

The Source of Shoah Remembrance

Education

Remembrance

Documentation

Research

Annual Report 2008

Jerusalem



The Source of Shoah Remembrance

———— Annual Report 2008 ————

Introduction

Over the past 55 years, Yad Vashem has transformed Holocaust Remembrance into a universal human undertaking. From our inception, we reached out to all the citizens of the world to aid in our mission to document the events of the Holocaust and commemorate its victims.

Today, Yad Vashem's global reach encompasses commemorative events, customized educational seminars, Internet access, traveling exhibitions and a wealth of publications and research studies. We remain dedicated to enhancing Holocaust Remembrance, Education, Documentation and Research around the world: to informing every nation about the Shoah and its universal implications, in order to pave the way towards a better, more tolerant future for the generations to come.



Yad Vashem seeks to inform but it also inspires... What I was taught about the Holocaust was significant but more importantly, I learned more about humanity

Zane Zalis, Canadian Educator



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From the Chairman of the Directorate



Dear Friends,

As the world grapples with the Holocaust over sixty years since its conclusion, an unusual paradox is increasingly evident. While mankind is moving away in time from the terrible events of that period, its interest in the Shoah grows steadily. Far from being relegated to the dusty shelves of history, more and more people around the world, from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, are delving deeper into the subject. Why is this? What is it about the Holocaust that so agitates humanity, so many decades after it occurred?

The answer is clear – the core existential questions that the Shoah raises remain unresolved: how could this unprecedented atrocity have been sanctioned – and implemented – by a modern nation-state? What made the perpetrators of the worst crimes against humanity act so unhesitatingly against their defenseless victims? Why did the millions and millions of bystanders not utter a word of opposition? What terrible “choiceless choices” did Jews encounter, and how did they grapple with the unspeakable day-to-day hardships they faced while still maintaining their Jewish solidarity and human dignity? And how were the relatively few Righteous Among the Nations able to act so defiantly to save Jewish lives?

In recent years, Yad Vashem has been concentrating its efforts on addressing these and other related questions, with the year 2008 yielding substantial achievements in the fields of education, remembrance, documentation and research.

With our recently completed development plan prioritizing education, there has been a significant expansion of educational activities by our International School for Holocaust Studies, in Israel and abroad. This has facilitated the creation of networks of dedicated teachers, who contribute their own unique experience to the dialogue, and gain from us the professional tools and support system necessary to strengthen learning about the Holocaust in their native countries. Yad Vashem is now the leading source of Holocaust education in the world, enhancing our unique role in preserving Jewish continuity, joining the global struggle against antisemitism and racism in all its forms, and promoting tolerance and the acceptance of humankind’s inherent heterogeneity.

The facade presented by antisemitism is presently undergoing a deceptive and dangerous mutation. No longer exclusively characterized by religiously based hatred, the “new” antisemitism sinisterly masquerades as delegitimizing criticism of Israel and its policies, both regarding the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and relating to its perceived status as a Western outpost in the Middle East. Holocaust denial and distortion are cynically utilized by the new antisemites, and Holocaust-related imagery and terminology are abused with increasing audacity.

The thousands of graduates of our educational seminars, and their tens of thousands of students, form a lasting and determined buffer against the growth of antisemitism worldwide. With this in mind, Yad Vashem has adapted to the “Google generation,” rapidly expanding our Internet capabilities, and making our vast and varied databases accessible to the global public. Historical accounts, pedagogic materials, original exhibitions and survivor testimonies can now be viewed online and via publications and traveling exhibitions in a range of languages, reaching audiences in hitherto untouched locations continent-wide, and making a lasting impression on key public opinion-shapers and decision-makers.

These achievements have been met, of course, thanks to the tireless efforts of our dedicated staff, and the vital and continuing support of our friends and supporters worldwide. Thus we realize our shared goals and fulfill our mission: the transformation of the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem into a spiritual center for the Jewish people and a source of inspiration for the nations of the world. In a time of renewed economic and political challenge, we are indebted to you for your steadfast assistance. During 2009, we shall press on with a profound sense of urgency. There is not a moment to lose.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Avner Shalev". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Avner Shalev
Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate

From the Chairman of the Council



Dear Friends,

As a child survivor of the Shoah, I have lived my entire life in the shadow of its terrible consequences and yet inspired by its eternal legacy. Clearly, the Holocaust has always been close to my heart and I have devoted myself to spreading the Jewish and universal values that may be learned through Holocaust remembrance and education. For decades, this has forged within me strong, deep ties to Yad Vashem, the world's pre-eminent center of Holocaust commemoration for the Jewish people and the global community.

I have been privileged for many years to witness first hand Yad Vashem's activity in Israel and around the world, and have thus come to profoundly respect and admire the tireless dedication of its devoted staff and faithful circle of supporters.

Last November, my appointment to the honored position of Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, just as we marked 70 years since "Kristallnacht," was especially meaningful. In the months since my appointment, I have gained an even deeper understanding of the vast scale of Yad Vashem's educational activities and outreach programs throughout the world, and I am convinced with greater certainty than ever that, in the light of increasingly menacing anti-Zionism and antisemitism worldwide, Yad Vashem must continue to play a central role in the strengthening of Jewish identity and the fostering of universal human tolerance.

Yad Vashem has established itself not only as a champion against xenophobia and prejudice, but also as the natural heart and home for survivors of the Holocaust and the next generations. My own life experiences, and those of my fellow survivors, resound within the walls of Yad Vashem. Its documents and exhibits reaffirm and echo our stories. It is to here that the Jewish people turn to remember our slain brothers and sisters, our destroyed communities and our cultural and religious heritage ravaged in the flames of the Shoah. Your continued support will facilitate Yad Vashem in spreading its message from Jerusalem: Teach about the tragic past in order to shape a better future for the Jewish people and the whole of humankind.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Israel Meir Lau". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau
Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council

Yad Vashem's Activities



Website in Five Languages



International
Educational Seminars



Multilingual
Publications



Righteous Among
the Nations Recognition



Around the World

Names Recovery Campaigns



Cooperation with
Global Organizations

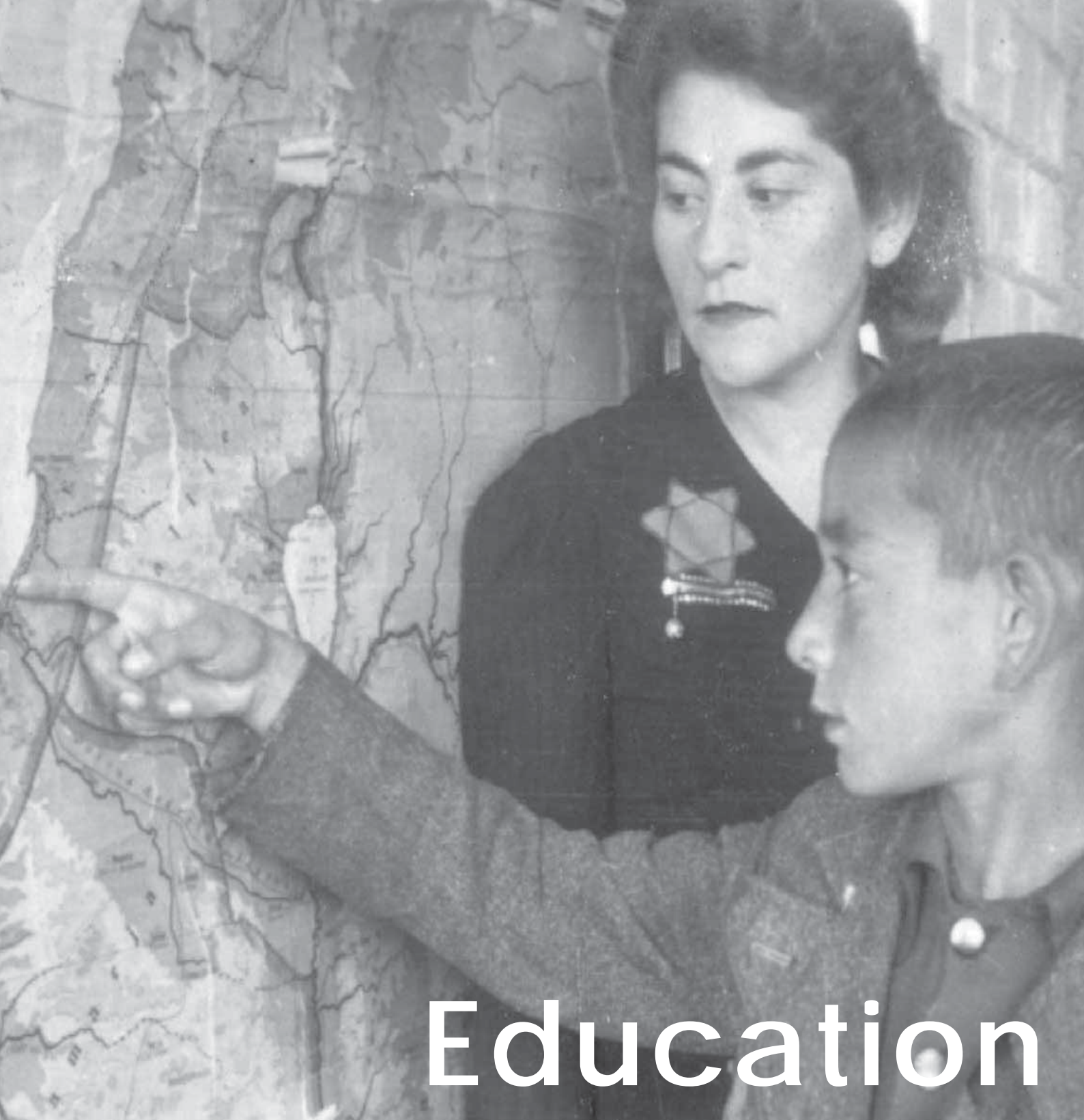


Online
Pedagogical
Tools



Traveling Exhibitions





Education

A teacher and a pupil near a map of *Eretz Israel* in the ghetto, Lodz, Poland, c. 1940/1



*Listen to the teachers, and
be good children*

Holocaust victim Carl Mayer in a letter to his two sons,
Manfred and Heinz, France 1941

Education

Over the past decade, Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies has become the world's unsurpassed source for Holocaust Education. We remain committed to our primary goal: enriching the knowledge of educators around the world and providing them with the correct tools for teaching this vital topic to every person, regardless of age, gender or race.

In 2008, the International School for Holocaust Studies hosted over 305,000 students, soldiers and IDF officers, and conducted an unprecedented 64 long-term seminars in 14 languages for educators from abroad, and 90 seminars for Israeli teachers.



"Teaching the Shoah: Fighting Racism and Prejudice"

Over 700 Educators from 53 Countries attend International Conference on Holocaust Education

In early July, Yad Vashem hosted over 700 educators and representatives from all the major Holocaust centers around the world for its Sixth International Conference on Holocaust Education. For more than half the participants this was a first visit to Israel and, in light of Europe's rapidly changing demography, a special emphasis was placed on how to teach the Holocaust in a multicultural setting.

The morning sessions focused on different themes, tackling the issues of racism and antisemitism, teaching the Holocaust in a diverse society and combating the phenomena of racism and prejudice in the classroom. One session was also devoted to the legacy of the Holocaust survivors in Israel's 60th year.

In addition to leading educators and historians, a variety of guest speakers hailed from different domains: Holocaust survivor and renowned artist Samuel Bak presented a series of paintings he created especially for the conference, and Commander of the Israeli Air Force General Ido Nechustan talked about the importance of teaching the Holocaust to the IDF Officer Corps. At the final session, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev spoke of the challenges facing educators in an era when Holocaust survivors will no longer be among us, and his vision of Holocaust education for future generations.

After each main lecture, participants gathered at the International School for Holocaust Studies for more than 160 educational workshops, touching upon a vast range of multi-disciplinary Holocaust-related topics.



The conference gave me the precious opportunity to meet a lot of people from different countries and exchange our experiences. Teaching the Shoah is difficult, but it is a challenge that we have to face if we really want to build a better world

Laura Fontana, Italy





Youth Leading Youth

First-Ever International Youth Congress at Yad Vashem

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, 27 January 2008, 116 young people from 62 countries and five continents gathered at Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies for the first-ever International Youth Congress. The three-day Congress, held under the patronage of UNESCO, was devoted to the study of the Holocaust and discussions of its universal significance. Ranging in age from 17 to 19, and speaking some 30 different languages, the delegates (some of whom are pictured above with President Shimon Peres) hailed from countries as varied as Senegal, Morocco, Australia, Thailand, Nepal, China, Gambia, Canada, Russia, Poland, France, Great Britain, Guatemala, Turkey, Israel and the United States. Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist youth alike committed to shaping Holocaust remembrance and its importance to coming generations.

In the wake of their transformative experience at Yad Vashem, the International Youth Congress participants have spent the past year organizing and participating in commemorative and educational events within their own communities. To encourage this initiative and ensure its continued success, the International School is now running a "Youth Leading Youth" program, to provide the young leaders with additional knowledge and tools.

By interacting with individuals from different backgrounds and cultures, I learned the cornerstone of genocide prevention: tolerance

David Mazor, USA

Breaking New Ground

New International Seminars Wing Answers Rising Demand for Holocaust Education

Over the past decade, the activities of Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies have increased above and beyond even the most optimistic of projections. Every year, hundreds of thousands of teachers, students, politicians, journalists, community leaders, diplomats and others from all over the world visit the school to gain a deeper insight into what happened during the Holocaust and to learn the latest interdisciplinary approaches to teaching about this period of history in their own countries.

In order to facilitate the current rate of growth in demand for intensive international seminars, Yad Vashem recently began construction of an extension to the International School for Holocaust Studies. The New International Seminars Wing will add approximately 4,500 square meters (almost 50,000 square feet) of space to the International School, and will include 11 new classrooms, a 328-seat lecture hall and spacious lobby, videoconferencing facilities, an interactive workshop and discussion room, an Educational Materials Development Department and an Online Outreach Department.



Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ 305,700 students, soldiers and IDF officers participate in programs of the International School for Holocaust Studies
- ⇒ International School staff active in 55 countries around the globe
- ⇒ 90 seminars held at Yad Vashem for Israeli educators
- ⇒ 64 seminars held at Yad Vashem for educators from abroad
- ⇒ Yad Vashem provides on-site training and mobile teaching units to over 21,000 teachers and students across Israel

“The Holocaust and Human Rights”

Yad Vashem Increases International Cooperation

As the world’s leader in Holocaust education, Yad Vashem cooperates with governmental and non-governmental bodies regarding annual remembrance and educational programs. From the UN-sponsored International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January to ongoing cooperation with the International Task Force on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research and UNESCO, Yad Vashem provides information, exhibitions, teacher-training seminars and multimedia programs devoted to the Holocaust and to combating xenophobia in dozens of countries throughout the year.

Towards the end of 2008, the International School held its annual graduate seminar in Vienna, as part of a joint initiative with the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). During the seminar, some 2,000 youth from Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia were exposed to projects aimed at deepening their awareness of different minorities in Europe and increasing understanding of human rights.



Programs for the Ultra-Orthodox Community

For a number of years, Yad Vashem has dedicated the period of *Bein Hametzarim* – the three weeks between 17 Tamuz, when the walls of Biblical Jerusalem were breached, and 9 Av, when the Temples were destroyed – to inviting the Ultra-Orthodox public for intensive Holocaust-related courses. In 2008, two large conferences were held at the International School for Holocaust Studies: one for *Talmud Torah* (elementary school) teachers, attended by some 100 instructors from all over the country; and one for some 450 female educators; as well as additional seminars and workshops. In addition, 2008 also saw the completion of the educational series *Years Wherein We Have Seen Evil*, comprising textbooks and accompanying CDs about religious life during the Holocaust.



I enriched my knowledge, and hope to pass on what I learned to my students, so that the generations to come will know

Participant in a seminar for Ultra-Orthodox educators at Yad Vashem

Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ Some 5,000 Ultra-Orthodox educators take part in professional development sessions at Yad Vashem
- ⇒ 53 survivors participate in seminars on how to give testimony before audiences



*Holocaust education is
a firewall against new
anti-Semitic ideas*

German Ambassador to Israel
Dr. Harald Kindermann

"You Gave Me a Reason to Live" Seminars for Survivors at Yad Vashem

In 2008, the International School hosted three seminars for Holocaust survivors who wish to relate their personal experiences before public audiences. These highly successful seminars, conceived by Holocaust survivor Hana Greenfield, have been held at the School for the past 17 years, and have already helped prepare some 480 survivors to tell their individual stories to students, soldiers and teachers from around the world.



The International School for Holocaust Studies – Online

The Yad Vashem Education & e-Learning website contains a wide range of pedagogical knowledge and tools in 19 languages, making it the most accessible database of Holocaust-related educational material in the world.

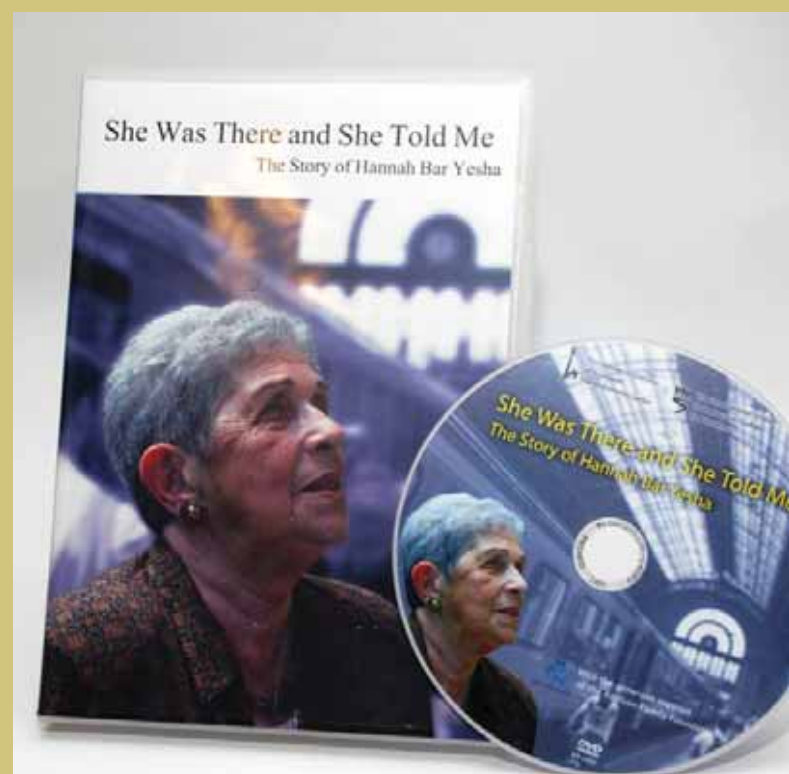
The “Virtual School” (www1.yadvashem.org/education) comprises online courses, lesson plans, suggestions for Remembrance Day ceremonies, selected readings and book reviews, available to teachers and students alike. The website also features a “Holocaust Research Center,” with lexicon entries, testimonies, diaries, letters, maps and timelines, as well as information about recent events, upcoming seminars and conferences, e-newsletters and reports on international projects.

“She Was There and She Told Me”

Filmed survivors’ testimonies

“Witnesses and Education,” a joint project of the International School and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem’s Multimedia Center, is a series of films that tell the survivors’ stories before, during and after the Holocaust. The movies, clips of which are available for viewing at the Virtual School, are filmed at the actual sites of the events. They transmit as full and multi-faceted a life story as possible, helping students grapple with the lifelong struggle of survivors.

The second film in the series was produced in 2008. *“She Was There and She Told Me” – The Story of Hannah Bar Yesha*, follows the experiences of a 12-year-old girl who, in the summer of 1944, was deported to Auschwitz with her extended family. This unique and moving film also describes Hannah’s childhood in the city of Ungvar, Hungary, her emigration to Israel and her successful efforts to establish a family there.





Remembrance

Unveiling of a memorial to Holocaust victims, Hasenecke DP Camp, Germany, 1947



I should like someone to remember that there once lived a person named David Berger"

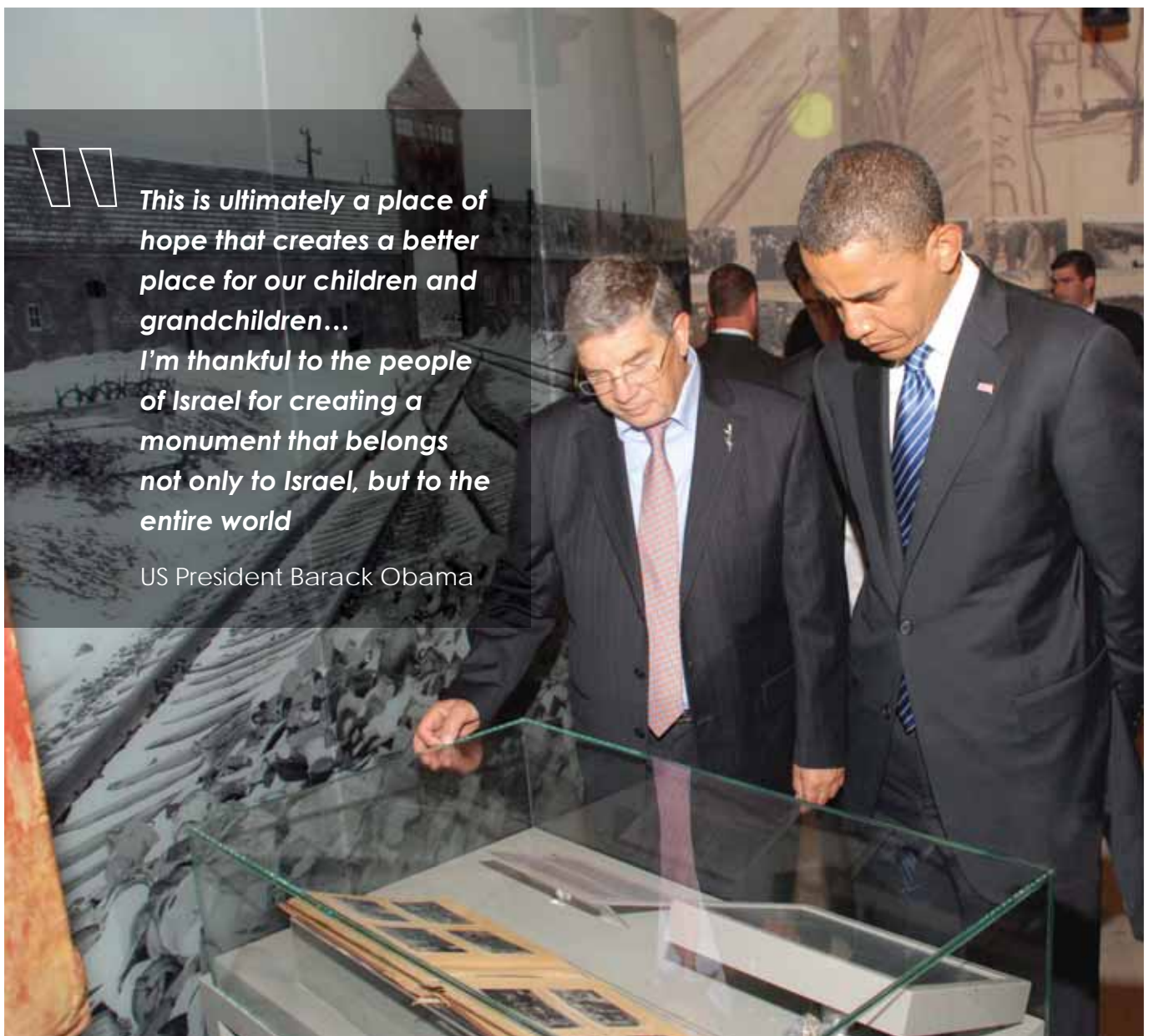
Holocaust victim David Berger in a letter to his friend Elsa, Vilna 1941

Remembrance

As the Center of Holocaust Remembrance for the Jewish people as well as the global community, Yad Vashem continues to encourage the public at large to assume the fundamental duty of personal – and collective – remembrance.

In 2008, more than one million visitors toured the unique Yad Vashem complex on the Mount of Remembrance – including the museums, monuments, Garden of the Righteous and Valley of the Communities. Among them were presidents, prime ministers and leading figures from every continent.

Over 54,000 people received tours of the campus from our guides, professionally trained to create an enlightening and transformative experience. Many thousands of visitors also met with Holocaust survivors, hearing first hand about their personal experiences during the Shoah.



This is ultimately a place of hope that creates a better place for our children and grandchildren... I'm thankful to the people of Israel for creating a monument that belongs not only to Israel, but to the entire world

US President Barack Obama



Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ Over one million people visit Yad Vashem
- ⇒ 940 foreign and Israeli dignitaries tour the campus
- ⇒ 90 events and 360 memorial services held

Audio Tours through the Holocaust History Museum now available in seven languages

The Yad Vashem Museum Complex, comprised of the Holocaust History Museum, Museum of Holocaust Art, Synagogue, Learning Center, Visual Center and Exhibitions Pavilion, is visited by thousands of people from Israel and abroad every day. The displays – including personal artifacts, authentic photographs, original artwork and survivor testimonies – provide the visitors with a comprehensive, multimedia and, above all, human account of the Shoah.

In order to service our international audience, in 2008 Yad Vashem completed the production of personal audio guides for the Holocaust History Museum in seven languages: English, Hebrew, French, German, Spanish, Russian and Arabic. The guides provide explanations for some 80 displays in the Museum, as well as dubbed original speeches and survivor testimonies.





There are many museums in the world, but the source is here at Yad Vashem. This is the heart and soul of Jewish memory

Nobel Prize Laureate Prof. Elie Wiesel

Special Events Forge Jewish Continuity

Every year, Yad Vashem conducts hundreds of remembrance services, cultural events and gatherings commemorating specific Jewish communities as well as significant events during the Shoah. Many are held in cooperation with survivor and next generation organizations, and are attended by fellow *landschaftmen*, family members, diplomats and government representatives.

The annual climax is the official state ceremony for Holocaust Remembrance Day, attended by the president and prime minister of Israel, survivors from Israel and abroad, diplomats, top-ranking government officials, and hundreds of youth movement members and IDF soldiers. During the day, educational and cultural programs take place across the campus, as does "To Every Person There is a Name," the public reading of the names of Holocaust victims, a unique Yad Vashem endeavor now duplicated around the world.

This year, some 2,500 people attended the ceremony, whose theme was "Holocaust Survivors in Israel: 60 Years Since the Establishment of the State." A separate youth movement ceremony was later held in the Valley of Communities, with hundreds of youth movement members and representatives from student councils all over Israel pledging to take upon themselves the task of Holocaust remembrance for the sake of Jewish continuity.



70 Years Since "Kristallnacht"

Lessons for Today Disseminated to Global Audience

Seventy years ago, on the night of 9-10 November 1938, the Nazis unleashed a series of riots against the Jews in Germany and Austria. Within hours, thousands of synagogues and Jewish-owned businesses were damaged or destroyed. Scores of Jews were killed, and thousands more sent to concentration camps. The pogrom came to be called *Kristallnacht*, or "Night of Broken Glass," for the shattered windowpanes that covered the streets.

In its sustained efforts to educate the public about the events of that time and their continued relevance today, Yad Vashem marked the 70th anniversary of the *Kristallnacht* pogrom in November 2008 with special ceremonies, educational seminars and a new online exhibition.





Honoring Survival ... a vibrant exhibition at Yad Vashem is telling a less-known story of the renaissance of the survivors in Israel, and the extraordinary role they played in shaping the character of the new state

New York Times, May 2008



Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ Traveling exhibitions showed in 23 locations worldwide
- ⇒ 2 major exhibitions displayed at the Exhibitions Pavilion



"My Homeland: Holocaust Survivors in Israel"

Special Exhibition Marks Israel's 60th Anniversary

As Israel celebrated its 60th anniversary, its population of Holocaust survivors numbered some 250,000, about half the number that arrived in the country since the establishment of the State. Their dramatic story in this land – a story not yet completely told – is the subject of a new exhibition opened by the Prime Minister in Yad Vashem's Exhibitions Pavilion in April 2008.

From the day they set foot in the country, the survivors fostered an unambiguous and intense Israeli identity, striving to be among those who shaped Israeli culture. They have left their mark in every field: in building new towns, the army, industry, the economy, law and culture. Painters and graphic artists, poets and writers, athletes and dancers, academics and cultural icons – many survivors were perceived by the public as native-born Israelis.

However they never shirked their unique responsibility: to preserve the memory of the Holocaust through commemoration and documentation. After the Eichmann trial of 1961, the two realms – displayed in the exhibition – merged into one, as Israeli society as a whole brought the survivors into its fold and made Holocaust remembrance a central component of its national identity.

Traveling Exhibitions Enhance Global Holocaust Remembrance

In order to promote international interest and global discourse on the subject of the Holocaust, Yad Vashem utilizes traveling exhibitions as a tool to reach audiences and institutions worldwide, and provide them with the materials and skills to learn and teach about the Holocaust and its universal implications.

Now available in a variety of languages, these exhibitions portray a wide range of topics, including sketches of a Jewish Red Army soldier at the liberation of Majdanek and Auschwitz; the lifelong journey of a Holocaust survivor to portray his experiences through art; the unique stories of women during the Holocaust; Jewish children's efforts to maintain their innocence; and the photographic account of Muslim Albanians who saved almost all the Jews living within their borders. Displayed in 23 different locations throughout 2008, the traveling exhibitions continue to receive great acclaim.



Facts and Figures 2008

- ➡ Over 400 artifacts added to some 22,000 pieces in Yad Vashem's collection
- ➡ 80 works added to Yad Vashem's art collection, which now comprises 12,000 pieces

Righteous Among the Nations

The title of “Righteous Among the Nations,” awarded exclusively by Yad Vashem on behalf of the Jewish nation, is the highest tribute paid to non-Jews for their efforts in saving Jewish lives during the Holocaust. Since 1963, Yad Vashem has bestowed this exceptional honor on more than 22,700 people.

In 2008, Yad Vashem honored hundreds of people as Righteous Among the Nations, in a series of poignant ceremonies in Israel and abroad.



Facts and Figures 2008

⇒ 515 people recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. To date, Yad Vashem has honored more than 22,700 people as Righteous Among the Nations

Polish Righteous Honored for Saving Children

Yad Vashem recently held a ceremony honoring Magdalena Grodzka-Guzkowska from Poland as Righteous Among the Nations. Magdalena was 15 years old when she enlisted in the Polish Underground to fight the Germans. At great personal risk, she helped Jewish children escape from the Warsaw ghetto, found them places of refuge and taught them Christian customs in an effort to disguise their Jewish identity.

Among Magdalena's young charges was 5-year-old Wlodzio Berg, whom she took to an apartment in the city. She brought him food every day, as well as art supplies with which to draw pictures. Berg, now William Donat (pictured left, with his rescuer), survived the Holocaust and flew in from New York for the emotional ceremony recognizing his rescuer. Also present were educators from Lodz, Poland, participating at the time in a seminar at the International School for Holocaust Studies.



*In saving their fellow human beings, the Righteous saved all of humanity...
It is our mission, as the educators of the young generations, to follow in their footsteps*

Polish Educator at Yad Vashem

Virtual Avenue of the Righteous

In 2008, Yad Vashem launched an online website devoted to the fascinating and inspiring stories of heroism found in the files of its Righteous Among the Nations Department, as the basis for a future comprehensive online resource about this unique project.

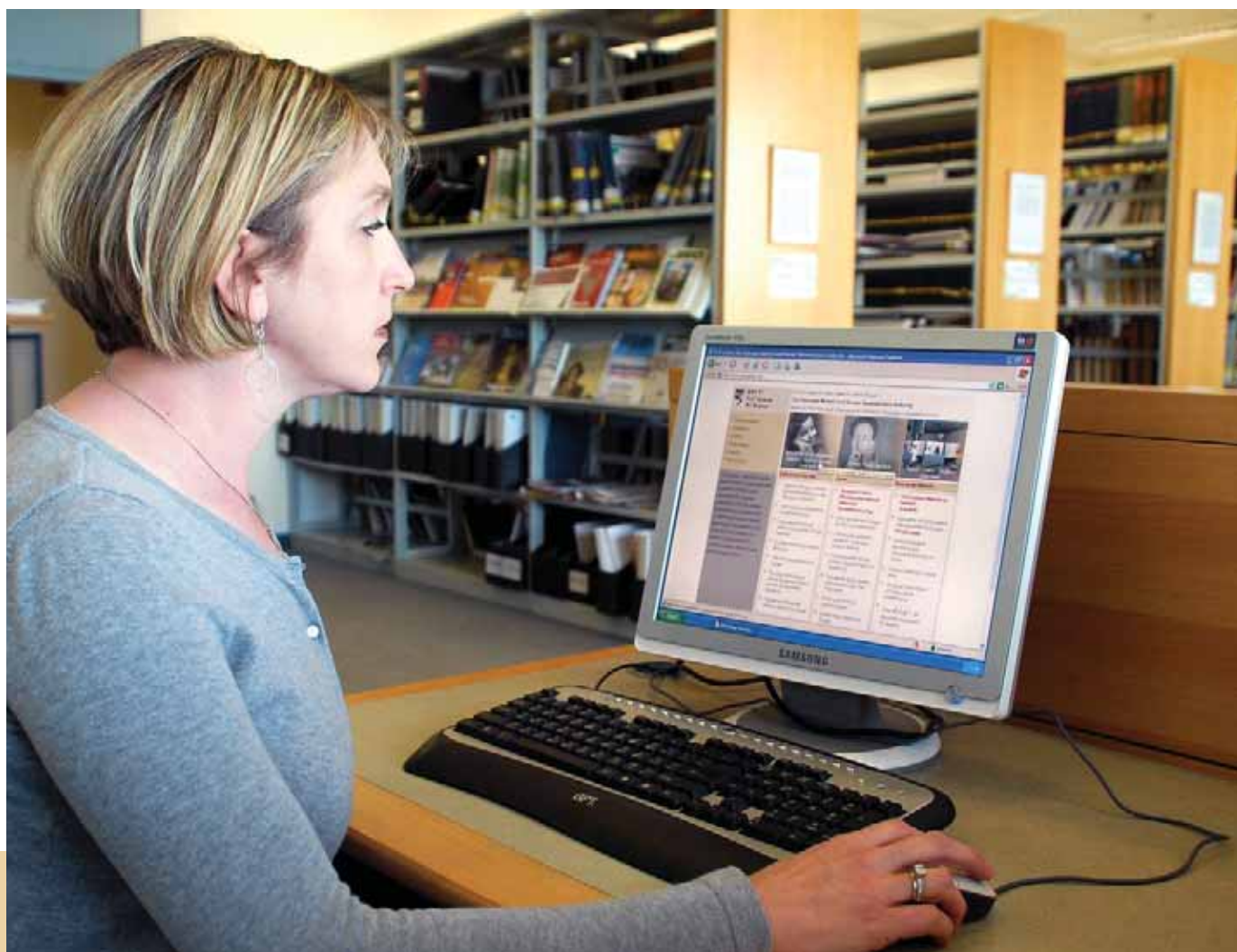
The new section includes guidelines on how to apply for the honor; a virtual tour and map of the sites commemorating the Righteous on the Mount of Remembrance; news and information about recent events; a selection of articles; and a virtual wall of honor for all the Righteous recognized so far. It also contains a selection of personal stories, together with photos and documents collected by Yad Vashem over the past 45 years.



Yad Vashem Online: The Most Comprehensive Website for Holocaust-related Information

With over eight million visits in 2008 – a more than twofold increase since 2005 – Yad Vashem's website (www.yadvashem.org) has become the premier online resource for anyone wishing to learn more about the Holocaust.

In 2008, Yad Vashem launched a new website in Arabic, three YouTube channels, and a number of special mini-sites covering a range of topics about the Holocaust.



The Yad Vashem website contains an immense amount of subject matter organized in an impressive manner. It is an outstanding example for all Internet sites

Judge at the 2008 WebiAwards

Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ 8.1 million visits to the Yad Vashem website from 220 countries and territories worldwide
- ⇒ 14 new online exhibitions: 6 in English, 5 in Hebrew and 3 in Spanish

Yad Vashem on YouTube

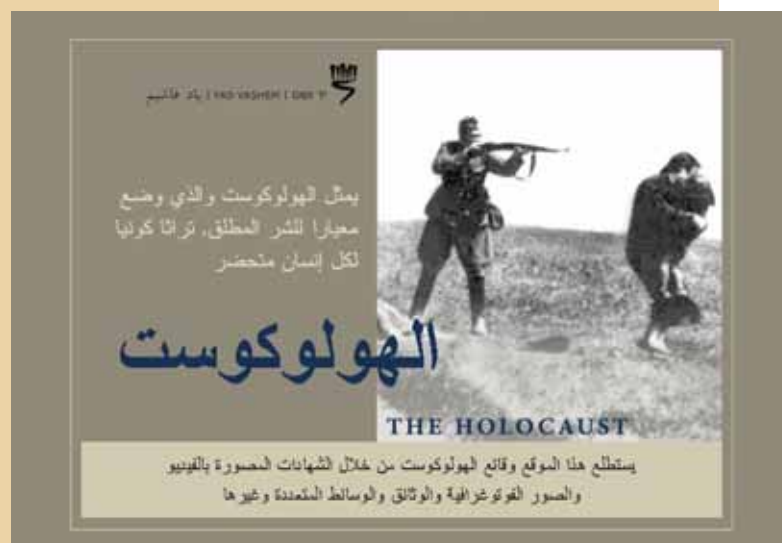
In advance of Holocaust Remembrance Day 2008, Yad Vashem launched its own channels on YouTube – one of the most popular websites in the world – in English, Hebrew and Arabic. The interest in these channels has been overwhelming, with close to one million video views logged in their first few months of operation.

The channels (www.youtube.com/user/YadVashem) contain testimonies from Holocaust survivors, archival footage, scholarly lectures on key issues related to the Holocaust, and footage from VIP visits, as well as human-interest stories. By reaching a broader audience through YouTube, Yad Vashem hopes that visitors to the site will be encouraged to view the Holocaust as an event of universal significance and identification.



Over 360,000 visits to New Arabic Website

On 24 January, Yad Vashem launched its new Arabic website, in an effort to provide the Arabic-speaking world with reliable and comprehensive information about the Holocaust. At the event marking its launch, Prince El Hassan bin Talal, brother of King Hussein of Jordan, sent a recorded message, noting that the website, "presents a unique opportunity to learn about and understand the issues which are not only of historical import, but are also vital to our lives today." By the end of 2008, the site had logged over 360,000 visitors from 120 countries.





Documentation

Members of the Historical Committee gather testimony from survivors in the Leipheim DP Camp, Germany, c. 1946/7



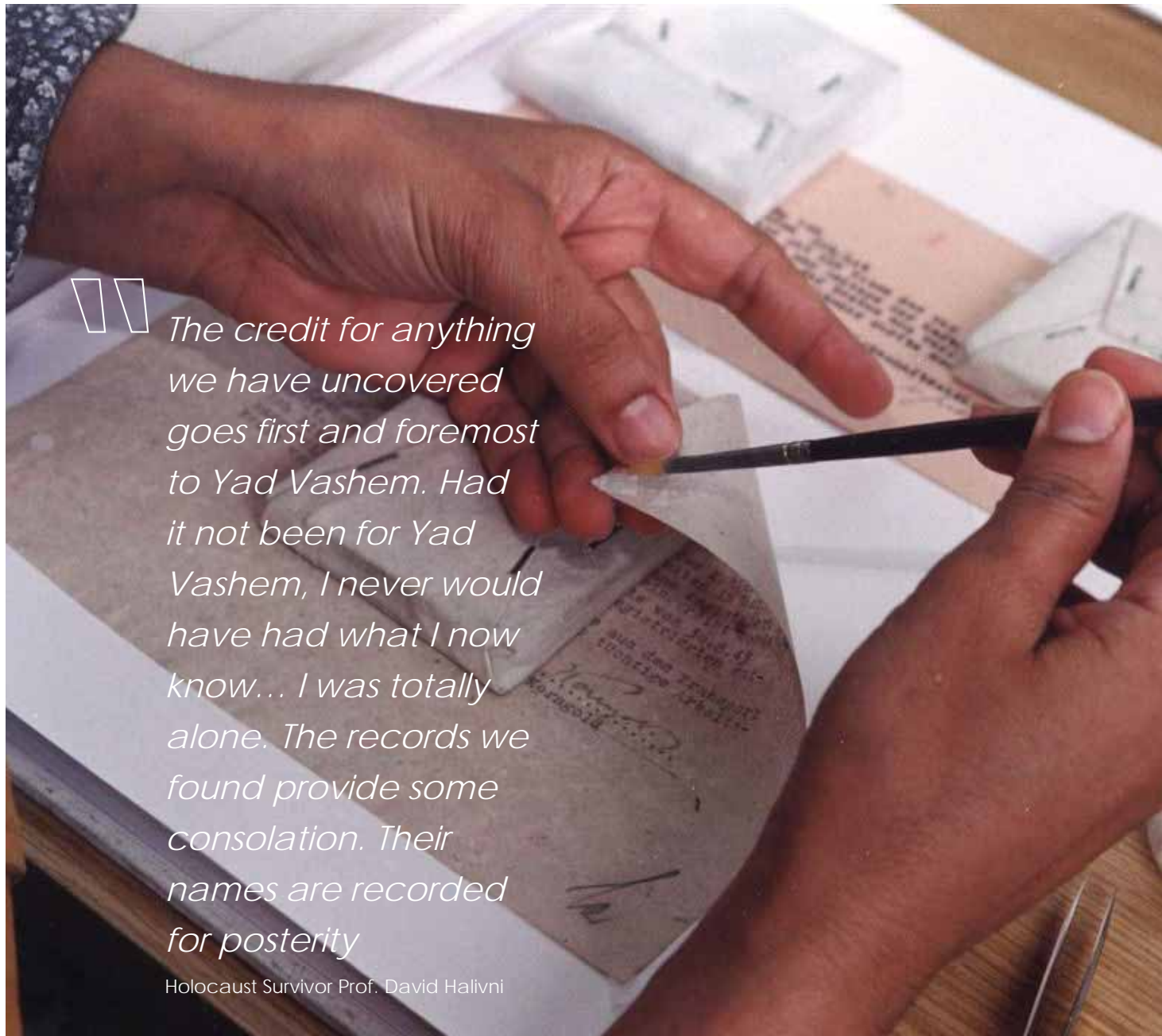
May my notebook, written in blood... serve as evidence to the world of the bloodbath of the murderer Hitler and his gang of criminals

From a letter written by Holocaust victim Yitzchak Aron (son of Moshe and Tzirel), 1942

Documentation

With over 125 million pages of documents, Yad Vashem's Archives comprise the world's largest collection of Holocaust-related information.

In 2008, we significantly expanded our archival collection, receiving tens of millions of documents from repositories and archives around the world. From our vast wealth of original documentation, we respond to thousands of applications every month from researchers, survivors and the general public, searching for information on the fate of individuals during and after the War.



The credit for anything we have uncovered goes first and foremost to Yad Vashem. Had it not been for Yad Vashem, I never would have had what I now know... I was totally alone. The records we found provide some consolation. Their names are recorded for posterity

Holocaust Survivor Prof. David Halivni

From the Streets of the Ghetto to the World Wide Web: Yad Vashem's Photographic Collection Now Online

In May 2008, Yad Vashem uploaded some 130,000 historic photographs – a significant portion of its unique collection – to the Internet. The photos cover the lives of the Jews before, during and after the Holocaust, as well as Shoah remembrance worldwide. As such, they represent an invaluable asset to historians, educators, writers, filmmakers and the public at large.

Internet surfers are now able to conduct searches of the database by topic, name or geographical location. A user-friendly interface allows surfers to navigate their way with ease. Every photograph in the database is linked to information relating to its content and, upon selection, a Google map automatically opens showing the location of the places noted in the caption. Further links enable expanded searches. Yad Vashem plans eventually to integrate the photographic collection with its other online databases, as well as those to be uploaded in the future.



***Amid all the horror around him, he has found his destiny:
to photograph, and leave behind a testimony for all generations
about the great tragedy unfolding before him***

Holocaust survivor Arie Ben Menachem about Lodz ghetto photographer and Holocaust victim Mendel Grossman (pictured above)

Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ 50 million pages of documents added to the Yad Vashem Archives, which now houses 125 million pages of documents in total
- ⇒ Over 14,500 photographs added to the Photo Archive, which now comprises some 370,000 images
- ⇒ 26,000 public enquiries answered by the Reference and Information Services Department: 18,000 written and 8,000 in the Library and Archives Reading Room

Yad Vashem Archives help reveal the fate of individual victims

By collecting and safeguarding millions of pieces of evidence from all over the world, Yad Vashem can provide students, researchers and historians, as well as the general public, with an accurate and detailed historical record of the atrocities committed against the Jewish people. Despite the passage of time, our Reference and Information Unit weekly assists hundreds of people seeking information about missing relatives.

The Yad Vashem Archives was recently augmented by the receipt of some 67 million pages of documents from the post-war German-based International Tracing Service (ITS). The digitized documents, 20 million of which Yad Vashem had already copied in the 1950s, include information about Holocaust victims, deportations, concentration camps, forced labor and displaced persons.



Preserving for Posterity

Part of the work undertaken in the vast Archives Division is the restoration and preservation of millions of documents from the wartime period, including diaries written during the Holocaust. One such diary was penned by Rabbi Uri Feivish Tauber during his incarceration in the Mogilev ghetto from 1941-1944. The diary, containing compelling and moving descriptions of his work and experiences in the ghetto orphanage, was submitted to the Archives by his widow Ruth. Yad Vashem's unique Preservation and Restoration Laboratory worked tirelessly to repair and preserve its crumbling pages, and restore it to a condition from which researchers may be able to decipher and utilize the information within.

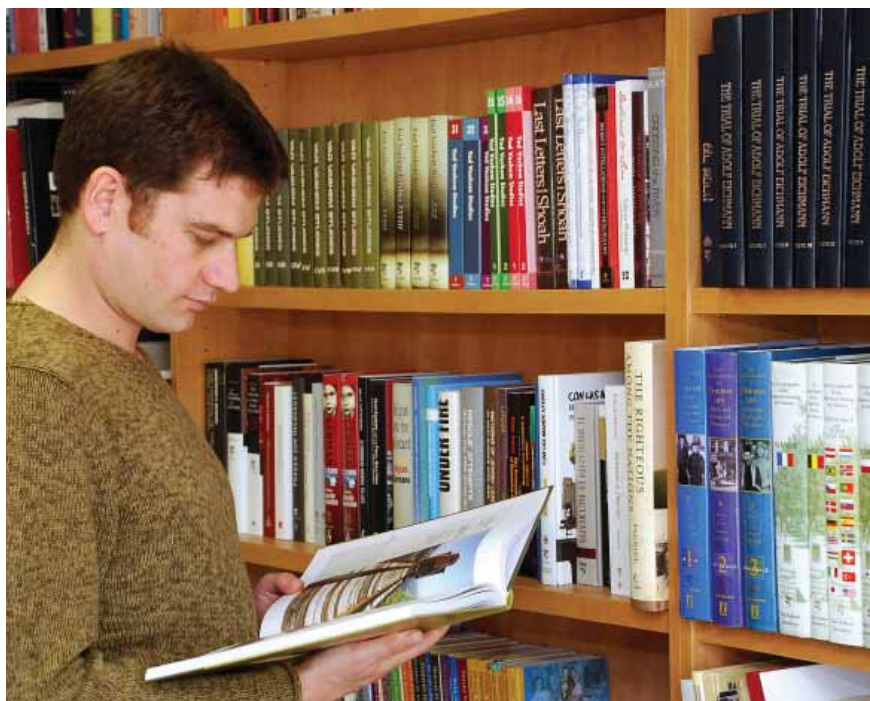


I didn't want the diary to be lost forever... at Yad Vashem it is much safer than in my own home. Now others can read it and learn about what happened. It will be a reminder for all time

Ruth Tauber, widow of Rabbi Uri Feivish Tauber

The Library

With over 117,000 titles in more than 50 languages, the Yad Vashem Library comprises the largest collection of Holocaust-related publications in the world. Not only does the material lining its shelves contain a wealth of information about the Holocaust, it represents mankind's attempt to grapple with one of the most traumatic events in human history.



In 2008, over 3,000 new titles were added to the Library, covering a range of topics from memoirs and biographies to educational publications, anthologies and postwar accounts.

Catalogue of the Yad Vashem Library: Now Online

In 2008, Yad Vashem uploaded its entire library catalogue – some 117,000 titles in 54 languages – to the Internet. The unique collection – the largest of its kind in the world – contains every kind of publication in the field, including memoirs, novels, encyclopedias, *sifrei yizkor* (memorial books), Nazi and antisemitic publications, and geographic sources. With links to basic bibliographies about the Holocaust, in-depth features on interesting items in the Library, articles from *Yad Vashem Studies* and published papers from our scholarly conferences, the online catalogue provides an unparalleled source of readily accessible knowledge regarding published works about the Holocaust.

Facts and Figures 2008



3,400 book titles added to the Library collection, which now numbers over 117,000 titles in total

Names Recovery

With over 3.6 million names, Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names is the only repository in the world dedicated to preserving the memory of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust. Millions more names remain unidentified: it is our collective duty to persist until they are recovered.



*When I help other survivors I can look them in the eye.
I don't need to explain myself; we already have a mutual
understanding and share a common knowledge*

Holocaust survivor and Names Recovery Volunteer Aliza Shomron

Survivors Volunteer in Yad Vashem's Global Names Recovery Project

The Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project trains volunteers in Israel and around the world to assist Holocaust survivors and members of their generation to commemorate victims by recording their names – and, when available, photos and other biographical data – on Pages of Testimony. Many of those joining the ranks of this historic effort are themselves Shoah survivors.

In Israel, volunteers undergo training at Yad Vashem and then conduct home visits with survivors, where tremendous sensitivity is required to guide them through the painful process of re-opening and confronting feelings of loss and mourning from over half a century ago. Nevertheless, Holocaust survivors time and again express their gratitude to the empathetic volunteers for finally helping them ease such a heavy burden.



Families Reunite Through Online Names Database

Since Yad Vashem uploaded its Central Database of Shoah Victim's Names to the Internet in 2004, its staff has had the honor to facilitate – and witness – poignant reunions of Jewish families from all over the world. Recently, descendants of the Diamond Family (USA) and the Dashut Family (Israel) met for the first time when Nancy Diamond (center) visited Yad Vashem's Hall of Names in October 2008, and met with her cousin, Holocaust survivor Avshalom Dayagi-Dashut (left) and his daughter Yona Kahanovitch (right).

Facts and Figures 2008

- ➡ 33,000 Pages of Testimony and 4,400 photographs added to the Hall of Names
- ➡ Over 600,000 names records digitized from archival documents gathered in Hungary, the former Soviet Union and other sources
- ➡ Yad Vashem's Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names reaches 3.6 million names



This unique idea bridges continents, generations and time itself... the Jewish family lives on

Sara Michaela Reingewirtz



A Living Connection

Bnei Mitzvah “Twin” with Holocaust Victims

An increasingly popular way in which Jewish children and their families are strengthening their identification with the Jewish people is by forging bonds with individual children killed in the Holocaust. Using the Online Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, bar and bat mitzvah students review Pages of Testimony containing the names, biographies and (when available) photographs of children with the same Hebrew name, birth month or other family connection.

Many of the young students turn to Yad Vashem for help in researching various aspects of the victims' lives, their struggles, and their traditions before or during the war. The experience adds a meaningful dimension to their own “coming of age,” and a powerful connection to the Jewish generations lost in the Holocaust. (Pictured above: Nathaniel Jean, left, with Henri Joinovici, brother of Holocaust victim Albert Joinovici, with whom Nathaniel twinned his bar mitzvah celebration.)

Stories From a Silent World

Collecting Testimony from Deaf Survivors

How did people born without hearing survive the Holocaust? How did they connect with their surroundings? These questions are not theoretical for many dozens of deaf Holocaust survivors living in Israel today. Until just a few years ago, they were unable to provide videotaped testimony because of the technical difficulties involved. Yad Vashem's Oral Testimony Section, part of the Archives Division, initiated a special project, in cooperation with the Institute for the Advancement of Deaf Persons in Israel. So far, twenty survivors, deaf from birth, have been interviewed, and an additional 25 survivors (most from the former USSR) are currently being recorded.



This exceptional documentation is carried out with the help of a sign-language translator, who participates in the interviews at Yad Vashem. After the recordings are complete, the interviews are passed on for transcription, so that the individual stories of these survivors, part of the whole story of the Shoah, may be made available to researchers and the general public alike.

Facts and Figures 2008

⇒ 1,250 new survivor testimonies filmed. Yad Vashem's Archives now hold some 100,000 video, audio and written testimonies

Visual Center

The Yad Vashem Visual Center is the world's repository of Holocaust-related films. The Center currently houses over 65,000 video recordings of all kinds of genres – including documentaries, feature films and survivor testimonies.



The transfer of the testimonies will create untold opportunities for education, scholarship and research”

Kim Simon, USC Shoah Foundation Institute Interim Executive Director

World's Largest Collection of Holocaust Survivor Video Testimonies

A full copy of the nearly 52,000 testimonies of Holocaust survivors and other witnesses was recently transferred from the archive of the USC Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education, established by Steven Spielberg. Now accessible for searching and viewing at Yad Vashem's Visual Center, these testimonies, from 56 different countries and in 32 languages, supplement Yad Vashem's existing Archive collection of 10,000 survivor testimonies, as well as 5,200 Holocaust-related films of all genres, produced from 1945 until today.

These collections are now easily accessible to the public at large at Yad Vashem's Visual Center. A simple computer search accesses and cross-references the entire collection. With over 200,000 hours of video available via VOD (Video on Demand), the Visual Center's collection of films is now the largest of its kind in Israel.

"The Green Dumpster Mystery" Winner of the 2008 Avner Shalev Award

For the third year running, Yad Vashem's Visual Center was honored to bestow the Avner Shalev Award for Artistic Achievement at the International Jerusalem Film Festival. The award, given to a film produced within the previous year that brings extraordinary cinematic expression to a unique Holocaust-related story, was presented to Tal Haim Yoffe, director of the moving docu-detective film, *The Green Dumpster Mystery*. The film follows Yoffe's own journey of discovery of the Wolkowicz family, through a pile of old photographs he chanced upon that had been thrown into a dumpster. Yoffe gently unravels tangled and torn threads of memory, patiently reweaving them into a whole –thus recreating the tale of one family of survivors among many thousands more.



Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ 500 new films added to the Visual Center Library Catalogue, which now holds 5,200 Holocaust-related films
- ⇒ In addition to its thousands of yearly visitors, over 90 groups, including teachers, students and filmmakers, attend the Visual Center for varied activities and programs



Research

The Second International Research
Conference at Yad Vashem, 1974



*I do not know who will remain alive
from among us, who will be privileged
enough to edit the material we have
accumulated. But one thing is clear to
us all: our toil, our efforts, our sacrifice...
these have not been in vain*

From a letter written by historian and Holocaust victim Emmanuel Ringelblum, leader of the "Oneg Shabbat" underground documentation center in the Warsaw ghetto, 1942

Research

The International Institute for Holocaust Research is the leading authority in worldwide scholarship on the Holocaust and Holocaust-related topics. Dozens of novice and seasoned researchers from around the world come to Yad Vashem every year to learn from the Institute's world-class scholars and staff, utilize the vast archives for their research and participate in its prestigious international conferences.

In 2008, the Institute held two major international conferences – one on Jews in North Africa During WWII, and the other on the Contribution of Holocaust survivors to the State of Israel – as well as a major summer workshop on Jewish Life During the Holocaust. Participants hailed from a range of countries and disciplines, many of them young scholars who continue to expand the boundaries of Holocaust research.



The archival materials and testimonies preserved at Yad Vashem present a different, “human” perspective compared to that provided by official Nazi documents... There is no other place where the combination of research and remembrance is so simultaneously impressive, overwhelming and challenging

German Researcher Ingo Loose,
Participant in the Israel-German Research Workshop, 2008

Exclusive New Research: Encyclopedia of the Ghettos

In 2008, scholars at the International Institute for Holocaust Research completed a multiyear major new research project: *The Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*. Presenting the latest research conducted in the field, the Encyclopedia is a comprehensive compilation of information regarding 1,150 ghettos that served as concentration and deportation sites for Jews throughout Europe.

Each entry describes the history of its Jewish inhabitants from after WWI and through the Holocaust era. In addition, the Encyclopedia contains historical analyses of the term “ghetto,” as well as critical discussions of the visual documentation presented within the Encyclopedia: some 70 maps and more than 300 photographs. An accompanying DVD contains film footage covering both the pre-ghetto era and ghetto life, taken from the Yad Vashem Archives and other institutions around the world. The English Edition of *The Encyclopedia of the Ghettos*, created for academics and the broader public alike, will be published shortly before Holocaust Remembrance Day 2009.



New Diana Zborowski Center Focuses on the Aftermath of the Shoah

The new Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Shoah, opened at the end of 2008, is devoted to dealing with the universal significance of the Holocaust, its commemoration over the years, and how its legacy has been transmitted to the coming generations. The Center will promote scholarship and international projects on a number of planes, including the fate of the remnants of the Jewish communities in Europe; confronting the Holocaust in Israel and the Jewish world; the legal handling of Nazi war criminals; economic struggles to restore Jewish property and receive compensation; commemoration work in all its forms; confronting the Holocaust in research and scholarship; and the artistic representation of the Shoah in literature, and the material and performing arts.

(Pictured left: Dr. Ze'ev Mankowitz, Chair of the new Diana Zborowski Center.)

Facts and Figures 2008

- ⇒ 15 international research conferences and workshops
- ⇒ 26 fellowships and awards granted to scholars from Israel and abroad

"The Untold Stories"

The Murder Sites of Jews in the Occupied Territories of the Former USSR

At the end of December 2008, the International Institute for Holocaust Research completed the first stage of its comprehensive new research project, "The Untold Stories." At the heart of the project are 101 sites across the former USSR in which the local Jewish population was massacred by the German occupying forces.

The new project, to be uploaded to the Yad Vashem website in 2009, presents 51 different communities whose Jews were massacred, in Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia and Russia. The historical background of each location is linked to primary and secondary resources – documents, letters, maps, illustrations, Pages of Testimony, lists of victims and stories of Righteous Among the Nations – which together create a multi-dimensional historical and human portrait. The new website also contains 139 video clips, of which over 80 are witness accounts, as well as 1,459 photographs and scans of original documents.



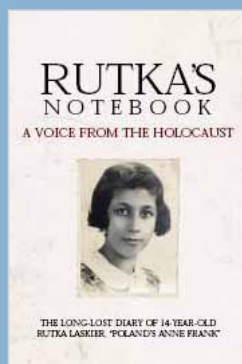
I have never studied in such a positive environment as in Yad Vashem... For the people who work there – scholars and staff alike – the Holocaust is not a distant affair. They carry out their research with a strong and visible emotional involvement. It is an exceptional place

Prof. Götz Aly, Yad Vashem Research Fellow 2008

Publications

The world's leading publishing house of its kind, Yad Vashem Publications issues dozens of Holocaust-related books every year, including original memoirs, diaries and documents, albums and encyclopedias, groundbreaking research and historical reviews.

In order to reach new and diverse audiences, many of our prize-winning publications are translated into various languages, making Holocaust literature more readily available to readers worldwide.



Rutka's Notebook: A Voice From the Holocaust

In 2008, Yad Vashem and TIME Inc. published a new edition of *Rutka's Notebook*, the diary of a 14-year-old girl trapped in the Bedzin ghetto in Poland. The diary only recently came to light and is now preserved in Yad Vashem's Archives. The new edition, which gained worldwide acclaim, new photos, maps and annotation that further illuminate this fascinating document.

Yad Vashem Studies: Collection of Scholarly Reviews

The pioneering scholarly review journal *Yad Vashem Studies*, now published on a biannual basis, is generally centered around a theme. In 2008, the first volume was dedicated to the late Prof. Leni Yahil, one of the most influential scholars of the Holocaust; and the second to the events surrounding the *Kristallnacht* pogrom.



Facts and Figures 2008



Yad Vashem publishes 51 new books, including memoirs, albums and research studies

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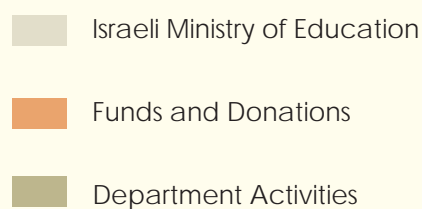
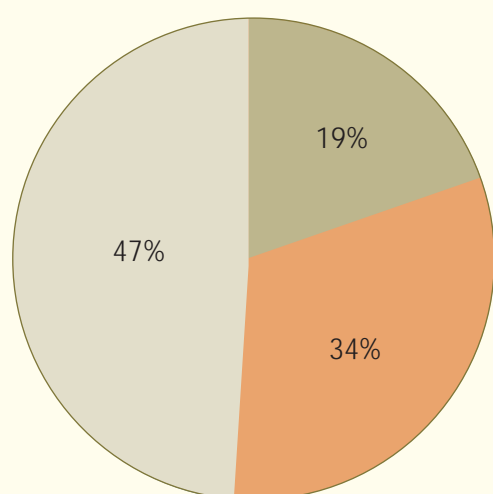
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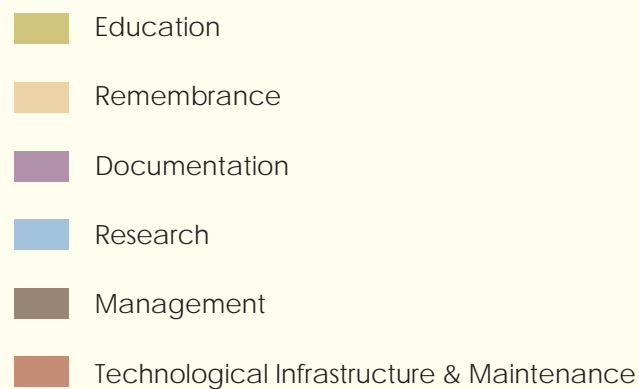
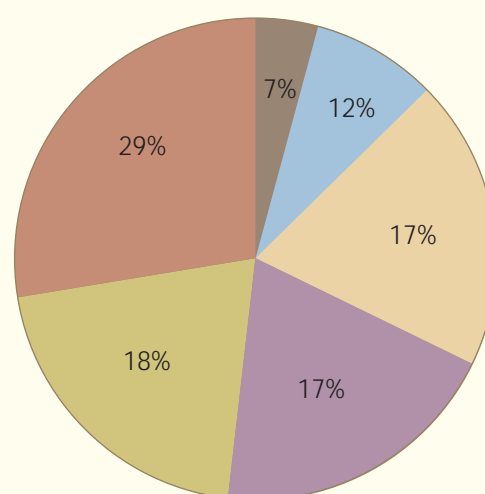
Operational Budget, as of 31 December 2008

Revenues



	NIS (000)
Israeli Ministry of Education	43,451
Funds and Donations	31,353
Department Activities	17,444
Total	92,248

Expenditures



	NIS (000)
Education	16,650
Remembrance	15,634
Documentation	15,541
Research	11,004
Management	6,760
Technological Infrastructure & Maintenance	26,659
Total	92,248

Development Budget

The source of all revenues for Yad Vashem development projects is donations and legacies.

	NIS (000)
New Projects and Programs*	43,824
Building and Technological Infrastructure**	20,806
Total	64,630

* Projects and programs in the spheres of Education, Remembrance, Documentation and Research

** Commencement of construction of the new International Seminars Wing at the International School for Holocaust Studies, general construction works and development of technological infrastructure



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