Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, is the leading authority in Holocaust education, remembrance, documentation and research. Yad Vashem is at the forefront of unceasing efforts to safeguard and impart the memory of the Holocaust victims, as well as the events of the Shoah period. From the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem works tirelessly to document accurately one of the darkest chapters in the history of humanity, and to grapple effectively with the ongoing challenges of keeping Holocaust remembrance relevant today and for future generations.
From the Chairman of the Directorate

Dear Friends,

2019 marked the 75th anniversary of the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp. I recall how I travelled to Germany in 1995 to mark the 50-year anniversary of the liberation. That visit was my second time in Buchenwald. When I arrived at the camp for the first time, I was just a young child. I had no mother. I had no name, no identity. I was just a number. I could not possibly have committed any crime; I was just a young child. I had no father. I had no identity. I was just a number. I could not possibly have committed any crime.

Seeing how completely my life had been transformed, I was no longer a prisoner from my old-new homeland, the State of Israel. My name had been given back to me: Israel Meir Lau. I was not a prisoner anymore. I was the Chief Rabbi of Israel. Such drastic changes had transpired between my first visit and my second.

The eternal legacy of the Shoa’s victims and survivors will always remain the distinct moral bedrock of Yad Vashem’s mission of remembrance. I am convinced that in a world plagued by doubts and uncertainties, this remarkably relevant legacy provides us all with inspiration and fortitude. Your support, even at the most trying of times, enables us to safeguard the future of our essential memory.

Yad Vashem has found an enthusiastic partner in the fight against contemporary antisemitism. This was evident, for example, in our enhanced teaching units on the subject, for use both online and in classrooms.

The global impact of the message "Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism" resonated forcefully at the 50-year anniversary of the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp. It is a noteworthy paradox that strong interest in the narrative of the Shoah, its cultural and political trends highlighted the relevance of our activities, preferences and resources.

In Israel, where external indicators of Shoah remembrance are frequent, our intensive educational endeavors reveal the authentic need for new means and frameworks to teach and reach young people regarding deeper meanings of the Holocaust.

Yad Vashem’s crucial tangible foundations of remembrance, our consistent accumulation of priceless Holocaust-era photographs of Holocaust survivors and their messages to future generations, accompanied by a compelling tools, both facilitated by Yad Vashem expertise and involvement.

From the Chairman of the Council

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau
Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

ANNUAL REPORT 2019
Highlights of Yad Vashem’s Activities in 2019

Holocaust Education
› 232,000 students from Israel and abroad attended educational programs
› 126,000 Israeli soldiers and security force members participated in educational activities
› 54,000 teachers from Israel and around the world took part in conferences and seminars
› 22,000 worldwide participants in online courses
› 17,000 educators, community leaders and opinion shapers attended activities held abroad

Research and Publications
› 23 fellowships and awards granted to scholars
› 21 international research workshops and symposia
› 24 new publications
› 9th annual International Holocaust Research Book Prize

Artifacts and Artwork
› 1,150 new artifacts; 42,000 total
› 430 new works of art; 12,100 total

Righteous Among the Nations
› 300 individuals recognized as Righteous Among the Nations; 27,600 total

Visits and Commemorative Events
› 1,070,000 visitors
› 750 world leaders, dignitaries and official visitors
› 135 memorial services
› 70 events

Internet Activity
› 5.4 million visits to the website in 8 languages
› 34.7 million video views on YouTube channels in 8 languages since their launch
› 13,500 new Facebook members; 187,500 total
› 27,600 new followers on Twitter; 80,800 total
› 27,800 new followers on Instagram; 55,000 total

Collections
› 7 million new pages of documentation added to the Archives; 217 million pages total
› 350,000 pages of documentation digitized
› 4,800,000 names now in the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names
› 35,000 Holocaust-era items donated for safekeeping by 1,200 individuals
› 10,000 photographs added to the Photo Archive; 510,000 images total
› 1,300 new Holocaust survivor testimonies filmed; 133,000 video, audio and written testimonies total
› 28,000 public inquiries for archival information answered
› 4,000 new publications in the library; 174,000 publications in 60 languages total
› 670 Holocaust-related films acquired; 9,500 total
› 12,600 films now searchable in the online Film Catalogue
› 14th annual Award for Artistic Achievement in a Holocaust-related Film
The International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem serves as the primary source for education about the Shoah, offering students and educators from around the world the opportunity to learn how to teach about the topic in a way that is both meaningful and relevant. In 2019, more than 451,000 students, soldiers and educators attended programs of the International School. Expert staff work to create effective educational materials, online pedagogical tools and teacher-training activities in order to create tailor-made programs suitable for different age groups and cultures. Graduates of Yad Vashem’s educational programs form a network of dedicated professionals, who continue to disseminate its cutting-edge pedagogical methodology throughout the world.

EDUCATION

358,000 students and security force members attended educational programs
Conference Attracts 1,200 Israeli Educators

Over one thousand educators from across Israel came to Yad Vashem on the first day of summer vacation to attend the International School for Holocaust Studies’ eighth biennial Israeli educators’ conference. The conference helped participants connect to the human experience of both Holocaust victims and survivors by exploring testimonies and artifacts, and studying ways to continue to create relevance and meaning in Holocaust education. Focusing on teaching and designing Holocaust commemoration as the events of the Holocaust recede into history, the educators discussed the challenges facing Israeli society in creating relevant forms of remembrance for today’s students.

54,000 educators from Israel and abroad received training

145 seminars for educators from abroad

Graduates Mark a Decade of Activity in Australia

In May 2019, graduates of the Gandel Holocaust Studies Program gathered in Melbourne to mark ten years of activity in Australia. The unprecedented event included lectures from leading historians in the field, diplomats and representatives from Holocaust-related institutions on the topics of the use of digital resources in a world without survivors; teaching about the perpetrators; and contemporary antisemitism. A ceremony was held marking the recognition of the late Johannes and Tjerke Wagenaar (the Netherlands) as Righteous Among the Nations - with their Australian granddaughter receiving a medal and certificate in their honor. The Paper Brigade - a film exploring cultural resistance in Vilna during the Holocaust and its aftermath - was screened during the event. A highlight of the conference was the deeply moving opportunity to connect with 12 Holocaust survivors who addressed the educators in a series of personalized workshops sharing their individual and family stories of survival, and of their “return to life” journeys.
Holocaust Education Center in Negev Begins Expansion

Over the past year, construction has begun in earnest on a new Yad Vashem Holocaust Education Center within the IDF Jewish Heritage Building of the Ariel Sharon Training Campus. This building will contain a first floor dedicated to the heritage of the IDF units housed on the Training Campus, with the second floor solely dedicated to Holocaust Remembrance, creating a natural connection between the history of the IDF and the lessons learned from the Holocaust.

The Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center which currently operates on the Campus was awarded the Chief of Staff’s Educational Award for Excellence in 2018 and saw almost 24,000 soldiers participating in Holocaust education programming throughout 2019. The creation of a new, larger center – a joint endeavor of the IDF and Yad Vashem – will enable an unprecedented expansion of current activities: it will incorporate exhibit spaces, classrooms, auditoriums, offices and multimedia rooms. Programming will be tailored to the soldiers’ various training stages, and will include follow-up activities for repeat visitors. Yad Vashem’s experts have spent 2019 engaged in intense preparation of materials and exhibition content.

“...My soldiers can attest that the Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Educational Center strengthened their sense of mission and the importance of protecting the State of Israel.”

Staff Sergeant Shai Rubinstein

Top IDF Staff Connect to Holocaust Remembrance

On the eve of Holocaust Remembrance Day, in what has become a tradition at Yad Vashem, the IDF General Staff Forum, led by incoming Chief-of-Staff Aviv Kochavi, came to the Mount of Remembrance for a special symposium. This year, the gathering focused on the story of Jewish fighters in World War II and the Shoah, with lectures about Jewish soldiers in the Allied armies, Jewish Brigade soldiers, and the story of warriors in Krakow. During a visit to Yad Vashem’s Artifacts Collection, participants viewed items that once belonged to Holocaust victims, as well as possessions of Jewish soldiers and underground fighters. One of the highlights of the day was the meeting with a former Jewish Red Army fighter. Chief-of-Staff Kochavi was personally moved when the Yad Vashem Archives presented him with a collection of documents and testimonies about his family during the Holocaust period.
High-level officials from Yad Vashem and the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum met in two special summits in 2019. Convening in Jerusalem in February and in Oświęcim in September, staff from both institutions presented their recent successful projects and discussed major challenges they both face. Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies took the initiative to coordinate the first meeting, and invited senior staff from a broad cross-section of the organization. The reciprocal visits helped strengthen professional ties among senior staff, and encouraged them to develop plans for future cooperation. As leading world bodies in the field of Holocaust education and remembrance, these summits provided a unique opportunity for both sides to foster sustainable cooperation in various fields and projects.

In February 2019, 350 members of various Israeli youth movements attended the Fourteenth Youth Movements Congress at Yad Vashem. The participants, ranging from Druze youth and the Scouts to Bnei Akiva, Hashomer Hatzair and Beitar, were all taking part in a year of volunteer service. The Congress included an extensive tour of the sites and monuments on the Mount of Remembrance, as well as a joint training activity addressing the complex educational and moral questions that members of youth movements grappled with during the Holocaust. Fascinating insights emerged from the discussions and created a bridge between the members of the various movements representing diverse groups in Israeli society. The day included an encounter with Holocaust survivor Eli Netzer, who as an 11-year-old boy was rescued by the activities of the Hungarian youth movement’s underground. Participants were deeply moved by his testimony and presented a letter pledging their commitment to continue to bear the responsibility for Holocaust commemoration in contemporary Israeli society.

Young Leaders Pledge to Carry the Torch of Remembrance
New Resources to Combat Rising Antisemitism

In order to deal with rising antisemitism in the US, the multimedia teaching program “Echoes & Reflections” has completely revamped its “Contemporary Antisemitism” unit to include new resources, strategies for teachers to deal with antisemitism in the classroom, and more practical advice for students to speak out when they hear or see antisemitism in their home environments. The unit has been brought up to date to include a discussion of the Charlottesville, Virginia demonstration and the “Tree of Life” Synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and presents examples of how classical antisemitic tropes have evolved and are now spread using social media. In addition, Holocaust denial and distortion are discussed as examples of the “new” antisemitism, as well as anti-Israel bias, which is becoming ever more prevalent. Developed by Yad Vashem, the ADL and the USC Shoah Foundation, “Echoes & Reflections” employs inquiry-based learning to encourage students to explore this subject independently, using resources curated by the program. This will encourage greater critical analysis of antisemitic messages by students.

New Educational Journey to Poland for Druze Teachers

In July 2019, a group of Druze history educators visited Poland on the first-ever such trip organized by Yad Vashem. During the six-day journey, the 25 participants discussed historical issues as well as their educational implementation, while looking into ways to connect the Druze community to Holocaust-related themes. The journey, which was preceded by a two-day preparatory seminar at Yad Vashem, also included components that connected the visit to the personal beliefs of the Druze community. The experience culminated with a meeting of the participants back in Israel, where they had the opportunity to discuss the importance of their visit to Poland and plans to incorporate what they had learned in their classrooms. In the aftermath of this successful program, other Druze educators have expressed their willingness to take part in future similar trips.
In July 2019, the first-ever educational seminar for Turkish high-school students was held at Yad Vashem. The seminar was spearheaded by a local educator who is a graduate of a Yad Vashem professional development program who also coordinates non-mandatory activities related to Judaism and Holocaust studies in the school. It included tours of the Holocaust History Museum and the Yad Vashem campus, educational workshops, visits to Jerusalem and other parts of Israel, and informal meetings with Israeli youth. The young participants come from an area in Turkey that has been influenced by nationalist and religious extremism during recent years. The seminar aimed to equip them with a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Holocaust, and empower them to positively influence their wider communities, including the university communities they will join in the coming years. As agents of memory and history, the students form part of a larger link in the chain of Holocaust remembrance, ensuring its renewal and relevance for future generations.

During 2019, a new mobile education unit in Hebrew dealing with rescue during the Holocaust was created for use in Israeli middle schools. Students are invited to explore, discuss and connect with the information in a hands-on manner, providing a meaningful alternative to frontal learning in the classroom setting. After viewing a short, animated film that introduces the topic of rescue, the class is divided into small groups, each of which examines suitcases containing pictures, documents, testimonials and various objects. Through clues in the accompanying texts, the students delve into the stories to try and uncover what the stories have in common, what makes them unique, and what challenges were faced by both the rescued and rescuers. The students are challenged to gain a better understanding of the types of assistance provided by individuals, organizations and underground groups to Jews during the Shoah, and examine the motives of the rescuers that prompted them to endanger themselves for the sake of their fellow human beings.
Annually, a wide range of young leaders from all over the world take part in various educational tours and activities organized by Yad Vashem, designed for a variety of audiences, nationalities and languages. During 2019, these groups included approximately 57,000 “Birthright” participants. While the majority of “Birthright” groups are from North America, Yad Vashem also hosts students from Turkey, Eastern Europe, and Scandinavia. This year, approximately 26,000 youth and youth leaders also visited Yad Vashem through their schools, summer camps, youth movements, and universities. For the second consecutive year, a delegation of Lithuanian high-school students came to Yad Vashem for a seminar, which included tours of the Valley of the Communities, the Yad Vashem Campus and Holocaust History Museum, as well as hearing a Holocaust survivor’s testimony.

School Alumni Meet to Discuss Challenges Ahead

A conference for Yad Vashem Alumni took place in Lithuania with the participation of fifty educators, including teachers, staff in the education departments of museums, and academics from the Former Soviet Union – Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, Kyrgyzstan and Estonia. The conference organizers chose the participants from over 300 applicants based on their educational projects and initiatives, and focused on challenges in Holocaust education specifically in the FSU. The conference emphasized Lithuania in order to memorialize one of Eastern Europe’s most vibrant prewar Jewish communities, which was representative of the history of the Holocaust in the USSR. It also aimed to create a common platform to keep the subject relevant for future generations of Russian-speaking students, and to create an opportunity for the participants to share their experiences.
For the third consecutive year, a unique educational training program for Israeli prison inmates was held in collaboration with the Israel Prison Service. Eight projects were held in prisons throughout Israel, with inmates – both Jewish and non-Jewish – voluntarily participating in workshops and guided discussions about the Holocaust. They also attended workshops with art or creative-writing instructors, and produced artwork using various techniques, including posters for exhibitions and for educational activities around Holocaust Remembrance Day. The study groups consisted of both Jews and non-Jews, who were incarcerated for various offenses. For many of the participants, who come from complex and challenging backgrounds, the workshops engendered high interest, openness and curiosity. The project aims to create a meaningful discourse among prisoners, and to strengthen their sense of belonging when they are reintegrated into society.

“Society has made tremendous efforts to rehabilitate me and I feel how much I need to respond to that and contribute to the rehabilitation of others. I believe that what we have learned will make us better people.”

Inmate, Neve Tirtza Prison

Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies stands at the forefront of educational technology, providing innovative digital materials for a global audience. The School offers educators advanced online pedagogical tools to teach about the Holocaust in their classrooms in a meaningful and relevant way, as well as user-friendly online programs on a range of topics for society at large.

A new course entitled “Chosen Issues in Holocaust History” has gone online on Israel’s “CampusIL” educational platform. The course features discussions by leading Holocaust historians about key topics concerning the Holocaust and its background, including antisemitism, the Weimar Republic, the Nazi rise to power, the evolution and substance of the Nazi worldview, and the lives, responses and possible courses of action available to German Jews under Nazi occupation. The course also deals with the victims’ lives – how Jews functioned in the face of ubiquitous death, what life was like in the camps, and more. It presents and discusses the topic of liberation, which brought about the end of the war and the Holocaust, as well as the beginning of the survivors’ long journey to rebuilding their lives.
Exploring the Fate of Balkan and North African Communities during the Holocaust

Over the years, Yad Vashem has increased its research into World War II and the Holocaust in the Balkan States and North Africa, collecting testimonies and developing educational programs and testimonials on the subject. How did Jews lived in their communities before the occupation? How did they cope with decrees and deportations and murder? How did World War II influence Jews in the various areas of occupation?

A new online Hebrew-language course called “The Destiny of Jewish Communities during the Holocaust,” offers participants a journey of seven lessons, during which they may explore the large and magnificent Jewish communities that existed for centuries in Yugoslavia, Greece and North Africa, and explore their experiences and fate during WWII. The course, which may be found on the “CampusIL” platform, part of the “Digital Israel” national initiative, features leading researchers in their field, and is accompanied by archival materials, documents, testimonies and maps.

This course has been very informative, particularly in relation to contemporary issues around antisemitism. No matter what laws are enacted, I believe education is still the key to better understanding and prevention of all forms of discrimination.

Lorraine Ball, MOOC Participant

Short Films Examine Notable Figures from the Holocaust

During 2019, Yad Vashem produced six short films about a number of well-known Jews who lived in different places during the Holocaust. For different reasons, each of these figures – Anne Frank, Janusz Korczak, Mordechai Anielewicz, Elie Wiesel, Primo Levi and Abba Kovner – has become a symbol of the Holocaust, whether for engaging in physical warfare against the Germans, or for creating art, taking action or dreaming, despite the impossible reality of life. The films illustrate the stories of these individuals, who fought a personal war in the collective Jewish struggle for survival. They feature Holocaust-era photos and archival footage, as well as pedagogical questions to ponder. After viewing one or all of the films, teachers are encouraged to discuss different ideas with their students – unique expressions of mental fortitude, the human spirit during the Holocaust, and contending with challenges. Educational materials, such as lesson plans and articles related to each of the figures, are provided for teachers and students who are interested in further expanding their knowledge about each of the figures presented.
During 2019, over one million people visited Yad Vashem on Jerusalem’s Mount of Remembrance to learn about the cataclysmic events of the Holocaust, commemorate the victims, and pay tribute to the survivors. Almost half of these visitors received guided tours of the campus, including heads of state, participants on some 750 official visits for dignitaries, and delegations from a variety of cultures and nationalities. In addition, Yad Vashem held 70 events in conjunction with Holocaust survivor and next-generation organizations, as well as some 135 memorial services.
At the invitation of the President of the State of Israel, some 50 members of royalty, presidents, prime ministers and parliamentary leaders from Europe, North America and Australia attended the Fifth World Holocaust Forum on 23 January 2020. Organized by the World Holocaust Forum Foundation in cooperation with Yad Vashem, the Forum, entitled “Remembering the Holocaust, Fighting Antisemitism,” took place in a specially erected marquis in Yad Vashem’s Warsaw Ghetto Square.

The Forum was held in advance of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, and the UN-sanctioned International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. This historic occasion took place against the background of the rise in hateful and violent expressions of antisemitism, especially in Europe and North America. Given this alarming situation, efforts to educate about the dangers of antisemitism, racism and xenophobia and foster Holocaust commemoration, education and research are more crucial and relevant than ever.
Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day 2019

Highlights of 2019 Official Visits

750 tours for world leaders, dignitaries and official visitors
The winner of the national competition to design the official poster for Holocaust Remembrance Day 2019 was Itamar Magid, 25, of Tel Aviv, a first-year student in Visual Communications at Shenkar College, and the grandson of Holocaust survivor Moshe Magid.

The poster features three paper boats, representing various types of documentation: writing, painting and music. The historical baggage these boats carry is still “alive.” The reflection of the boats in the water creates both a Yellow Star and a Star of David, attempting to convey a sense of the past, as well as belonging to the future. The paper boats sail on quiet waters, which, for many years, were tempestuous. They carry memories from a distant place, painful and sad, but they face a better future – of hope and dreams. A lesson plan based on the poster was distributed to schools across Israel.

In Berlin, history seems to be resurrected on the streets, viewed from every building and reflected in every home. In July 2019, Yad Vashem organized a five-day seminar for guides and other interested parties highlighting the city’s Jewish past. Participants visited the magnificent Jewish cemetery in Weissensee; the Great Synagogue; the restored monument of Moses Mendelssohn; the “Monument to the Missing House”; and the Otto Weidt Museum. Weidt was a visually impaired German who established a brush factory during the Holocaust, so that he could employ Jews with visual and physical disabilities with the purpose of saving them. He was later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations for his rescue efforts.

The seminar also included echoes of the dark Nazi past manifested in the buildings that served the Nazi administration, as well as the many memorials spread throughout the city. The in-depth tour shed light on the process of designing remembrance in Germany, and how that is expressed today.
On Holocaust Remembrance Day, the general public was invited to take a rare glimpse behind the scenes of Yad Vashem’s ongoing commemoration, educational and documentation efforts. Yad Vashem experts presented archival documents, works of art and artifacts not usually on display, and explained special projects and challenges faced daily by Yad Vashem in order to illustrate the wide range of endeavors undertaken year-round on the Mount of Remembrance. The tours included a unique visit to the Archives, focusing on the process of preservation and digitization; a special view of short animated films that touched on the personal experience of the Holocaust from a contemporary perspective; fascinating stories of Righteous Among the Nations; and a lecture on the development of antisemitism through the ages.

A range of activities were offered during 2019 as part of Yad Vashem’s efforts to engage the Israeli public in cultural and educational enrichment events throughout the calendar year.

Behind the Scenes at Yad Vashem: Special Tours for the Public

Exploring Monuments and Art on the Mount of Remembrance

During the summer and fall of 2019, special guided tours were conducted on the Mount of Remembrance for the general Israeli public. “Behind the Camera’s Lens” looked at the “Flashes of Memory” exhibition; “Broken Puzzle” and “Final Portrait” involved visits to Museum of Holocaust Art and the Synagogue, focusing on the management and preservation of the Art and Artifacts Collections, as well as the challenges involved in uncovering the stories behind the items; and “Memory Carved into Stone” explored how architectural design has served as a vehicle for the expression of Holocaust remembrance since the establishment of Yad Vashem in the 1950s to the present day. Special tours for Jewish holidays were also held, focusing on how Jewish law and customs were marked during the Holocaust.
The Hebrew date 10 Tevet was set in ancient times to mark the beginning of the siege by Nebuchadnezzar over Jerusalem. In modern times the Chief Rabbinate of Israel set the date as a memorial to the destruction of the Jewish communities during the Holocaust. Today it also serves as a general memorial day for those whose date of death is unknown, including many Holocaust victims.

To mark 10 Tevet this year, Yad Vashem invited the public to attend a special event. The evening included a fascinating lecture by Rabbi Dr. Benny Lau on “The Power of the Kaddish: The One and the Whole.” After the lecture, Rabbi Tamir Granot and clarinet player Hilik Frank performed “I’ll Wait for Him: Melodies Arising from the Ashes of the Holocaust,” accompanied by other musicians. The works had been composed and sung during the Holocaust, and the moving and meaningful stories behind the music were shared with the audience.

During the holiday of Hanukkah in December 2019, Yad Vashem held a special seminar entitled “Anenu Beyom Korenu.” The seminar allowed members of the Israeli public to closely examine the topic of the Jewish calendar during the Holocaust. For Jews of all generations, the concept of time and the yearly calendar cycle has served as the basis for observance and Jewish identity. The Holocaust era posed enormous physical and spiritual challenges to the desire to continue to keep track of prayer times, as well as the Sabbath and Jewish holidays. The increasing difficulty in maintaining a normal Jewish life turned the Jewish calendar into a symbol: a reminder of the world before the war, a source of meaning in a reality that was rapidly deteriorating, and a hope for redemption and a brighter future. On the Jewish holiday of heroism, redemption and light, the seminar sought to connect with the sparks of life, dedication and faith that remained strong among the Jews during the Holocaust, against all the odds.
Yad Vashem’s unique collections of original artifacts and artworks belonging to Holocaust victims and survivors provide the cornerstone for the displays in the Museums Complex – the Holocaust History Museum, the Museum of Holocaust Art and the Synagogue – as well as its temporary and traveling exhibitions. These authentic items are essential tools that help convey the narrative of the Holocaust in a broad, historical context, while focusing on individual and personal stories from the period.

“New on Display” in the Museum of Holocaust Art

A “New on Display” section opened in Yad Vashem’s Museum of Holocaust Art ahead of Holocaust Remembrance Day 2019, presenting the public with drawings and sketches acquired by Yad Vashem in recent years. The pieces on exhibit were drawn by artists from a variety of countries – France, Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Poland and even Tunisia – and represent a wide range of environments and styles. Fascinating life stories are revealed through the diverse works, and can be read in the accompanying texts.

In the new section, for example, visitors can explore the everyday life of Maximilian Feuerring in a POW camp in Germany, where he concealed his Jewish identity; discover the outset of designer Dan Reisinger’s artistic path as a child in occupied Yugoslavia; and contemplate the artwork Henri Epstein left behind in a village in France after he was arrested and deported to Auschwitz. Many of the pieces arrived in poor condition due to the circumstances in which they were created and stored. Yad Vashem conservation experts spent a considerable amount of time treating and preserving the sketches and the drawings, before readying them for display.

Survivors: Faces of Life after the Holocaust

In January 2020, a new exhibition entitled “Survivors: Faces of Life after the Holocaust” opened in the Ruhr Museum in Essen, Germany, in the presence of German Chancellor Angela Merkel. The exhibition is the fruit of a cooperative project between Yad Vashem and award-winning portrait photographer Martin Schoeller. The commemorative venture presents images of 75 Holocaust survivors from Israel, to mark the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. German-born Schoeller photographs all his subjects – whether public figures or anonymous individuals – in the same way, using special lighting and photographing in extreme close-up. The result in this case is compelling portraits that capture the weathered faces of Jewish men and women who lived through the atrocities of the Holocaust. Accompanying the portraits are messages from the survivors for the generations to come. A book of the images and inspirational messages was also published. The exhibition is being offered for display in museums throughout Europe and the rest of the world.
Yad Vashem’s Artifacts Collection is comprised of over 42,000 items connected to the devastating events of the Holocaust. Since Yad Vashem’s establishment, gathering genuine artifacts has been part of the process of commemorating the destruction of European and North African Jewry during the Shoah. The many personal effects in the collection disclose the individual stories of people, families and, at times, entire communities forever lost to the Jewish nation.

THE ARTIFACTS COLLECTION
A gold locket once belonging to Sofia Cohen of Arnhem in the Netherlands was recently donated to Yad Vashem. Sophia (née Wolf) was born in 1867, and later married Jonas Cohen of Arnhem. The couple had five children. On Hanukkah in 1942, Sofia was transported to Westerbork, and shortly afterwards deported to Auschwitz, where she was murdered at the age of 75. After the war, Sophia’s daughter Eva discovered her mother’s gold locket, which had been hidden in the courtyard of her house just before she was deported. Inside the pendant were photographs of Sophia’s parents and her children, Shlomo, Caroline and Simon, who were also deported and murdered. Sofia’s granddaughter decided to donate the pendant to Yad Vashem as a memorial to her grandmother and a testimony to the fate of Dutch Jews during the Holocaust.

Hidden Gold Locket Commemorates Dutch Holocaust Victims

Yad Vashem’s Art Collection, the largest and most wide-ranging collection of its kind in the world, includes 12,100 pieces, most of which were created during the Holocaust. These works demonstrate the strength of the human spirit under the harshest of circumstances, and represent a living testimony of Jews during the Holocaust through an awesome creative power. The artists who produced them – in ghettos, in camps and in hiding – used their tools as instruments of expression and defiance during the most devastating period in their lives in order to leave a trace of their existence for posterity.

THE ART COLLECTION
During 2019, Yad Vashem’s Art collection was enriched by a unique collection of 22 paintings and drawings by French-Polish artist André Blondel. The works, donated by the artist’s daughter, allow for a fuller understanding of the life story of Blondel from the outbreak of war until liberation and his artistic development during these years. Despite living in hiding under conditions of isolation, loneliness, and in a state of fear and trepidation, Blondel found the will and reason to live through his artistic activity.

French-Polish Survivor Artworks Enrich Collection

André Blondel was born in Czortków, eastern Galicia, as Shaye Sassza Blonder. After completing high school, he traveled to Paris, where he studied architecture at the National School of Fine Arts. He also attended the Krakow Academy of Fine Arts, and was a member of the Union of Polish Artists and Writers (ZZPAP) and a co-founder of the avant-garde movement “The Krakow Group.” With the outbreak of WWII, Blondel joined the Polish army in France. He later found shelter in Aix-en-Provence with the help of the French underground. After liberation, he returned to intensive painting activity until his death in 1949.
Yad Vashem’s website continues to reach a vast global audience, with 5 million visits from around the world during 2019. Comprehensive sites in English, Hebrew, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Farsi and Arabic are helping meet the ever-growing demand for reliable and accurate Holocaust-related information. Yad Vashem’s dynamic presence in social media – 187,500 members on Facebook, and a growing audience on Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram – offers an unprecedented opportunity for rapidly communicating ideas, imparting relevant content, and engaging with and connecting to a broad and diverse public who can immediately share the information with thousands more.

YAD VASHEM ONLINE

This year, to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day 2020, Yad Vashem launched its IRemember Wall in six languages — English, Hebrew, French, Spanish, German and Russian. The participatory online project encourages the general public worldwide to remember the Holocaust by randomly matching individuals with a victim from the Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names. Partnering with Facebook International to promote the project on social media, over 85,000 victims were commemorated by people from some 175 countries around the world in their own languages. This year, the IRemember Wall had a new feature: After being matched with a victim from the Names Database, participants could then choose additional names of Holocaust victims to add to the Wall. They were also encouraged to share information about the individuals they commemorated on Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

Yad Vashem and Facebook Join Forces to Remember Holocaust Victims

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Thank you for giving me a place to acknowledge the individual and not just the statistics

Catherine Fisher, Canada, on Facebook
NEW ONLINE EXHIBITIONS

“Love Her Like a Mother”
Last Letters from the Holocaust: 1944

A collection of letters from the Yad Vashem Archives has recently gone online in the fourth and final installment in a series of online exhibitions showcasing last letters from Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust. Most of the letters were donated to Yad Vashem as part of the “Gathering the Fragments” campaign. They were sent from countries across the European continent to relatives and friends from homes, hiding places, ghettos, jails and camps. Written in a variety of languages – Italian, German, Dutch, Hungarian, French and Russian – these missives are often the sole evidence that the person existed, and they make it possible to tell the stories of individuals in the Holocaust and give its victims a name, a face and a memory.

“Love Her Like a Mother”

1939: Jewish Families on the Brink of War

The German invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 marked the beginning of WWII. To mark the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of the war, Yad Vashem uploaded a new online exhibition that presents the fate of Jewish families in the Holocaust beginning in 1939. The stories are based on items from the Yad Vashem Archives and collections, which Holocaust survivors and relatives of the victims have given to Yad Vashem to preserve for posterity. The exhibition shows the unfathomable gap between life before the Holocaust and the fate of Jewish people during its devastating events.

“Many people of my birthplace Thessaloniki do not even know about the Jewish past of the city and all their fellow citizens that were humiliated and murdered. We shall never forget, but some did not even start to remember. Showing faces and telling about lives and loves is a way to remember.”

Konstantinos Lazaridis, on Facebook
Approximately one-and-a-half million Jewish children were murdered in the Holocaust; few survived. Unbelievably, as they struggled to hold on to life, many Jewish children attempted to maintain their childhood and youth by creating a different reality for themselves from that which surrounded them. In many cases, it was the children who gave their parents the encouragement and hope to continue their desperate daily fight for survival.

Ahead of International Children’s Day, and to answer the high demand for material on the experience of Jewish children during the Shoah, Yad Vashem launched a new online exhibition in November 2019, entitled “Children in the Holocaust.” The exhibition features children’s toys, games, artworks, letters, diaries and albums, all carefully preserved in Yad Vashem’s collections, and which appear across the Yad Vashem website as part of other online presentations on a variety of Holocaust-related topics. In addition, the new exhibition brings testimonies from survivors who shared their childhood experiences from before, during and immediately after the Holocaust.

In keeping with efforts to create meaningful and relevant content for an ever-growing global audience, a number of new online exhibitions featuring timely and meaningful subjects were uploaded to the Yad Vashem website during 2019. The exhibitions included stories of Jewish women who fought in the Red Army, which was uploaded in Russian for International Women’s Day; “Back to School” – a visual overview of children in educational frameworks before, during and immediately after the Holocaust (in Russian and French); “Last Letters from Children during the Holocaust,” (in French) for International Children’s Day; and an exhibition on the “Oneg Shabbat” Archives (in German).
Since Yad Vashem first embarked upon the worldwide project to recognize non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust, more than 27,600 individuals have been granted the title of Righteous Among the Nations. The honor is a unique and unprecedented attempt by the Jewish people to pay tribute to people who stood by their side at a time of persecution and great tragedy.

300
individuals recognized as Righteous Among the Nations

Greek Rescuer Reunites with Descendants of Jewish Family

Two Holocaust survivors now living in Israel were reunited with their Greek rescuer in the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem in November 2019. The emotional reunion took place in the presence of some 40 descendants of the survivors who are alive today because of heroic actions taken 76 years ago. Survivors Sarah Yanai and Yossi Mor met with Melpomeni Dina (née Gianopoulou), one of the people who helped save their lives during the Holocaust. Siblings Sarah and Yossi Mordechai were born in Veria, Greece, a small town with 600 Jewish residents near Thessaloniki. Due to the heroism and sacrifice of both the Gianopoulou and Axipoulos families, most of the immediate Mordechai family members survived the war. Yad Vashem recognized Melpomeni Dina as Righteous Among the Nations in 1994. Members of the Gianopoulou and Axipoulos families were recognized a few years earlier in 1989.
The most comprehensive collection of Holocaust-era documentation in the world – 217 million pages – is housed in the Yad Vashem Archives. Efforts to make the wealth of information gathered by Yad Vashem available to an ever-growing worldwide audience remains a priority as the demand for readily available resources continues to rise. The Archives continue to develop relationships with international institutions resulting in the sharing of information with various international institutions, further propelling the growth of the Archives’ holdings.
In February 2019, some fifty experts representing thirty different organizations worldwide gathered at Yad Vashem for a three-day workshop on the topic of Holocaust Victims’ names. The seminar offered the opportunity for exchange of professional expertise and the continued development of mutually beneficial relationships. Sessions included the presentation of Yad Vashem’s new “clustered” records in the Names Database and its half-century partnership with the Arolsen Archives. In addition, several new and surprising sources of documentation were uncovered. In a special ceremony during the workshop, Yad Vashem received an updated list of all the Jews who were deported from France during WWII from the Mémorial de la Shoah museum in Paris. This amended list is now complete, and replaces an older version already housed at Yad Vashem. Additionally, Yad Vashem signed a groundbreaking agreement with the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, under which copies of documentation and data on Shoah victims will be exchanged between the two leading organizations. In November 2019, the first shipment of copied documentation for the Auschwitz Museum’s archival collections was received by Yad Vashem, which included file cards and photos of inmates who were transported from Mauthausen, and lists of “death certificates” of Auschwitz inmates.

A new interface for the Online Documents Archive now presents some three million pages of scanned documentation in a visually engaging format. Searches are conducted using simple and relevant keywords, with quick document retrieval. More than 100 different kinds of archival collections are now available for viewing, which include documents received more recently as part of Yad Vashem’s “Gathering the Fragments” campaign. The Hebrew/English interface arranges pertinent technical information side-by-side with the documentation. The hierarchical placement of the document in the archival “tree” is available for viewing as well, enabling researchers and others to locate additional relevant documentation.
What constitutes an “original source”? How can documentation in the digital era be authenticated? These and other issues formed the basis for a recent experts’ workshop, entitled “The Source – Holocaust Sources: Truth, Interpretation and (Mis)Use in the Digital Era.” In November 2019, experts from Europe, North America and Israel – researchers, archivists, cataloguing and technology experts, conservation experts, documentary creators, and education and communications professionals – gathered at Yad Vashem to share their approaches and viewpoints regarding the status of the “original source” in the digital age. Topics broached included the authenticity, accessibility and use of Holocaust archival sources; the academic use of digital versus original sources; methodologies for ensuring trust in digital archives; dilemmas of physical conservators; preserving context in the digital world; and ethical dilemmas regarding the boundaries of manipulation of materials, social media campaigns and more.

The most well-known sources in Yad Vashem’s Central Database of Shoah Victims’ Names are the commemorative Pages of Testimony. However, the online Names Database includes hundreds of other sources, such as electronic records from other organizations, lists from Yizkor (memorial) books, and archival registers. In the vast majority of cases, only one source appears for each victim in the Names Database. New Online Interface Connects Documentation for Individual Victims

In many cases, multiple sources appear for a given person, which have now been collated together for easier research purposes. So far, Yad Vashem has succeeded in creating hundreds of thousands of “clusters” using advanced methodological and technological tools. The updated interface of the online Names Database can display these clusters, or one source at a time, according to the user’s preference.
More than 13 million documents from the Arolsen Archive (formerly the International Tracing Service, ITS) can now be explored online using Yad Vashem’s powerful search platform. The state-of-the-art technology allows for fast data management and extended place and name search, resulting in an easily accessible, user-friendly online archive. Yad Vashem has been working closely with the ITS/Arolsen Archives for nearly half a century, from scanning copies of documentation concerning the fate of Jewish victims, to augmenting Holocaust-related documentation and now making it available worldwide to enhance Holocaust research and study.

During 2019, Yad Vashem received several Pages of Testimony, together with a hand-drawn map with heartrending inscriptions. “Sketch of execution site where the German barbarians shot our parents in the outskirts of the city of Novogeorgievsk [Ukraine] on 9 January 1942," it read. The map was drawn by Yaakov Branopolsky, a Red Army soldier who reached his hometown of Novogeorgievsk in March 1944, where he discovered the tragic fate of his parents and other Jews. Yaakov was one of Golda and Avraham Branopolsky’s four children, and he sent the information to his sister Katya, who had been evacuated during the war. Pages of Testimony for Avraham and Golda were completed by Sergei Prokopov, a great-grandson of Avraham and Golda. Work continues to uncover the more than one million still-unknown names of Holocaust victims, a large number belonging to Jews who lived in the Soviet Union during the Holocaust.

I hope to find the place where [my mother’s] grandparents were murdered and buried. But even if I am not successful, it is important that their memories be preserved at Yad Vashem.

Sergei Prokopo, great-grandson of Avraham and Golda Branovsky
Survivor Testimony Sheds light on the Life of a Young Girl in Hiding

“I remember fear. They told us that if we didn’t behave nicely, they would leave us all alone. I remember the red faces of the farmers. We wandered around everywhere with forged documents in case we got lost, and with chocolate and a kind of cracker so we would have something to eat.... I remember my father’s hand, reaching out to me from above.”

In these fragments of remembrance, Dr. Naomi Cassuto (née Cohen), describes her childhood while in hiding in villages in southern France during WWII. Naomi’s father Leo was one of the leaders of the Jewish Scouts in France (EIF). Just weeks after helping his wife and three children escape to Switzerland, he was deported to Drancy and murdered in Auschwitz. After the war, Naomi and her family immigrated to Eretz Israel. Dr. Cassuto’s story joins the vast corpus of 133,000 eyewitness testimonies that enable researchers today, as well as future generations, to familiarize themselves with the individual stories that make up the broader picture of the Holocaust. This is part of Yad Vashem’s ongoing efforts to record, collect and preserve survivor testimonies and to make them accessible to the public at large.

Thank you. This last November I traveled to Israel and gave Yad Vashem letters my father received from his family in Poland. None survived, but thanks to ‘Gathering the Fragments’ their words and experiences will be forever remembered.

Renie, on Twitter

Last Letter from the Front

When the Germans invaded the Soviet Union, Moisey Berezovsky was conscripted into the Red Army, leaving behind his wife Rachel and two young daughters Maya and Esphyr in Gomel, Belarus. When Gomel was attacked, Rachel and her daughters managed to escape the burning city to Samara before the Germans arrived. One day, she miraculously received a letter from Moisey describing his capture and subsequent rescue. Rachel’s beloved husband had escaped several times and wandered for over six months in Nazi-occupied areas, eventually rejoining the Red Army. On 8 March 1943, Moisey fell in battle. Rachel and her daughters returned home to Gomel at the end of the war. In 1990, Moisey’s daughters immigrated to Israel. As part of the “Gathering the Fragments” Project to collect personal items from the Holocaust era, Esphyr entrusted his last letter to Yad Vashem where, together with its story, it will be kept safe for generations to come.

35,000 items collected

1,300 new testimonies filmed
Yad Vashem’s Visual Center serves as the world’s primary repository of Holocaust-related films of all genres. Among the many works are those concerning Jewish life between the two World Wars, the Holocaust period, postwar antisemitism, genocide, and other associated topics. Among the many works attained in 2019 are local and foreign feature films, award-winning documentaries, television programs, short films and amateur movies. The Visual Center serves as a vital resource for filmmakers, researchers and the general public worldwide.

Winner of the 2019 Avner Shalev Chairman’s Award

The 2019 Avner Shalev Yad Vashem Chairman’s Award was granted at the Jerusalem International Film Festival to the film *Heimat is a Space in Time* (Germany, Austria 2019). “Through a fascinating combination of cinematic media – narrative, visual, and sound, together with letters, archival documents, and recordings – director Thomas Heise presents a profound family portrait, reflecting the relationship between the events of the Holocaust, and the way in which they are remembered in the present,” concluded the jury. “By reading both familial and official documents in his own voice, Heise has created a powerful cinematic experience that serves to perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust by looking consciously at the past in order to lay the foundations for a new perspective on life in the present.”

12,000 Films in the Online Film Database

In November 2019, a special screening was held in cooperation with Yes Studios and Netflix of two episodes of the series “The Devil Next Door,” attended by the series’ director Yossi Bloch. The screening was the highlight of a three-year joint project with Bloch to preserve the video documentation of the trial of former Sobibor death camp guard Ivan Demjanjuk. The original footage had been deposited at Yad Vashem by Israel’s Educational TV. The series, viewed by millions of people worldwide on Netflix, has helped raise awareness of the Holocaust on a global scale. It provides an additional opportunity for discourse not only regarding the events themselves, but also for the responsibility of both individuals and society for the atrocities perpetrated during the Holocaust.

I would like to thank Yad Vashem for all the assistance I received, from locating materials and converting the format to beneficial advice and knowledge in countless topics.

Yossi Bloch, Film director

Netflix Series Raises Holocaust Awareness
With over 174,000 titles in some 67 languages, the Yad Vashem Library is the most comprehensive collection of published material about the Holocaust. The books on its shelves and in its carefully monitored storage facilities range from research volumes to poetry, and from Holocaust-era Nazi publications to survivor memoirs. Dedicated Library staff keep a keen eye out for new publications relating to the Shoah and its aftermath that are released around the world, and thus maintain the Library’s name as the ultimate resource in Holocaust-related works.

During a 2008 trip to Jerusalem for a “Writers Gathering,” American author Margaret McMullan found herself in the Library Reading Room at Yad Vashem. On a whim, she entered the name of her mother’s Hungarian branch of the family, the Engel de Jánosi family, and was surprised to find the name of a relative who was murdered during the Holocaust. McMullan had never heard of this relative, and was curious to discover more. This chance event led her on a five-month journey of discovery in her ancestral hometown of Pécs, Hungary, accompanied by her husband and teenage son.

McMullan skillfully weaves together her family’s challenges in accustoming themselves to the austere Hungarian culture with her determination to peel away layers of history to reveal a fascinating tale of a Jewish family’s fall from the highest graces to the misery of the concentration camps – resulting in a gripping new novel Where the Angels Lived: One Family’s Story of Exile, Loss, and Return. Her determination to fill out the missing information on Richárd Engel de Jánosi’s Page of Testimony at Yad Vashem is finally fulfilled, but not until her life and identity are forever changed.

The book was published in 2019 and McMullan personally presented it to the Yad Vashem Library.

In May 2019, the Yad Vashem Library launched a series of lectures about new acquisitions, presented by the authors themselves. The first author in this initiative was Uwe Westphal, a former fashion reporter and art historian who has spent decades researching the Jewish fashion industry in Berlin from the mid-nineteenth century up until the outbreak of WWII, and whose latest book, Fashion Metropolis Berlin 1836-1939: The Story of the Rise and Destruction of the Jewish Fashion Industry, was recently donated to the Yad Vashem Library. In his fascinating lecture, Westphal described how at the turn of the twentieth century, Berlin became the hub of the world fashion industry, and was 90 percent Jewish-owned. By the early 1930s, Jewish fashion firms began to be targeted, a boycott of the industry was imposed, and a great many of the businesses were closed or expropriated by “Aryan” businessmen. Even more shocking is the use of labor and concentration camp prisoners by German firms to design and manufacture clothing during WWII. Westphal bemoaned the fact that the younger generation is often completely unaware of this shameful part of their country’s heritage. He expressed his hopes that his book will “put the record straight” about this integral part of Holocaust history.
Yad Vashem’s renowned International Institute for Holocaust Research stands at the forefront of scholarly study of the Holocaust era. Through groundbreaking research initiatives, the Research Institute helps lay the foundations for thorough investigation and analysis of the catastrophic events that took place during the Shoah. It strives to develop innovative research projects, strengthen cooperative relationships with other research institutes, nurture young academics and create an atmosphere that fosters comprehensive scholarly discourse.
The Holocaust in the Soviet Union in Real Time

How did people in the Soviet Union react to the events of the Holocaust during WWII and in the years following? This topic was the focus of the fourth annual international conference organized by the Moshe Mirilashvili Center for Research on the Holocaust in the Soviet Union, of Yad Vashem’s International Institute for Holocaust Research, in December 2019. Entitled “The Holocaust as Reflected in Public Discourse in the Soviet Union during the Stalinist Period, 1941–1953,” the conference primarily focused on how Jewish and non-Jewish intellectuals, writers, cinematographers, painters, folklorists and actors in the USSR responded to the news of the horrific events occurring throughout Europe. Despite the official Soviet narrative that emphasized the killing of the Jews as Soviet citizens and not as Jews, Jewish writers and artists still managed to transmit Jewish ideas and concerns in their writings.

International Workshop Investigates the Marking of Jews during the Holocaust

Yad Vashem’s International Research Institute held a three-day international research workshop in July 2019 on the marking of Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators during the Holocaust. The workshop tackled a topic not yet investigated to its fullest extent, and strove to encourage an exchange of views between the participants. Many features of markings differed from country to country - the shape and style of the “Jewish badge,” where it was worn, and how comprehensively the decree was implemented. Topics included differences in implementation in cities of certain countries in Europe and North Africa due to local factors; consequences of enactment of the decree in occupied and unoccupied zones of France; the legends of King Christian X of Denmark and the King of Morocco wearing the Yellow Star in unity with their Jewish citizens; and the reaction of children and teens to being forced to don a Jewish mark. The workshop also presented several micro-historical accounts, enabling researchers to understand more localized contexts and thus coming to more in-depth insights, often changing previous assumptions. A new online display of different Jewish markings – also including clothing and prisoner tags - during WWII was launched on Yad Vashem’s website.
Deportation Database Continues to Expand

Yad Vashem’s “Pan-European Deportations Database and Research Project” aims to reconstruct all the transports that took place during the Holocaust from territories of the Third Reich, countries under German occupation, and so-called “Axis” and “satellite” states. During 2019, one hundred transports were researched and uploaded to the Deportation Database on the Yad Vashem website. An additional one hundred transport descriptions were added to the online guide of the website – bringing the number of entries to 1,442. Most of these entries describe the deportations from ghettos in the Wartheland (a region established by the Germans in October 1939 in the part of Poland that was annexed into the Reich) to the Łódź ghetto and to the Chełmno death camp – among them thousands of children, as well as the physically and mentally disabled. The research includes the collection and analysis of primary and secondary sources, testimonies and postwar legal material. The synthesis of all these various types of sources presents a broad overview of the transports, while emphasizing the personal experiences of the victims.

Examining Religious Institutions and Jews in Hiding During the Holocaust

The hiding of Jews in religious institutions throughout Nazi-occupied Europe during the Holocaust was historically unprecedented. This phenomena raises many questions that are still mostly unanswered. On what level was conversion compulsory for staying in an institution? Did convents and monasteries primarily hide children? Was the hiding of Jews in religious institutions common in all countries? These and related issues were at the center of an enlightening international workshop held at Yad Vashem, co-organized with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in July 2019, which revealed many misconceptions held on the topic, and varied issues that call for re-evaluation.
In November 2019, Yad Vashem’s International Book Prize for Holocaust Research in memory of Benny and Tilly Joffe, z”l, was awarded to Omer Bartov for Anatomy of a Genocide: The Life and Death of a Town Called Buczacz (Simon & Schuster, 2018), and Joanna Tokarska-Bakir for Pod Klątwą: Społeczny portret pogromu kieleckiego (Cursed: A Social Portrait of the Kielce Pogrom) (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Czarna Owca, 2018). At the awards ceremony, Bartov gave a fascinating address, in which he used the town of Buczacz in Eastern Europe as an example of the Holocaust on a local level, examining the nature of the encounter between the perpetrators and the victims.

In her book, Tokarska-Bakir maps out the daily experience of anti-Jewish violence in postwar Kielce. Offering a close reading of hundreds of personal accounts, including the voices of Jewish victims, she established a model paradigm in the study of antisemitic violence in general, and in Poland in particular.

A book launch and research symposium on the postwar diaries of renowned artist and Holocaust survivor Yehuda Bacon took place in September 2019 under the auspices of the Research Institute’s Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust. During WWII, young Yehuda Bacon became determined to share the events he was experiencing. Between the years 1945-2015, he created over 240 notebooks describing what he went through during the war and the process of his rehabilitation through heartbreaking prose and powerful drawings. The first volume, The Cold Shower of a New Life: Postwar Diaries of a Child Survivor, is part of a series of Bacon’s journals to be released, and in the course of 2020 two additional volumes from his diaries written immediately after the war are due to be published.
In November 2019, the International Research Institute held a book launch and seminar for the Holocaust-era diary: **Though a Candle of Pety Still Burns Within Me: Diary of a Scholar from Dukla (Heb.) (Yad Vashem and Jerusalem College, 2019).** The memoir was written by Rabbi Yosef Guzik, a young Torah scholar, while in hiding in the attic of a Polish farmer located near his hometown of Dukla, located in the Lwow region. Written in eloquent Hebrew, the diary serves both as documentation and commemoration of Jewish life in the town of Dukla. Rabbi Guzik brings to life the town's celebrations and sorrows, as well as its community leaders and individual members, allowing them to be remembered for posterity.

The symposium, held under the auspices of the Yad Vashem’s Center for Research on the Holocaust in Poland and the Holocaust Research Center of the Michlalah-Jerusalem College, addressed the history of commemoration of individual Jewish communities since the nineteenth century; and rescue attempts and the hiding of observant Jews during the Holocaust.

**Comprehensive Annotated Collection of Holocaust-era Documentation**

The first two English-language volumes of the most comprehensive collection of documentation from the Holocaust period were published during 2019. **The Persecution and Murder of European Jews by Nazi Germany, 1933-1945**, originally compiled and published in German, includes 16 volumes with 5,280 documents, and contains an expansive and representative selection of primary sources. The original project was conceived by the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich, Freiburg University, the Free University of Berlin and the German Federal Archives. This version is a joint project of the above-mentioned German partners and Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research. The challenges pertaining to accurate English translation and annotation of the documents - originally written in more than 20 languages - are addressed and reviewed by an international editorial board, comprising the editors of the German edition and leading researchers from Yad Vashem, the UK and the US. The board also reviews the detailed forewords that accompany the documents, the glossaries and the indexes. During the coming year, two additional volumes in the series are scheduled to be published. The Research Institute is currently translating those documents originally written in Hebrew and Yiddish.
Part of the International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem Publications disseminates new and innovative Holocaust-related research that influences Shoah remembrance and academic investigations. Each year Yad Vashem Publications releases dozens of new titles in a variety of languages. These include works focusing on research, documents and memoirs.

“We Think of You as an Angel”: Shaul Weingort and the Rescue of Jews During the Holocaust

Shortly before WWII broke out, Shaul Weingort, a young Polish rabbi, arrived in Switzerland to live with the family of his future wife. Although only in his mid-twenties, Rabbi Weingort was already regarded as a brilliant scholar. In the years that followed, Weingort sent letters to many of the greatest minds of the Jewish world. The topic of those letters, however, was not Talmudic interpretation or Jewish law; they were meant to save lives. Rabbi Weingort’s extended family was among millions of Jews who had come under German rule as a result of the occupation of Poland. The rabbi began to send aid packages with food, medication and religious items. When the deportations to death camps began, however, foreign citizenship became the only way to escape. In this book, Sara Kadosh sheds light on Weingort’s efforts to create an aid network that delivered sustenance, South American passports, and hope to his family and hundreds of other Polish Jews in an attempt to save their lives. Rabbi Weingort died tragically in 1946, and until now his story was largely unknown.


In this important study, Ilaria Pavan analyzes the economic aspects of antisemitic persecution in fascist Italy. Exposing the persecutory intentions and mechanisms of the Italian regime, she discusses the long series of provisions, decrees, and laws that severely afflicted the Jewish community. The rigorous application of the rules, including the expropriation of property, exclusion from workplaces and professions, and then the confiscation and looting of personal possessions, left the Jews emotionally and economically shattered. For Italian Jews, the road to reintegration and the return of seized properties at the conclusion of the war was long and difficult, characterized by contradictory and insufficient laws, lack of empathy by clerks, and general indifference to the violations suffered during the long years of persecution. Based on many sources - government documentation, letters and survivors’ memoirs – Pavan depicts in detail both the persecution and the reintegration stages, and devotes ample space to the voices of the victims.

Starting Anew: The Rehabilitation of Child Survivors of the Holocaust in the Early Postwar Years

In Starting Anew: The Rehabilitation of Child Survivors of the Holocaust in the Early Postwar Years (edited by Dalia Ofer and Sharon Kangisser-Cohen), a range of scholars examine the process of rehabilitation of child survivors of the Shoah in various European countries and North America. The authors researched areas including - medical assistance to those suffering from physical illness, the return of Jewish youngsters from non-Jewish families and institutions, and the provision of adequate housing and resources to surviving children. As it sheds light on the efforts made and strategies employed to help in the rehabilitation of these young child survivors, the book may also provide important insights for the carers of the millions of children today who are looking for ways to restore hope and instill resilience in young innocent victims of suffering as a result of war and violence.
Breaking New Ground:
Construction Begins on The Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus

During 2019, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for Yad Vashem’s new Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus. Attending the ceremony were former Chairman of the Jewish Agency Natan Sharansky, Ambassadors of Germany and Austria to Israel, Campus supporters, representatives of Yad Vashem Societies worldwide and Holocaust survivors. Stressing the importance of partnering with Yad Vashem in this vital endeavor, Yad Vashem Benefactor Jane Wilf spoke on behalf of the American Society for Yad Vashem, and Chairman of the Society of Friends of Yad Vashem in Germany Kai Diekmann spoke on behalf of Yad Vashem Friend Societies in Europe.

The Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus was recently generously endowed by Martin and Ilana Moshal, originally from South Africa, in memory of Ilana’s relatives, distant cousins of the Moshal family and all others who were murdered in the Shoah.

The Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus, to be built at the heart of Yad Vashem on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, will house The David and Fela Shapell Family Collections Center, the Joseph Wilf Curatorial Center, the renovated David and Ruth Mitzner Auditorium, the Auditorium lobby for temporary exhibitions, the new Family and Children’s Exhibition Gallery, the Legacy Sculpture Garden and the Legacy Plaza.

In appreciation of the vital role of Yad Vashem, Martin and Ilana Moshal, in addition to their Lead Gift to endow the Campus, have also generously endowed the Archival Repository for Yad Vashem’s original archival documents in The David and Fela Shapell Family Collections Center, which will include state-of-the art intake, conservation and storage facilities for Yad Vashem’s unrivalled collections of artifacts, artworks and archival materials.

Following the ceremony – which included a performance by the Sheba Children’s Choir – stakeholders signed two copies of a Scroll of Dedication. One was kept in Yad Vashem, and the other was buried in The Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus. The items in Yad Vashem’s Collections – including 217 million pages of documentation, 12,100 original artworks and 42,000 artifacts – are the building blocks of accurate Shoah remembrance, allowing Yad Vashem to pass on the stories of their creators and owners for future generations.

Yad Vashem would like to convey its gratitude to the Moshal family for their strategic donation during these difficult and uncertain times, and to all its partners in The Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus.

“The State of Israel, Yad Vashem and Yad Vashem’s Friends guarantee that the memory and meanings of the Shoah will live on for generations to come.”

Natan Sharansky at the groundbreaking ceremony
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Ark Rav-On*  
German-Speaking Countries and German Swiss Desk

Ruth Ur**  
German-Speaking Countries Desk

Jeremy Weiss  
US Desk

Adv. Arie Zuckerman  
Diaspora Affairs Desk and Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Directorate

* outgoing  ** incoming
Financial Highlights 2019
Implementation of 2019 Budget, unaudited

Revenues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Activities</th>
<th>NIS (000)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government of Israel</td>
<td>67,795</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department Activities</td>
<td>23,682</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent and Other Income</td>
<td>4,242</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funds &amp; Donations</td>
<td>193,572</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,291</strong></td>
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Expenditures

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>NIS (000)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Documentation</td>
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<td>Remembrance</td>
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<td>Technological Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Management</td>
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<td>Research</td>
<td>13,753</td>
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<td>Resource Development</td>
<td>13,793</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,562</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>199,291</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for the dedicated work and fundraising efforts of its Friends Societies across every continent of the globe. The activities, events and awareness-raising endeavors of our partners are crucial to our shared mission of spreading Holocaust remembrance and education worldwide.

American Society for Yad Vashem
Chairman: Leonard Wilf
Executive Director: Ron B. Meier, PhD, z”l*
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Chief Development Officer: Eillene Leistner*  
Amy Cooper**
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*outgoing **incoming
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Fax: +41 22 736 28 25
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Caracas-Venezuela-1060

Invest in Your Heritage – Join Yad Vashem’s Legacy Circle
Let your estate plans ensure that the memory of the Shoah is passed on to future generations. By including Yad Vashem in your estate plans, you guarantee a future that confronts denial and indifference. To learn more about legacy giving please visit: www.yadvashem.org/legacy or e-mail: international.relations@yadvashem.org.il
We would like to extend a warm welcome to Yad Vashem’s newest Benefactors. The growing commitment to Yad Vashem every year inspires us to maintain our continued dedication to this institution. In an era of rising anti-Semitism and Holocaust distortion, we trust that Yad Vashem will continue to find ways to prioritize Holocaust education worldwide. We commend all those who have contributed to this vital mission, and encourage others to join Yad Vashem’s Circle of Friends.”

Dr. Miriam and Sheldon G. Adelson

New Torchbearers

Martin and Ilana Moshal

Martin Paul Moshal, an entrepreneur and philanthropist, was born in Durban, South Africa in 1970. He graduated from the University of Cape Town with a degree in Business Science, and has been engaged in the development and commercial expansion of a range of businesses. Today, Martin is a successful long term investor and is involved in several technology companies, including a number of start-ups.

Martin firmly believes that there is no secret formula for success, other than hard work, motivation, a lot of patience and no small amount of luck. “I was lucky enough to have been given two things that, more than anything else, helped me on the road to success: a good education, and the support and encouragement of my family to believe in myself.”

In 2009, Martin founded the Moshal Scholarship Program, which supports some 1,000 financially disadvantaged university students in Israel, South Africa and Ukraine annually, and has over 300 alumni. He believes that inequality in education caused by financial circumstances is one of the greatest ongoing tragedies, and that education is the most effective route out of poverty. Martin encourages his scholars to give back to others however they can, whenever and wherever they have the opportunity.

Martin has made significant contributions to Israel not just through his scholarships, but also by supporting technology companies through the Sigmalabs start-up accelerator and the Bar-Lev High Tech Park, which will bring 5,000 jobs to the Western Galilee. In 2017, Martin received an Honorary Doctorate from the Technion–Israel Institute of Technology, and in 2018 he was awarded an Honorary Fellowship by The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Martin’s wife Ilana, a children’s clothing designer by profession, was born in Jerusalem in 1979. At the age of 11, she moved to South Africa with her family. Ilana’s paternal grandparents survived the Shoah, but three of Ilana’s great-grandparents and her great-uncle were murdered during the Holocaust. Martin and Ilana have four children: Joseph, Zoe, Nellie and Bella.

Martin and Ilana have generously endowed The Moshal Shoah Legacy Campus as well as the Archival Repository which will house all of Yad Vashem’s original archival documents. Their endowment is in memory of Ilana’s relatives, distant cousins of the Moshal family and all others who were murdered in the Shoah; and in support of the vital role Yad Vashem plays in preserving the physical evidence of the Holocaust in order to remember the past and thus shape the future. Their donation is the third largest single donation in the history of Yad Vashem, and it is our distinct privilege to welcome Martin and Ilana Moshal as Yad Vashem’s first “Torchbearers.”
Jay and Barbara Hennick
Yad Vashem welcomes Jay and Barbara Hennick as new members of its Circle of Visionaries.

Member of the Order of Canada and Canada’s “Entrepreneur of the Year” (1998), Jay S. Hennick has been involved in innovative occupations since his teenage years. He is the founder, chairman and controlling shareholder of FirstService Corporation, and the chairman, chief executive officer and controlling shareholder of Colliers International Group Inc.

Barbara Hennick is the daughter of Holocaust survivors, Nathan Gray (né Grajcar) from Bedzin, Poland and Irene Gray (née Tuvel) from Munkács, Czechoslovakia. She is a chartered accountant, who has worked in industry and with numerous charitable organizations. In this benevolent spirit, Jay and Barbara Hennick founded the Jay and Barbara Hennick Family Foundation, a philanthropic institution committed to supporting organizations in the fields of healthcare, education and the arts.

“As a child of Holocaust survivors, I learned firsthand about its impact on the human spirit,” says Barbara. “The work that Yad Vashem undertakes towards advancing Holocaust education today and in the future will ensure that the meanings of the Holocaust will never be forgotten, and will enable future generations to insist on a more tolerant, compassionate and inclusive society.”

The Asper Foundation
The Asper Foundation, which has supported educational activities at Yad Vashem since 2002, became Yad Vashem Pillars in 2019. The Asper International Holocaust Studies Program originated from the vision of Dr. Israel H. Asper, who shared his concerns for the future of Holocaust education and awareness with Yad Vashem experts, leading to the conception of a major global outreach program at the then-fledgling International School for Holocaust Studies.

In the almost two decades since, the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program at Yad Vashem has developed targeted programming through joint decisions by the Foundation’s Trustees and the Yad Vashem Directorship regarding which projects of the International School are in most need of support. Among others, the Asper Program incorporates professional development programs, worldwide outreach projects, expert international engagement, and support for Yad Vashem’s international educational conferences. The closing session of each international conference was dedicated to the memory of the late Dr. Israel Asper, and now his wife Ruth (Babs), to perpetuate the memory of the Program’s founders. Speakers at the Asper closing sessions have included world-renowned professors and lawmakers, heads of state, members of parliament and UNESCO ambassadors. Tens of thousands of educators and students from over 70 countries have benefitted from the Program’s exceptional support since its inception.
Borussia Dortmund GmbH & Co. KGaA

The German-based Borussia Dortmund (BVB) is one of the largest sports clubs in the world, with more than 30 million fans worldwide. The fans’ chant – “All generations, men and women, all nations are united by Borussia” – reflects the defining values of BVB: unity, openness and tolerance. To this end, BVB works against right-wing extremism and discrimination in a long-term and in-depth manner: a fan-based initiative fights discrimination in a multitude of ways; BVB’s partners and sponsors cooperate on these important subjects. These vital initiatives are brought together under the motto “United by Borussia,” creating an extensive network to stand up for a diverse society that rejects racism, antisemitism, and all other forms of discrimination.

Remembrance projects and activities for historical-racial discrimination are the pillars on which Yad Vashem is built, United in remembrance, united against racism, discrimination and social exclusion. The expansion of Yad Vashem is a project that Daimler AG is proud to support, ensuring that the company continues to recognize its past while promoting Holocaust remembrance today and for the future.

Haim Koren, z’l

The life of Haim Koren, Holocaust survivor and dear friend of Yad Vashem, was intricately connected to the bitter fate of the Jewish community of Czernowitz during the Holocaust. His close relatives died from illness and starvation during 1941, leaving Haim the sole survivor of his family. During WWII, he acted accordingly his entire adult life. Despite the many travails he endured, Haim had a great sense of humor and enjoyed life enormously. He believed wholeheartedly in the vigorous efforts of Yad Vashem to ensure the future of Holocaust victims for years to come. The Campus’s state-of-the-art storage and conservation facilities will help humanity learn from history. In recent years, Daimler AG has supported various projects to prevent the spread of protectionist tendencies and for the future.

Deutsche Bank AG

Deutsche Bank AG

Deutsche Bank AG is an international mobility and logistics company that employs some 120,000 people worldwide. Founded as a joint stock company in 1994, it united the former East and West German railways during a fundamental rail reform. A predecessor organization of today’s Deutsche Bahn, the Reichsbahn, played a significant role in the deportations of European Jews to their deaths. Deutsche Bahn is well aware of this shameful history, and remains committed to fighting antisemitism and racism.

By supporting the construction of the Collections Center in the new Shoah Legacy Campus, Deutsche Bahn wishes to help perpetuate the memory of the lives and fates of Holocaust victims for years to come. The Company’s state-of-the-art storage and conservation facilities will help humanity learn from history. In recent years, Daimler AG has supported various projects to prevent the spread of protectionist tendencies and for the future.

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Whoever Haim met was enamored of his life of all living things; his concern and devotion to his fellow human being was his guiding light. Having been educated with these values as a child, he acted accordingly his entire life. In the many trials he endured, Haim had a great sense of humor and enjoyed life enormously. He believed wholeheartedly in the vigorous efforts of Yad Vashem to ensure the future of Holocaust victims for years to come. The Campus’s state-of-the-art storage and conservation facilities will help humanity learn from history. In recent years, Daimler AG has supported various projects to prevent the spread of protectionist tendencies and for the future.

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Anonymous, USA
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Ford Foundation, USA
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Arie, Dor, Elitan y Yair Geller-Leizorek, México
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The Nisbar Foundation, the Netherlands
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Raquel & Edmundo z”l Sadile, Brazil
Mrs. Lily Safra, Switzerland
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Andor & Margaret Schwartz z”l, Australia
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Gloria & Szulim (Gol) Szulim z”l and Family, USA
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Stella & Sam Skura z”l, USA
Howard Sokolowski & Senator Linda Frum and the Latner Family, Canada
Egon & Miriam Sonnenschein and Family, Australia
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Steven Spielberg, USA
Daniella & Daniel Steinmetz, Israel
Dr. Lucilo N. Tauber z”l, USA
Sara y Rolando Vilas y Familia, México
Marty & Debbie Vine, Shelly Tenenbaum, Israel-USA
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韬 & Sheila Samson and Family, Israel
Andor & Margaret Schwartz z”l, Australia
Lily & Nathan Shapell z”l, Vera & Paul Guerin, USA
Gloria & Szulim (Gol) Szulim z”l and Family, USA
Ernest & Helen Singer, Miguel & Beth Singer, Barry & Nelly Zagorski, Canada
Stella & Sam Skura z”l, USA
Howard Sokolowski & Senator Linda Frum and the Latner Family, Canada
Egon & Miriam Sonnenschein and Family, Australia
Ed & Fran Sorshine, Canada
Eida & Abraham Spiegel z”l and Family, USA
Steven Spielberg, USA
Daniella & Daniel Steinmetz, Israel
Dr. Lucilo N. Tauber z”l, USA
Sara y Rolando Vilas y Familia, México
Marty & Debbie Vine, Shelly Tenenbaum, Israel-USA
Volkswagen AG, Germany
The Harry and Jeannette Weinberg Foundation, USA
Martin & Bracha Werber, David & Eile Werber, USA
Jaime & June Woldenberg and Family, Monterrey Mexico
The Wolfson Family Charitable Trust, UK
The Estate of Rachel & Meri Yaskill z”l, Israel
Ruta & Felix z”l Zandman, USA

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Anonymous, Mexico
Anonymous, Spain
Anonymous, USA (2)
Berna & Murray Alon, USA
The Estate of Robert & Jacqueline Aronzet z”l, France
Annie Averbuch, France
The Estate of Pessia-Pnina Berson z”l, Israel
Alberto & Raquel Cohen, Mexico
Jacobo Cojuba y Familia, México
Marina & Alexander Dobrovinsky, Russia
The Estate of Rafael Fierman z”l, USA
Jonathan Gora Friedman and Sam Friedman, USA
Joseph & Helen z”l Frolich-West and Family, Australia
Jean Frydman, France
The Estate of Clara Gero z”l, Israel
The Estate of Heliena & Ariel Geyer, France
Jean & Eugene Gluck z”l, USA
The Estate of Joseph Goldstein z”l, USA
The Estate of Shmuel Goldstein z”l, Israel
The Estate of Salomea Gruener z”l, Australia
Abbi & Jeremy Halpern, USA
International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, Norway
Zofia & Josef z”l Landau, Venezuela
The Estate of Werner Lowey z”l, USA
The Estate of Hawana Liberman z”l, Israel
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The Marcus Foundation for Education, Culture and Welfare, Switzerland-Isreal
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The Schwarzbaum Family, Austria
Ted Slavin, USA
Smetanich Family, Israel
The SNCF, French Railways, France
The Steindling Family, Austria-israel
Sadia Sultan y Perla Azarraf Sultan, Venezuela
The Estate of Fray Vin Berek z”l, USA
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Anonymous, Spain
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<td>Jason Grosfeld, USA</td>
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<td>Michael Herzberg, UK</td>
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<td>Alison &amp; Shawn Horwitz, USA</td>
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<td>Amy &amp; Mark Kestenbaum, USA</td>
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<td>Allen &amp; Lillian Meyer z”l Trust, USA</td>
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<td>Mary &amp; Jonathan Pelotman, USA</td>
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| Diruh Sauermann, Switzerland |
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The National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism, Austria
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