfilm copy] consisting of the records of the Commission of Prisoners, Internees and Civilians (the PIC commission) and concerning specifically the "Israelites" (Jews), shed interesting light on the relief activity. Geneva historian, Jean-Claude Favez, in a book published in France some twelve years ago, thoroughly examined the ICRC records pertaining to the Nazis' persecution of the Jews.

Numerous documents provide precise information about the protection of the Jews of Budapest during 1944 and 1945, and the activity of the delegate Friedrich Born, particularly concerning the proposal to affix signs on Jewish houses designating them as being under the protection of the ICRC. There is also extensive documentation of the activity of Karl Kolb, the delegate to Romania, who, at the request of the ICRC and with the kind assent of the royal government of Romania, visited

Transnistria in December 1943. His main objective was to evaluate the needs (in terms of provisions, clothes, medicines) of the deported Jews who survived in Transnistria. However, in his report to the ICRC, he emphasized, basing himself on statistical data, that some 241,000 persons were missing in the wake of the massive deportations of



The ICRC report from Transnistria, late 1943. No mention is made as to why 241,000 Jews "were missing."

limited, especially since it did not control any operational budget. Its effectiveness rested solely on the good will of the countries involved.

Nonetheless, the ICRC adopted three courses of action in its efforts to relieve the sufferings of civilian victims before and during the war: inspection of places of detention;



# AN AMBIGUOUS ROLE



Jews from Bucovina and Bessarabia. He also insisted on the need to immediately repatriate all the deported Jews still in Transnistria, and reintegrate them into the Romanian economy. All of these activities were financed by the Joint. The G59 series also contains important documentation about the activity of the Joint representative in Switzerland, Saly Mayer.

One may also find reports on the visit to the Theresienstadt Ghetto (June 1944), as well as to the camps in Croatia, Slovakia, Romania, and Hungary. There are also many documents concerning immigration to Palestine, and correspondence with many Jewish organizations. Much light is shed on the fate

of the Jews in countries occupied by the Axis powers. Certain files report the ICRC representatives taking over camps such as Mauthausen, Dachau and Theresienstadt in the last days of the war. Other files concern issues of principle: implementation of international conventions, protection of civilian populations, declarations and interventions on behalf of Jews. The attitude of the ICRC towards the persecuted Jews can be seen in a letter from Schwarzenberg, in charge of the Department for Special Assistance, to G. Kullmann of the High Commissioner for Refugees in London.

Dated April 17, 1944, it describes relief to civilian deportees (Jews) with the assistance of the Joint. Schwarzenberg insists, "Relief for persecuted groups without distinction of race or creed, i.e., not to make exceptions for Jews.... the High Commission of the League of Nations shares this point of view and does not regard only Jews as refugees."

As underlined by Professor Favez, all these documents show that three basic factors played a role here: the lack of an internationally recognized legal basis for intervention; the refusal to make an exception in favor of the Jews, having previously assisted all persecuted groups regardless of race or faith; the fear

that too much insistence on the fate of the Jews would imperil the ICRC's already limited relations with the Germans concerning other categories of detainees.

It is true, however, that towards the end of the war and particularly concerning the Jews of Hungary, the ICRC was anxious to make a gesture on behalf of the Jews in order to ward off the accusation that they did nothing while there was still time to act.

Finally, one cannot avoid the impression that, in trying to come to grips with the fate of the Jews under the Nazis, the ICRC was impeded by an undue sense of formality and propriety, and was completely out of touch with the reality of the Holocaust. This impression is neutralized, to some extent, by the fact that if both major Jewish organizations (World Jewish Congress, Jewish Agency), and even the Allies, were not able to prevent or even mitigate the Holocaust, then the ICRC, with its minuscule resources, could not be expected to do better. To be sure, its moral prestige was immense. However this was true only in the eyes of those who believed in the principles of humanity. This was obviously not the case with the Nazis. One may nevertheless concur with Professor Favez's conclusion, that the ICRC should have spoken out and put all its moral authority on the line, on behalf of the victims of the Holocaust.

## The Theresienstadt Music Memorial Project

By Alisa Lehrer

Over the last few years, Yad Vashem has been affiliated with the Theresienstadt Music Memorial Project. This project, under the patronage of Václav Havel, President of the Czech Republic, and directed by Professor David Bloch, recaptures the musical life of the infamous Theresienstadt Ghetto.

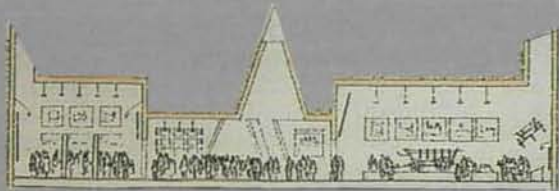
Amongst many of the Jews sent to Theresienstadt there were talented artists, musicians and writers and as a result, a secret cultural life

began to flourish almost immediately. Many of the world-famous composers who were sent to the ghetto continued with their score writing and compositions. Groups of chamber music were formed, and concerts were held, even in the bitter and harsh conditions of the Ghetto.

The Theresienstadt Music Memorial Project is devoted to restoring the extraordinary music of Theresienstadt. Many of the composers and musicians were deported from Theresienstadt

to Auschwitz and perished there. The project preserves and promotes the music of Theresienstadt, not just as exceptional music but as a testament to the strength of the human spirit. Yad Vashem, which is affiliated with the Theresienstadt Music Memorial Project, is active in three of the major commemorative tasks of the project: the CD production of Theresienstadt composers such as Viktor Ullman and Gideon Klein, the reproduction and eventual publication of the musical scores composed in the ghetto, and concerts similar to the May 1997 concert honoring Edith Kraus at Yad Vashem. For further details, please contact Ita Goldberger, tel: 972-2-6751671.





Internal perspective of the exhibition halls in the museum

**Y**ad Vashem 2001 is a masterplan designed to bring the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority into the 21st century. The forty-five acre site, situated on the Mount of Remembrance, amidst the lush Jerusalem forest and gentle hills, will contain a newly established museum campus. There will be abundant parking facilities, a visitors' center providing orientation and services, and a newly designed historic museum, with modern technology, which will facilitate a flexible use of space for both temporary and permanent exhibitions. The campus, which will mesh into the existing landscape, will have accessible connecting paths and plazas for the approximately two million visitors expected by the year 2000. These paths will connect between the different complexes of Yad Vashem including the Hall of Remembrance, the Children's Memorial, the Museum of Art, the Valley of the Communities, the Memorial to the Deportees, the new International School of Holocaust Studies and the new Archives.

The new entrance plaza will lead into the new Visitors' Center whose cornerstone was laid in October this year. This 2,500 square meter, two floor structure, designed by Moshe Safdie, will provide the conceptual corridor, differentiating between the mundane and familiar world and the sanctity of the memorial complex. The upper floor of the structure will create a temporal impression of a *Sukkah* (hut), open to the external panoramic views and providing visual access to the surrounding paths and structures of the museum complex. The series of hollow stone columns supporting a trellis-like roof will be bathed in pools of light penetrating from above. The bottom floor, in contrast, will be structurally solid and cubicle, and will include a restaurant, gift shop and amenities.

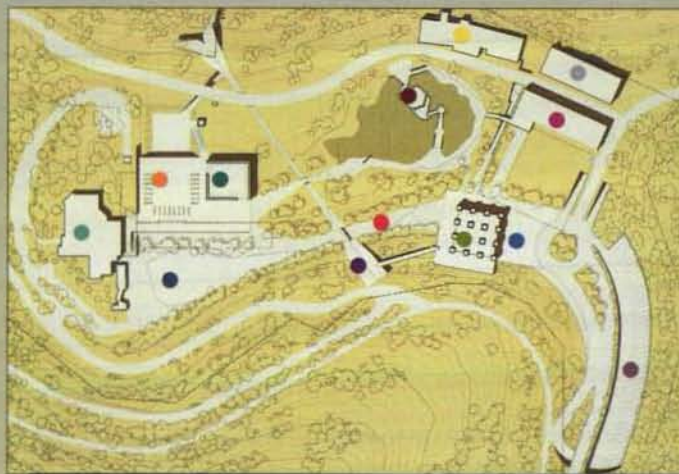
The visitor, upon exiting the building, will stroll down the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations which leads to the newly established historic museum.

With the development of new and refined modes of communication, the museum will aim to reach the young generations using familiar visual mediums. The new museum's historical layout will be chronological, provide thought-provoking information, especially for the young who are unfamiliar with this terrible period. The Holocaust will be presented from a Jewish perspective and the exhibition will provide the material needed to confront the various related issues, including communal life prior to the Holocaust, annihilation, Jewish reaction, resistance, collaborators, the Righteous Among the Nations and many other issues.

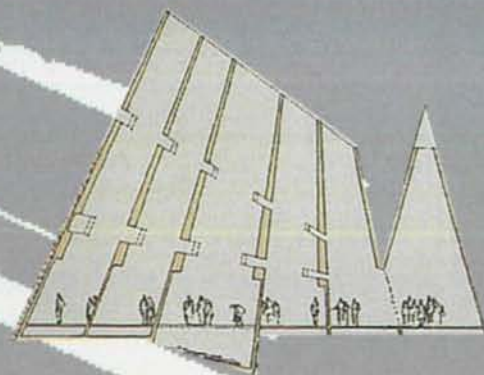
The new elongated, linear, 3,000 square meter structure, also

# THE MUSEUM

## UPPER LEVEL PLAN



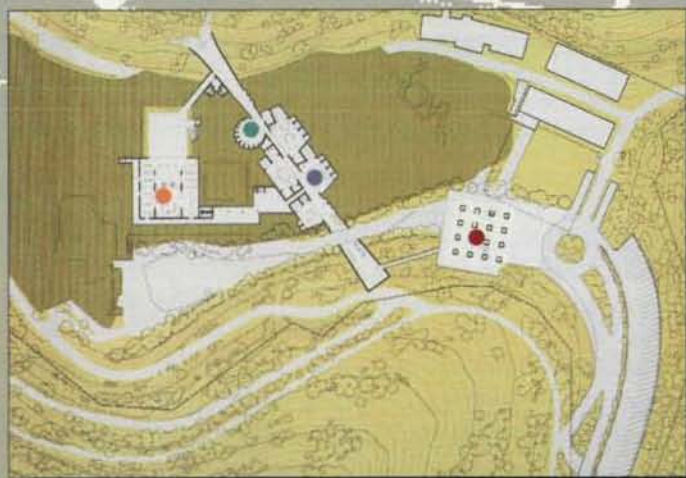
- NEW ENTRANCE PLAZA
- NEW VISITORS' CENTER
- AVENUE OF THE RIGHTEOUS AMONG THE NATIONS
- NEW HISTORIC MUSEUM
- CHILDREN'S MEMORIAL
- HALL OF REMEMBRANCE
- NEW MUSEUM OF ART AND TEMPORARY EXHIBITS
- AUDITORIUM
- THE WARSAW GHETTO PLAZA
- NEW ARCHIVES
- NEW INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES
- ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
- NEW BUS PARKING AREA



*Internal perspective of the Hall of Names in the museum*

# New COMPLEX

## LOWER LEVEL PLAN



- NEW VISITORS' CENTER
- NEW HISTORIC MUSEUM
- HALL OF NAMES
- NEW MUSEUM OF ART AND TEMPORARY EXHIBITS

designed by architect Safdie, dramatically cuts into the hillside, symbolizing the chasm created by the Holocaust. The natural rock can potentially be incorporated into the museum's internal decor. The museum will contain a series of galleries organized along the approximately 175 meter long spine. It is primarily underground, with both the entry and exit protruding and cantilevering from the hillside. Throughout the entire structure, unobtrusive and complementing of its surroundings, light will penetrate below and create an atmosphere of mystery and continuity. The flexibility of the pavilions' design enables the alternating use of space. The central section is lit through an impressive atrium. From here, the route continues underground leading the visitor to the Hall of Names, the symbolic resting place of the millions of names of the Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

The Hall of Names will contain the memorial pages based on the millions of Pages of Testimony filled in by survivors and their families, or on other sources of information from Yad Vashem and elsewhere, of each individual victim whose death has been recorded. The design and elevated roof of the building, as well as a visual commemoration, such as a projected screen of names, will create a sanctuary for quiet reflection and unity with the memory of the beloved departed.

The visitor will then leave the Hall of Names and continue to the Art Museum which, in addition to its permanent display halls, will contain a main secondary hall, 800 square meters in size, for temporary exhibitions. The museum complex will also have a learning and information center where visitors can access information, individually and in small groups. Computer stations will be strategically located and provide a variety of multimedia programs and databases from the Encyclopaedia of the Holocaust, including maps and photographs. A visual screening center will show documentary and popular films on the Holocaust, upon request of individuals and small groups. This center will also contain the master copies of the video films of tens of thousands of Holocaust survivors, from Steven Spielberg's Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation.

Upon leaving the partially underground museum complex, the visitor will walk out into the light and green hills of Jerusalem, symbol of life and continuity, and the capital of the Jewish people. From there he will walk up to the Hall of Remembrance, the central site of Jewish collective commemoration. Here, individuals, families and the different Holocaust survivors' organizations come to recite Yizkor and rekindle the eternal flame; here the names of those who perished are read on Holocaust Remembrance Day within the ceremony, "Unto Every Person There is a Name", and here, on official visits, international dignitaries lay their wreaths.

The visitor can continue his visit to the other sites on the grounds of the Mount of Remembrance.



By Dr. Nahum Bogner

**B**ritish immigration policy between 1939 and 1948, expressed in the 1939 White Paper, was a function of Britain's new policy toward the Zionist enterprise in Palestine. The British wanted to relieve themselves entirely of their earlier commitment to support the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. They did this primarily by drastically reducing Jewish immigration to 75,000 immigrants for the five-year-period. Additional immigration after that period would be dependent upon Arab consent. This policy meant that Britain completely ignored the dire situation of the Jews of Europe on the eve of the Second World War. The gates of Palestine were slammed shut for many who saw it as their final hope of refuge; the small Jewish *Yishuv* (Jewish settlement in Palestine) was severely constricted, and the Zionist dream of establishing a Jewish state was all but demolished.

The leadership of the Zionist Movement refused to recognize this policy as legitimate, and they undermined it by encouraging and organizing illegal immigration. The British, however, were determined, and had no intention of succumbing to any pressure as far as immigration was concerned.

With Britain's entry into the war in September 1939, war was also declared on Jewish immigration to Palestine, and particularly on illegal immigration. British authorities canceled all the immigration certificates and entry visas into Palestine which had been granted to Jews within the German Reich, since these Jews were now considered to be subjects of enemy states, and could supposedly pose a security threat to Britain. In reality, this move was meant to reduce the number of immigration candidates to the 75,000 certificates stipulated by the White Paper. There was something ironic about the British determination to fight illegal immigration, illustrated by their capture of the *Tiger Hill* immigrant boat off the coast of Palestine on September 2, 1939 – one day after the war began. The first shots fired that day by a British warship were not aimed at German forces, but at Jewish refugees on the boat, two of whom were killed.

Prior to the war, Britain had shown greater generosity than most countries toward Jewish refugees, and, in the years 1933-1939, had absorbed some 50,000 refugees, among them 10,000 children, who were placed in (often non-Jewish) foster homes. During the war, however, Britain decided to draw a sharp dividing line between the

## *The Callous British Policy Toward Aliyah Between*

fate of the Jews in Europe and the Zionist enterprise in Palestine. This decision was reached through cold political calculation, in an attempt to appease the Arabs in the Middle East, an area of strategic significance for Britain.

As illegal immigration grew, so too did the British war against it. When it became clear that Britain could not prevent the refugees from setting sail from Europe, it was decided to prevent them from entering Palestine at any cost – including deportation. In November 1940, the British government decided to deport the 1,500 refugees on the *Atlantic*, who had left Central Europe for Palestine. They were held in confinement on the tropical island of Mauritius for five years.

Pressure was placed on Prime Minister Winston Churchill, who was considered friendly to Zionism, to prevent the deportation of the survivors of the *Patria*. The *Patria* had been loaded with immigrants who had arrived in a convoy with the *Atlantic*, and was to set sail for Mauritius. The ship was sabotaged in the Haifa port

by *Hagana* members who wanted to delay the deportation of the refugees on board. As the result of malfunctioning, the ship was sunk and some 270 refugees on board drowned.

In early 1942, when the Nazi killing machine was already sweeping over the Jews of Europe, Britain put heavy pressure on the Turkish government to prevent the *Struma*, loaded with 770 refugees from Romania, from passing through the Bosphorus en route to Palestine. The refugees on the *Struma* had left Romania following the slaughter of the Jews of Bucovina and Bessarabia, and had reached the port of Istanbul with great difficulty. They were held on the ship for over two months, in inhuman conditions. In the end, the ship was towed back to the Black Sea by Turkish authorities, where it was mistakenly torpedoed by a Soviet submarine, and all aboard were drowned.

Under pressure following the *Struma* disaster, the British government moderated its war against illegal immigration, and agreed to grant immigration certificates to immigrants who reached the shores of

Courtesy of Diaspora Museum



*British soldiers wait on the shore to take illegal immigrants off the boat*

# TO ERETZ YISRAEL NO!

## 1939-1949 was a Result of Pure Political Self-Interest

Palestine. Their numbers would then be deducted from the total of 75,000 certificates stipulated by the White Paper. Several thousand immigrants were saved by this gesture, but British policy on immigration remained fundamentally unchanged. Ultimately, the quota of certificates which, according to the White Paper, was supposed to be issued by the British over a five year period, was in fact not even filled.

Even after the war, when the results of the Holocaust were already well-known, the British continued their policy of limiting immigration, and refused to raise the immigration quotas for survivors wishing to rebuild their lives in Palestine. At this point, the Zionist leadership determined to make use of enlightened public opinion, which was favorable toward the survivors, in order to cancel the White Paper policy, and to bring about the creation of a Jewish state.

Toward the end of 1945, illegal immigration was renewed in small numbers. At first, only a few small boats could dock without being caught. The threat of deportation, however, remained. The situation reverted to the pre-war reality, as though the Holocaust had not occurred. For tactical reasons alone, the British delayed the use of deportation as a weapon against the immigrants. But when the *Yishuv's* armed struggle against British rule intensified, and immigration grew from a trickle into an increasingly powerful current, exceeding the quota of 1,500 certificates which the British continued to allow, the

United Nations. It also failed to deter illegal immigration.

Britain's steadfast adherence to a strict policy against Jewish immigration after the United Nations' November 29, 1947 decision to end British rule over Palestine, astounded international political figures; the British navy prepared to prevent the landing of 15,000 refugees from Romania, who were to set sail on the *Pan York* and the *Pan Crescent*. The British government also refused to accede to the United Nations' demand that while evacuating its forces from Palestine, it clear a port in the area assigned to the Jewish state, to facilitate Jewish immigration.

British motives for limiting immigration were strictly political. In their involvement in the Arab-Jewish conflict, they chose – for reasons of imperial interests – to prefer the Arabs to the Jews. As settlement of the Palestine question drew near, they attempted to prevent the *Yishuv* from growing beyond its proportions as one-third of the population. Thus, they hoped to make up for their "original sin" toward the Arabs – the Balfour Declaration – in which they committed themselves to supporting the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. When the United Nations decided on partition and the establishment of a Jewish state in part of Palestine against the will of the Arabs, British authorities did not wish to be perceived as having facilitated its creation through a liberal immigration policy.

## What were their motives?

### The Current Debate on the Exodus is Reaching High Tones in Israel

By Daniel J. Chalfen

**T**he saga of the *Exodus* is an exceptional example from Jewish history that reflects motivation amidst adversity and endurance at a time of no apparent hope. The struggle of 4,515 Holocaust survivors in the summer of 1947 was exceptional in its determination, in the sheer size and logistics of the ship – the largest Aliyah Bet ship to date – and, above all, in terms of the immigrants aboard.

Dr. Nahum Bogner, author of *The Resistance Boats*, profiled those aboard as displaying pathos, affiliating with fellow Jews and not

trusting others. They believed that Israel was on the verge of becoming a formal state, but their principal goals were to rehabilitate their lives within a secure Jewish environment and to discover family lost over

British government decided, in August 1946, to deport illegal immigrants to Cyprus. From this point on, illegal immigration became a grass-roots revolt along the country's shores, in which tens of thousands of refugees, in dozens of boats, took part.

When the British authorities realized that deportation to Cyprus was not a deterrent, they decided to begin deporting the immigrants back to Europe. Thus, in the summer of 1947, they became entangled in a two-month struggle with the immigrants on board the *Exodus*. They forced them to return to Germany, but it was not much of a victory: The war against the *Exodus* added little glory to Britain, in the days when the question of Palestine had already been transferred to the

Courtesy of Diaspora Museum



Jewish refugees from Romania stand on a hut in Atlit in 1944 and raise the flag.

the previous decade. As opposed to the smaller boats that carried young, healthy, movement-affiliated immigrants, the *Exodus* had an especially large percentage of pregnant women and families with young children. There were even some on board who had previously applied to enter other countries. Yet, these people developed the feeling of being on the crest of one of the Jews' greatest waves, and they perceived their role as intrinsic to the fight for unrestricted immigration into Palestine and, ultimately, Jewish independence.

The struggle of those on the *Exodus* was phenomenal in terms of duration, the number of people involved and the role it played in the work of the Zionist leaders and underground fighters in the same period. However, the actual motivation causing the fervency of the immigrants' demands has become a recent focus for debate. The episode, which has been recognized as the pinnacle of *Aliyah Bet* and the Mossad's intensive post-war efforts to bring Holocaust survivors living in European displacement camps to Palestine, has spurred a rollercoaster of emotions.

The people involved, including David Ben Gurion, the Zionist emissaries working among the Jews in Europe and the resolute Holocaust survivors themselves, have been placed under the spotlight. It is impossible to assess quantitatively the roles of each of the various players involved in bringing in these immigrants. The issue is obviously sensitive and emotional and pits survivor against historian. Historians assess the period based on written sources and connected events, while the survivors believe that the psychology behind the *Exodus* immigrants' angst cannot be understood by those who were not present. While the historians explain the saga in terms of propaganda and ideology, the survivors say it was initially based on one thing only: instinct.

Some scholars believe that those on the *Exodus* were Zionists and wanted to get to Palestine and help build the Promised Land. Others believe the decision was made because these forlorn survivors had nowhere else to consider a possible home. A third school of thought postulates that the Zionist emissaries working in Europe were trying to fulfill their dream of ingathering the exiles. A fourth school believes that the emissaries preached to selected audiences only - to people they felt would be useful in the imminent battle for Israeli independence.

Dr. Irit Keinan, an expert on survivors interned in Europe, passionately believes that the survivors were true Zionists who felt that a homeland was a necessary substitute for all that had been destroyed during the Holocaust. Staying in Europe was too harrowing, and America only provided a physical safe haven and not a place where they could be united and in control. According to Keinan, Zionism was the intuitive choice made by the survivors, representing their future, their home, and their best chance.

Conversely, Dr. Idit Sartal postulates that the survivors involved in the *Exodus* were simply passive pawns in a wider Zionist struggle. She suggests that the immigration was not organized to save Holocaust survivors but rather to bring them in to help fight for independence. She claims that Ben Gurion was not concerned with the welfare of the immigrants, but rather the emissaries were bringing them for their

own ideological and professional purposes. Sartal believes that Zionism was a non-issue, for the survivors.

Yet Bogner suggests that the survivors' Zionism preceded the work of the emissaries in post-War Europe, who only provided the organizational framework and a connection to the Yishuv. The *Exodus* did require the involvement of the emissaries, but it is foremost an example par excellence of the instinct and gut feeling of the survivors - the self-initiated struggle displayed in France, Hamburg and less so in Haifa could never had been foreseen. Even if their Zionism was based largely on negative, push factors, and was post-catastrophic rather than pioneering, their desire to go to Palestine was clear.

The emissaries were most effective in the time between the survivors' developing feelings and their arrival in Palestine. The mix of people on the *Exodus* dispels the myth of selective immigration. The emissaries knew of the troubles awaiting the immigrants, but these emissaries sent by Ben Gurion, believed in the mass absorption of Jews in Palestine.

The debate has also raised the question of the emissaries' motivation. However, the survivors on the *Exodus* were not naive, and whilst they had dreamy ideas about Israel, they also knew their journey was potentially treacherous and, with no promises for the future, chose to make it. The dividing line between interest and ideology is infinitesimally thin.

The emissaries' goal of increasing strength and political settlement lies on this border. It represented the congruence between selfish ideals and helping others fulfill their wishes. Nothing comes to fruition without an interest, but it must be mutual, and the work of the emissary could barely begin before the interests of the survivors were realized. Most aboard the *Exodus* decided to join the Zionist struggle - whether because of anger with the British, peer pressure or lack of choice. Zionism gave the survivors a positive drive, a sense of potential achievement and a sense that their suffering had not been in vain.



The Exodus

At Haifa, the British entered the ship and engaged in a fight with the immigrants. Those fighting were a small number and consisted only of movement-affiliates. The immigrants were then split into three transports and taken to France. One of the boats had only one emissary on board, one had two and the third had none. Yet, when the French government refused to take them off the ship against their will, the refugees chose to endure the discomfort rather than disembark. Without the organization and leadership of emissaries, resistance was still rife and the true Zionist aspirations of the survivors were released. At Hamburg, resistance was even greater as the refugees saw their dream of arriving in Eretz Israel becoming more and more distant.

"Their ideology did not emerge from a theoretical framework," explains Professor Yisrael Gutman. "A small core of survivors had been members of Zionist youth movements, but most of those who decided to illegally immigrate to Palestine had developed an instinctive Zionism, forged during the Holocaust and the few years immediately afterwards. Zionism was not just an idea, it was the central force that enabled the survivors on the *Exodus* to persist in their dream of reaching Palestine. Zionism was their way to live."

*Celina Shatil is the First in a Series of Four Profiles of People whose Roots are in Israel*

# "AN INDESTRUCTIBLE BOND"

By Roberta Chester and Michal Morris Kamil

**C**elina Shatil, the sole survivor of her immediate family from Krakow, followed the routes both her parents advised; she credits her parents with her physical survival and her later success and outstanding achievements. Before being deported to Auschwitz, her father painstakingly prepared a brilliant escape plan which would take Celina, not yet eighteen, from Poland, through Slovakia to Hungary and finally to Romania, using false papers and escorts along the way.

Today, in her apartment high above the streets of Tel Aviv, Celina Shatil - an Israeli pioneer in the field of building and waterproofing - is far away in space and time, but not in memories. She left the Bochnia Ghetto on November 9, 1943, and arrived in Israel on November 4, 1944, after twelve harrowing months of terror and hardship. Celina was incarcerated in the DP camp in Atlit when the boat she was on from Constanta was intercepted by the British. Celina recalls, "I had escaped to a country which was not yet willing to reckon with the Holocaust, and as I walked through the streets of Haifa on VE Day, I felt angry and alienated. I was devastated that my parents didn't get to see this day. This was one of the hardest periods in my life."

In October 1945, Celina Shatil, highly intelligent but with no formal matriculation because of the war, fulfilled her mother's dream and enrolled at the Technion in chemical engineering. Funded by a Polish government grant which she supplemented with three jobs, Celina was one of the first Holocaust survivors to study at this scientific institute of higher learning. She recalls the hostility of several fellow students during her first year. "The locals were contemptuous of the survivors and accused us of going like lambs to the slaughter. I partially blame myself and other survivors as we didn't speak out. We felt that people didn't understand. I myself

never felt that we had anything to be ashamed of - on the contrary."

Along with her fellow students, Celina joined the *Hagana* and later the 22nd battalion of the *Carmeli* Brigade of what was to be the foundations of the Israel Defense Force, and accompanied the convoys which crossed hostile terrain between Hadera and Haifa. Celina's husband of ten months, Bezalel Perechodnik, was tragically killed on the final day of Haifa's liberation when he blocked a ricocheting grenade with his body, thus saving the lives of three of his friends.

Celina joined the newly formed Science Corps and became one of the first women officers of the new Jewish state's defense forces. "When we returned to the Technion after the war, we felt like orphans, I for the second time," she says, "because so many of us were killed. Life was very sad." But for Celina, her army experience was very effective in helping her integrate into Israeli society. "After everything I had been through, I so wanted to establish roots, to belong, to feel Israeli. The war, the army and my personal tragedy had formed an indestructible bond between myself and this country, and it has lasted until now. I am very connected to this place."



*Celina (right) and her family on holiday before the war*



*One of the first women officers in the new IDF*

*Celina married Eliezer Shatil, an engineer, in 1950, and received her*

*Celina in the chemical laboratories*



*Celina Shatil*

Diploma from the Technion in 1951. In 1958, as a young mother to daughter Orna, and working at the Israeli Standards Institute in Tel Aviv, Celina's career took a giant leap when she received a UNESCO grant for graduate studies in Europe. Besides developing colored asphalt - a uniquely Israeli product - for which she holds the patent - Celina was the chief engineer of the chemistry laboratories of the Standards Institute. Celina became a pioneer in waterproofing and insulation and her expertise has contributed to industry, universities and numerous government agencies. She was one of the consultants of the National Water Carrier and of the main water line between Ashkelon and Eilat. Reflecting on her career, Celina says, "I derive much satisfaction knowing I succeeded in a field which was in its infancy."

Looking back, Celina feels, "We are different people today. I have grandchildren who really want to know about the Holocaust. Unfortunately, because many survivors have died, the efforts of Yad Vashem, of films, and trips to Poland will ensure the provision of that knowledge for future generations."

Celina Shatil's life epitomizes the human spirit's capacity to triumph over adversity. "I feel that the Holocaust has lessons to teach us all. We must strive for peaceful co-existence. Living by the sword never solves any problems and deprives our children of the future they deserve."

# The Ghetto Walls did not

## Kamarad- A Children's Newspaper from Theresienstadt includes Stories of Faraway Places, Daily Life, even Comics

By Ruth Bondi

**D**etails of the Holocaust which are now being discovered, more than fifty years after the end of the war, elicit astonishment and surprise: astonishment at their content, and surprise that it took half a century to reach public awareness. This is true, inter alia, of the children's newspaper, *Kamarad*, a single-copy paper in Czech, produced in the Theresienstadt Ghetto, between October 1943 and September 1944. Only now, at the end of 1997, are all twenty-two issues of *Kamarad* to be published, in Hebrew translation, with an introduction and explanations, by Yad Vashem and Beit Theresien, located at Kibbutz Givat Haim Ihud.

*Kamarad* was written by a group of boys aged 12-14, in a *heim* (a dormitory, in ghetto terminology), in the Q-609 children's home. There were only two survivors of the twenty-three children who were involved in writing the newspaper or who are described in the boys of the *heim* section. The others were murdered at Birkenau in the summer and fall of 1944, or died after passing the selection in a concentration camp in Germany or perished in the death marches.

Ivan Pollack, editor of *Kamarad*, who also wrote and illustrated the comic strip *Zandluzhando*, was born in 1930 in the city of Nachod in Bohemia, and died in January 1945 in the Kaufering camp next to Dachau. According to the paper, he was fond of his pillow which he nicknamed *Tutnik*. He called his forty-five-year old mother, who stitched every issue of *Kamarad* together with blue and white thread, "the old lady."

In an eight-part series on how *Kamarad* was created, Ivan Pollack describes the efforts of publishing a single-copy paper in the ghetto. The paper was written on the second level of his bunkbed. In order to obtain the two sheets of paper he needed each week, Ivan pleaded with those children in the dormitory who had brought paper from their homes. This, along with a leaky fountain pen, colored pencils, watercolors and eraser,

were all precious items which the children contributed to their beloved paper. Each new issue was read aloud in front of the the counselors at Friday night parties. During the week, dormitory residents could only read the paper within the room, lest it be lost or damaged.

The serialized novels, which were all written by the children themselves, indicate the breadth of the children's horizons (and the influence of *Rudofsky*, a series of popular

of two young rocket inventors who intend to circle the world with their invention (we will never know if they succeeded: the story stops when the author, Papek Beihaby, nicknamed "the philosopher", was sent to his death in September 1944). The colorful comics, which appeared in the paper from the first to the last issue, tell of the lives of race-car drivers, and of the intrigues and connivances among the contestants. The puzzles and riddles, the medical section, the sports section – all serve as testimony to the fact that the children's world did not shrink to the dimensions of the crowded ghetto.

The newspaper reflects the children's daily routine, from the ringing of the alarm clock (purchased despite the SS ban on watches and clocks) to the collective walk of the urination convoy to the outhouse before bed. In between, there was an activity-filled day – cleaning the room, standing in line to wash, studies, chores, bringing food from the distribution point, afternoon rests, games, and evening visits with parents in the adults' barracks. Beyond the daily routine, *Kamarad* describes special experiences, such as snowball fights after the first snowfall, a game of cops and robbers during a walk to the edge of the ghetto (whose entire length was 700 meters), a warm shower, the war against fleas, the celebration of an instructor's birthday, and a prize-bearing contest (the prize consisting of a small flag and two cookies).

Events in the history of the Theresienstadt Ghetto are confirmed in the children's descriptions: an escape attempt by five residents of the dormitory – three returned on their own, one was captured, and one succeeded in escaping (and survived) – and the collective punishment which came in its wake in the spring of 1943; the terrifying commander, who wore down the 40,000 ghetto prisoners outside the city walls in November 1943; and the saddest experience of all: separation from friends sent to the unknown in the East (the Birkenau death camp) in September and December of 1943.



*The last comics which appeared in Kamarad. The story describes the celebration following the motor-car races.*

pocket-sized adventure stories for children) despite the fact that they were not permitted to attend school since 1940, and had been imprisoned in the ghetto for two-and-a-half years. One novel is about gold-diggers in north-western Canada. Another is the story



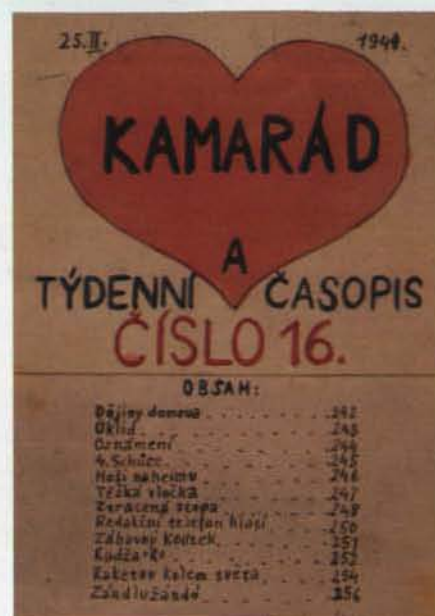
# imprison their Imagination

The Boys of the *Heim* section, in which each child's strengths and weaknesses are described, usually humorously, often in rhyme, allowed for a release of the tensions which arise in a situation in which thirty malnourished children have not a moment of privacy and sleep, eat, study, play and read in a single room. Although children did not die of hunger at Theresienstadt, they were frequently ill and constantly hungry. They would sometimes swallow their entire portion of bread in one gulp, and would then live for two days on loaves of bread. Food theft in the dormitory, an act which was strictly forbidden, was rare. (A thief who was caught was publicly punished; in one case, his hair was shaved).

The instructors and counselors, who were usually twenty-year-olds, are described in

*Kamarad* – at times critically, but mostly affectionately. According to *Kamarad*, the counselors (along with the Youth Department and the ghetto leadership) attempted to create a small protected environment for the children, to educate for values, even in the ghetto. Nonetheless, the children were aware of their surroundings. They saw starving old men and women scrounging for food remains or standing by the food distribution line, hoping for a little more of the bitter, gray soup distributed in the afternoon.

The newspaper's principal importance lies in the fact that it was written by the children of the ghetto themselves – in their own language, in the midst of the Holocaust, in real time – with no adult intervention. These are not memoirs which pass through



The cover of issue 16 of *Kamarad*

the filters of years of experiences, forgetting and repression. Furthermore, the voice of a group of young boys emerges, no different from children of today, who might very well find common language with one another as equals – with one exception: the lives of the *Kamarad* group were cut off in their youth.

## "The Need to Play is like Hunger"

An Interview with Author Uri Orlev who was Awarded the Bruno Brand Prize

By Galia Limor

"I find it difficult to say I write about the Holocaust," confesses author Uri Orlev. "I write about my childhood memories. It is true, of course, that in war, terrible things happen, but sometimes good things happen as well." This personal and very human tone is characteristic of Orlev's writing. Orlev writes for children and youth, and his books – not only those which relate to the Holocaust – have been translated into many languages.

Orlev was recently awarded the Yad Vashem Bruno Brand Children's Literature Prize for 1997, for his autobiographical book, *The Sand Game*, which tells the story of his youth during the war. The sand game is a metaphor for Orlev's and his brother's lives. In this game, they gathered a handful of sand, threw it up in the air, turned their hand over, and caught the falling sand. They did this repeatedly, and each time fewer and fewer grains of sand fell onto the palm of their hand. "The Germans threw us up into the air all the time," Orlev

explains to his son at the beginning of the book, and each time, many people died. But we – my brother and I – always fell back down into a safe place."

The story of Orlev's childhood in the Warsaw Ghetto during the war is of a boy's adventures, and the author – who writes from a child's viewpoint – sees himself as the hero of a suspense story, which will necessarily have a happy ending. Orlev says, "The book describes day-to-day life. The war lasted six years, and murder did not take place all the time. As long as there was food, people lived,



married and celebrated birthdays. On the streets of the Warsaw Ghetto, balloons were sold and people slept in beds with pajamas, not with clothing and shoes, as one often sees in movies. Just before its liquidation, there were half a million people living in the Warsaw Ghetto. They lived in a pressure cooker, and people constantly died of disease, cold and hunger. But the remaining people continued to live. They read books and sent their children to study. The image of the Holocaust is distorted because one is constantly shown only horrors. Mine is a firsthand testimony and it describes day-to-day life."

In *The Sand Game*, Orlev and his brother continue the game throughout the war. Orlev emphasizes, "As long as people live, until they are killed, they continue to wake up in the morning and say hello. Children continue to play. The need to play is like hunger."

Uri Orlev at the ceremony in Yad Vashem

# NEWS

On September, 21, 1997, the President of the Czech Republic, Václav Havel, visited Yad Vashem accompanied by Israeli President Ezer Weizman. Havel signed the Visitors' Book with a heart.



L. to R.: Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate Avner Shalev, President Weizman, Mrs. Havel and President Havel, in the Hall of Remembrance.

## HUNGARY TO AMEND LAW

The government of Hungary announced that it has placed before the Hungarian Parliament, a special amendment to the Right to Privacy statute, which will enable the Hungarian government to honor Yad Vashem's request for Holocaust period documents held in Hungarian archives.

The message was conveyed in an official meeting in late August which included the chief archivist of the Hungarian National Archives, Dr. Lajos Gecsenyi; Hungarian Ambassador to Israel Dr. Istvan Csejtei; Hungarian Consul General, Dr. Janos Hovari; Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev; Deputy Director of the Israel Ministry of Education, Menachem Cohen; and Yad Vashem chief archivist, Dr. Yaacov Lozowick.

The chief archivist of the Hungarian National Archives reported that Hungary sees great importance in the transfer of the documents to Yad Vashem, which will lead to an increase in knowledge on the Holocaust in general and on its history in Hungary in particular.

The Deputy Director of the Israel Ministry of Education expressed his satisfaction and offered the active support of Education Minister, Mr. Zevulun Hammer, for the effort being made by the Hungarian Government.

## THE LEXICON OF THE LIBYAN AND TUNISIAN COMMUNITIES WAS PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT WEIZMAN

The Holocaust did not pass over the Jews of North Africa: Thousands of Jews of these communities suffered persecution, degradation, and confiscation of property. Thousands more were imprisoned in concentration camps and forced labor camps; they were beaten, starved, and killed. In the Giado camp in central Tripolitania, close to 600 Jews died of hunger and disease. Throughout Tunisia, thousands of Jews were imprisoned in some 32 forced labor camps. Dozens died of disease, hard labor and abuse. Had it not been for the Germans' final defeat in the North African campaigns, the Jews of North Africa would have been led to the death camps and killed with their European brethren. There is little public awareness of the history of the North African Jewish communities during the Holocaust, or of the unique features of the persecution suffered by the Jews of these communities, and their perseverance in the face of this subjugation.

The assumption that the Holocaust passed over the Jews of North Africa is widespread among most of the public. This fact lends great importance to the publication of this extensive volume, which joins its fifteen predecessors as a memorial to the Jewish communities destroyed in the Holocaust. The emphasis in this encyclopedic enterprise is on the community as a living, developing entity, in which Jewish individuals found their place to which they contributed their



Israeli President, Ezer Weizman, receives from Yad Vashem's Chairman of the Directorate, Avner Shalev, "Pinkas Kehilot Libya and Tunisia". From R. to L.: Dr. Irit Abramski-Bligh - the editor, Avner Shalev, President Weizman, Libyan survivor Iris Museri and Tunisian survivor Chai Ha'ivri.

talents, and whose historical and cultural heritage both nourished them and was created by them. In contrast with other Jewish communities destroyed in the Holocaust, there is little written historical documentation on the North African communities. Materials such as testimonies, documents and photographs are limited, especially for rural communities. Dr. Irit Abramski-Bligh invested great efforts in gathering testimonies and historical sources to produce a thorough and comprehensive historical picture - as complete a portrait as possible - of the Jews of Libya and Tunisia during the Holocaust.

By Gideon Greif

## US SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE ALBRIGHT VISITED YAD VASHEM

On September, 10, 1997, US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, visited Yad Vashem. At the end of her visit, leaving the Children's Memorial, Albright spoke with great emotion: "The history remembered here at Yad Vashem is at odds with what we want to believe it was. There is an unbelievable sadness, suffering and cruelty. We must never allow ourselves to be at peace with the Holocaust. I know that I will never forget my visit."

In the picture: US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev.



■ In a festive ceremony in October, the cornerstone for the new Visitors' Center at Yad Vashem was laid. The Visitors' Center will be established thanks to a major gift from **David Shappell**, a close friend of Yad Vashem. **Shappell** attended the ceremony along with the **American Yad Vashem Society's** delegation and other distinguished guests. The Visitors' Center will be dedicated to the survivors of the Shoah and will serve as a meeting point between the familiar, everyday world and the reverence of the memorial site. The center will also provide facilities to the millions of visitors who visit Yad Vashem.

□ A delegation of the **American Yad Vashem Society**, led by **Eli Zborowski**, made its traditional pilgrimage to Jerusalem during Sukkot, met with Yad Vashem's Chairman of the Directorate, **Avner Shalev**, and participated in a rich and stimulating program.

□ The Society's Annual Tribute Dinner will take place in November and the Guests of Honor will be **Edgar M. Bronfman, President of the World Jewish Congress** and **Jane and Mark Wilf** representing the vanguard of **Yad Vashem Young Leadership**. **Ronald S. Lauder** will be the **General Chairman** of this festive evening. The guiding theme will be advancing the campaign, led by **Joseph Wilf**, to establish the new museum complex of Yad Vashem. The evening will also mark the fifth anniversary of the American-supported Valley of the Communities for which the dedicated members of the Society have produced an impressive photo journal entitled, *A World Remembered*, as part of the overall fundraising drive.

□ Leading **American Society** member, **Fanya Gottesfeld Heller**, and her brother **Arthur Gottesfeld**, recently took part in the ceremony at Yad Vashem recognizing the late **Izydor Sokolowski**, from the Ukraine, as a Righteous Among the Nations. His daughter, accompanied by family members, received the award; many of **Fanya Heller's** family and friends were present at this moving occasion.

□ **Ms. Nancy Waldbaum**, on behalf of the **Waldbaum Foundation**, has generously sponsored "No Child's Play," the Yad Vashem Art Museum's new exhibition of children's toys, games and handmade crafts from the Holocaust period.

■ In addition to his generous support for the Yad Vashem multimedia programs, amongst which is the highly acclaimed "Return to Life" CD-ROM program, **Leslie Dan**, a good friend from **Canada**, has pledged a major gift toward the construction of the new International School for Holocaust Studies and the new multimedia center which will be part of the school. These pledges were secured through the dedicated efforts of the **Canadian Yad Vashem Society**, led by **Hank Rosenbaum**.

□ The **Canadian Yad Vashem Society's** Annual Tribute Dinner will also take place in November. The two Guests of Honor will be the **Premier of Ontario, Michael Harris**, and leading community figure, **Leslie Dan**. **Mr. Harris** was the central guest at the Society's Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony where he presented scrolls to eight Canadian Holocaust survivors, including **Councillor Milton Berger, Deputy Mayor of New York, Joe and Jean Kichler** who were both on *Schindler's List*, and businessman **Abe Bielak**. The special event taking place at the dinner this year will be the presentation of the Righteous Among the Nations Award, by Chairman of the Directorate **Avner Shalev**, to the children of two recently recognized Dutch couples. The son **Bernd Jager** will receive the award on behalf of his deceased parents, **Hendrik G. Jager and Geesje Ten Brinke**, for saving the late **Margaretha Gosschalk**. A close relative will receive the award on behalf of the late **Hamstra and Klasiene Jacob** who saved **Flora Vogel Lirtzman**. Each of the two families risked their lives by harbouring these two Jewish women during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands.

■ The **Venezuelan Society's** Chairman, **David Israel**, and leading community member, **Moric Dum**, saw the results of their generous support at Yad Vashem's opening ceremony of the "Memorial Cave," which has been extensively renovated.

■ Activities of the **Panama Society** include the Anne Frank exhibition which was on show for 6 weeks. It was inaugurated in an elegant and crowded ceremony by Panama's President. Among the many visitors were 6,500 schoolchildren.

■ The newly appointed **Head of the Latin American Desk of Yad Vashem, Danny Gater**, has established his office in **Mexico**, and from there will liaise and focus on the activities of the existing societies and assist in the establishment of new societies in this part of the world.

■ The **Israeli Society desk**, within the **Yad Vashem Fund**, whose Director is **Simcha Salach**, has recently appointed **Yaron Ashkenazi** to head its operations. **Ashkenazi**, a lawyer by profession, intends to promote the activities within the Society and to focus on the enlargement of the circle of friends of Yad Vashem in Israel.

Published by:



Yad Vashem יד ושם

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes'  
Remembrance Authority

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**Chairman of the Directorate:** Avner Shalev  
**Vice Chairman of the Directorate:** Johanan Bein  
**Secretary General:** Ishai Amrami  
**Head of the International Institute:** Professor Yehuda Bauer  
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# new Yad Vashem

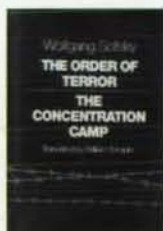
## PUBLICATIONS AND EVENTS

### NEW PUBLICATIONS



Dippel John V.H., *Bound upon a Wheel of Fire*, Basic Books (NY:1996), 353 pp.

People have been baffled for many years as to why the leaders of German Jewry did not encourage the Jews to leave Germany with Hitler's rise to power. This book presents the stories of six prominent Jews in German Jewish society and their personal reasons and beliefs for not leaving Germany. It focuses on their deep love and patriotism towards Germany, even when their homeland and compatriots willed the destruction. This original book neither defends nor condemns the German Jews but sheds light on an inexplicable phenomenon. A.L.



Wolfgang Sofsky, *The Order of Terror - The Concentration Camp*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997, 356 pp.

Sofsky's sociological study is a fascinating and intensely disturbing analysis of the central arena where the Nazis perfected their brutality, and of the people who suffered in these realms of degradation and death. Because the Nazi camp system had innumerable dimensions, Sofsky's study sometimes seems a bit flat, melding many experiences into archetypes in order to investigate them. However, his analysis using concepts of space and time, social structures, work, and violence and death, greatly contribute to the reader's understanding of both the unfettered cruelty employed by the perpetrators, and the swirling vortex of terror in which the prisoners were trapped. His descriptions are graphic and ensure that the reader never forgets that the subject under discussion is that of the most vile use of unbridled power in the history of mankind, and the victims of that absolute power.

R.R.



From L. to R.: Eli Zborowski, Joe Wilf, Avner Shalev, Ira Drukier.

Eli Zborowski, Joe Wilf and Ira Drukier, leaders of the American Society for Yad Vashem, visited Yad Vashem this September. The highlight of their three day visit was the Yad Vashem Directorate meeting, in which the plans for the new entrance plaza and the new museum complex, part of the "Yad Vashem 2001" project, were presented by Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate and architect Moshe Safdie.

A memorandum of understanding was signed by the American Society, in which they pledged to raise a third of the funds required for the "Yad Vashem 2001" project. Joe Wilf, Chairman of the campaign for "Yad Vashem 2001," pledged the first generous gift, on behalf of his family, toward the project. Joe Wilf emphasized, "The importance of the project lies not only in establishing a meaningful commemoration but also in reaching out to the younger generations and affording them the opportunity to learn, to witness and to remember. Yad Vashem owes its uniqueness and importance to its location in Jerusalem, Israel and we are certain that the memorial will stand not only for the next generation but forever."

### EVENTS NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

**28th October - 5th November:** *Journey into Memory*. Screenings of Holocaust related films at the Jerusalem Cinematheque in association with Yad Vashem. Professor Saul Friedlander will speak at the opening night.

**18th - 19th November:** The International Center for Holocaust Studies' Conference (in Hebrew) on Zionism and Zionist policies in the shadow of the Holocaust.

**1st December:** The Ya'akov Buchman Memorial Prize awarded annually to authors and research scholars for their works on the Holocaust.

**December:** A special concert will be held at Yad Vashem to mark the opening of Viktor Ullmann's opera *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*

at the new Israeli Opera House in Tel Aviv. The concert will include chamber music composed in Theresienstadt and arias from the opera.

**December:** The Zussman Prize awarded annually to artists in recognition of their Holocaust related works.

**31st December:** As part of the International Yiddish Festival, a seminar will be held at Yad Vashem on Yiddish culture between the two World Wars and Yiddish literature during the Second World War. At the end of the seminar, singer Ruth Levine will perform Yiddish songs and readings.

For further information, please call: 972-2-6751614.