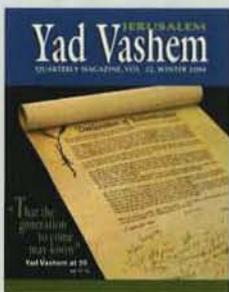


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It is hard to believe that 50 years have passed since the establishment of Yad Vashem: hard for the survivors who remember the *Shoah* daily, and hard for the next generations to whom those terrible events are a world away.

Yad Vashem opened its Jubilee Year by accentuating both past achievements and future challenges (pp. 10-13). With antisemitism gaining momentum worldwide, it is imperative we redouble our efforts in Holocaust education, spreading the message of tolerance and respect (p. 2). The Council of Europe's forum at Yad Vashem on educating to prevent crimes against humanity is a small but significant step in this direction (pp. 6-7). At the same time, we continue to work towards providing worldwide access to the central database of *Shoah* victims' names (p. 3) in order to remember and memorialize every victim of the Holocaust.



Cover:
*The Declaration of
 Remembrance*
 (p. 13)

In a European Union survey conducted in November 2003, 59 percent of respondents named Israel as the primary threat to world peace. Additional surveys revealed that 61% of the German population would be happy with less public discussion about the Holocaust; 11% of Italians believed that Jews fabricated the Holocaust, and a remarkable 8% of Italians said they would like to see Jewish citizens leave their country. The findings of these independent surveys were verified in the recent report commissioned by the EU about antisemitism in its midst. The subsequent shelving of the report, which Yad Vashem protested vehemently, indicates the severity and complexity of European antisemitism today.

Combating Antisemitism: Education

Undeniably, the results of these polls illustrate a deep-rooted and broad-based antisemitism bubbling to the surface in Europe. Greek composer and cultural icon Mikis Theodorakis recently added his voice to the chorus, calling the Jewish people "the root of evil." Making Israel and the Jews the archenemy of peace, or the source of all the world's ills, is a new version of the old Nazi mantra: "The Jews are our misfortune"—a staple of Hitler's propaganda, which ultimately led to the horrors of the *Shoah*.

In the late 1990s, the Swedish government—fearful of a growing trend of Holocaust denial in Sweden—published and freely distributed throughout Europe millions of copies of a basic history of the Holocaust. Around the same time, Swedish premier Goran Persson founded the Taskforce for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research. Yet even such significant actions seem unable to overcome the overpowering, demonized image of Israel and the Jews in much of the public mind.

Last October, a Swedish newspaper article highlighted the local spread of a virulent strain of antisemitism imported from the Middle East. In response, Jan Samuelsson, a Swedish professor of comparative religions and an expert on Islam, justified Muslims' hatred of the Jews. Ignoring Israel's unprecedented overtures towards peace or Arab rejectionism of Israel's right to exist, Samuelsson declared that Muslims' adoption of Nazi ideology and the dissemination of the [fabricated] *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, are understandable responses to "the atrocities that the State of Israel conducts against Arabs in the Middle East."

More worrisome than the content of Samuelsson's tendentious response, is that it was published in the same newspaper as the original article. Such 'evenhandedness' and the inability to differentiate between a thoughtful article and a hateful screed is commonplace in European media. The practice of granting equal time in the supposed name of fairness, without delving into the contexts of thorny, deeply rooted problems, has nurtured much of the anti-Israel and anti-Jewish bias now so prevalent throughout the continent. To people like Samuelsson, as is implicit in his comments, even suicide bombings of innocent civilians may be justified as reactions to Israel's 'devilish' acts.

But demonization of the Jews is not just a European phenomenon—it is already accepted practice in large parts of the world. The infamous comments made by former Malaysian Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir Mohamed at the recent summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference—in which he stated: "...today the Jews rule this world by proxy. They get others to fight and die for them"—went unchallenged, and were even praised, by delegates from the 57 OIC members states present. Insofar as attitudes toward Jews are often a litmus test for social tolerance, this entrenched and growing hatred poses an extremely serious threat to world democracy.

While these deplorable attitudes may not be sufficient grounds for the perpetration of another Holocaust, history has shown us they are certainly prerequisites for massive violence against Jews and others. The torching of a Jewish high school in France in November and the shocking bombing of two Turkish synagogues during Sabbath morning services, followed by the bombing of the British consulate and a British-based bank, demonstrate clearly that violence has gone well beyond mere rhetoric.

Antisemitism must be combated with serious and widespread education about the Holocaust. Unfortunately, traditional modes of education have yet to make a serious dent. The world media must make every effort to break through two-dimensional stereotypical representations of Israel and the Jews through serious education, and by replacing simplistic presentations with those that address the complexities that are integral to our world. For the past half century, Yad Vashem has been at the forefront of Holocaust education and, through its multi-language seminars, educational materials and online information, has played a significant role in the battle against antisemitism in all its guises. Yad Vashem stands ready to further any serious educational initiatives to combat the forces of hatred so reminiscent of those that led to the Holocaust.

“What a treasure trove... I will be sending more Pages [of Testimony] in as soon as possible.”

“My most successful discovery was a... *chazan* [cantor] at the *Adass Yisroel* congregation in Berlin, born in Latvia in 1853—thus confirming my late grandmother’s claim... I have been looking for this for 30 years and your site solved it.”

Within the next few months, Yad Vashem hopes to meet the tremendous challenge of uploading its database of *Shoah* victims’ names onto the Internet. This uniquely interactive website will enable Yad Vashem to advance one of the important missions in its 50-year history: to gather information about—and thus memorialize—every man, woman and child murdered by the Nazis and their accomplices during the *Shoah*. In turn, the site will be used by, and benefit, the community of those very people who contributed to its formation: the relatives, friends, and acquaintances of the six million Holocaust victims.



Advancing Towards Online Access: Shoah Victims’ Names Database

This crucial project is being supported by businessman and hi-tech entrepreneur Yossie Hollander. Recently, Chief Judge Edward Korman of the Eastern district of New York, who is responsible for distributing funds from the settlement agreement with the Swiss banks, announced his support of uploading the *Shoah* Victims’ Names Database as part of a more extensive list of all the victims of the Nazi regime. Attorney Judah Gribetz, the court-appointed representative supervising the compensation process, is in frequent contact with Yad Vashem in order to actualize Judge Korman’s decision.

Since its inception, Yad Vashem has been gathering names and biographical details of Holocaust victims via firsthand testimony of relatives and witnesses, documented lists, and (primarily) through the hundreds of thousands of Pages of Testimony submitted to the Hall of Names. With approximately four million records of names digitized to date, this database is the largest resource of its kind, and has been accessible to the general public at Yad Vashem for almost four years.

The importance of making the database available on the Internet cannot be underestimated. As the generation of Holocaust survivors and witnesses is drawing to an end, this is the last chance to collect names of Holocaust victims. Once online, this massive database will for the first time become accessible to any person, anywhere in the world. It is hoped that this will encourage those who have not yet had the opportunity to visit Yad Vashem to check if the names of their dear ones are memorialized. If not, they will be able to fill out Pages of Testimony online, which will then be added to the database.

Four pilot projects have allowed the development team to further fine-tune the site. The projects gave specific groups of people online access to the database for a limited period of time: the first, a group of high school students in Jerusalem; the second, attendants of the 23rd International Conference on Jewish Genealogy held last July in Washington, D.C.; the third, United Jewish Communities General Assembly participants in Jerusalem (November); and the fourth, participants in the Israel Business Forum organized by the Globes Group (December). After the Washington conference, Gary Mokotoff, a major figure in the Jewish

or friends who perished during the *Shoah* does bring some form of closure. However, what was most rewarding for us, and those who conducted the searches, was that many of them found relatives—first cousins, uncles, great-aunts—who had submitted Pages of Testimony and were still alive. With the aid of mobile phones, contact between the families were made almost instantaneously; the sheer joy and overwhelming gratitude of those people will remain with me for a long time.”

In all four projects, the public succeeded in accessing and navigating the database with ease. This was, in large part, due to the unique search system developed at Yad Vashem—the most powerful of its type in the world—which enables highly accurate retrieval of information, beyond standard phonetical searches. The system takes into account alternative names of people and places, which can result from use of multiple languages, historical changes, and cultural traditions in the source testimonies and documents. Indeed, a major challenge for members of staff working in the Hall of Names was transliterating the information recorded in Hebrew on Pages of Testimony into Latin characters. This is no simple task: the same three Hebrew letters written without vowels, for example, can actually spell a few different



UJC Major Gifts Chairman and American Society for Yad Vashem Executive Committee member Mark Wilf searches the *Shoah* Victims’ Names Database at the GA.

Genealogy world, wrote in his widely distributed newsletter: “The system is very well thought out... I would be happy if one-tenth of the software I used was of the quality that existed in the preliminary version of what Yad Vashem has developed.”

Dana Porath, Content Manager of Yad Vashem’s website, assisted GA participants to surf the new site. She estimated that out of some 900 searches, an astonishing 80 percent resulted in a positive find. “Many of the participants were pretty skeptical about discovering a previously unknown relative in the database, so they were often amazed at what they found. Of course, to identify relatives

names. Accurate transliteration is ensured through close cooperation between Yad Vashem’s experts in geography and linguistics and data systems specialists.

In addition, Yad Vashem’s International School of Holocaust Studies is currently developing a set of online educational tools around the database. The School will use the information on the website to produce specialized educational programs in order to impart to future generations the meaning of the *Shoah* and the individual experiences of its victims.

The website will, therefore, provide access to the years of accumulated experience and knowledge available at Yad Vashem. In the words of Alexander Avraham, Director of the Hall of Names: “The technological tools are just that—tools to enable one to glance at a Page of Testimony for a beloved father written by a survivor in the 1950s, tools to enhance our ability to record the recollections of an eighty-year-old lady, tools that put together all those bits and pieces of memories and help us to see the vivid image of those individual innocents who were murdered.”

The author is Deputy Director of Reference and Information Services Unit and Head of Data Processing in the Hall of Names

At the end of October 2003, the International Institute for Holocaust Research at Yad Vashem hosted a four-day workshop entitled: "Re-examining the Past: New Interpretations on Jewish Life in Poland During the Holocaust." Six researchers from Poland were invited to participate: Dariusz Libionka Ph.D., Andrzej Zbikowski Ph.D. and Marcin Urynowicz, from

societies towards the extermination is one of the most crucial questions in Holocaust historiography. However, in Poland it overshadows all other issues, such as the uniqueness of the Holocaust or its



Poland and the Holocaust

A new view on history

the Institute of National Memory in Warsaw; Jolanta Zyndul Ph.D. and Jakub Petelewicz from the Mordechai Anielewicz Center for the Study and Teaching of the History and Culture of Jews in Poland, Warsaw University; and Anna Ziebinska Ph.D. from the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin.

After the workshop, Jolanta Zyndul reflected on what she had gained from her visit, as well as the current position of Polish historiography and research on the Holocaust:

Poland's attitude toward the Holocaust



Dr. Jolanta Zyndul

"Coming to Yad Vashem gave us the chance to compare our studies with those of our Israeli counterparts. We were also able to use the archives in

between workshop sessions, which gave a real boost to my personal research on Poland's Jewish community in the interwar period.

"The lectures of the Polish participants—as well as the discussions held during the workshop—were, for the first time, dominated by the topic of Polish-Jewish relations during World War II. This corresponds with today's Holocaust research in Poland. Two years ago, the debate in Poland over Jedwabne—instigated by Jan T. Gross's *Neighbors*—facilitated a new critical approach to the subject. Until then, Polish research had focused mainly on assistance to Jews in hiding during the war. Today, we are also researching other, less admirable actions of Poles during the Holocaust—blackmailing Jews, informing on them to the German occupiers, and even murdering them.

"Obviously, the attitude of different

interdependence with modernity. It also lacks—in my opinion as an historian—an approach that portrays it as a universal phenomenon where people face situations of extreme choice."

Holocaust Research at Warsaw University

"The Mordechai Anielewicz Center was established in 1990 as part of the Institute of History at Warsaw University, with the cooperation of the Jack Fliderbaum Foundation. It is one of a number of academic centers which focuses on Jewish history in Poland. Three historians—Professor Jerzy Tomaszewski, Anna Michalowska Ph.D., and I—work at the Center, and scholars from home and abroad are invited to give occasional lectures. Professor Israel Gutman, former Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research and current Academic Advisor to Yad Vashem, was one of our guest lecturers.

"The Center leads academic activity in many fields, but concentrates on teaching the history of the Jews in Poland, including the Holocaust. Many history and humanities students attend our courses and seminars: Polish students are generally interested in information about Jews in Poland before WWII; Jewish students want to discover more about their heritage. Study options range from the popular Hebrew and Yiddish courses to doctoral research on Polish Jewry.

"On 8 May 2003—the 60th anniversary of Mordechai Anielewicz's death—the Center organized a Jewish Day at Warsaw University, which was open to the public. Approximately three thousand people attended lectures, film presentations, exhibitions, theater performances and a concert of Jewish music during that remarkable day. I hope the next Jewish Day will raise similar interest, thus ensuring that Polish Jewish history remains at the forefront of discussion and research in our country."

The great challenge in designing the new Holocaust History Museum was meeting the basic perception of the museum curators—to present historical information and personal experiences from the Holocaust, while creating a multi-sensory experience and a sense of identification with the Jewish world that was destroyed. The design of the museum was based on several guiding cornerstones: a chronological-thematic axis presenting the history of the Holocaust according

Facts

to an evolving narrative, while emphasizing the Jewish aspect and personal stories. In addition, the exhibition contains a variety of original artifacts from Yad Vashem's collections, including personal effects, certificates, diaries, oral testimonies, video footage and works of art.

A multi-sensory experience

Aside from providing information, an experiential dimension was integrated into the museum's design, giving visitors an overall impression of the time, place and atmosphere. Unique settings, spaces with varying heights, and different degrees of light accentuate focal points of the unfolding narrative. For example, together with the museum curators' perception of how to present the Warsaw Ghetto, one exhibition gallery is a reconstruction of the ghetto's Leszno Street. Visitors walk through the gallery on original cobblestones, surrounded by sights and sounds of the street produced by personal artifacts, film footage and enlarged photographs of that period.

The exhibition is also presented on several levels, from the general narrative to the personal story. The task was to depict the many individual experiences while considering the visitor's capacity to absorb the wealth of material presented. The design of the exhibition thus uses special materials and colors, enabling visitors to distinguish easily between the levels, and choose the depth they wish to reach within a topic.

The visitors' route

One of the basic guidelines for the museum's design was to create a visitor's route dictated by the evolving narrative, with a beginning, middle and end. A central 180-meter walkway (prism) was built with exhibition galleries on either side. Between the galleries are impassable gaps extending along the breadth of the prism floor. These gaps form a physical obstacle, guiding

the visitor into the adjacent galleries, yet always enabling eye contact with either end of the prism. Displaying items from different events, the gaps symbolize turning points in the Holocaust, and serve as chapter headings for the evolving narrative of the exhibition. The prism is therefore a longitudinal axis of historical memory, crossed by the visitors as they move from one gallery to the next and from one subject to another.

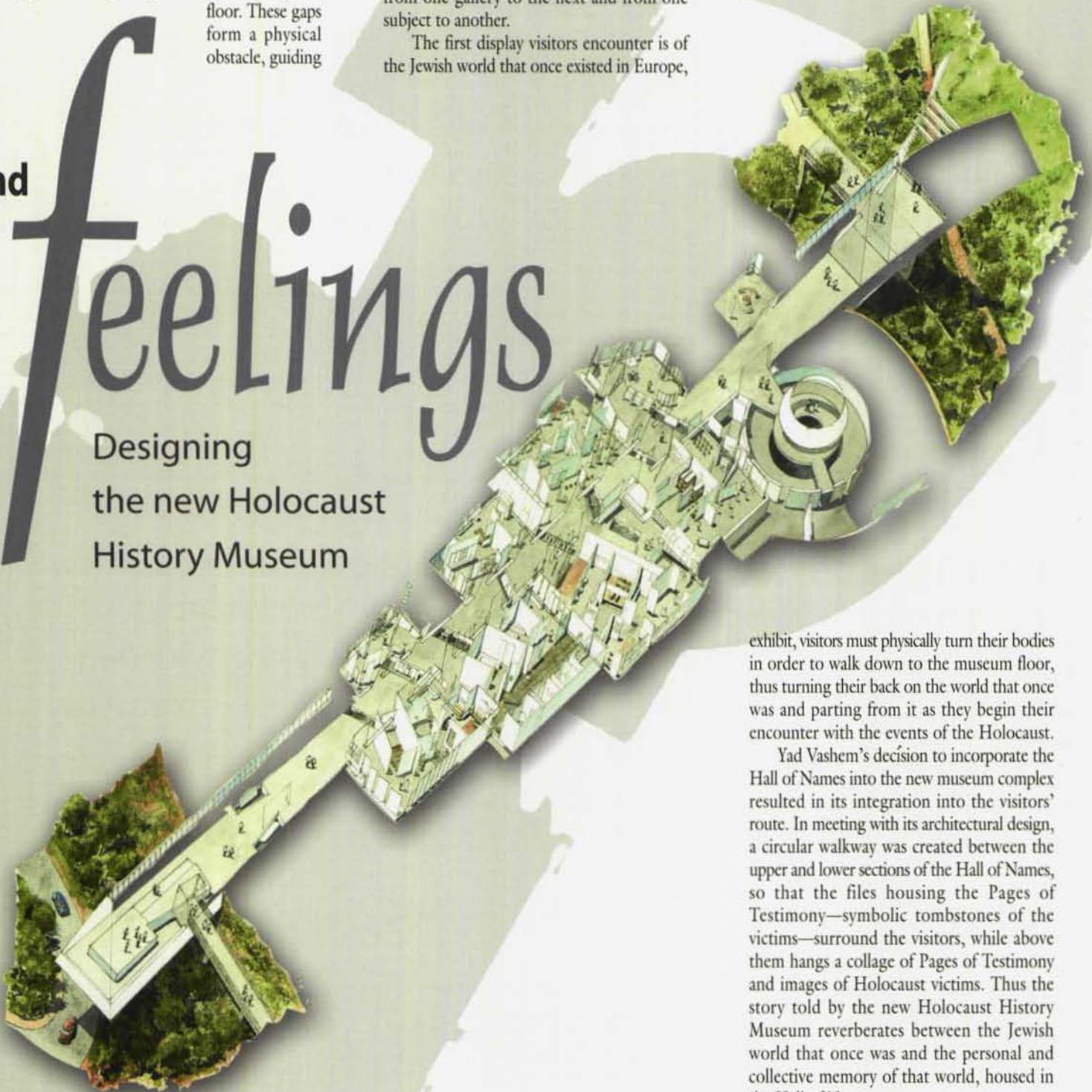
The first display visitors encounter is of the Jewish world that once existed in Europe,

providing an initial acquaintance with the people whose story will later be told. Commissioned from a renowned artist, this large-screen multimedia display presents visitors with an entire world—a vibrant and multifaceted culture of joy and sadness, difficulties and deliberations, exploration and education. After viewing the

and

feelings

Designing
the new Holocaust
History Museum



*The new Holocaust History Museum — view from above
Architectural illustration by Shalom Kweller*

exhibit, visitors must physically turn their bodies in order to walk down to the museum floor, thus turning their back on the world that once was and parting from it as they begin their encounter with the events of the Holocaust.

Yad Vashem's decision to incorporate the Hall of Names into the new museum complex resulted in its integration into the visitors' route. In meeting with its architectural design, a circular walkway was created between the upper and lower sections of the Hall of Names, so that the files housing the Pages of Testimony—symbolic tombstones of the victims—surround the visitors, while above them hangs a collage of Pages of Testimony and images of Holocaust victims. Thus the story told by the new Holocaust History Museum reverberates between the Jewish world that once was and the personal and collective memory of that world, housed in the Hall of Names.

The writer is the designer of the new Holocaust History Museum

“Teaching Remembrance”

The Council of Eur

by Richelle Budd Caplan

Over the last decade, there has been an increasing interest across Europe to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust and crimes against humanity on a number of levels: local, regional, national and within the wider European context. This interest comes despite the growing wave of antisemitic expression on the continent, which has become more pronounced over the past few years. Since the late 1990s, staff at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem have participated in several conferences focusing on teaching and remembering the Holocaust in the 21st century, including those coordinated under the auspices of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, and the Council of Europe.

On 15-21 September 2003—the week Yad Vashem began to mark its Jubilee Year—an international forum organized with the Council of Europe was held for the first time at the

School, as part of the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program (see box p. 7). The Council, located in Strasbourg, France, was founded in 1949 and includes over 40 member states to date. Israel is an observer nation.

Representatives from nine countries—Austria, Croatia, Finland, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom—participated in the forum. They were also invited to attend the Jubilee Year opening event, and were given guided tours of Jerusalem.

The forum was opened by Gabriele Mazza, the Council’s Director of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education, and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate. In his opening remarks, Mazza stated: “Being here, in Israel—and more importantly at Yad Vashem—to hold a forum under the auspices of the Council of Europe’s project ‘Teaching



Council of Europe representatives at Yad Vashem

Remembrance: Education for the Prevention of Crimes Against Humanity’ is more than symbolic. The Council has already held several seminars devoted to the teaching of the Holocaust in various places, but we all know that discussing this very topic here, in Israel, is a very different way of touching the subject.”

Before arriving in Jerusalem, all participants were asked to prepare concise responses to two questions: ‘Why teach the Holocaust in your

First Seminar from Spain

by Ephraim Kaye

From 12-21 September, 2003, the International School for Holocaust Studies held a seminar for 14 Spanish scholars, university lecturers, publishers, writers and journalists. Most had visited Israel before, and appreciated its challenges and accomplishments. Nevertheless, they felt it important to acquire further knowledge in order to combat the current wave of antisemitism and anti-Israeli sentiment in Spain.

The seminar—jointly supported by David and Malke Grodzinsky from Mexico, Ita Eidelman Vaisman from Venezuela, and The Rich Foundation for Education, Culture and Welfare (Switzerland)—was short and intensive, and included discussions between the lecturers and seminar participants on a variety of issues: history, literature (with the participation of author Aharon Appelfeld), psychology and philosophy. “The seminar contributed greatly to my understanding of the Holocaust. Now I am able to hold discussions with anyone who wishes to raise the subject,” noted businessman and editor, José Luis Fernández Gándara.

One of the most moving experiences of the seminar was the presentation of the book,

Country, City, Family (translated into Spanish), by author Amala Einat. The presentation was accompanied by an eyewitness testimonial film relating the journey to Auschwitz by survivor Daniel Hanoch. One participant was so overcome by emotion that he left the room. Daniel Hanoch followed to offer him some comfort.

The concluding session of the seminar took place on Friday evening, at the home of Perla Hazan, Director of the Iberoamerican Desk of Yad Vashem’s International Relations Division, together with Yariv Lapid, Head of the European Desk of Seminars for Educators from Abroad, and course coordinator Ariel Sieferheld. “This seminar both sharpened and deepened my understanding of the tragedy that was the Holocaust,” said José Luis Fernández Gándara. Added journalist Antonio José Chinchetru del Rio: “As far as I am concerned, my visit to Yad Vashem was a turning point in my life. I could never go back to being the person I was before I came.”

The author is Director of Seminars for Educators from Abroad, International School for Holocaust Studies



Helping Survivors tell their story

The German Foundation for Remembrance, Responsibility and the Future is supporting a program at the International School for Holocaust Studies that increases Holocaust survivors’ awareness of the role they play in the remembrance process—while helping them confront their past—by telling their stories. Survivors attend workshops where they learn and practice how to recount their experiences most effectively. They are also taught the best way to relate to various audiences and age groups, including youth seminars in which survivor testimonies play a crucial role.



... e a t Y a d V a s h e m

country?’ and ‘What are the main religious, political, economic, historical, educational and social issues in your country that have direct bearing on your educational work?’ The responses were e-mailed to all the participants, and compiled in a booklet prepared by the School. The issues raised by the questions were varied, and often reflected national concerns: the current upsurge in antisemitism (France); public and media confusion between the terms ‘Holocaust’ and ‘genocide’ (UK); the importance of film, literature and TV in Holocaust education (Italy) as well as visits to authentic sites, such as Mauthausen (Austria); and the role of the Catholic Church during the War (Slovakia). Presentations and discussions included lectures by Yad Vashem staff, as well as Dr. Emil Shufani, principal of a Christian-Arab school in Nazareth and recent recipient of the UNESCO peace education prize. Shufani addressed the forum on a trip he organized for Israeli Arabs and Jews to Auschwitz-Birkenau in May 2003.

During the final session, participants reflected upon their experiences over the week-long forum. Not only had they broadened their knowledge and awareness of various aspects of the Holocaust but, more importantly, they were planning to share what they had learned with colleagues upon their return home. They also expressed thanks for the warm atmosphere of the group, and emphasized that being in Israel had added an important dimension to the seminar. It is hoped that this will be the first in a number of seminars on Holocaust education for European educators held in association with the Council of Europe at Yad Vashem.

The author is Director of the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program, International School for Holocaust Studies

Mourning a Dear Friend

Israel H. Asper (1932-2003) was a strong supporter of Israel, an active leader in Canadian and Jewish community affairs, and a benefactor of Yad Vashem.

In 2002, Yad Vashem’s International School for Holocaust Studies launched the Asper International Holocaust Studies Program through the generous support of the Asper Foundation in Winnipeg, Canada. The program provides Holocaust education-related activities for educators around the world, including a biannual international conference and follow-up forum; seminars for Jewish and non-Jewish educators from English-speaking countries; professional development outreach; and the International Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research.

A well-respected businessman and philanthropist, Israel Asper visited Yad Vashem on a number of occasions, addressing the participants of the Third International Conference on Holocaust and Education in April 2002.

Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, said: “We mourn the loss of our friend Israel Asper, and we extend our deepest condolences to his family. His steadfast devotion to education across the globe about the Holocaust, antisemitism, racism, and human rights is a cornerstone in ensuring that an event like the Holocaust never happens again.”

The Fourth International Conference in Holocaust and Education at Yad Vashem, sponsored by the Asper International Studies Program, will be held 8-11 August 2004, and will include a lecture in memory of Israel H. Asper, *z”l*.



Recent Highlights at the International School for Holocaust Studies

- 11-12 May Work-study programs for Grade 11 pupils in conjunction with the Ministry of Labor
 - 15 May Preparatory day for Israel Police delegation to Poland
 - 22 May* Preparatory day on “Witnesses in Uniform” for IDF delegations to Poland
 - 28-29 May** “Green Leaf” project—preparation of Israeli youth for trips to Poland
 - 7-21 June First-ever seminar for teachers from Lithuania
 - 10 June Study day on “Man in the Holocaust” for senior staff of the IDF Home Front Command
 - 11 June Ministry of Education’s “Seeds of Peace” program: workshop for students traveling to the US
 - 22-25 June*** Training course for Holocaust survivors on how to give testimony to various audiences
 - 30 June – 16 July International summer seminar for English-speaking educators
 - 6-16 July Seminar for Jewish teachers from the FSU
 - 24 July Study day on “Jewish Heroism during the Holocaust” for the Israel Police Legal Advisor’s Department
 - 30 July Preparation day for IDF Headquarters and Command officers visiting Poland
 - 29 July – 13 August Seminar for Jewish educators from North America
 - 3-16 August “Meitar” Seminar—Young Jewish Leadership from the FSU
 - 8-24 September Seminar for educators from Poland
 - 12-21 September First-ever seminar for scholars, publishers, writers and journalists from Spain
 - 30 October – 7 November Seminar for teachers from Nordrhein-Westphalia, Germany
 - 7 November – 4 December Two seminars for educators from Austria
 - 9-14 November Seminar for young politicians from Romania
 - 28 December – 10 January Seminar for educators from Hungary
- Approximately 100 groups from “birthright Israel”—young Jews from the Diaspora who come to strengthen their Jewish identity and affinity with Israel—also participated in workshops and seminars during this period

* Also on 4 June, 2 July, 9 September and 15 October

** Also on 16-17 September

*** Also on 26-30 October

On 13 June 2003, at the conclusion of talks on cooperation between the Romanian government archives and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Romanian government issued the following statement: "The discussions held on this topic have highlighted, in the final analysis, the position of the Romanian government: encouragement of research regarding the Holocaust in Europe

Romanian Education Minister Ecaterina Andronescu. In the letter, Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Directorate of Yad Vashem, maintained that the statement made by the Romanian government was an historical falsity. "If Germany were to have made a distinction similar to that of the Romanian government, it could easily claim that there was no Holocaust in Germany, since the German Jews were systematically killed only once they were deported

that the Holocaust took place in Romania, a statement that—according to the ambassador—was erroneous.

However, the series of alarming statements emanating from Romania did not end there. In an interview with *Ha'aretz* on 25 July, Romanian President Ion Iliescu repeated the previous line of the Romanian government and its representatives: "The Holocaust was not unique to the Jewish population in Europe.



Romania: The Journey

while emphasizing the fact that, within the borders of Romania, there was no Holocaust between 1940-1945."

The statement was harsh, given that Romania was the only ally of Nazi Germany that chose not to send its Jews to extermination camps in Poland; instead they were killed by Romanian armed forces and police in the areas under its control, including occupied Ukrainian territory given to them by Hitler. The statement was all the more shocking as it coincided with the publication of a comprehensive study by Dr. Jean Ancel on the history of the Holocaust in Romania (Yad Vashem, 2003) which proves that 420,000 Jews were murdered in greater Romania and the areas under its control during the Holocaust (240,000 were Romanian citizens and 180,000 were from the Soviet Union; the study was also published in Romanian). Yad Vashem was quick to voice its serious disapproval of this statement.

"If Germany were to have made a distinction similar to that of the Romanian government, it could easily claim that there was no Holocaust in Germany"

In a radio interview on 17 June, Romanian Minister of Culture and the Denominations Razvan Theodorescu supported his government's statement, claiming there had been no Holocaust within the borders of wartime Romania. Yad Vashem responded by sending a strongly worded letter to then

to the death camps in Eastern Europe."

On 29 June, following Shalev's letter, Romania's Ambassador to Israel, Dr. Valeria Mariana Stoica, and State Secretary in the Ministry of Culture and the Denominations, Ion Antonescu, visited Yad Vashem. In a meeting with Shalev, the ambassador reported that she had spoken with Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Năstase, who had reiterated his personal acknowledgement of the historical facts regarding the murder of Romanian Jews during the Holocaust. Prime Minister Năstase had said he would investigate who was responsible for releasing the statement denying

Many others were killed in the same manner, including Poles." He absolved the Romanian people from any responsibility for the murder of Jews that took place in Romania during WWII, adding: "In Romania under the Nazis, Jews and Communists were treated equally."

Following this interview, Yad Vashem reached the conclusion that Holocaust denial in Romania is a deeply rooted phenomenon. A simple condemnation would no longer suffice; some form of action was needed to end Romanian ignorance of the facts, and attempts to avoid responsibility. This time, Avner Shalev wrote to the Romanian president,

What is the Commission's mandate?

Yad Vashem insisted that the scope and topics of the investigation by the Commission would be as broad as possible, and would include all elements pertaining to the Holocaust against Romanian Jewry.

The Commission's letter of appointment states: "... The Commission shall investigate events that took place between December 1937 and May 1945 relating to discrimination, isolation, enclosure, deportation and physical destruction of the Jews of Romania; the Commission shall investigate the persecution of the Gypsies in Romania in 1942-1944; the Commission shall examine the trials that were conducted immediately after World War II (1945-1951) in relation to these events. The Commission's findings shall be based on archives found in Romania, Moldavia, the Ukraine, France, Germany, Israel, Russia, the United States, or any other country... The Commission shall enjoy investigative independence and shall work according to the criteria of academic-scientific research; the Romanian government hereby undertakes to adopt the Commission's report and its conclusions; the Romanian government undertakes to open all of its archives and provide any document needed for the Commission's investigative work."

"The educational aspect of the Commission's mandate is its greatest achievement"

inviting him to establish a commission of historians "so that together we can investigate the historical truth and publish the facts

to Truth

regarding Holocaust-related events in Romania." In his letter, Shalev proposed that the commission include Romanian Holocaust experts, and utilize Romanian and German archival documents, survivor testimony, and Eastern European Holocaust research. Shalev's letter won the support of many other bodies in Israel and abroad; among them the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the American Jewish Committee, B'nai Brith, and Israel's Foreign Ministry.

Less than three months later, on 22 October, President Iliescu officially announced the establishment of an International Historical Commission of Enquiry into the murder of Romania's Jews, to be headed by Nobel Laureate and Vice Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Professor Elie Wiesel. Before departing for Romania, Shalev said: "I congratulate the President of Romania on his courageous decision to confront Romania's past. This is a vital step in the process of building the country's democratic society, and an essential act for strengthening the ties between Romania and the Romanian Jewish community in Israel and abroad." He added: "The fact that Professor Wiesel is heading the Commission gives it special weight and historical significance."

The letter of appointment written by the Romanian president states that the Commission will investigate the Holocaust in Romania in order to ascertain the historical facts, and publish them in Romania and abroad. Members of the

Commission are to include historians and public figures from Israel, the United States, Romania, Germany and France. Dr. Jean Ancel will be one of the five Israeli representatives (see sidebar).

The Romanian government has pledged to disseminate and publish the Commission's findings to the Romanian public using three methods: publication of the Commission's report in Romanian and English; holding conferences, forming discussion groups and posting a full copy of the Commission's report on the Internet informing the public of the report and its conclusions; and, most significant of all according to Dr. Ancel, disseminating and circulating knowledge about the Holocaust of Romanian Jewry in Romania's education system, through teacher training programs and special curricular materials. "The educational aspect of the Commission's mandate is its greatest achievement," notes Dr. Ancel.

In November, Yad Vashem's International School for Holocaust Studies, assisted by the Foreign Ministry, held a weeklong seminar for Romanian politicians to study the Holocaust in Romania and understand its importance for Romania today. The seminar was initiated by the President of Romania; seven young politicians representing various political parties (except for the Fascist "Greater Romania" Party) attended. Leading researchers, including Dr. Ancel, presented lectures and led discussions on Jewish-Romanian relations during the Holocaust and today. The participants also heard testimonies from Romanian Holocaust survivors.

After the seminar, three participants—members of the Social Democratic Party (to which President Iliescu and Prime Minister Năstase belongs)—sent a letter of thanks: "We came to Yad Vashem in order to discover the truth. After hearing the lectures and testimony from survivors, and after seeing the maps and official documents, we became convinced of the historical truth... We must be accountable for our history, both the good and the bad.



"There is a new generation in Romania that wants to free itself of all the lies of the Communist regime"—young Romanian politicians participate in a seminar at Yad Vashem

The Holocaust in Romania was horrific and we are not proud of what happened... We hope you are convinced of our honest and genuine intention to assume responsibility and serve as young ambassadors for the message of peace and friendship."

According to Dr. Jean Ancel, although the establishment of the Commission began with a Romanian slip of the tongue, it marks the beginning of a serious dialogue:

"The establishment of this Commission represents the Romanian government's withdrawal of its painful and unreasonable statements. This is an attempt to



retreat from its previous position and prepare the Romanian people for the Commission's findings—which will determine not whether there was a Holocaust in Romania, but the extent of the Holocaust—and will make the Romanian people aware of what has been hidden from them for so long. I see the establishment of the Commission as an achievement, as a way of both satisfying the Jewish people and telling antisemitic circles that the 'games' are over—and the time has come to recognize this aspect of Romanian history, too."

Dr. Ancel stressed the significance of the Commission's establishment as an official government initiative: "In a country like Romania, which used to be Communist, if the establishment doesn't signal that there is a change, then the people won't accept it so easily. This time it comes from the highest echelon, indicating to the Romanian people that the days of hiding the truth are over, and the time has come to turn the Holocaust into a subject studied in Romania's schools, and to publicize it."

After his lecture to the seminar participants, Dr. Ancel said, "There is a new generation in Romania that wants to free itself of all the lies of the Communist regime. Slowly this truth will trickle down, forming the basis of all their attitudes regarding WWII and the devastation perpetrated against the Jewish people during the Holocaust."

Remembering the Past,

by Leah Goldstein

In September 2003, Yad Vashem marked the beginning of its Jubilee Year. Hundreds of guests came from around the world to partake in a host of new dedications, unique ceremonies and special events. Among the guests and dignitaries from Israel and abroad were the President and Prime Minister of Israel, government ministers, the Chief Rabbi, members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Chairman of the World Jewish Congress, delegations of international Yad Vashem Friends societies, Holocaust survivors and Righteous Among the Nations. Following are some of the highlights of those exceptional events:



Minister Yosef (Tommy) Lapid



David Azrieli (left) opens the new Book and Resource Center, watched by Stephanie Azrieli, Danny Hakim, Danna Azrieli and Naomi Azrieli

"I am proud and grateful to Yad Vashem for giving me the honor of contributing to the establishment of the Book and Resource Center. The Center stores memories of the past, but most of all, it will enable Yad Vashem's visitors to bring the books to life as they read them." **David Azrieli**

On 14 September, the new **Book and Resource Center** was inaugurated in the presence of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, Yosef (Tommy) Lapid MK; donors David and Stephanie Azrieli and family; Menachem Einan, President, Azrieli Group; Chief Rabbi of Israel, Yonah Metzger; Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Professor Szewach Weiss; and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev.

In an official ceremony in the Office of the Speaker of Knesset on 15 September, the Israel Philatelic Service issued two new **commemorative stamps** in honor of Yad Vashem's Jubilee Year. In attendance were: Speaker of the Knesset, Reuven Rivlin MK; Yad Vashem Directorate member, Dov Shilansky; Professor Szewach Weiss; and Chairman and Director-General of the Postal Authority, Yossi Sheli.

"Never have I had such a valuable opportunity to use stamps to express something more significant than all the events in the life of our people commemorated by previous stamps—a terrible event, that we must never forget, and that we must never allow to be forgotten."

Reuven Rivlin MK



From left to right: Avner Shalev, Reuven Rivlin MK, Professor Szewach Weiss, Dov Shilansky, Yossi Sheli

In a ceremony at Janusz Korczak Square on 15 September, Yad Vashem received the original box in which historian Dr. Emmanuel Ringelblum hid the underground archive—code named *Oneg Shabbat*—documenting daily life in the Warsaw ghetto. The **'Ringelblum' box**, donated to Yad Vashem in honor of its Jubilee Year by the Jewish Historical Institute, Warsaw (ŻIH), will be displayed in Yad Vashem's new Holocaust History Museum.

The ceremony took place in the presence of Professor Feliks Tych, Director of the ŻIH, and Marian Turski, Chairman of the ŻIH Council; Avner Shalev; and Professor Israel Gutman, Academic Advisor to Yad Vashem.

Excerpt from a letter from **President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski**: "The eminent Israeli historian—and great friend of Poland—Professor Israel Gutman once said: 'If there was something which definitely distinguished Jews from other nations it was the power of memory.' Yad Vashem is a guard of the memory of every one of the six million *Shoah* victims, securing testimonies of their life and death... I wish to congratulate you on the occasion of your 50th anniversary and pay my utmost respect for the work Yad Vashem has done so far. I also express my thanks for your cooperation with Polish research centers and museums, among them the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw and the National Archives... I wish Yad Vashem many years of fruitful activity, success and persistence in fulfilling its mission of great importance for Israel, the Jewish people and the whole contemporary world."



The 'Ringelblum' Box

Shaping the Future

Yad Vashem marks the opening of its Jubilee Year



The Jubilee Year Opening Event

In the presence of President Moshe Katsav, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Speaker of the Knesset Reuven Rivlin MK and other dignitaries, a crowd of thousands, most of them Holocaust survivors, attended the spectacular **Jubilee Year Opening Event** in Warsaw Ghetto Square on the evening of 16 September. Speaking at the event were the President and Prime Minister of Israel, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Professor Szewach Weiss, Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem, Eli Zborowski, and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev. The evening included a multimedia presentation of Yad Vashem's work over the years, as well as performances by renowned singers Dudu Fisher, Shlomit Aharon and Yevgeny Shapovalov, violinists Shlomo Mintz and Ida Haendel, the Ankor and Philharmonia Choirs and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra.

"I wish to offer heartfelt congratulations to Yad Vashem, and to thank all those who contributed to this vital and important endeavor. The work of commemoration, remembrance, documentation and education is a shining example for generations... I am glad that Yad Vashem has not forgotten the place of the Righteous Among the Nations, those points of light that shone through the darkness, people whose virtuous souls burned with the Divine spark during a time of despair. As we celebrate Yad Vashem's Jubilee, the Holocaust is not a forgotten chapter of our history. It is engraved upon the consciousness of the world, and stands as an indictment and an admonition, commanding us: 'Never Again!'"

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

"Shortly before his death, Mordechai Anielewicz wrote: 'My life's dream has come true. I have lived to see Jewish resistance in the ghetto in all its greatness and glory.' The spirit of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the torch of resistance of the ghetto fighters and Jewish partisans was carried over to *Eretz Yisrael*... Mordechai, how we wish you could have shared our pride in the establishment of Yad Vashem, an institution dedicated to the cause of remembrance that stands majestically on *Har Hazikaron* in the heart of Jerusalem, the capital of the independent State of Israel."

Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem, Eli Zborowski

"With the passage of time, as the generation of Holocaust survivors grows older, the legacy of the Holocaust is being passed on to the next generation. At the same time, a large sector of the public in Israel and worldwide is showing a renewed and growing interest in the Holocaust. The shifting of generations requires us to transmit the memory of the Holocaust using modern, innovative tools available through the information and communication technologies of the new millennium. This new era will mark Yad Vashem's distinct ability to imbue the memory of the Holocaust with depth and meaning, so that a dialogue will grow from the past, bequeathing a legacy to strengthen commitment to Jewish continuity, protect the basic values of humankind and educate future generations."

Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev



Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

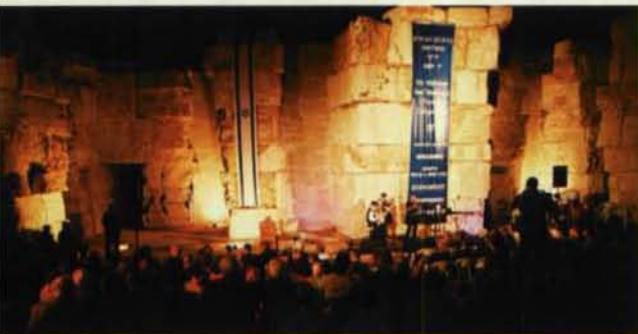


From left to right: Dr. Yitzhak Arad, Haim Rubin, Joseph Wilf, Ira Drukier, Maxi Librati, Stephanie Azrieli, David Azrieli, Marcia Toledano, Bernice Bookhamer, Cheryl Skura Lifshitz, Shimon Peres MK, Avner Shalev, Eli Zborowski, Diana Zborowski, Lawrence Joseph, Prof. Szewach Weiss, Sam Halpern, Gladys Halpern, Ruta Zandman, Felix Zandman, Harry Karten, Steven Mitzner

On the evening of 15 September, the names of Yad Vashem's benefactors were unveiled on the **Benefactors' Wall** in Yad Vashem's Entrance Plaza. Speakers included: Leader of the Knesset Opposition, Shimon Peres MK; Campaign Chairman, Yad Vashem Development Masterplan, Joseph Wilf; architect David Azrieli; Young Leadership Delegate, American Society for Yad Vashem, Cheryl Skura Lifshitz; and Avner Shalev.

"There is an attempt to deny, a tendency to forget, and an inclination to forgive—that is human nature... I want to thank you for building such a worthwhile center. You are helping the Jewish people to remember every moment, so that we will not be blind to our dangers, and be proud of our achievements." **Shimon Peres MK**

"Tonight the Young Leadership of the American and International Societies for Yad Vashem rededicates itself to the memories of our *Kedoshim*... Let me assure you that we are wholeheartedly committed to Yad Vashem." **Cheryl Skura Lifshitz**



On the evening of 15 September, a **reception for the Friends Delegations** from 26 countries that came to participate in Yad Vashem's Jubilee events was held in the Valley of the Communities. Addressing the crowd were: Minister of Immigrant Absorption, Tzipi Livni MK; Mayor of Jerusalem, Uri Lupoliansky; Professor Szewach Weiss; Chairman, Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel, Noach Flug; Chairman, Israel Society for Yad Vashem, Yoram Berger; Vice-Chairman, American Society for Yad Vashem, Ira Drukier; Chairman, French Society for Yad Vashem, Dr. Richard Prasquier; and President of the Euro-Asian Jewish Congress, Alexander Machkevich.

"The meaning of our existence here is to carry on for those who remained there, to continue the existence of the Jewish world in Israel. This is not an easy task—sometimes it is very difficult indeed..." **Minister Tzipi Livni**

"Millions of visitors come to our beloved city, guests from throughout the country and tourists from all corners of the globe. Two sites in Jerusalem remain at the top of their list: the Western Wall and Yad Vashem. These two sites perpetuate something that existed among our people and was destroyed... To remember something, we must study it, or it will be forgotten. We have come here today to Yad Vashem, a place that does everything to make certain we don't forget." **Uri Lupoliansky**

"Fifty years ago we had no idea that twenty million visitors, thousands of teachers, hundreds of researchers and dozens of world leaders would visit Yad Vashem and learn about the Holocaust. I hope that with the dedicated work of Yad Vashem's employees and volunteers, and with the help of donors, the government, the Claims Conference and the Jewish Agency, we can expand and enhance Yad Vashem's educational and research activities, in order to perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust." **Noach Flug**

On the morning of 17 September, **The Partisans' Panorama**—a tribute to the Jewish fighters who fought within partisan ranks during the *Shtetl*—was inaugurated in the presence of IDF Chief-of-Staff Maj. Gen. Moshe (Bogie) Ya'alon and sculptor Zadok Ben-David. The Panorama was established through the generosity of the late Julia and Isidore Karten—partisans in the Ukraine—and their families. Chairman of the Organization of Partisans, Underground Fighters and Ghetto Rebels in Israel, Baruch Shuv, and Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem, Eli Zborowski, addressed the audience. Speaking on behalf of the family were Harry Karten, Bernice Bookhamer, and representing the third generation, Young Leadership Delegate, American Society for Yad Vashem, Karen Toledano.



Maj. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon

"The IDF soldiers, who represent the future, have drawn their strength and power from your heritage, your images, your personalities and the memory of your actions that encourage us, surge within our souls and guide us along our path. You swore to arise and establish, to build and to be rebuilt, to defend and protect—and we are committed and proud to fulfill this mission." **Maj. Gen. Moshe Ya'alon**

"We dedicate this vista to those who fought in the forests, fields, and cities of Europe, to the *partisanim* who resisted in extraordinary ways. I can't imagine a more fitting monument to these heroes, a tranquil place overlooking the hills of Jerusalem. Because even in their darkest hour, those people never lost sight of the future." **Karen Toledano**

From left to right: Harry Karten, Danielle Karten, Avner Shalev, Zadok Ben-David, Senior Art Curator of the Museums Division, Yehudit Shendar, Bernice Bookhamer, Marcia Toledano, Yaakov Toledano, Karen Toledano, Michal Toledano, Talya Toledano Davidovich



On the afternoon of 17 September, President Moshe Katsav hosted a ceremony at his Jerusalem residence for the signing of the **Declaration of Remembrance**—a written pledge ensuring continued Holocaust remembrance in our generation and those that follow. The declaration was signed by Israeli heads of state and Jewish leaders from Israel and abroad. Speaking at the event were President Katsav; Chairman of the World Jewish Congress and President of the Claims Conference, Dr. Israel Singer; President of the French Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah, Simone Veil; Academic Advisor to

Yad Vashem, Professor Israel Gutman; and former Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Israel Meir Lau.

“Yad Vashem is, essentially, the focus of identification for the Jewish people and a symbol of our national unity... The workers at Yad Vashem have fulfilled their task with a sacred reverence, and Holocaust survivors see this as a small measure of consolation and comfort for their pain. I wish to express my admiration and appreciation for Yad Vashem and its dedicated staff since its founding, and to encourage them in this national and historic undertaking. Now Yad Vashem faces new challenges... and it must act to ensure that the Holocaust remains etched within our national identity.”

President Moshe Katsav

“The Shoah is different from any other event, from those that others try to compare it to. That is why Yad Vashem, and the pledge we are signing today, is so special.”

Dr. Israel Singer

“Every time my feet touch the Land of Israel and lead me to Yad Vashem, the

faces of my loved ones and my friends—which haunt me constantly—burst out in front of my eyes. I am deeply moved today, especially as we have come, on the occasion of Yad Vashem’s 50th anniversary, from the four corners of the earth in order to express our commitment to the memory of the six million murdered Jews.”

Simone Veil

“In recent years Yad Vashem has been undergoing a dynamic process of expansion, organization and reconstruction in many spheres, and on a large scale. This work has been undertaken with talent and dedication, through the encouragement and assistance of devoted friends the world over. Yad Vashem has become a role model according to which similar institutions for perpetuating the Holocaust have been established.”

Professor Israel Gutman

“Signing the Declaration of Remembrance was for me the highlight of the Jubilee events, and an extraordinary experience for me as a representative of the German delegation... I signed the scroll with a trembling hand, as I realized my obligation to represent the message of Yad Vashem and to spread it throughout Germany.”

Excerpt from a letter from First Assistant Chairperson of the German Society of Friends of Yad Vashem, **Prince Albrecht zu Castell-Castell**

On the morning of 18 September, Hertha Najmann endowed the **Najmann Chair of Holocaust Studies** at Yad Vashem’s International Institute of Holocaust Research in the memory of her husband, John Najmann. Incumbent Chair and Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research, Professor David Bankier, gave the keynote lecture. Other speakers included Chairman of the National Yad Vashem Charitable Trust, UK, Ben Helfgott; and Avner Shalev.

“The Holocaust must not be politicized or marginalized into the sidelines of history... John wanted the world never to forget. It is therefore with great pleasure that my children and I fulfill my husband’s dearest wish and endow this Chair of Holocaust Studies.”

Hertha Najmann



Hertha Najmann

On 17 September, a dinner was held for Yad Vashem’s benefactors and supporters. The dinner marked the establishment of the **Eternal Fund for Preserving and Perpetuating the Memory of the Holocaust**. The keynote address was given by Minister of Finance, Benjamin Netanyahu MK. Among the speakers were: Executive Vice-President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, Gideon Taylor; President and Chairman of the Board, Europe-Israel Group of Companies, Motti Zisser; Simone Veil; Second Generation representative, American Society for Yad Vashem, Leonard Wilf; and Avner Shalev.



Joseph Wilf (left) shakes hands with Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

“Yad Vashem has made an enormous contribution, not only in securing the memories of the millions who perished in the Holocaust, but also in securing our future by drawing the necessary conclusions to ensure our victory over the forces of evil. I wish to congratulate you for championing such an important cause.”

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

“From the very beginning, the Claims Conference decided that it would have a very special relationship with Yad Vashem. This historic partnership has lasted for 50 years... I say to Yad Vashem: ‘Your work is holy and it is we who are privileged to be part of it.’”

Gideon Taylor

“At Yad Vashem, the living can affirm that our people will never suffer a similar fate again. Our parents gave us a heritage unlike any other in the world—a heritage that came from everything this institution symbolizes, serving as the spiritual, ideological and moral heart of the Jewish people: to be a free people in our land. As the second generation of Holocaust survivors we are committed to ensuring that Yad Vashem shall remain the place from which Jewish communities throughout the world can draw their Jewish resilience and moral fortitude.”

Motti Zisser

“I have always believed that carrying forward the message of remembrance in order to help build a more tolerant, and thus more peaceful, future is Yad Vashem’s sacred message... I look forward to the daunting task of helping secure a sound financial and educational future for our noble mission’s ideals of remembrance and the end of intolerance, hatred and violence.”

Leonard Wilf

Events June – November 2003

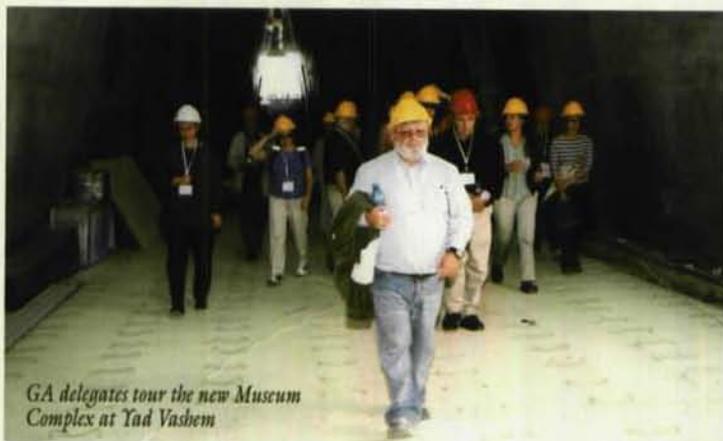
- 19 June** Ceremony marking 60 years since the destruction of the Greek Jewish community: in the presence of Israel's fifth president, Yitzhak Navon; Greek Ambassador to Israel, H.E. Panoyotis Zografos; Chairman of the Center of Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel, Noach Flug; and Chairman of the Organization of Greek Concentration Camp Survivors in Israel, Moshe Ha-Elion
- 29 June** Memorial gathering marking 63 years since the beginning of the Holocaust in Romania: with the participation of hundreds of members of the Organization of Jews from the Dorohoi District, Romania
- 29 June** Commemoration evening in honor of film director Nathan Gross: with the Organization of Former Residents of Krakow in Israel
- 8 July** Study evening on the occasion of the publication of *Nitzanim Mi'efer* (Budding from the Ashes), the story of Nisan Reznik, a member of Hanoar Hatzioni and one of the founders of the FPÖ (United Partisans Organization) in the Vilna Ghetto: in cooperation with Board member of Massuah, Yitzhak Artzi (ז"ל); Deputy Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Dr. Yitzhak Arad; Chairman of the Organization of Partisans, Underground Fighters and Ghetto Resisters in Israel, Baruch Shuv; and author Nisan Reznik
- 5 August** Annual memorial service marking 61 years since the deportation of Janusz Korczak and the children to Treblinka: with members of the Janusz Korczak Association, headed by Chairman Aharon Belczynski, and an educational activity for pupils from the Mahanot Haolim youth movement
- 17 August** Memorial gathering for the Jews of Rhodes, Greece, who were murdered in the Holocaust
- 2 October** Memorial service and gathering marking 62 years since the murder of Jews in Ukrainian territory: in conjunction with the Association of Immigrants from the Ukraine in Israel, chaired by David Levine: in the presence of Minister of Immigrant Absorption, Tzipi Livni MK; Jewish Agency Chairman, Sallai Meridor; and Ukrainian Ambassador to Israel, H.E. Alexander Slipchenko
- 28 October** Annual convention of *Alumim* Association—children who lived under assumed identities in France during WWII
- 9 November** Special activity for 500 pupils marking the 65th anniversary of Kristallnacht organized by the International School for Holocaust Studies: in conjunction with the Jerusalem Education Administration, the Ministry of Education's Information Center, and 120 members of the Association of Immigrants from Central Europe
- 23 November** Memorial ceremony for Italian Jews murdered in the Holocaust and annual gathering with the participation of hundreds of Italian Jews living in Israel

Yad Vashem and the GA By Aryeh Zuckerman

At the recent United Jewish Communities of North America (UJC) annual General Assembly (GA) in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem—marking its Jubilee Year—was given a place of honor among the various events.

On November 13, a special session of the Zionist General Council was held at Yad Vashem, commemorating 50 years of cooperation between the two institutions. The event included a tour of the site and a memorial service, attended by some 200 representatives from Zionist federations in Israel and the Diaspora. Speaking at the event were Chairman of the Zionist General Council, Dr. Yitzhak Chen; Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Sallai Meridor; and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Council, Professor Szewach Weiss.

On November 16, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev, spoke at the Jewish Agency Assembly, and representatives of the various communities and federations signed the Declaration of Remembrance.



GA delegates tour the new Museum Complex at Yad Vashem

During the GA, Yad Vashem gave attendees special online access to the *Shoah* Victims' Names Database (see p.2). Representatives of the American Embassy in Israel, businesspeople and federation heads attended the launch of the pilot program at Jerusalem's International Congress Center where the GA was held. Yossie Hollander, a successful hi-tech entrepreneur and supporter of the project, and UJC National Major Gifts Chairman and American Society for Yad Vashem Executive Committee member Mark Wilf addressed the audience.

During a special day of tours on 18 November, GA participants were shown new developments at Yad Vashem and heard about its continuing efforts to commemorate and educate about the *Shoah*. In addition, visits and meetings with federation leaders were held at Yad Vashem before, during and after the GA, reinforcing its relationship with North American Jewish communities.

In light of the current wave of antisemitism and terror, Holocaust education has become increasingly relevant for the Jewish people, and was a natural focus of the daily agenda at GA. Yad Vashem appealed to the communities to join hands in this vital endeavor.

The author is Special Advisor to the Chairman of the Directorate

by Vivian Uria **New: Personal Audio Guides**

Yad Vashem recently began offering a new audio guide system for visitors to the Historical Museum. The service enables visitors to listen to explanations about the museum's exhibits—in their own desired order and pace—through personal headphones.

Professional narrators explain the events of the period, and original testimonies and recordings are available at the push of a button. The system also enables groups (currently up to 40 people) to listen to their tour guide speaking into a personal microphone, using wireless headphones. This allows the many groups visiting the museum to listen to explanations without disturbing other visitors.

The audio guides may be hired in the entrance building, for a small fee. At present, until the opening of the new Holocaust History Museum, the guides are available in English and Hebrew. In the future they will be available in additional languages; the service may also be extended to cover all sites of the Yad Vashem campus.

The author is Director of the Visitors Center

Torah Scroll in Memory of Ilan Ramon z"l

On 15 October, Chief Education Officer of the IDF, Brig. Gen. Elazar Stern, entrusted Yad Vashem with a Torah scroll written in memory of Israel's first astronaut Colonel Ilan Ramon, who died in the tragic destruction of the space shuttle *Columbia* last year. The scroll was donated by Mrs. Debra Korman to Col. Ramon's widow Rona, who endowed it to the IDF with the request that it accompany IDF delegations on visits to Holocaust sites in Poland.

Colonel Ramon's mother and grandmother are survivors of Auschwitz, and his grandfather and other members of his



Left to right: Avner Shalev, Brig. Gen. Elazar Stern, Eliezer Wolferman, Debra Korman

family perished in the Holocaust. Prior to the ill-fated shuttle mission, Ramon contacted Yad Vashem and asked to take an artifact from the Holocaust with him on his space flight. Yad Vashem gave him a copy of Petr Ginz's drawing *Moon Landscape*, which reflects the young artist's vision of how the earth would look from the moon. Ginz was murdered in Auschwitz at the age of 16.

Participants in the ceremony at Yad Vashem included Mrs. Korman; Col. Ramon's father, Eliezer Wolferman; Brig. Gen. Elazar Stern; Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev; and 200 IDF officers who were participating in a preparatory seminar at Yad Vashem in advance of their visit to Poland. During the ceremony, a procession escorted the Torah scroll to the synagogue, where it will remain in trust between IDF visits abroad.

Claims Conference Dedicates Family Path

On 25 November, the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany held a special session at Yad Vashem in recognition of Yad Vashem's Jubilee Year. Speakers included President of the Claims Conference, Dr. Israel Singer; Chairman, Julius Berman; Vice President of the Claims Conference and

Chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, Sallai Meridor; Treasurer, Roman Kent; Chairman of the Executive Committee, Moshe Sanbar; Executive Vice-President Emeritus, Saul Kagan; and Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev.



Left to right: Dr. Israel Singer, Julius Berman, Saul Kagan, Gideon Taylor, Moshe Sanbar, Roman Kent

Following the session, a dedication ceremony for the Family Path was held. The Path—which leads from the entrance of Yad Vashem to the Family Plaza between the International School for Holocaust Studies and the Archives and Library building—is dedicated to the memory of families who perished in the Holocaust. The Family Path was built with the support of the Claims Conference, in honor of Executive Vice-President Emeritus, Saul Kagan.

A Polish Family's Ultimate Sacrifice by Dr. Mordecai Paldiel

In a moving ceremony held in early November, the Righteous Among the Nations designation was awarded posthumously to the Daniluk family of Poland: parents Anna and Wlodzimierz, and their daughter Luba. The only surviving family member—their other daughter Raisa Borowska—was also recognized as Righteous Among the Nations. She attended the ceremony together with Eti Netzer and Tova Katz—daughters of a survivor who had been rescued by the Daniluk family—and dozens of family members.

On 8 January 1943, there was a knock at the door of the Daniluk home in the village of Malnicky (in the Bialystok region) in Poland. At the door—frozen, dirty and hungry—stood Palter Lopata. After escaping an *aktion* in the ghetto, he had helplessly wandered around before deciding that he had no choice but to turn to strangers for help. With one look at his wretched condition, Anna Daniluk took him inside. At first Palter asked only for something to eat and to spend the night, but Anna and her husband Wlodzimierz persuaded him to stay with them a while longer. A few days later Yitzhak Koplinsky, who had heard about Palter's hiding place, arrived. Afterwards, two more of Palter's Jewish friends—Moshe Flicker and Israel Bramson—joined them. Days turned into weeks and months, and in the end, the four remained hidden in the Daniluk home until the area was liberated by the Russians on 23 July 1944.



Left to right: Tova Katz, Eti Netzer, Raisa Borowska

In May 1945, the Daniluks invited the four survivors and other relatives to celebrate the victory over Germany. At 11:00 p.m., at the peak of the party, a group of armed men burst into the house firing their guns. Within a few minutes, seven people had been slaughtered and others lay seriously wounded. The gang of murderers were members of the Polish underground (the A.K.), outraged that the Daniluks had saved Jews during the war. Before leaving, they poured gasoline all over the house and set it ablaze. Among the dead were Wlodzimierz Daniluk, his daughter Luba, and Moshe Flicker. Daniluk's wife Anna and their other daughter Raisa were among the wounded. Yitzhak Koplinsky and Palter Lopata were also injured, but they managed to escape. Israel Bramson had not attended the party due to illness, and thus he too survived.

According to testimony given in 1948 by Palter Lopata, as well as the testimony of Israel Bramson's two daughters and other documentation, Yad Vashem decided to recognize Anna and Wlodzimierz Daniluk and their daughters Luba and Raisa—who had urged their parents to help the Jews—as Righteous Among the Nations.

The author is Director of the Righteous Among the Nations Department

International Academic Cooperation

Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and the United States-Israel Educational Foundation (USIEF) have established a new research grant in the field of Holocaust studies. Founded in 1956 and supported by the American and Israeli governments, USIEF coordinates the Fulbright Program between America and Israel, enabling outstanding scholars to research, lecture and study at leading higher education institutions in both countries. The new grant will enable (non-American) Israeli citizens, enrolled in a doctoral program in Israel, to make a six-month visit to a US university or research institution, in order to advance their dissertation research on the Holocaust.

To enhance Holocaust research in Italy, the Institute has also established—in conjunction with the University of Pisa (Italy)—an international exchange program between the two institutions. The program is intended to assist Yad Vashem's annual workshops for Ph.D. candidates.

The author is Academic Assistant to the Head of the International Institute for Holocaust Research

Art Museum Loans Portraits to Germany

On 21 September, an exhibit entitled *The Right of the Image... Jewish Perspectives in Modern Art* opened in Bochum, Germany. Adding to the Biblical prohibition, "Thou shalt not make any graven image," Theodore Adorno declared after the Holocaust: "Writing poetry after Auschwitz is an act of barbarism"—expressing the earth-shattering cultural crisis of his generation. This exhibition depicts attempts by Jewish artists to restore sanity, equality and universality after the Holocaust through art, reaffirming their Jewish identity and fulfilling their desire to give form to a Jewish self-image.

Within the succession of artists and multi-faceted art works displayed—dating from the 19th century until today—special emphasis was given to the portrait, as



Jozef Kowner (1895-1967), Self-portrait, 1941, watercolor on paper. Gift of Leon Kowner family, Haifa

a link between the different parts of the exhibition. As such, the museum in Bochum requested to borrow 13 works from the Yad Vashem art collection. The people commemorated in these drawings—Jews who were persecuted to their deaths by the Nazi regime—were drawn by Jewish artists during the Holocaust, and are a mute representation of the horrors of that dark period in history.

Inclusion of Holocaust artists in an exhibition of Jewish art is a clear recognition that they are an integral part of the

Yehudit Inbar is Director of the Museums Division, and Yehudit Shendar is Senior Art Curator of the Museums Division

Editor of *Yad Vashem Studies* Awarded Prize

In May 2003, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem awarded Dr. David Silberklang, Editor of *Yad Vashem Studies*, the prestigious Pridan Prize for doctoral research in Modern Jewish History. The prize, awarded annually to two or three doctoral candidates, was given to Dr. Silberklang for his



Dr. David Silberklang
"The Holocaust in the Lublin District of Poland."

In his letter of recommendation, former Head of Yad Vashem's International Institute for Holocaust Research and current Academic Advisor, Professor Yehuda Bauer, wrote: "Dr. Silberklang's Ph.D. thesis is, in my judgment, one of the best Ph.D.s produced at the Institute... The analysis is excellent, and when published, will undoubtedly be a major contribution to our knowledge."

Current Institute Head, Professor David Bankier, commented that Dr. Silberklang's work combines German and Jewish sources, and is the first to make wide use of the Judenrat Archives in Lublin: "I expect that his doctoral work will make an important contribution to research on the fate of Jewish communities in Poland during the Holocaust, and is undoubtedly deserving of the Pridan Prize."

The MARC of Professionalism

by Dr. Robert Rozett

The Yad Vashem Library has recently undergone a process to adopt the Machine Readable Cataloging Record (MARC) standard set by the United States Library of Congress for the classification of library computer data. According to the Library of Congress, using the standard ensures better sharing of bibliographic resources, prevents duplication of work, and allows libraries to benefit from an industry-wide standard whose primary purpose is to foster communication of information. It also enables libraries to make use of commercial systems to manage their operations, thus benefiting from the latest advances in information technology.

The MARC standard has already been adopted by many libraries and book vendors around the world, including universities and specialist libraries in Israel. Adopting the standard will also enable the Yad Vashem Library to join the online Israeli University Libraries' Network.

Professor Elhanan Adler of the University Libraries' Network coordinated the conversion process with a team from Yad Vashem's library, headed by the systems' librarian, Anna Shindar, and the head of cataloging and classification, Rudica Yaacov. The process, which included actions to improve the library's catalogue, was completed at the end of December.

The author is Director of the Library

VISITS AT YAD VASHEM



Actor, director and activist Christopher Reeve (right) and his son Matthew visited Yad Vashem on 30 July 2003



President of the Dominican Republic, Hipólito Mejía (right), was given a tour of Yad Vashem on 18 September 2003 by Director of the Hall of Names, Alexander Avraham (left)



Prime Minister Mikuláš Dzurinda of the Slovak Republic visited Yad Vashem on 12 November 2003



Dr. Bálint Magyar, Minister of Education of the Republic of Hungary (right), visited Yad Vashem on 2 November 2003 with Ambassador to Israel H.E. Dr. János Hóvári (left)

Mitzner Family Ensures Holocaust Remembrance

David Mitzner was born in Warsaw, to a distinguished family in the sweater manufacturing industry. At the outbreak of WWII, David was recruited by underground organizations as a courier between the Russian and German occupied zones, helping people flee the Nazis, as well as reuniting families. Captured once by the Gestapo, he escaped certain death.

In the spring of 1941, David was caught crossing the Russian border without documentation. He was arbitrarily sentenced as an anti-Communist, and sent to the Siberian gulag system. After almost eight years of hard labor he was released; he returned to Warsaw, but found no trace of his family or community. David decided to make a new life for himself in the United States, where he arrived in 1949. There he quickly proved his talent in business; his company, 'RIDA Development Corporation' is one of the largest American real estate groups in Poland today.

"I barely escaped alive from Poland, but now I am known as a successful businessman, a proud Jew and a proud American," David Mitzner says. He and his wife Ruth have two sons, Jacob and Ira, and five grandchildren. Both David and his son Ira—who works together with his father in the family business—are proud and generous supporters of many different Jewish and Israeli causes.

"My father taught my brother and I the importance of community involvement



Left to right: Shraga I. Mekel, Director of Development, American Society for Yad Vashem; Mindy, Laura, Ira, Steven and Michael Mitzner; David Mitzner; Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, Avner Shalev

and *tzedaka*," reflects Ira. "He teaches by example: both Dad and Mom are extraordinary role models to our entire family."

It was only natural that David and Ruth Mitzner, Ira and Mindy Mitzner and their families recently became benefactors of Yad Vashem. "In

becoming benefactors of Yad Vashem, my father has helped ensure that what happened to his family and the Jewish people during WWII will never be forgotten," says Ira.

Ira and Mindy Mitzner—devoted supporters of the community—encouraged their oldest son Steven, 17, to spend his final year of high school studying in a *yeshiva* in Israel. Steven represented the Mitzner family at the unveiling of Yad Vashem's new Benefactors' Wall during the Jubilee Year opening events in September 2003.

Szamai Szymonowicz, z"l

Born in Wielun, Poland, Szamai Szymonowicz was a member of the Beitar Movement from his youth. Early in the war, Szamai escaped from the Lodz Ghetto to the Soviet Union. In 1945 he returned to Poland, where he helped bring remaining survivors to Israel; he himself came to Israel aboard the "Altalena."

An accountant by profession, Szamai was one of the founders of the Bank of Israel as well as a public activist. As a member of the Yad Vashem Directorate and Board of Directors since 1996, he contributed his professional knowledge and life experience to Board discussions with patience and forbearance.

Yitzhak Artzi, z"l

Born in Siret, Romania, Yitzhak Artzi was a leader in the Romanian Zionist Youth Movement. During the war, he was active in the *Bricha* ("escape") organization, rescuing children from Transnistria. In Israel, Yitzhak became a journalist, attorney and Knesset member. He devoted himself to Holocaust remembrance, helping found the Center for Organizations of Holocaust Survivors in Israel. He was also a member of the Yad Vashem Council and the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous Among the Nations for more than 20 years.

W Friends WORLDW

U.S.A.



Over 1,200 guests and diplomats from more than 17 countries attended the American Society for Yad Vashem's Jubilee Tribute Dinner on 2 November at the New York Hilton Hotel. More than half the guests were members of the younger generations. The guest speaker was Ari Fleischer, former White House Press Secretary and Assistant to President George W. Bush (bottom with American Society Chairman, Eli Zborowski). This year's dedicated honorees were

Marilyn and Jack A. Belz (top, center, with Ari Fleischer, and their family) who were presented with the Yad Vashem Remembrance Award, and Sharon and David Halpern (above, second and third from the right, with Sam and Gladys Halpern, left and Avner Shalev, Chairman of the Yad Vashem Directorate, right) who were presented with the Yad Vashem Young Leadership Remembrance Award.



On 20 October, Yad Vashem dedicated the Visitors Center, built through the generosity of David and Fela Shapell of Los Angeles (above, receiving a token of gratitude and esteem from Avner Shalev), and assisted by Israel's Ministry of Tourism. Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz spoke at the ceremony.



Yad Vashem mourns the passing of Fred Kort, West Coast Chairman of the American Society for Yad Vashem (left, with Barbara Kort and Jona Goldrich at the American Society's 2002 Dinner in Mr. Kort's honor). One of the few survivors of Treblinka, Fred Kort carried the memory of the Holocaust with him daily; his involvement in *Shoah* commemoration extended across the US and Israel.

survivors of Treblinka, Fred Kort carried the memory of the Holocaust with him daily; his involvement in *Shoah* commemoration extended across the US and Israel.

A reception sponsored by the American Society for Yad Vashem and the Holocaust Center for Northern California was held in San Francisco at the home of Dr. Ingrid Tauber, (second from left) daughter of the late Dr. Laszlo N. Tauber who established the Fund in her name for Research on Hungarian Jews During the Holocaust at Yad Vashem.



Pictured: Shraga I. Mekel (left), Development Director, American Society for Yad Vashem; Prof. Yehuda Bauer (center), Academic Advisor, Yad Vashem; Elana Bauer (second from right); and Leonie Darwin (right), Yad Vashem supporter.

CANADA



The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem held a Jubilee Dinner honoring Yad Vashem's 50th Anniversary on 12 November at The Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto. Jubilee Awards were presented in the name of the late Izzy Asper to Babs Asper (top, left) and Gail Asper (top, right) of Winnipeg and Leslie Dan of Toronto (not pictured) for establishing Holocaust education programs at Yad Vashem. Special awards were also presented to 11 Canadian families for their generous support of Yad Vashem. Over 600 guests attended the dinner.

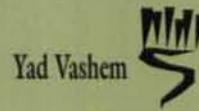


Pictured bottom, left to right: Avner Shalev; Bob Rae, former Premier of Ontario and Dinner Chair; and Andrea Dan Hytman.



Hank Rosenbaum, Chairman of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem (above, with his wife, Helen), headed a 25-member delegation to the opening events of Yad Vashem's 50th year.

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SOUTH AMERICA



Chaim Nekricz from Brazil (left) and David Yisrael, Chairman of the Venezuelan Society for Yad Vashem (right) together with Perla Hazan, Director of the Iberoamerican Desk, at the dinner for Yad Vashem supporters on 17 September. Nekricz and Yisrael also signed the Declaration of Remembrance.

FRANCE



At the dinner for Yad Vashem supporters on 17 September marking the establishment of the "Eternal Fund for Preserving and Perpetuating the Memory of the Holocaust", Simone Veil (above), President of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, announced that the foundation will be making a large contribution to the Fund.

AUSTRIA



On 23 September, a ceremony marking the renovation of the Administration and Research Building was held in the presence of donor and longtime supporter of Yad Vashem, Danek Gertner (left), and Dalia Rabin-Pelosoff (right).

WIDE

SWITZERLAND



Members of the Swiss-Israel Society visited Yad Vashem in November together with Dr. Rolf Bloch, President of the Swiss Society for Yad Vashem (second from right).

FINLAND



A delegation from the Finnish branch of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem (ICEJ) visited Yad Vashem in October, and met with Chairman of the Directorate, Avner Shalev. The tour was a demonstration of thanks to ICEJ Finland for their considerable donation for the International School for Holocaust Studies.

Left to right: ICEJ's Finnish Director, Dr. Ulla Jarvilehto, and ICEJ Executive Director, Malcolm Hedding, laying a wreath in the Hall of Remembrance.

SPAIN

Isaac Caro Querub (left, with President Moshe Matsav) was among those who signed the Declaration of Remembrance, at a ceremony held at the President's residence on 17 September.



New Publication:

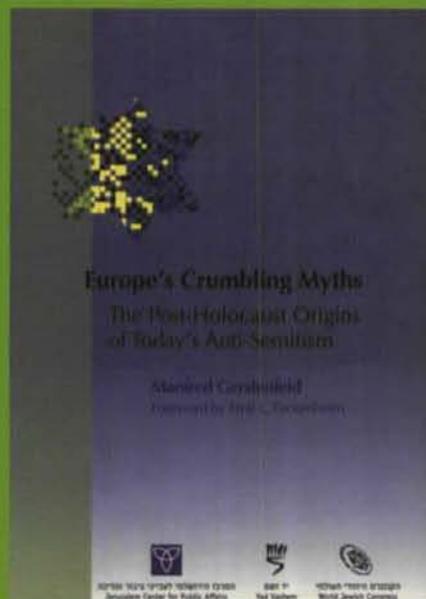
Europe's Crumbling Myths The Post-Holocaust Origins of Today's Anti-Semitism

Manfred Gerstenfeld
Foreword by Emil L. Fackenheim

In association with the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs (JCPA)
and the World Jewish Congress (WJC)

How were the Jews received into European society after returning from concentration camps or hiding? How did European countries deal with economic restitution and its moral aspects? How is the Holocaust remembered and taught in Europe today?

Europe's Crumbling Myths explores how the legacy of post-Holocaust Europe laid the basis for today's resurgence of antisemitism in the continent. This book provides an analysis of Europe's moral attitude toward the Jews in the post-war period, and provides perspectives on the major issues concerned.



"A must read for anyone interested in understanding how contemporary European antisemitism is connected to post-War European attitudes of Jewish exclusion which set the stage for the moral, judicial, and educational failures that followed in the wake of the *Shtetl*." Alan L. Berger, Radlock Eminent Scholar, Chair of Holocaust Studies, Florida Atlantic University

"This well-informed and exceptionally well-written book takes the format of an introductory essay and 15 interviews with prominent experts. Gerstenfeld convincingly

argues that there is a new common ground on which right-wing Holocaust deniers, leftist European intellectuals and influential Arabs stand united: in their criticism of Israeli policy, and in their hatred of the Jews. This book deserves the widest possible audience."

Johannes Houwink ten Cate, Professor for Holocaust and Genocide studies, University of Amsterdam

