

# Yad Vashem Jerusalem

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## A Mosaic of Life and Death

New Encyclopedia of the Ghettos (pp. 10-11)

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New Exhibition Marking 27 January

Architecture of Murder: The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints (pp. 2-3)

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**Yad Vashem**

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## Contents

**New Exhibition Marking 27 January: ■ 2-3**

Architecture of Murder

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints

**Education ■ 4-5**

**From Morocco to Jerusalem ■ 4**

First-Ever Seminar for Moroccan Educators

**Thousands of Youth Mark 10 Tevet ■ 4**

**Graduate Spotlight: ■ 5**

Maria Borzecka, Poland

**New in the Virtual School ■ 5**

**A Vibrant Center of Investigation and**

**Inspiration ■ 6-7**

The International Institute for Holocaust

Research

**New Research: Pope Pius XII and the**

**Holocaust ■ 8-9**

**"A Fragile Happiness" ■ 9**

Louise Roger: Righteous Among the Nations

**A Mosaic of Life and Death ■ 10-11**

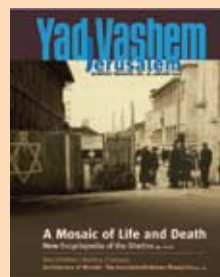
New Encyclopedia of the Ghettos

**Different Perspectives ■ 12**

Documentation of the *Shoah*

**News ■ 13-16**

**Friends Worldwide ■ 17-19**



■ On the cover: *Munkacs Ghetto, 1944*  
Courtesy: Ghetto Fighters' House Museum,  
Photo Archive

## Dr. Daniel Uziel and Leah Goldstein

■ The Auschwitz-Birkenau camp complex was planned as a mammoth building project that would take years to complete and that, in fact, was never concluded. A number of companies and organizations were involved in the construction, as well as thousands of workers, both German and foreign. A building project of this magnitude naturally created a vast quantity of red tape, including technical paperwork.

While planning the camp complex, the offices and companies involved in the project prepared hundreds of sketches of the various building sites. Draftsmen for the SS, prisoners with technical skills and civilian experts prepared the plans, which assisted the contractors in presenting the project and performing the construction work. Amongst other detailed sketches were those for the gas chambers and crematoria.

Copies of administration documents – including the plans – were preserved in an archive next to the main camp. Prior to the evacuation of the camps in January 1945, the Germans burned the archive of the camp's headquarters, but missed that of the construction corps, kept in a separate building. As a result, with the liberation of the camp an appreciable portion of these documents fell into Soviet hands, and was transferred to Moscow. Copies found by the Poles were eventually placed in the Auschwitz Museum. The plans finally became accessible to the public with the fall of the Eastern Bloc and the opening of archives in Eastern Europe.

In 2008, 29 original yellowing drawings were found in an abandoned apartment in Berlin, including 15 original plans of the Auschwitz complex. The mass circulation German paper *Bild*, owned by the Axel-Springer publishing house, acquired the diagrams and, after authentication by experts at the German Federal Archives, published their discovery. After being displayed in a temporary exhibition in Berlin, *Bild's* editor-in-chief, Kai Diekmann, presented them last August to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev for safekeeping on the Mount of Remembrance.

New Exhibition Marking 27 January  
International Holocaust Remembrance Day:

# Architecture of Murder

## The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints

The drawings housed at Yad Vashem are dated between 1941 and 1943 and include plans to expand Auschwitz I, the original plans for Birkenau, and sketches of various buildings in the camps and surrounding areas. Among others they present the evolution of Birkenau in October 1941. One of the Birkenau plans bears the signature of Heinrich Himmler, as well as the head of the SS building department, Hans Kammler. On another, Auschwitz commandant Rudolph Höss signed his name. The plans also include an early sketch of Crematorium II.

Marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day, on 25 January Yad Vashem will open a temporary exhibition entitled "Architecture of Murder," displaying

The SS militiamen cynically enjoyed admonishing the prisoners: "...we have won the war against you; none of you will be left to bear witness... there will perhaps be suspicions, discussions, research by historians, but there will be no certainties, because we will destroy the evidence together with you."

Primo Levi, quoted in the new Yad Vashem Exhibition, "Architecture of Murder"

the sketches in the context of the "everyday people" whose decisions and actions led to the construction of the largest extermination center of European Jewry.

Alongside the sketches, visitors will be able to view an aerial photo of the massive complex, the Vrba-Wetzler Report (written by two Jewish



■ SS officers amidst building plans at the head office of the Auschwitz Central Construction Directorate. Yad Vashem Archives

escapees from Auschwitz in 1944), an album displaying pictures of the camp's construction, and quotes from SS men and Jewish inmates describing the site and its murderous purposes. Also on display will be a copy of the poem "Death Fugue" by Paul Celan, in which the renowned poet shatters the common image of the Nazi by refusing to describe the Germans as monsters, portraying them instead as human beings who, by choosing evil, surrendered their sense of morality.

The exhibition opening will coincide with a seminar for the Diplomatic Corps in Israel in the presence of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. A variety of honored guests from Israel and abroad will be present, including a special delegation of Yad Vashem Friends Societies from Canada and from Germany, and Holocaust survivors. Participants will hear the Prime Minister, Minister of Education Gideon Saar, Prof. Shlomo Avineri, Prof. Moshe Halbertal, Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau,

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum Director Dr. Piotr Cywiński, Axel-Springer CEO Dr. Mathias Döpfner and Holocaust survivor Ruth Bondy, among other distinguished speakers.

"Architecture of Murder" will remain open to the public at Yad Vashem's Exhibitions Pavilion until the end of February, after which parts of the exhibition will be displayed in the entrance of the Archives and Library Building at Yad Vashem. Marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day, a traveling version of the exhibition will also open in the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 26 January 2010, supported by Michaela and Leon Constantiner and Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

*"Architecture of Murder" was curated by Director of Yad Vashem's Museums Division Yehudit Inbar and designed by Pnina Friedman. The exhibition is funded thanks to the generous support of the Greg Rosshandler and Harry Perelberg families, Australia.*

*Dr. Daniel Uziel is Director of the Photo Archive at Yad Vashem's Archives Division and the exhibition's Historical Advisor.*



# From Morocco to Jerusalem

## First-Ever Seminar for Moroccan Educators

Arièle Nahmias



■ Moroccan educators tour the Holocaust History Museum.

■ In November 2009, 18 teachers from Morocco came to Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies to participate in a tailor-made seminar on Holocaust education, supported by the Adelson Family Foundation. One of the participants had heard

the School's Mario Sinai lecture in Spain and had asked him to organize a special seminar for Moroccan teachers at Yad Vashem. The European Department rose to the challenge, and organized this special delegation, which included social activists and opinion shapers from within the Berber community, an ethnic majority in Morocco.

Participants toured the Holocaust History Museum and the exhibit "Besa: A Code of Honor" (a photographic exhibit of Albanian Muslims who rescued Jews during the Holocaust). They heard a number of lectures about the *Shoah* and antisemitism and met with survivors, thus learning the historical narrative in combination with personal stories. A highlight of the seminar was a face-to-face discussion with legendary Israeli journalist Emanuel Halperin as well as Members of Knesset Yaakov Edri (Kadima) and Daniel Ben Simon (Labor), both natives of Morocco. After listening to brief overviews on Israeli society, the Moroccan educators were delighted to have the opportunity to present their culture and explain the goal of their visit to Israel.

Boubaker Outaadit, the group's leader, related how he first became interested in the Holocaust while studying German history at the University of Casablanca. Another participant commented, "As a sociologist, I know a lot about human beings, but I cannot understand how people could ignore, humiliate and murder

their brethren in such a brutal manner. Yad Vashem is a heroic institution in the field of human rights... because it imparts a universal message to the whole of humanity. When you are at Yad Vashem you realize that dialogue between peoples of all races, religions and sects is the only solution."

Throughout their visit, the educators expressed great interest and were actively involved in in-depth discussions. "This visit showed how important it is for Yad Vashem to hold seminars for educators from Muslim countries where the official institutions do not deal with the Holocaust and do not train teachers to do so," said School Director Dorit Novak. "In these countries, the mission of Yad Vashem – to increase Holocaust remembrance and education throughout the world – is absolutely critical. We hope to welcome more groups from Morocco in the near future."

Participant Ali Khadaoui intends to join the educators back in Morocco who informally teach students the history of the Holocaust. Also a poet, Khadaoui was particularly moved by the story of Holocaust survivor Hannah Gofrit, whose personal experiences formed the basis for the Yad Vashem educational unit, "I Wanted to Fly Like a Butterfly." He expressed his sentiments in a poem, ending with the words "What is a six-year-old guilty of?"

*The author is head of the French Desk at the International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## Thousands of Youth Mark 10 Tevet

Shirly David and Yafa Novoselsky

■ The International School once again marked 10 Tevet (the General Day of Mourning) with a range of educational activities. On 7 Tevet (24 December 2009), hundreds of students from religious middle schools throughout Israel came to Yad Vashem for a special seminar on the topic "Jewish Communities in Light of the Holocaust."

The youths heard a lecture by Rabbi Yirmi Stevitsky, principal of the Himmelfarb School, and took part in a variety of activities that included tours of the site accompanied by actors, meetings with survivor-witnesses and various educational workshops.

On Saturday night, the eve of 10 Tevet (26 December), some 800 students from the religious youth groups – Bnei Akiva, Ezra, Ariel and the Religious Scouts Movement – viewed documentary films about Jewish communities prior to the Holocaust, and held extensive discussions on the topic.

The following day, some 1,500 religious high school and seminary students and National Service volunteers attended a daylong seminar on the theme "I have built what was destroyed, and planted what was desolate" (Ezekiel 36:36). Rabbi Benny Lau, Head of the Beit Morasha study center, gave a lecture on

the place of the community in Jewish tradition and Shulamit Imber, Pedagogical Director of the International School, spoke on the topic of "Daily Heroines – the strength of women in the face of the rupture of the community." During the day, the participants toured the Museum Complex, met with survivors, visited the "Besa: A Code of Honor" exhibition, and participated in selected workshops. The day ended with a prayer service in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.

*Shirly David is the Training Coordinator for Middle Schools, and Yafa Novoselsky is the Coordinator for the Religious Sector at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem.*

## Graduate Spotlight

Every year, the International School for Holocaust Studies holds hundreds of seminars and conferences, in dozens of languages, for educators and students in Israel and around the world. Featured here is one of the School's seminar graduates, and what she has achieved since her visit to Yad Vashem:

**Richelle Budd Caplan**

■ A few years ago, Maria Borzecka participated in an intensive teacher-training seminar at Yad Vashem designed for Polish educators, supported by the Adelson Family Foundation and ICHEIC - the International Commission for Holocaust Era Insurance Claims. There she was introduced to the story of Holocaust survivor and author Hannah Gofrit, which became a great inspiration for her in teaching about the Holocaust in Poland.

Hannah Gofrit was born in Biala Rawska, Poland. Her childhood wartime experiences are featured in the popular elementary school book, *I Wanted to Fly Like a Butterfly*. This Yad Vashem educational resource, translated into a number of European languages, is frequently presented at pedagogical workshops organized by the International School for Holocaust Studies.

After reading Gofrit's story, Borzecka decided to visit 64 Zelazneh Street in Warsaw, where Gofrit hid with her mother for two years in the apartment of the Skowronczak family later recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations.

In May 2009 the visit was reciprocated when Gofrit and her family visited the Willy



■ Maria Borzecka (left) and Hannah Gofrit (center) with a class of students at the Willy Brandt School in Warsaw, Poland, May 2009

Brandt Bilingual German-Polish School in the Polish capital, where Borzecka teaches. During a meeting with Borzecka's students, Gofrit answered questions and admired the children's colorful art projects inspired by her personal story.

Gofrit says her close relationship with Borzecka has been particularly meaningful. "As a six-year-old girl during the *Shoah*, I was not allowed to attend first grade together with my friends in Poland. This painful childhood experience has never left me. Visiting Maria's school in Warsaw with my husband and son has brought me closure, and I feel as though I have come full circle. Since then, I have started

## Maria Borzecka Poland

to read in Polish again and speak more freely in my mother tongue. My connection with Maria has made an enormous impact on my life."

In December 2009, Borzecka returned to Yad Vashem with a group of dedicated Polish educators and leaders to attend a special graduate seminar. She spent time with Gofrit, and reinforced her commitment to Holocaust education in Poland.

*Since 2005, the School's European Department has trained several thousand educators representing some 25 countries across the continent. For more information, please contact: europe@yadvashem.org.il*

*The author is Director of the European Department at the International School for Holocaust Studies.*

## New in the Virtual School [www1.yadvashem.org/education](http://www1.yadvashem.org/education)

**Naama Shik**

### New Filmed Testimony

■ A new title will soon be added to the series "Witnesses and Education - Recorded Experiences of Holocaust Survivors."

*In Fact, I Am Alive - The Story of Avraham Aviel* covers the life of Avraham Aviel (Lipkowsky), born in 1929 in Daugieliszki, Poland. On 10 May 1942, Aviel and his family were taken together with the Jews of Radun (the village of the Rabbinic leader, the Chafetz Chaim) and of the surrounding areas to be murdered in killing pits. His mother and brother were among those executed. Aviel and his brother Pinchas managed to escape to the forests, where they joined the partisan forces. To Aviel's great sorrow, Pinchas, who had survived the mass murder, was killed before his eyes. In 1945, Aviel traveled to northern Italy, and stayed at a Jewish children's home in Salvino. From Italy, he set sail to pre-state Israel. Following internment

at a detention camp in Cyprus, he arrived at Israel's shores in 1946.

At the beginning of 1948, Aviel joined the Sixth Battalion of the Palmach, and fought on the road to Jerusalem. In 1961, he appeared as a witness at the trial of former SS officer Adolf Eichmann, describing the liquidation of Radun as an example of the tragic story of the Jews of Lithuania, as well as the life of the partisans in the forests.

*"Witnesses and Education" is a joint project of the International School for Holocaust Studies and the Center for Multimedia Assisted Instruction at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The films, available in several languages, are screened for teachers and students from Israel and abroad, IDF staff and informal educators, as well as the broader public. The project is produced with the generous support of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and the Adelson Family Foundation.*

### Special Site for 27 January

■ The International School will launch a special sub-site marking International Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January. The site includes a broad range of materials on the Holocaust as well as a variety of educational tools. As part of the International School's educational philosophy, these materials are presented as learning environments - memorial ceremonies, lesson plans and other pedagogical aids - to encourage the exploration of pertinent topics before, during and after the Holocaust. Historical introductions, explanatory texts, testimonies and source materials - including diary entries, last letters, photographs and artifacts - help students and teachers across the globe increase their knowledge and further Holocaust remembrance worldwide.

*The author is Director of the Educational Technology Department at the International School for Holocaust Studies.*



# A Vibrant Center of Investi

Leah Goldstein



■ Researchers at the 2009 Workshop on Real-time Media Reports During WWII



■ Incumbant of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies and Head

■ This summer, the International Institute for Holocaust Research bade farewell to its director, Dr. Tikva Fatal-Knaani, who joined Yad Vashem in 1988 and directed the Institute for more than a decade.

When Dr. Fatal-Knaani joined the Institute, it was headed by Prof. Yehuda Bauer and Prof. Israel Gutman, both of whom are now Academic Advisors to Yad Vashem. Since August 2000, the Institute has been headed by Prof. David Bankier, Incumbant of the John Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies, and its Chief Historian is Prof. Dan Michman. Under Fatal-Knaani's directorship, the Institute expanded its international contacts, established its international research exchange program with universities and institutes abroad, and initiated numerous research projects. Dr. Fatal-Knaani will maintain her relationship with Yad Vashem as an external scientific and linguistic editor, while completing her latest research, on the Rowne ghetto, for which she received a scholarship from the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah.

The Institute's new director is no stranger to Yad Vashem. Dr. Bella Gutterman was the Director and Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Publications for ten years. She has been awarded various prizes for her research, and has published an array of seminal Holocaust-related works, including *Narrow Bridge to Life: The Gross-Rosen Network of Labor Camps for Jews*, *The Wolfsberg Machzor 5705* (co-edited with Naomi Morgenstern), *The Auschwitz Album:*

“No other place offers this kind of information; none stimulates this type of associative working process, invoking new ideas through its many connections.”

Prof. Goetz Aly

*The Story of a Transport* (co-edited with Prof. Israel Gutman), and *To Bear Witness: Memory of the Holocaust at Yad Vashem* (co-edited with Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev). Her latest research is a biography of Warsaw Ghetto fighter Zivia Lubetkin.

In a recent interview, Dr. Gutterman explained the current projects of the Institute, and its goals over the coming years:

## What is the International Institute for Holocaust Research?

The International Institute is the world's leader in Holocaust-related research. The Institute leads and initiates basic and far-reaching research on the Holocaust; cooperates with world-renowned scholars, universities and institutes in dozens of countries; holds international and local conferences, research workshops, lectures and seminars on a range of Holocaust-related

topics; responds to current issues and research initiatives; and, most importantly, through its many research grants, encourages and develops the next generation of Holocaust researchers. The Institute also includes Yad Vashem Publications and *Yad Vashem Studies*, as well as the recently opened Diana Zborowski Center for the Study of the Aftermath of the Holocaust, endowed by Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem Eli Zborowski.

## What major projects is the Institute working on today?

The Institute is working on a number of long-term research projects in cooperation with other departments in Yad Vashem. We recently completed a unique and innovative project to prepare the new **Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust** (see pp. 10-11), and the multiyear project “**The Untold Stories**,” mapping the murder sites in the Nazi-occupied FSU is continuing apace.

Other ongoing initiatives include the **Deportations Project**, which is researching the expulsion of Jews to ghettos and camps. This phenomenon, an integral part of the “Final Solution,” employed the latest in modern technology and bureaucratic infrastructure, mass transportation across the railways of Europe and advanced logistical systems. The vast information revealed by this research will be accessible to scholars and historians, as well as families of *Shoah* victims and anyone wishing to broaden their knowledge of the Holocaust.

# gation and Inspiration

## The International Institute for Holocaust Research



of the International Institute for Holocaust Research Prof. David Bankier

Since 2000, the Institute has been working on a project called “**The Children’s Universe**,” focusing on the fate of Jewish children during the *Shoah* and the unique hardships this vulnerable segment of the population went through in the ghettos, camps, partisan units and in hiding. Many scholarly articles and books have already been published based on this research.

In partnership with Yad Vashem, the **Sobibór Archaeological Excavations Project** is conducting new excavations on the site of the former extermination camp both to pinpoint the parts of the camp and determine the exact location of the killing center. Forthcoming is the publication of the **Lithuanian Testimonies Project**, which analyzed survivor testimonies collected immediately after the war in the hope of learning more about the atrocities that took place in Lithuania – a country with one of the largest percentages of Jewish victims in the *Shoah* – as well as its vibrant prewar Jewish community. The Institute is also working on completing the **Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations**, as well as an innovative study investigating the political, humanistic and religious motivations of Protestant ministers and deaconesses and Catholic priests, sisters and brothers for **rescuing Jews in France and Belgium**. In addition, the Institute plans to release a book describing the **contributions of Shoah survivors** to kibbutzim, moshavim and other communities in Israel.

The **Diana Zborowski Center** is presently conducting research in three major areas:



■ The “Untold Stories” online research project on Yad Vashem’s website

analyzing the ideas of prominent Jewish writers regarding the standing of Europe in the context of the *Shoah*; documenting the attempts at collective Holocaust remembrance in the first decades after the war; and comparing survivor testimonies over the years, and their effects on the shaping of collective memory.

### Who is currently undertaking research at the Institute?

The International Institute has recently established a new research scholarship for MA and Ph.D. students from abroad who are writing their theses on the *Shoah*. This scholarship provides the opportunity for students to travel to Israel and conduct research at the Yad Vashem Archives and Library for two weeks. They are also able to consult directly with world-renowned scholars such as Professors Bauer, Gutman, Michman and Bankier.

One of our current returning research fellows is German historian and author

Prof. Goetz Aly, recipient of last year’s Yad Vashem fellowship from the The Baron Friedrich Carl von Oppenheim Chair for the Study of Racism, Antisemitism and the Holocaust. In a recent letter to Yad Vashem, Aly described Yad Vashem as a “treasure.” “No other place offers this kind of information; none stimulates this type of associative working process, invoking new ideas through its many connections.”

Aly also mentioned the hubbub of visitors, among whom are many survivors seeking information about the fate of their families. “They help me see the history of the Holocaust not solely from the perspective of the persecutors and murderers. When I sit at Yad Vashem, I write a book differently than I would in Berlin. There, from the window of my office, I can see Goebbels’ Ministry of Propoganda. It towers in its powerful Nazi architecture over the opposite side of the street. But here, I see people, I hear them speak, tell their stories, and I think to myself: This is a blessing.”

### New Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Publications

■ Established Yad Vashem researcher Dr. Iael Nidam-Orvieto has been appointed Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Publications, working alongside Director of Yad Vashem Publications Gabi Hadar. For many years, Dr. Nidam-Orvieto has been deeply involved in researching the *Shoah* in Italy, including its precedence and aftermath. She recently conducted a scholarly workshop at Yad Vashem on Pope Pius XII, and is currently editing the discussions that took place during the workshop for the upcoming book *Pius XII and the Holocaust: The Current State of Research* (see p. 8).



# Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust



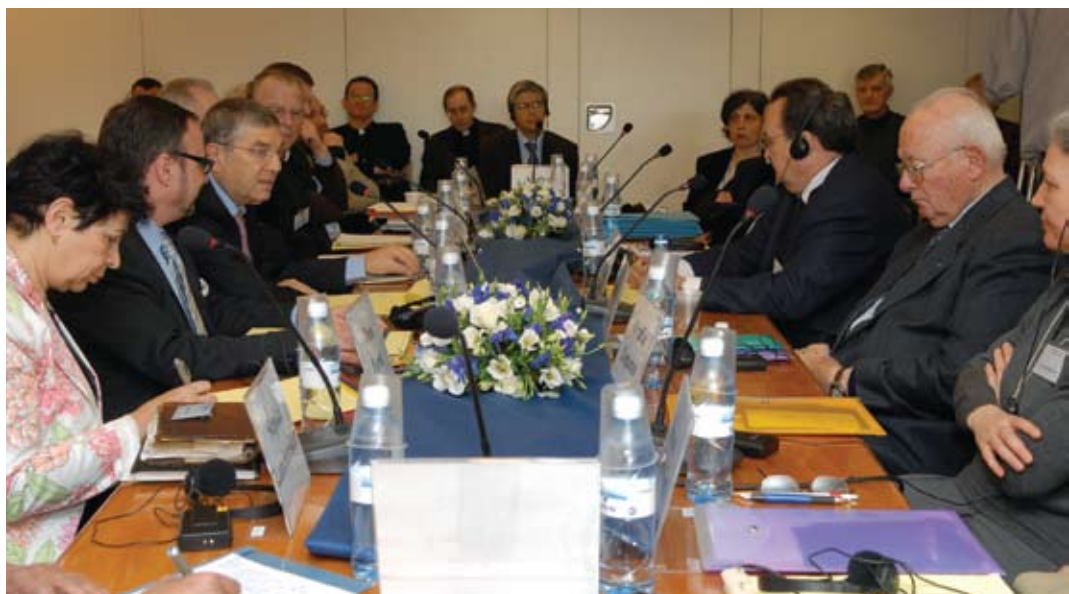
■ *Dilemmas, silence, active rescue, passivity.* These words are often mentioned when dealing with the controversial figure of Pius XII and his papacy during WWII. The debate over his attitude and actions regarding the persecuted Jews of Europe began during the 1960s following the release of the play *The Deputy* by Rolf Hochhuth, and continues even today, splitting public opinion as well as generations of scholars.

The critics emphasize that Pius' main failing was his silence – his lack of a clear and direct condemnation of the annihilation of the Jews by Nazi Germany. Backing up this opinion is his famous radio speech of Christmas 1942, in which the Pope failed to mention the Jews or the Germans, referring more generally to the demise of hundreds of thousands of people “who, without any fault on their part, sometimes only because of their nationality or descent, have been consigned to death or to slow decline.”

Scholars bring many explanations for this public silence: political, ideological or even personal. Some claim that Pius was pro-Nazi or antisemitic, even calling him “Hitler’s Pope.” They emphasize the failure of the Pontiff to fulfill his moral duty officially to denounce the Holocaust, or to remind the Catholic community of its ethical responsibilities.

On the other side of the debate are those who argue that Pius' speeches clearly referred to the Jews and their suffering, and claim that the varied rescue activities carried out by Catholic clergy throughout Europe is clear proof of the inspiration they received from the Pope. These defenders maintain that the lack of a direct confrontation with the Nazi regime was a strategic choice meant to avoid worse catastrophe and enable further clandestine rescue activity.

As much of the relevant source material remains unavailable to historians – the archives of the Vatican for the period of WWII have yet to be opened – explanations on both sides are often based on assumptions or unsystematic documentation. However, over the last few years, certain archives containing relevant material have been opened, leading to an increased interest in the topic. For example, the archive



■ *At the scholarly workshop on Pius XII and the Holocaust, March 2009*

**As much of the relevant source material remains unavailable to historians, explanations on both sides are often based on assumptions or unsystematic documentation**

of Pius XI's papacy has been recently opened to the public, enabling research that sheds new light, among other things, on the policy of the Holy See during the 1930s and on Eugenio Pacelli's (later Pope Pius XII) operations as Vatican Secretary of State. Documentation revealed in other archives across the world has led to the publication of new books on the topic, as well as important new insights into the existing historiography.

In March 2009, the International Institute for Holocaust Research and the Salesian Theological

Institute of Saints Peter and Paul in Jerusalem organized a scholarly workshop at Yad Vashem to discuss the current state of research on Pius XII and the Holocaust.

The academic discussion was based on specific questions presented to specialized scholars from around the world expressing the range of opinions on Pius XII. The closed forum enabled a dynamic and open discussion, soon to be released as a pathbreaking publication on the topic.

One of the most innovative pieces of research presented at the workshop dealt with the rescue of Jews in Italy, especially in Rome. Thanks to vast material recently opened to some researchers, new insights were presented as to refuge activities of the “religious houses,” suggesting a more direct involvement of the Holy See, albeit one that also aided evacuees, orphans, partisans and soldiers of all nationalities, in the name of Christian charity.

A topic that revealed the gap between the participants concerned converted Jews who, as is shown in published documentation, were afforded much help by the Vatican. Since the Nazis considered them still Jewish, should the help given to those who converted be considered



# “A Fragile Happiness”

## Louise Roger: Righteous Among the Nations

Dr. Iael Nidam-Orvieto

Irena Steinfeldt

If Pius XII was involved in, encouraged or even initiated one activity, does that mean that he had equal involvement in the other?

as aiding Jews? Or must one claim that this assistance is dubious, considering that those Jews who chose not to abandon their faith were less likely to receive the help of the Vatican?

Another debate was whether Pius XII was responsible for actions taken by clerics, both in the rescue of Jews during the Holocaust and in its aftermath, during the escape of Nazi criminals from Europe along the so-called “ratlines.” If Pius XII was involved in, encouraged or even initiated one activity, does that mean that he had equal involvement in the other?

What is undeniable is that the new documentation enables scholars to better understand the Pope’s background and opinions vis-à-vis Nazism and antisemitism. Much clearer is his aversion to National Socialism, which he considered one of the worst heresies of the modern age. While his upbringing was rooted in traditional anti-Judaism, his branding as an antisemite must be called into question.

Several scholars have suggested a new approach, one that views the complexity of the responses and how the Pope’s operations were understood and accepted by his followers and his contemporaries – both the Allied and Axis powers. The workshop was certainly the first step towards more open and sincere academic collaboration on the topic, albeit many questions remain unresolved and his legacy controversial. Only the full opening of the Vatican Archives and continued cooperation among the scholarly community will enable a more comprehensive understanding of Pius XII and the Holocaust.

*The author is Editor-in-Chief of Yad Vashem Publications and a scholar in Italian history.*



■ Ehud Loeb (center row, third from left) and his family with the grandchildren of Louise Roger and the French Ambassador to Israel in the Garden of the Righteous

■ In a moving ceremony in Yad Vashem’s Garden of the Righteous on 27 October 2009, Louise Roger from France was posthumously honored as Righteous Among the Nations for her role in rescuing Holocaust survivor Dr. Ehud Loeb.

Born as Herbert Odenheimer in Bühl, Germany, Loeb was deported to France in October 1940 together with all the Jews of Baden and the Palatinate. A Jewish organization managed to get the seven-year-old and other children out of the Gurs internment camp, where he and his family were being kept under terrible conditions. Loeb’s parents were deported in September 1942 and were killed in Auschwitz. After being moved from one place to another, Loeb finally arrived at the home of Jules and Jeanne Roger (honored as Righteous Among the Nations in 1989) in Buzançais. However because of Jules Roger’s underground activity, it became too dangerous for him to stay, and so Roger moved the child to the home of his mother, Louise Roger, in a remote village, where he lived under a false name until liberation.

Today, Loeb is a very active volunteer for Yad Vashem. He often speaks to groups of teachers and students about his experiences during the Holocaust, and serves as a member

of the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous. At the ceremony, surrounded by his wife, his children and grandchildren, Loeb described the time with Roger as “fragile happiness.” “I do not remember ever receiving a hug or a kiss from her, but I loved her and knew that she loved me. I had become her grandchild,” he said.

The award was presented by the Chairman of the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous Justice Jacob Türkel and Yad Vashem Chairman Avner Shalev to Roger’s two grandchildren who had flown in for the event. Also present were French Ambassador to Israel Christophe Bigot, members of Aloumim (the Association of Jewish Children Hidden in France during the Holocaust), and a group of French teachers attending a seminar at Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies.

Roger’s grandson Robert thanked Yad Vashem for the honor bestowed on his grandmother. “If she had been here she would not have been able to read a speech, since she could hardly read and write,” he explained. “However, although concealed under an austere exterior, her kind heart would have spoken for itself.”

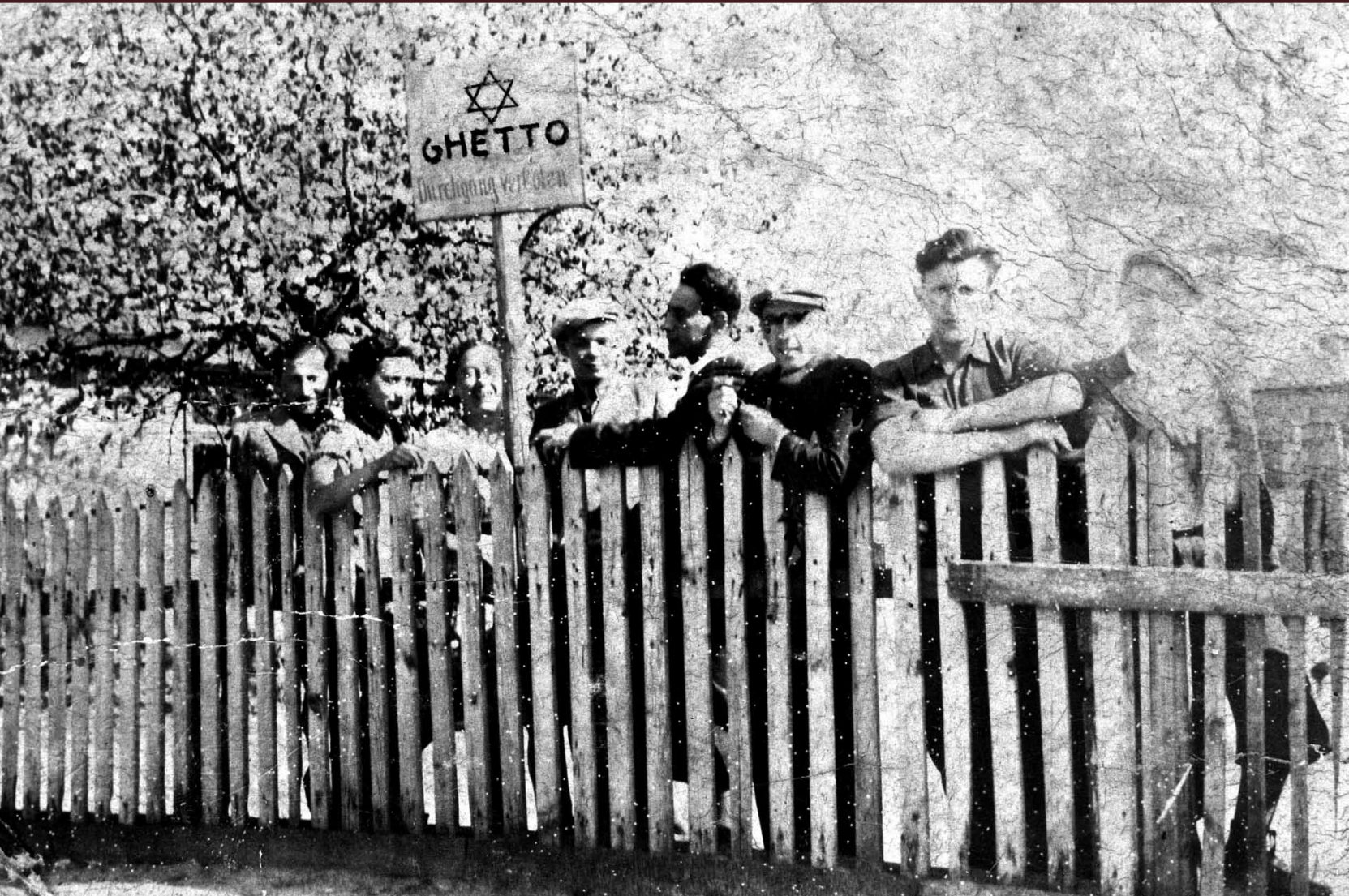
*The author is Director of the Department of the Righteous Among the Nations.*

[www.yad vashem.org](http://www.yad vashem.org)

for photos, speeches and more information on this and other Righteous stories.



# A Mosaic of Life and Death



■ *Jews in the Szadek ghetto, Lodz district, near a sign prohibiting through passage. Yad Vashem Archives*

■ **Seventy years after the Nazi regime established the first Jewish ghetto – Piotrków Trybunalski in Poland – Yad Vashem has released a new publication: the *Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust*.** Written by researchers at the International Institute for Holocaust Research and edited by Prof. Guy Miron and Shlomit Shulchani, the encyclopedia includes entries on close to 1,100 ghettos established in the areas occupied by the Germans: Greater Poland, the Russian Republic, Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Transnistria, Romania and Greece.

**10 publications**

As the first and only comprehensive collection of the ghettos established by the Nazi regime, the encyclopedia marks an important milestone in the history of Holocaust research and historiography. While some ghettos are quite familiar to the general public – Warsaw, Lodz, Lwow, Vilna and Bialystok – this epic chronicle also includes the vast majority of ghettos, large and small, that existed for a few weeks or years throughout the Soviet Union and Hungary.

## What is a Ghetto?

Deciding which cases to include in the encyclopedia was a complex and almost

undecipherable problem. In the town of Szydłowiec in the Kielce district of Poland, for example, there were some 12,000 Jews. The order to establish the ghetto was given at the end of December 1941 but was carried out only in April 1942. The entire town, except for two streets, was eventually transformed into the ghetto, albeit without walls or fences. By contrast, in Mglin, the district town of the Orel Province in the Russian Federation, the ghetto was established in the local prison. Six hundred Jews from the town, men and women separately, were imprisoned there for six weeks until they were taken away and murdered in the



# New Encyclopedia of the Ghettos

Dr. Lea Prais

municipal park. These and other cases raised the question: what is a ghetto? Is it an open and unsurrounded town, or a prison under lock and key?

Eventually, the term “ghetto” was defined as any community that existed in the areas of German occupation where the Jews were entirely or partially coercively concentrated for a period of at least a number of weeks. Nevertheless, the editors of the encyclopedia were not entirely satisfied with this definition, and in a series of introductions that preface the entries give their attention to the many problems that derive from the complexity of the phenomenon. The issue of the Jewish houses (*Juden Häuser*) is one such example. These were living compounds, scattered throughout Germany’s cities, to which local Jews were forcibly transferred until their deportation. Despite the fact that the Jewish houses in Germany were never defined as ghettos, their resemblance to the definition of a ghetto is certainly eye opening.

## The power of photographs to commemorate the transient and ephemeral remains an historic tool of the first order

### Discovering New Information

The encyclopedia is arranged alphabetically, with geographic coordinates (prewar or postwar) and alternative Jewish names for each community. While each entry includes a summary of the community’s Jewish history prior to the outbreak of the war, it primarily deals with the life of Jews in the ghetto; the date of its establishment and the attendant circumstances; the ghetto’s physical expanse and number of inhabitants; and the internal institutions and the people who headed them. It also recounts the various challenges the Jews of the ghetto experienced, the means of daily survival, response patterns to the persecution campaign such as acts of resistance or flight, and the extermination campaigns until the final liquidation.

Historians and experts spent six years researching and writing the encyclopedia. Consequently, even in areas that had already been ostensibly surveyed and researched, such as occupied Poland, new ghettos were discovered whose existence had previously eluded the researchers. Thus, for example, it was discovered that a ghetto had been established in the Fortress of Solipse in Deblin-Irena in the Lublin province (known as Modzitz to the Jews), where some 3,500 Jews lived. The main information about its history was discovered in one of the documents stored in the “Oneg Shabbat” archives assembled underground in the Warsaw ghetto.

### The Power of Visual Documentation

A collection of over 250 photographs, some in color, form an important part of the encyclopedia. The photos, taken in the various ghettos, were carefully chosen by Yad Vashem photo curators Nian Springer-Aharoni and Orit Adurian. The collection paints the miserable and somber ghetto life in a vivid and human light, as frequently reflected in the texts. In a comprehensive introduction to the photos, Springer-Aharoni distinguishes between the character of German photography, both personal and for propaganda purposes, and Jewish photography in the ghettos, which was sometimes performed clandestinely and other times on behalf of the Jewish authorities. The power of photographs to commemorate the transient and ephemeral remains an historic tool of the first order.

In addition to the volume itself, an accompanying DVD includes a series of films taken in the ghettos or on the eve of their establishment. The cinematography’s raw materials, devotedly gathered and researched by Yad Vashem film curator Efrat Komisar-Kaplan, were edited by film producer Nathan Lifshitz. The circumstances in which the films were photographed, as well as the identity of the photographers – mostly members of the Nazi propaganda units – convinced Lifshitz to add an introductory film explaining the aspects and challenges these film segments harbor. Nevertheless, the rarity of the films and their ability to project an authentic picture of the physical surroundings and the faces of the ghetto Jews, most of them anonymous,

provide a unique and unusual supplement to the accounts themselves.

## Excerpts from the extensive literature written by ghetto residents provide a personal and human soundtrack to the formal texts

In addition to the collection of photographs and films, the encyclopedia also features maps and diagrams of the ghetto areas, appended to the relevant entry. Some of the illustrations display the frequent changes the ghetto area underwent, such as in Kovno, whose area was drawn in real time by the Bauhaus artist Fritz Gadiel.

### A Personal View

An analysis of Jewish life in the ghettos would not be complete without exploring their day-to-day lives and spiritual world. The encyclopedia presents articles that characterized the daily routine of the ghetto inhabitants, such as the yellow patch or the labor and ration cards, alongside the artistic works and drawings they created in the nadir of those darkest days. Likewise, excerpts from the extensive literature written by ghetto residents provide a personal and human soundtrack to the formal texts, and as a small window on the pulse of life in the ghetto. As Egon Redlich, Terezin ghetto resident, expressed in his diary: “My God, what a life! Multi-shaded, horrible, filled with contrasts and flowing rapidly... a cabaret performance on the one hand and alongside it dying old men... problems with disinfectant, eradicating lice infestations, manufacturing beds – a colorful mosaic of life and death.”

*Publication of the new Encyclopedia was made possible through the support of the Claims Conference, the Lisa and Norbert Schechter Fund and the Tema and Shlomo Kravitz (z”l) Fund.*

The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust may be ordered at:  
Tel: +9722-644 3511, Fax: +9722-644 3509,  
[publications.marketing@yadvashem.org.il](mailto:publications.marketing@yadvashem.org.il)  
To order from the online bookstore:  
[www.ecom.gov.il/YadVashem](http://www.ecom.gov.il/YadVashem)

*The author is Project Manager at the International Institute for Holocaust Research.*

# Different Perspectives



## Documentation of the Shoah

Dr. David Silberklang

■ “[W]hat was or is your own innermost intention that you were pursuing? Whom do you think you are serving in this way: Historical truth? Justice? The present or the future of the German or the Jewish people? Or do you wish to prove specifically to the latter that it isn’t worthy or doesn’t have the right to exist as a nation among the nations?”

(Leni Yahil to Hannah Arendt, March 7, 1963)

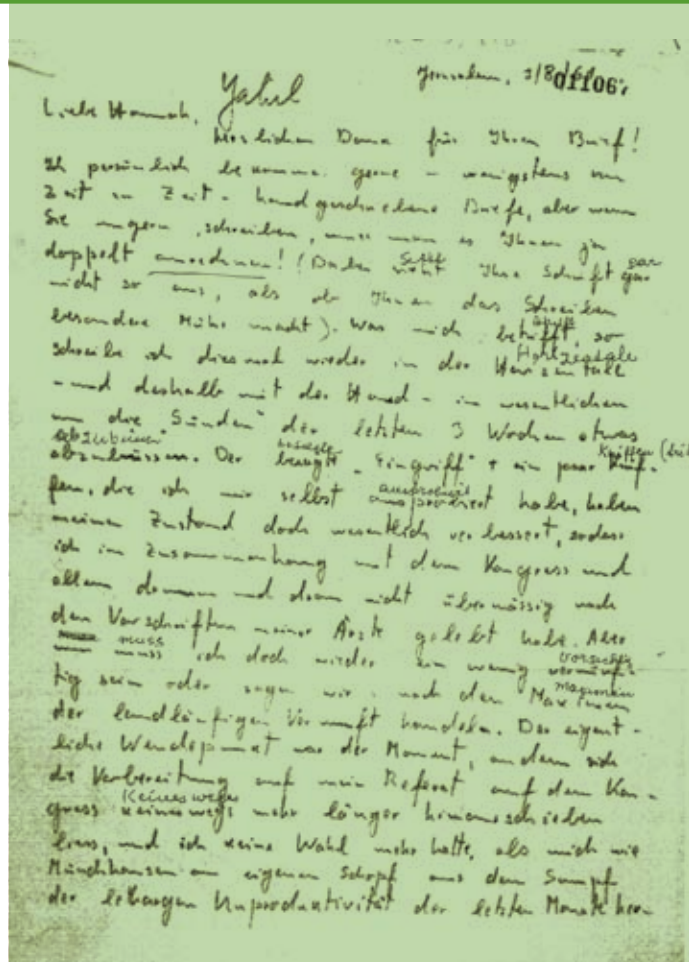


The Jerusalem trial of SS officer Adolf Eichmann was a milestone in the discussion and analysis of the Holocaust. The above quotation from a letter written by historian Leni Yahil to political philosopher Hannah

Arendt reflects the debate that ensued over two very different historiographical approaches: Arendt’s theses regarding “the banality of evil” and the cooperation of the Jews in their own destruction; and Yahil’s later work, inspired by the public controversy surrounding Arendt’s book, in which she sought to return to the victims their human face, which she felt both the Nazis had denied and Arendt’s misguided analysis had failed to appreciate.

Multiple perspectives can confuse, but they can also enrich our understanding of this most complex event

*Yad Vashem Studies* volume 37, no. 2 highlights this dispute, bringing different types of documents that give voice to the two perspectives: the 1943-44 diary of Ferenc Szálasi, the racist antisemitic leader of the Hungarian Arrow Cross Party, who seized power in October 1944 and murdered tens of thousands of Jews; and the February 1944 testimony of Cecile Klein-



■ Letter from Leni Yahil to Hannah Arendt, August 1961. Yad Vashem Archives

Hechel, a Holocaust survivor who recorded her harrowing story shortly after illegally crossing the border from France to Switzerland. The opposing perspectives are echoed in the 1960s correspondence between Yahil and Arendt on the Eichmann trial, the Jewish People, and the State of Israel.

Multiple perspectives can confuse, but they can also enrich our understanding of this most complex event. Szálasi’s diary reveals the thoughts of a self-important, raging racist antisemite. The reading can be chilling. Through the diary we can peek into the mind of a notorious murderer, and the severe dilemmas the Jews faced. Cecile Klein-Hechel represents the human face that Yahil sought to restore. Succeeding in saving her small son

during her brave border crossing, Klein-Hechel’s story provides insight into the struggles and determination of Jews trying to survive the Shoah, as well as into the attitudes of the French, Italians, Germans and Swiss towards the desperate Jews trying to save their own lives.

As important as these two documents are in themselves, they also shed light on the Yahil-Arendt exchanges. The two women’s friendship, which began when Arendt came to Israel for the trial, foundered over Arendt’s articles in *The New Yorker*, as well as in her book, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Study in the Banality of Evil*. The ideology espoused by Szálasi and the determination of Klein-Hechel to rescue her little boy from the

implementers of an ideologically based murder policy inform the Yahil-Arendt debate. Was Szálasi banal? Was his ideology not to be taken seriously? Was the murder that he advocated and implemented predictable? Can Klein-Hechel’s determined flight be reduced to a reflection of the debased state in which the Jews found themselves?

Arendt’s theses continue to influence some scholars, and the early dispute with Yahil is enlightening. These unusual documents and their perspectives on the Shoah do not provide pat answers to understand the event, but they do provide insight and much food for thought.

The author is Editor-in-Chief of *Yad Vashem Studies*.



## News from the Visual Center

By Liat Benhabib and Mimi Ash

### Special Screenings

■ The Visual Center held a preview of *Saviors in the Night* (Germany/France 2008), at the Jerusalem Cinematheque on 30 September 2009. The recently released feature, directed by Dutch-Jewish filmmaker Ludi Boeken, is based on the memoirs of Marga Spiegel. Spiegel, a Holocaust survivor from Westphalia, Germany, found shelter for herself, her husband Mane and their daughter Karin in the homes of local Christian farmers. Spiegel, who is now 97, and Annie Richter-Aschoff were the evening's honored guests. Richter-Aschoff's parents were among those who hid the Spiegel family, and were later recognized as Righteous Among the Nations.

■ On 21 October 2009, Yad Vashem hosted a large delegation of members of OBI (The Association of Belgian Immigrants in Israel) and JOBI (The Association of Young Belgian Immigrants in Israel), who met with Righteous Among the Nations Andrée Geulen and Israeli Government Minister Yossi Peled at a special screening of *Les enfants sans ombre* (Children Without a Shadow). The documentary film, directed by Bernard Balteau and produced by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne, tells the story of Professor Shaul Harel, a prominent Tel Aviv pediatric neurologist, who was hidden from the Nazis during WWII, together with other Belgian Jewish children, through the efforts of the

Jewish and Belgian underground movements. The screening completed an emotional day that included a guided tour of the Holocaust History Museum and other sites at Yad Vashem.

### Jewish Film Festival

■ The Yad Vashem Visual Center recently co-sponsored special screenings of Holocaust-related films at the Eleventh Annual Jewish Film Festival, held at the Jerusalem Cinematheque during Chanukah (December 2009).

Sasha Kleinman of the Jerusalem Cinematheque-Israel Film Archive introduced *The Oppenheim Family* (USSR, 1938), Grigori Roshal's dramatic adaptation of Lion Feuchtwanger's prophetic novel *The Oppermanns* (1933), a tragic tale of the downfall of a prominent Jewish family in Nazi Germany. The screening was made possible by a special donation of a restored copy of the film by the Mosfilm archives.

Director Artur Wiecek's documentary *Commandant Edelman* sketches a portrait of internationally renowned Marek Edelman, one of the commanders of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, who passed away at the age of 90 in October 2009. The screening was followed by a question and answer session with Simcha ("Kazik") Rotem, one of the most prominent members of the Jewish Fighting Organization in the Warsaw ghetto, who was interviewed in the film.



■ Actress Millie Perkins watches *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959) at the Yad Vashem Visual Center

A special symposium was held in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of George Stevens' classic film, *The Diary of Anne Frank* (USA, 1959). The speakers were Dr. Foster Hirsch, Professor of Film at Brooklyn College and Stevens' biographer; Dr. Robert Rozett, Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries; poet Gabriel Levin; and Professor Sidra Ezrahi of the Hebrew University. After the film was screened in a cinemascope version, Millie Perkins, the actress who portrayed Anne in the film, shared her experiences of the filming process with the audience. The film is part of Yad Vashem's digitized collection of Holocaust-related films.

Liat Benhabib is Director of the Visual Center. Mimi Ash is the Center's Acquisition and Projects Coordinator.

## Letters from Forced Labor Camp Discovered after Women's Exhibition Displayed in Australia

■ On 18 October, the Yad Vashem traveling exhibition "Spots of Light: To Be a Woman in the Holocaust" was launched at the Jewish Holocaust Centre in Melbourne, Australia. The 300 guests were addressed by leading television reporter and journalist Jana Wendt, as well as by Fay Eichenbaum, who gave a special presentation in tribute to her late mother, Holocaust survivor Regina Honigman, whose diary is featured in the exhibition. The diary features descriptions of Honigman's experiences in the camp, her longings for freedom and her family, and a Passover



■ Local curator Jayne Josem, survivor Sarah Saaroni and Fay Eichenbaum, daughter of Regina Honigman, at the "Spots of Light" traveling exhibition in Melbourne

*Hagaddah* inscribed entirely from memory.

Following the opening of the exhibition, Eichenbaum contacted its curator, Yad Vashem Museums Division Director Yehudit Inbar, to tell her of her unique collection of some 75 letters and postcards her mother received during the Holocaust whilst in the Gabersdorf forced labor camp. Many of the correspondences were written in code for fear of reprisals against their recipients. Eichenbaum's family in Jerusalem is planning to deliver the letters and postcards to Yad Vashem for further examination.

## Names Database: Cousins reunite 64 years after Shoah

Deborah Berman

■ Veronica Zer (née Rudas) last saw her second cousin Lili Reiter in 1945 when she returned to Hungary after surviving Auschwitz, where her mother and younger sister had perished. The two cousins lost touch with one another soon after, when they went their separate ways to rebuild their lives.

This summer, volunteers from Yad Vashem's Shoah Victims' Names Recovery Project went to help survivors at the Bayit B'Lev nursing home in Jerusalem fill out Pages of Testimony commemorating their loved ones killed in the Holocaust. Zer, 81, told the staff that she wished to fill out Pages for her cousins from the Reiter family. Searching the Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, they discovered that

Livia Prince, formerly Lili Reiter, had filled out Pages of Testimony for her parents, Viktor and Iren, and for her sister, Agnes, in 2006. The volunteers showed the Pages of Testimony to Zer, who was overjoyed to discover her cousin's address in Toronto. The two spoke by phone soon after.

In November, Livia Prince flew from Toronto to Israel to meet her cousin. Holding hands, they visited Yad Vashem's Hall of Names, Hall of Remembrance and Valley of the Communities, where they lit a memorial candle. "For me, this is closure," Livia said. "Not that there will ever be complete closure... but this is our history, and now we have to talk about it, and fast."



■ Survivors Veronica Zer of Jerusalem (left) and Livia Prince of Toronto in the Valley of the Communities. The two cousins last saw each other in 1945.

## New on [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org) Dana Porath

### Anonymous No Longer

■ Since the Holocaust History Museum was inaugurated in 2005, survivors and individuals have come forward and identified themselves, their relatives and their acquaintances in the photographs on display. In keeping with Yad Vashem's philosophy of telling the story of the individual victim and redeeming their identities, this new site restores the names of those previously anonymous people, including multiple identifications.



### Heartstrings: Music of the Holocaust



■ The songs created during the Holocaust in the ghettos, camps and partisan groups tell the stories of individuals, groups and communities; they were a source of unity and comfort, and later, of documentation and remembrance.

This online exhibition features twenty songs from the Yad Vashem archives all in the original Yiddish, including street entertainment of the Lodz and Kovno ghettos, professional popular music culture of the Yiddish theater in the Vilna Ghetto, and songs of the Vilna partisans. The prophetic song "Es Brent" (Our Town Burns), performed in the ghettos and camps, is also featured, as well as two songs written after the Holocaust that portray the mood and ideology of the survivors.

"Heartstrings" is supported by the Claims Conference.

### 19 km from Auschwitz: The Story of Trzebinia

■ On the eve of WWII, 512 Jewish families – 1,900 people – lived in Trzebinia, Poland, a community bubbling with Chassidic life and Torah learning, Zionism and a pioneering spirit, political parties and youth movements. After the war, only 270 Jews from Trzebinia remained alive.

"19 km from Auschwitz" is the first in a series of exhibitions that will focus on lesser



known communities: their world before the Holocaust, their fate during the war years, and the subsequent efforts to remember and commemorate the communities and those who perished.

"19 km from Auschwitz" is supported by the Claims Conference.

The author is Director of Yad Vashem's Internet Department.



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## RECENT VISITS TO YAD VASHEM

Over the months of October, November and December 2009, Yad Vashem conducted some 200 guided tours for over 2,500 official visitors from Israel and abroad. These guests included heads of government, business leaders, journalists, Holocaust museum directors, mayors and actors. Following are a small selection of our honored guests over the past three months:



■ **Prime Minister of Spain Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero** (third from right) visited Yad Vashem on 15 October. He was accompanied by Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Moratinos, Israel Education Minister Gideon Saar, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau and President of the Spanish Society for Yad Vashem Isaac Querub, and guided by Yad Vashem historian Dr. Avraham Milgram (right).



■ **Costa Rican President Dr. Oscar Rafael de Jesus Arias Sanchez** (left) toured the Holocaust History Museum on 29 November, guided by Director of the Hall of Names Alexander Avraham (right).



■ **Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Victor Zubkov** (left) visited Yad Vashem on 30 September, and was guided by Dr. Aharon Shneyer (right) from the Hall of Names.



■ **President of the Republic of Croatia Stjepan Mesić** (center) visited Yad Vashem on 20 October and toured the Holocaust History Museum, guided by Dr. David Silberklang, Editor-in-Chief of *Yad Vashem Studies* (right).



■ During his visit to Yad Vashem on 20 October, **President of the Republic of Macedonia Gjorge Ivanov** (right) was guided by Director of the Yad Vashem Libraries, Dr. Robert Rozett (left).



■ **Foreign Minister of Germany Dr. Guido Westerwelle** visited Yad Vashem on 23 November. After a tour of the Holocaust History Museum, the Foreign Minister laid a wreath in memory of the six million Jews murdered in the *Shoah*, in the presence of (left to right) Charlotte Knobloch, head of the German Jewish Council; Avner Shalev, Chairman of Yad Vashem; and H.E. Dr. Harald Kindermann, German Ambassador to Israel.

■ **Foreign Minister of Lithuania Vygaudas Usackas** visited Yad Vashem on 17 December and toured the Holocaust History Museum, guided by Dr. Irit Abramski of the International School for Holocaust



Studies. During his visit, Minister Usackas awarded the President's Medal for Merits to Lithuania to Katya Gusarov of the Department of the Righteous Among the Nations for her work in gathering information regarding the cases of Lithuanian rescuers.



■ On 21 October, the **US Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Susan Rice** (center), was guided through the Holocaust History Museum by Deputy Director of the Museums Division and Senior Art Curator Yehudit Shendar (left).

■ **Marshal of the Polish Sejm (Lower Chamber of Parliament) Bronislaw Komorowski** toured the Holocaust History Museum on 8 December.



**12 October** ■ Gathering marking 70 years since the destruction of Tomaszow-Lubelski and surrounding communities, with the participation of hundreds of Holocaust survivors, headed by Chairman of the Association Moshe Wertman, and members of the next generations. Dr. David Silberklang, Editor-in-Chief of *Yad Vashem Studies*, addressed the audience.



**18 October** ■ Annual commemoration marking the deportation of Jews from Italy to the death camps. Mirella Nissim (left) presented Edith Grinberger (née Sinkowitz) with a copy of a Book of Genesis dated 1821; the volume was discovered in Nissim's relatives' home, and includes a dedication to Edith's brother Guido Sinkowitz of the town of Fioma (then part of Italy) on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah. Guido died at Auschwitz at the age of 17.



**25 October** ■ Second Generation representative Dep. Inspector-General Nir Mariash laid a wreath at the monument commemorating the death march from Dachau at the **gathering of the survivors of the Landsberg-Kaufering-Dachau camps**. The gathering, held under the theme "The Next Generations," was attended by some 150 survivors, headed by Chairman of the Association Uri Hanoch, and members of the next generations.



## Events: October-December 2009

**29 October** ■ Gathering commemorating 67 years since the destruction of Czestochowa and surrounding communities at the Wohlman Community Hall in Givatayim, in the presence of Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Chairman of the Association Arye Edelist, survivors and members of the next generations.

**4 November** ■ Ceremony honoring the late **Karolina and Mikolaj Kmita of Poland as Righteous Among the Nations**. One of those rescued by the Kmitas was the late survivor Sofia Bronstein. The grandchildren of the Righteous, Jan Kmita and Ewa Nowakowska, traveled from Poland for the event, and accepted the certificate and medal in their grandparents' name. Pictured: Relatives of Sofia Bronstein z"l and the Kmitas in front of the tree planted by Bronstein in 1972 in honor of her rescuers.



**9 November** ■ Prayer service and memorial ceremony marking 71 years since *Kristallnacht*. Participants heard an address by Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council Rabbi Israel Meir Lau in the Yad Vashem Synagogue. That morning, a commemoration was held at Beit Terezin in cooperation with the Organization of Central European Immigrants.

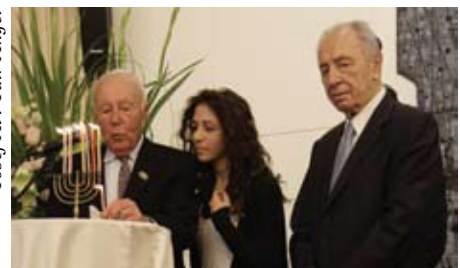
**19 November** ■ Gathering commemorating the Jews of Lwow and surroundings murdered in the Holocaust, and marking 66 years since the liquidation of the Janowska concentration camp on 19 November 1943. In a moving ceremony, an ancient Torah scroll (pictured) from the area of Lwow, located in the possession of a Polish merchant, was presented for safekeeping to Yad Vashem.



**9 December** ■ Gathering commemorating the Jews of Tunisia killed in the Holocaust, marking 67 years since the start of the persecution of Tunisia's Jews. Pictured: Holocaust survivors from Tunisia Yaakov Assel and Nadia Franco recall their memories.



**15 December** ■ President Shimon Peres lit the candles on the fifth night of Chanukah using a Menorah from the Yad Vashem artifacts collection at a **special ceremony at the President's residence saluting Holocaust survivors**. The President was joined by Warsaw ghetto fighter Simcha Rotem and his granddaughter, Tamar. Musical interludes included segments played on the violin of the young partisan Motele, who was killed in the *Shoah*.



Yosef Ari Yair Angel

## Concentration Camp Liberator Honored

■ On 8 November, a delegation from the Minnesota Legislature took part in an emotional visit to Yad Vashem. The group, led by State Rep. Frank Hornstein, included State Rep. Bernie



Lieder, who as part of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Division of the US Army was among those who liberated the Gardelegen concentration camp. In addition to visiting the Holocaust History Museum and Children's Memorial, Rep. Lieder was honored with the privilege of rekindling the eternal flame and laying a wreath at a special ceremony in the Hall of Remembrance.



# Friends Worldwide

## USA

■ Close to 1,000 people attended the **American Society for Yad Vashem** Annual Tribute Dinner on 8 November 2009, with the theme: "Whoever Saves a Life, Saves Humanity." This year's guest speaker was Israel's Minister of Social Affairs and Services, the Hon. **Isaac Herzog**, and honorees were award-winning actress **Tovah Feldshuh** and Holocaust survivor and educator **Fanya Gottesfeld Heller**. American Society Chairman **Eli Zborowski** acknowledged "these outstanding community leaders for their commitment to the noble cause of Remembrance."



Left to right: 2009 Dinner Chair and Chair of the Young Leadership Associates **Caroline Massel**, Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev**, Tovah Feldshuh, **Elizabeth** and **Eli Zborowski**



Left to right: **Natasha Hanina**, **Dr. Jacqueline Heller**, **Miriam Hanina**, Fanya Gottesfeld Heller, **Avner Shalev**, **Eli Zborowski**, **Ben Heller**

■ Yad Vashem Guardian **J. B. Pritzker** (center) visited Yad Vashem with the heads of the new Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in October 2009. They were accompanied by **American Society for Yad Vashem's** Director of Development **Shraga Mekel** (left).

During his visit, Chairman of the Directorate **Avner Shalev** (right) showed Mr. Pritzker the building site of the International Seminars Wing, towards which the J. B. and M. K. Pritzker Family Foundation generously donated.



■ Yad Vashem mourns the passing of **George Bass, z"l**, and extends its sincerest condolences to his wife **Anna**. May she be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

■ Members of the Board of Directors of the Jim Joseph Foundation, including (from right) **Jack** and **Renee Slomovic** and **Dvora Joseph**, toured the Holocaust History Museum and Yad Vashem campus. Holocaust survivor Jack Slomovic shared his memories with family members (pictured) during the tour.



■ During the visit of the extended Sutton family to Yad Vashem, a dedication ceremony was held honoring the Ma'ale Hazikaron, which the Middlegate Companies generously endowed in memory of **Esther Verdiger**, daughter of Holocaust survivors **Shmuel** and **Fayge Fryde**. The Sutton family also celebrated the bar mitzvah of **Miro Sutton** in the Yad Vashem Synagogue.



■ **Joyce** and **Lee Neibart** recently toured the Yad Vashem campus.



■ **Leon Wagner** (left) recently visited Yad Vashem together with **Leesa Shapiro** (second from left), **Renee**, **Roni** and **Myles Willett**, and **Helene Shapiro** (right).



# Friends Worldwide

## CANADA

■ Yad Vashem Builders **Will** and **Linda Hechter** were given a personalized tour of the Holocaust History Museum during their visit in December. In addition to his generous support, Mr. Hechter recently bestowed to Yad Vashem a unique photo album of the Nuremberg trials. The album is currently on display in the Museum.



■ The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem recently hosted Former Mossad Director **Efraim Halevy** in Toronto for several exclusive events for the Society's top supporters and the Toronto community to raise support for Yad Vashem's educational initiatives. Left to right: Efraim Halevy, Canadian Society National Chair **Fran Sonshine**, CEO of the IICC and IDF Brigadier General **David Tzur**, Canadian Society Executive Director **Yaron Ashkenazi**, Israeli Consul General to Canada **Amir R. Gissin**



## UK

■ During their tailor-made three-day visit to Yad Vashem in October, the Board of Trustees of the **British Friends of Yad Vashem** toured the Valley of the Communities and attended the launch of "The World that Was," a multimedia presentation of Jewish life in Europe before the Holocaust, which the British Friends endowed. Member of the Board of Trustees **Hannah Loftus** (center) and Chairman of the Board **Brian Markeson** (second from right) were presented with a certificate by Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council **Rabbi Israel Meir Lau** (second from left), accompanied by Director of the English Speaking Desk **David Metzler** (left) and Managing Director of the International Relations Division **Shaya Ben Yehuda** (right).



■ Yad Vashem mourns the passing of Yad Vashem Builder and dear friend **Simon Reiss, z"l**, who was honored with the title of Life President of the Yad Vashem UK Foundation. He was recently presented with the Yad Vashem Key as a token of appreciation for his hard work and dedication to Holocaust Remembrance.



## AUSTRALIA

■ **Frank Lowy** and his wife **Shirley** came for a special tour of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in December, guided by **Guy Shemer** (left) and accompanied by Yad Vashem Chairman **Avner Shalev** (right).



■ **Greg Rosshandler** (left) of Melbourne, the generous donor (with **Harry Perelberg**) of the new "Architecture of Murder" exhibition (see pp. 2-3), joined Director of Yad Vashem's Archives **Dr. Haim Gertner** to view the Auschwitz blueprints in the vaults of the Archives before their display at Yad Vashem.



## AUSTRIA / GERMANY

■ Yad Vashem's traveling exhibitions continue to be shown with sustained success throughout the German-speaking countries, thanks to the tireless endeavors of Yad Vashem's Friends Societies. The "No Child's Play" exhibition, dealing with children and teenagers during the Holocaust, was on display in Norden, Germany, as well as in numerous Austrian cities, most recently in the Austrian city of Klagenfurt.

The exhibition "Private Tolkatchev at the Gates of Hell," displaying drawings by Zinovii Tolkatchev, a soldier who participated in the Red Army liberations of Auschwitz and Majdanek, was displayed in September and October at the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen, and in November in Osnabrück, Germany, in cooperation with the University of Osnabrück.





## HOLLAND

■ During their visit to Yad Vashem on 29 October, Yad Vashem friend and Benefactor **Paul Baan** (center), his wife **Mineke** and other members of their family were accompanied by **Cecile Erez Bliliouis**, Representative of the Noaber Foundation, Israel. They were greeted by Director of the French, Benelux and Italian Desk **Miry Gross** (far left) as well as by Director of the International Relations Division **Shaya Ben Yehuda** and Yad Vashem CIO **Michael Lieber**.



## VENEZUELA

■ During their tour of Yad Vashem, **Perla Sultan** and **Samuel Akinin** visited the Garden of the Righteous Among the Nations.



## MÉXICO

■ **David Sitt** (third from left), his wife **Sharon** (second from left), his mother **Estrella Sitt** (left), and his sisters **Raquel** (right) and **Esther** (third from right) were joined by **Shaya Ben Yehuda**, Managing Director of the International Relations Division (second from right) during the unveiling of the plaque in David's honor.



## SPAIN

■ President of the **Spanish Association for Yad Vashem Isaac Querub** (left) and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council **Rabbi Israel Meir Lau** (right) accompanied Spanish Prime Minister **Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero** (center) during his visit to Yad Vashem on 15 October.



## CHRISTIAN DESK

■ In October 2009, Director of the **Christian Friends of Yad Vashem Dr. Susanna Kokkonen** visited Canada as a guest of ICEJ (International Christian Embassy Jerusalem) Canada during its national Holocaust Educational Week. Dr. Kokkonen spoke at Yad Vashem events in Halifax and Toronto. Left to right, at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church: **Rev. Peter Ma**, ICEJ National Director **Donna Holbrook**, Dr. Susanna Kokkonen, **Rev. Janet Ryu Chan**



■ In November 2009, Dr. Susanna Kokkonen attended Yad Vashem events in churches and interfaith groups in the US. Left to right, at the St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church in Brooklyn: Yad Vashem international seminar graduate **Prezemek Murczkiewicz**, **Father Mariano Cisco**, Dr. Susanna Kokkonen



■ During the Feast of Tabernacles, organized annually over Succot by ICEJ, the **Christian Friends of Yad Vashem** hosted guests from all over the world. Many of the groups focused on the legacy of the Righteous Among the Nations. Pictured: Christian group from Bolivia led by National Director **Alberto Magno**, in front of their "adopted" tree planted in honor of Italian priest and Righteous Among the Nations **Don Arrigo Beccari**



## Yad Vashem Needs Your Support!

In these difficult times of financial uncertainty and a worrying rise in antisemitism around the world, Yad Vashem is redoubling its efforts to commemorate the Holocaust, disseminate its universal implications and strengthen Jewish continuity. Yad Vashem is deeply grateful for your generosity in supporting its vital work, and welcomes both new friends and established supporters as partners in our shared mission.

■ To make tax deductible donations:

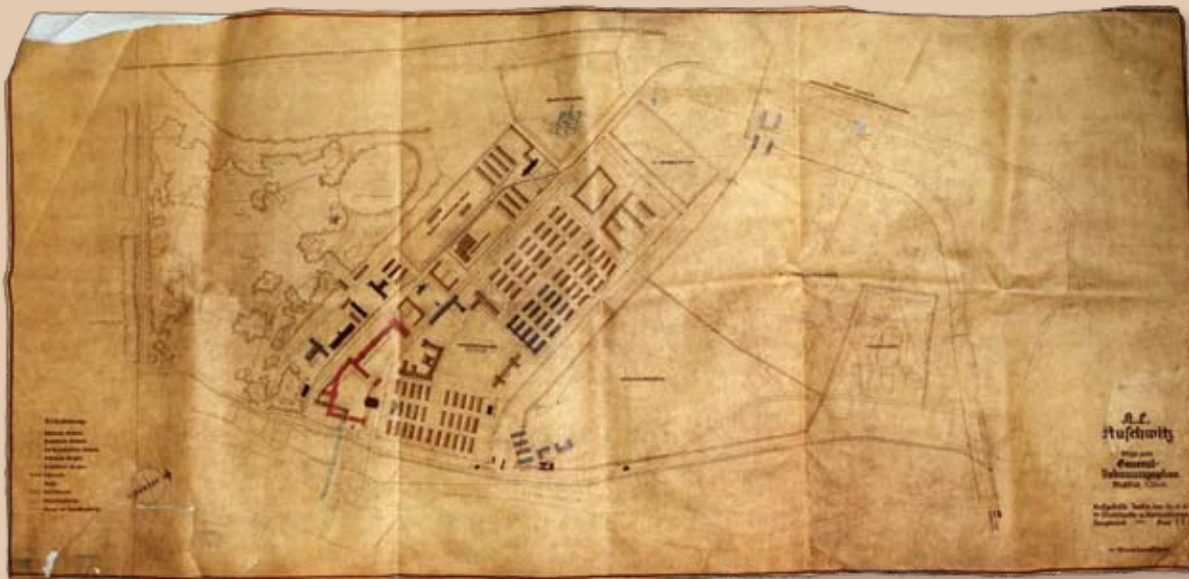
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6 Bloomsbury Square  
London, WC1A 2LP  
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■ For information on societies in other countries, or to donate online, please visit: [www.yadvashem.org](http://www.yadvashem.org) and click on "Donate Now."

Donations may also be sent to: International Relations Division, Yad Vashem, PO Box 3477, Jerusalem 91034, Israel.



## Architecture of Murder: The Auschwitz-Birkenau Blueprints (pp. 2-3)



**Yad Vashem**

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes'  
Remembrance Authority



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