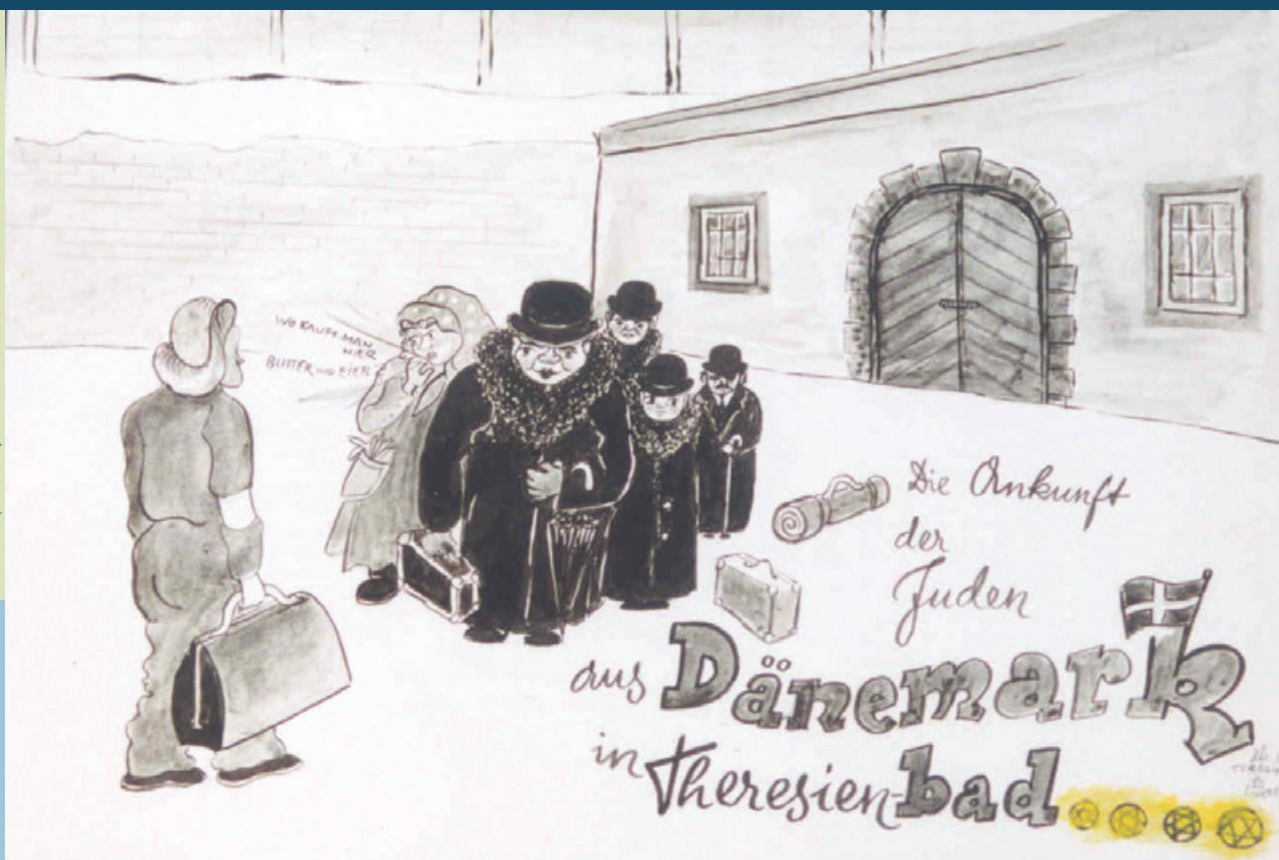


Dapei Keshet

Beit Theresienstadt Theresienstadt Martyrs Remembrance Association

ISSUE No. 84 >> April 2018

Eli Leskly, Transport from Denmark to Theresienstadt, 1943



75 years for the deportation
of Dutch and Danish Jews to
Theresienstadt ghetto

THERESIENSTADT MARTYRS REMEMBRANCE ASSOCIATION

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Events Calendar לוח אירועים

12.4.2018 יום חמישי - Thursday 09:45	12.5.2018 שבת - Saturday 10:00
Holocaust Memorial Day	Annual Meeting of the Theresienstadt Martyrs Remembrance Association
Beit Theresienstadt	Beit Theresienstadt

For details and registration:
 04-6369515 info@bterezin.org.il

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Claims Conference ועידת התביעות
 The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany



המשרד לשיוויון חברתי

Details on events will be sent by electronic mail.
 For further details contact Beit Theresienstadt,
 phone: +972-4-6369515
 e-mail: info@bterezin.org.il

To all members and friends of Beit Theresienstadt

It was 75 years ago when Dutch and Danish Jews arrived at the Theresienstadt ghetto. The fate of the Jews in the two countries was totally different.

Whereas in Holland 80% of the Jews perished, Denmark conducted an inspiring rescue operation in which the non-Jewish population mobilized itself to smuggle the Jews to Sweden by boats and save them. A relatively small number of Jews was captured by the Germans and was deported to the Theresienstadt ghetto. Dr. Margalin Shlain, in her comprehensive article which appears in this issue, describes on the one hand the arrival of Dutch Jews to the ghetto and the attitude toward them, and on the other hand the unique situation of Danish Jews in the ghetto, which derived from the Danish regime's mobilization to assist its Jewish subjects. Indirectly, the rest of the population in the ghetto was affected by it.

These days we are in the midst of a raging social argument about the fate of the refugees in Israel. Whether they are indeed in mortal danger in their homeland or perhaps are

migrant workers looking for economic success in prosperous Israel. The refugees tell hair raising tales about their journey from Africa to Israel.

Ample and confusing information is published in the media, and I will not get into the complex political facet of the topic. However, I find the self-mobilization of Holocaust survivor for the refugees' sake very moving. The ability to say, "we know what it is to be a refugee, to search for your way alone in the world without a family, to live in uncertainty without knowing what the next day will bring" is connected to the Biblical command "remember you were a stranger in the land of Egypt". As people who knocked on the doors of the world as refugees and was not answered, we cannot lock our doors before asylum seekers.



Yours,
Tami Kinberg



Children's drawing from the Theresienstadt ghetto, "Passover Seder"

CONCERT IN HONOR OF THREE PIANISTS FROM THE THERESIENSTADT GHETTO

In commemoration of 76 years of the establishment of the Theresienstadt ghetto, a tribute concert was held for three pianists from the ghetto – Edith Kraus, Alice Herz-Sommer, and Zuzana Růžicková. It is the second concert dedicated to the pianists. The first was held in Safed in August 2017, at the conclusion of the master classes which dealt with the music of the Theresienstadt ghetto.

Dan Rapoport, an expert on the music of the Theresienstadt ghetto and a clarinetist, moderated the concert and told about the musicians in the ghetto. He has participated in successful projects at Beit Theresienstadt for several years, and regards it as his mission to spread the story of the musicians in the ghetto. Prof. Alan Sternfeld from the Music Academy in Jerusalem, who had previously taught the seminar "History, Music, and Memory" and had known Edith Kraus in person, also participated in the concert and delivered a speech in her memory. Regretfully, in the period between the concert in Tzfat and the concert in Ramat Aviv, Zuzana Růžicková passed away. May her memory be blessed! The international violinist Eyal Shiloach and the soprano Orit Shiloach also participated. The pieces which were played were composed by Gideon Klein, Viktor Ullmann, Ilse Weber, Pavel Haas, Hans Krasa and more.



Many ghetto survivors were in the audience and enjoyed the music and the detailed explanations by Dan Rapoport. ■

A MULTI-GENERATION TRIP

“We are the silver tray on which the Jewish State was delivered” Holocaust Survivors in the War of Independence.

Last September we went on a multi-generation trip with the guide Uriel Feinerman, in the footsteps of the 1948 warriors. The trip revolved around the untold story of the Holocaust survivors who took part in the battles of the War of Independence and made an enormous contribution to the war effort. 30,000 soldiers out of about 60,000 combat soldiers were survivors at the end of the war. 4 out of 12 valor medal recipients were Holocaust survivors.

During the trip we visited an observation point over the Latrun area, the Yad La-Shiryon memorial site, the military cemetery in Nahalat Yitzhak and the exhibition “We are also the silver tray” in the Palmach Museum. ■



Inter-Generational Conference – Hanukkah 2017



Like every year the inter-generational conference was held on Hanukkah. The members of the association gathered at the Clubroom of kibbutz Givat Haim Ihud for the candle lighting. The Bagiansky family arrived represented by of three generations: the ghetto survivor Achim Bagiansky lighted the menorah with his grandchildren. The musical ensemble "Cypress Band" led the Hanukkah songs in a lively and joyful rendition. Pavel Koren was absent this time, and his son Tomer, also a musician, filled in for him. The evening continued with the satiric show "Bira ve-Nazkira" (Beer and Remembrance) performed by the third generation descendants: Udi Brindt, Ben Yosipovich and Carmel Netzer. It is a provocative "biting" show, describing the Holocaust remembrance in various situations: a trip to Poland, commemoration organizations, and the media attitude toward Holocaust survivors. Carmel Netzer, Ruth Bondi's granddaughter, changes personas and acts with talent: a tour guide to Poland, a director of a Holocaust commemoration organization, and a Holocaust survivor who arrives at the television studio for an embarrassing interview.

The audience's reaction altered between laughter and uneasiness. Not everybody loved the show, but undoubtedly nobody remained indifferent. After the show the actors had a discussion with the audience, and explained what brought them to write on the subject in this manner. The three of them have a family relationship to the Holocaust and the subject of remembrance is important for them. The various ways in which attempts are made today to commemorate the memory of the Holocaust and to impart various messages to the next generations evoke many questions. The discourse that opened following the show is interesting, shattering taboos, and asks the question we wrestle with a lot: what is the meaning of the Holocaust for the next generations, the third and the fourth ones, and what should be retained as relevant in the future. ■



From the show "Beer and Remembrance"

Memorial Tournament – Hanukkah 2017

Like every year on Hanukkah, the traditional memorial tournament for "Liga Terezin" players and spectators was held. This year too, the tournament was held jointly with educational and social projects. About 80 youths from Zikron Ya'akov, and the Druze villages Abu Snan and Julis participated in the tournament.

After learning about the horrible life conditions in the ghetto and how sports was a way of refuge for ghetto inmates (but used for propaganda purposes by the Germans), the participants received the shirts of various teams which played in Liga Terezin, and went down to the soccer field in kibbutz Givat Haim Ihud for the game. ■

THE MAGIC OF THE GENERATIONS IN MUSIC AND SONG – AN EVENT FOR FAMILY DAY

Family Day for the "Europe Café" Club Emeq Hefer

The "Europe Café" in Hefer Valley, established for Holocaust survivors, organizes extensive social activities under the directorship of Yona Targovnik. In honor of Family Day, a concert was held in the hall of kibbutz Ein HaHoresh, donated by Mr. Yosef Žamboki, who initiated masterclasses for young opera singers, a Holocaust survivor.

The audience was varied, from babies to age 90 plus – members of "Europe Café" arrived with their families. They were welcomed by the members of the "Beth El" community from Binyamina with refreshments from their products – special baked goods and colorful rose bouquets which were distributed at the end of the event. Rani Idan, head of the Hefer Valley Council, participated not only because of his position but as a member of the second generation, with his mother and grandson, and greeted the guests. The "Efrohey Ha'Efroni" (The Lark Chicks) choir opened the event with lovely singing. Tami Kinberg, Beit Theresienstadt director, related stories about Mother's Day in the ghetto, and recited an essay written by a girl from Theresienstadt:



The "Efrohey Ha'Efroni" choir



Mr. Yosef Žamboki greets the audience

"It was Mother's Day, the girls prepared presents for their mothers with enthusiasm. I felt very odd (my parents are in Palestine). I thought I had to give a present on this holiday to those for whom I feel almost like toward my mother. And this was exactly how I felt toward Mrs. Milstein and Tella. For a year and a half they cared for me almost like mothers, so why shouldn't I reward them? I wanted to be like the other girls.

So I prepared small presents for them.

I had a strange feeling when I saw Mrs. Milstein sitting at the table. I approached her slowly and finally gave her the present, added a sweet kiss and ran. I saw that she was surprised and happy. I was hundred times happier than her. I walked over to Tella, my whole body was trembling, and I started to cry. Suddenly I felt so good. I will never forget the Mother's Day of Theresienstadt.

(R.S., age 13, house 28). ■



Screening of the Film "Forgotten Transports – to Estonia"

In commemoration of 76 years of the establishment of the Theresienstadt ghetto, last November we held a study day which included the screening of the film "Forgotten Transports – to Estonia" followed by a meeting with the director Lukáš Přibyl. The film series "Forgotten Transports" was created after a comprehensive research work which includes numerous testimonies. The film director Lukáš Přibyl, tracked down the few

survivors and reconstructed their deportation to the ghettos and to the camps in Latvia, Belarus, Estonia and Poland, where they were sent for extermination or for forced labor. Many portraits and photographs reconstruct the family history of the deportees. The film series "Forgotten Transports" includes four films: forgotten transports to Estonia, to Latvia, to Belarus and to Poland. ■



The Opening of the exhibition "Point of View" in Olomouc, the Czech Republic



In the festival "Days of Jewish Culture" held in October 2017 in Olomouc, the exhibition "Point of View" opened in the gallery of the Department of the Humanities of the Jan Palacký University in the town. The exhibition presented a selection of the works by Emo (Emanuel), Trude (Gertruda) and Willy Groag which are held in the Beit Theresienstadt archive.

The selected works present a humorous and satiric point of view which helped the ghetto prisoners to combat the harsh and inhumane conditions they experienced in Terezin. In addition to these works, works which describe reality as it was were presented.

Mr. Pavel Maňák, (the local expert on the works of the Groag family and its chronicles in the town) opened the exhibition with greetings. ■

"How to Say Holocaust in German" Lecture Commemorating International Holocaust Memorial Day

In commemoration of international Holocaust Memorial Day, the lecture "How to Say Holocaust in German" was delivered on January 26, 2018 by Yossi Gilad. The lecture dealt with the development of the remembrance of the Holocaust in Germany after the end of World War II, with the changes that occurred over the years up to the present, and with the various struggles over this memory in Germany: who is struggling and for what. The lecture presented various questions, including: how did the Holocaust memory culture develop in Germany, and how does the memory culture take shape in a society which represents those who carried out the Holocaust and other crimes during World War II. who stand in line to be recognized as victims and does Germany deal with the horrific heritage of Nazism after the unification and during the arrival of an enormous flow of refugees? ■



The Opening of the "Brown Cardboard Folder" Exhibition in Terezin

When Ruth Lubin came up with the idea three years ago to create an art exhibition which will correspond with Felix Bloch's art displayed in Beit Theresienstadt, she did not imagine that the exhibition will gain so much success. Ruth is the daughter of the founders of Hadera, an esteemed artist and a curator. Among the exhibitions she curated in the past there were several which presented historical subjects from an artistic angle. The connection between history and art creates a new view, for example like the exhibition she curated in Khan Hadera museum, "Spread a Tablecloth and Bless" which mirrored a way of life, customs, and food during Hadera's 117 years, starting with the First Aliya and ending with the Aliya of Ethiopian Jews.

In the case of Felix Bloch's art, what attracted her attention was the material that Bloch elected to use – a brown cardboard office folder (probably because there was no other choice, due to the conditions in the ghetto). This is also the name of the exhibition. One can read about the exhibition in detail in issue 81 of "Dapei Keshet".

After it was exhibited in several places in the country, the exhibition arrived at the Terezin Memorial – PAMÁTNÍK TEREZÍN, in the Czech Republic. The opening of the exhibition took place on September 14, in the presence of the mayor of Terezin Hana Rožčová, the Israeli ambassador to the Czech

Republic Daniel Meron and his wife, the president of the Jewish community Jan Munk, the president of the aid organization for victims of the Nazi regime "Živá Paměť" (Living Memory) Darina Sedláčková and many additional guests.

The director of the Terezin commemoration site, Jan Roubínek, gave a speech in praise of the long association between Beit



From right – Tami Kinberg, Daniel Meron, Ruth Lubin, Miroslav Veselý Jan Munk, Jan Roubínek.

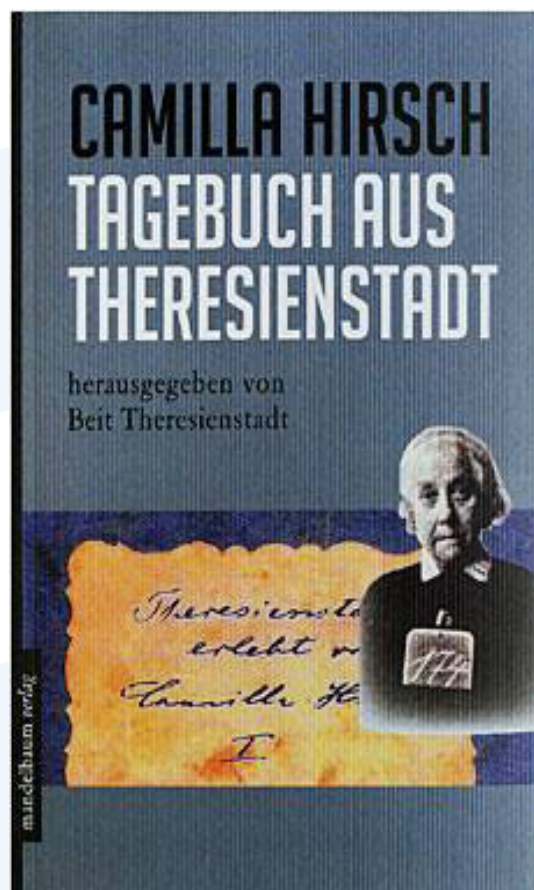
Theresienstadt and Terezin Memorial. The "Las Contrabass" band played a piece composed especially for the event by the contrabass musician Petr Tichý. The exhibition was very successful and was therefore extended for four months until the end of February. ■

Publication of Camilla Hirsch's Diary / Vienna, Austria

In commemoration of 79 years of Kristallnacht, the book launch of "Tagebuch aus Theresienstadt" by Camilla Hirsch was held at the Jewish Museum in Vienna. The book was published in Hebrew by Beit Theresienstadt in 2011, and now was published in the original language in which it was written, in cooperation with the Austrian publishing house Mandelbaum Verlag.

Camilla Hirsch's diary includes two notebooks written in small handwriting which are held in the Beit Theresienstadt archive. Camilla Hirsch was sent to the ghetto on July 15, 1942 when she was 73. The diary portrays an active, determined woman, who does not surrender to despair and continues to fight and struggle in spite of the numerous troubles she encounters. She created for herself, by her own hands, an internal and external framework of living, a world which enabled her to exist, while revealing perseverance and creativity. Camilla survived and was liberated in the special transport leaving from Theresienstadt to Switzerland in 1945.

The sisters Ruth Elkabetz and Miriam Prager, Camilla's brother's granddaughters participated in the book launch event at the Jewish Museum in Vienna. They were the ones who found the diary in the attic of their parents' house and took care of translating it and publishing it. Tami Kinberg, Beit Theresienstadt director and Michael Baiculescu, the owner of Mandelbaum publishing house also participated. Michael moderated a fascinating panel in which Ruth and Miriam described how they found the diary, and their search for the family history as a result of it. Tami answered the audience's questions about the Theresienstadt ghetto and mainly about the elderly people who were sent there, of which Camilla was one. ■



The First Period of the Agricultural Department in the Theresienstadt Ghetto

We heard a lot from the girls who worked in agriculture in the Theresienstadt ghetto. Thanks to the documents and the letters from the ghetto, and to interviews and testimonies given after the war, it is possible to learn about the development of the agricultural department; what was

to create for themselves separate vegetable gardens. In June 1943, Martin Gerson was deported with his wife and two children from Berlin to Theresienstadt. Gerson, a Zionist Jew, studied the profession of gardening in Ahlem, Germany. He worked in various agricultural estates and was in charge



Vegetable Garden, Margit Weinberger, Theresienstadt ghetto

required of those who worked in agriculture and how the department was managed from the first days when the first transport arrived at the ghetto.

The agricultural department, in contrast with the other departments which were under the supervision of the Jewish leadership in Theresienstadt, was under the close supervision of the German command in the ghetto. The town of Terezin became a ghetto for the Jews, but the spacious area of land, together with the variegated farms on location were intended for the Germans. 740 acres of land, with fruit bearing trees and animals – various fowls, cattle, sheep, horses and pigs as well as beehives, machines and a tool shed.

The members of the building transport AK, upon arriving in Theresienstadt, saw in the neglected area a place which would enable them to continue the activities they had started in the agricultural training camps of the Zionist youth movements. Their intention was to establish an agricultural unit to be engaged in agricultural training in the ghetto, in a productive occupation. For that purpose the members of the "Hehalutz" (Pioneer) movement in the ghetto who worked in agriculture in the vegetable gardens, some as instructors, joined together and established the main agricultural garden. The garden managers, who joined them with time, were former estate owners who were knowledgeable about the work.

Beginning in summer 1942, the youths, mostly ages 14–16, cultivated the land in the ditches between the walls and on the walls of the ghetto, for eight hours a day. This was how the vegetable gardens of the youths, charming nooks which combined a kind of agricultural training with education for physical and mental health. The "adults", ages 16 and up, had

of the Jewish training centers in Germany, as a consultant for agricultural subjects. It was only natural that upon his arrival in the ghetto, he would undertake the agricultural management there. The workers in the various agricultural branches got to know his tough hand. His high demands were intended to demonstrate productivity to the Germans, and at the same time to train as many youths as possible in agricultural work in order to prepare them for a future immigration to the Land of Israel. It was a way of thinking which corresponded to the outlook of the Jewish leadership and the members of the "Hehalutz" movement in the ghetto.

The Jewish leadership wanted to increase the number of agricultural workers like in the other departments in the ghetto, in order to protect them from being deported in the transports to the "east". From a personal point of view, the agricultural work enabled the workers to "escape" for several hours from the ghetto and to stay in the fresh air. Another advantage was the opportunity to steal sometimes a little of the agricultural produce, under great risk. The loot smuggled into the ghetto was mostly divided between family members and friends.

The flourishing and fruit yielding gardens are portrayed in paintings and artifacts created in the ghetto. Among other things it is possible to see the agricultural courtyard stuffed with mechanic and manual equipment, the vegetable gardens which were hidden among the ghetto walls and the girls working there with a hoe and a rake. The lists prepared for the Germans include the list of crops: cabbage, carrot, beet, and fruit trees, which "beautified" the dreariness of the place. ■

Visit by the Association of Immigrants from Yugoslavia in Beit Theresienstadt

Miri Derman, the Chairwoman of the Association of Immigrants from Yugoslavia, (Hitahdut Olej Ex Jugoslavija) organized a visit by the Association of Immigrants from Yugoslavia in Beit Theresienstadt. 284 Jews from Yugoslavia arrived in the Theresienstadt ghetto. They arrived in 1945 from various camps. Some of them were listed as arriving from Hungary. Zlatko (Zohar) Marton describes in his testimony: "We were transferred to Theresienstadt from Gunzendorf (Bavaria). We were not transferred directly, but through interim passages in a lengthy journey in cattle cars. In Theresienstadt there was exemplary order. People were separated immediately, women, men, children... We received food stamps, in different colors according to age and type of work. The children who worked received larger portions... The short period of three months in Theresienstadt was the most difficult period for me, emotionally and mentally."

Among the visitors was Martha Vinkler, a ghetto survivor. During the tour in the museum she added many interesting details about the life in the ghetto. Among other things she told how she was employed in the bank as a messenger. She did not have much work to do, since the bank was only a deception, so she found herself helping the wife of the bank manager to care for her newly born baby girl. Martha is looking for that girl who was born in the ghetto (see ad).

The testimonies brought by some of the members of the organization were added to our archive. If there are among the readers additional immigrants from Yugoslavia who arrived in the ghetto and did not document their story yet, they are invited to write down their story and send it to us. ■

Searching for Information

Tana Eva Bauer was born in the Theresienstadt ghetto on October 26, 1943. Her parents were Rudolf and Valerie Bauer. They arrived from Pilsen in transport S-1003. The father worked in the ghetto bank. The three of them survived. Eva has a sister named Vera.

We are searching for information about the members of the family. Please contact Beit Theresienstadt, Sima or Tami.



The Struggle against Racism and Discrimination on Football Fields

The FARE (Football Against Racism in Europe organization) was established in 1999 with the purpose of combatting incidents of racism and discrimination of all forms: extremist nationalism, sexism, homophobia, and discrimination against people with disabilities. Football is the most popular sport in the world. It appeals to a large audience and can motivate



social cohesion.

Each year in October the project of Football People weeks which is dedicated for various activities against racism and discrimination takes place. Under the auspices of this project a group from the German Football Club of Cologne arrived in Beit Theresienstadt. The group included fans and two social workers. Some of the fans of the Football Club of Cologne are extremist and violent, and the club makes an effort to handle and prevent such incidents. It employs social workers in a special project with the "Ultras". A short time before their arrival in Israel, during a game against the Arsenal team, several fans saluted the NAZI salute, and the incident was reported in the British media as well as in the Israeli media. In an interview for channel 5, Thomas Lokvila, a social worker accompanying the group said: "The idea of visiting Israel derives from the wish to prevent antisemitism in the stadium and around it. The goal is for the fans to tour Israel and get to know the Israeli culture and the Jewish religion, when returning back they will tell what they experienced and will assist in eliminating negative phenomena in the stadium."

The group toured the museum and met with Peter Lang (a member of Kibbutz Givat Haim Ihud, a survivor of Theresienstadt ghetto, and one of the founders of Beit Theresienstadt) in order to hear his story. The discussion with Peter was moving and when it was concluded he received the team scarf as a gift. ■

A Song Drives Away the Darkness

This year in Hanukah, for the second time, the history, music and remembrance seminar "A song drives away the darkness" was held at Beit Theresienstadt with the cooperation of "Mekorock Israel" under the director David Aviv. 16 youths from all over the country, secular and observant, participated in the seminar, where they learned about the Theresienstadt ghetto – the world of culture and music which was created in the ghetto, the human spirit and the endeavors of the ghetto prisoners. Chapters from the Books of Job, Kings, Jeremiah and Psalms were integrated in the studying, and were an inspiration for the seminar participants. The participants wrote, composed, and adapted 16 various songs under the guidance of the Beit Theresienstadt team, Noga Cohen from kibbutz Mishmar Hasharon, Naftali Harpaz the project coordinator from Kfar Haroeh, and the musical management of the artist Miki Shaviv.

Two diaries were source of inspiration for the young musicians: the diary of Alisa Shek and the diary of Tamar Herman. Tamar wrote the diary as letters to a friend who was sent from the Theresienstadt to the east, and did not return. She was sent to Theresienstadt ghetto in March 1942 when she was 14.5. In May 1945 she was liberated from Theresienstadt and immigrated to the Land of Israel in 1946. Her parents were murdered in Auschwitz in October 1944. Her sister died of typhus in the Bergen Belsen concentration camp, few days before the liberation of the camp.

On the last day of the seminar, all the songs which were created in its course were recorded ■

Light and Darkness / Noa Hochberg

I have no one, no one in the world but me
And nothing affects me
And my spirit and soul and I are beside
Ready to attack
The bundle of troubles
While one is still talking another arrives
To affect the balance of my life
My body is irritated
My heart is pierced
And I still create light and darkness
With my hands
Another song, another light to seek
And I will send my gaze at the sky
Discover a distant and quiet horizon

Not a bird and not an angel
While one is still talking another arrives...
Great wind, fire in rain
Vanity of vanities
The sound of silence remains again
Where warmth and light are rising.

Scars / Inbar Elisha

How is it strong and robust?
How doesn't it break?
It is the shedding of the leaves,
but the weeping does not sound
How the roots remain in the ground?
And perhaps if I were a tree, I did not have scars
And if I were inanimate I did not have feelings
Tell me, why did you forsake me?
Why was I left alone?
The sun lights up in black
And each day, is a grey day.



"Why did you forsake me?" (Psalms 22, 2)

The song portrays man's sorrow during the Holocaust. The sorrow was so great that man, out of despair, is jealous of the trees – of Nature. They stand strong and erect, their roots are sturdy and rooted robustly in the ground, and the branches are large and spread out with a lot of leaves. In addition to man's sorrow and misery, he asks God "why did you forsake me?"



Source of Inspiration: I took the story of Job to the place of the suffering and despair of the Holocaust, but in the end it was the hope and the great faith which held up the Jews. This is expressed in different ways in the diary of Alisa Ehrmann (Shek), where she expresses pain to a large extent but also finds ways to occupy herself and sanctify life. From Kings I chapter 28, the story of the prophet Elijah in the desert, I took the inspiration which appeared to me like the voice of God in the difficult period in World War II, and the attitude of the Jews to faith.

Dutch and Danish Jews in the Theresienstadt Ghetto / Dr. Margalit Shlain

Dutch Jews in Theresienstadt Ghetto

Dutch Jews were deported to Theresienstadt from 1934–1944 and were the fourth largest group in the camp after Czech Jews (from the Protectorate) and Jews from Germany and Austria. They were a heterogeneous group of 5,000, a small portion of the entire population of Dutch Jewry (less than 5%), who met the numerous requirements of “privileged Jews” and were approved by Eichmann for deportation to the “preferred” Theresienstadt camp.

They were mostly high-class Jews: war invalids and decorated Jews who served in World War I, including women decorated for their service as nurses, and their families, who immigrated to Holland from Germany and Austria after the Nazi rise to power. They also included the Jewish spouses of Germans, children whose parents were already deported to Theresienstadt, and 150 Jews who were members of the Dutch Nazi Party, as well as Protestant Christians of Jewish descent, or Jews who were baptized and were under the protection of the large Dutch Protestant and Reformed Churches, and the Calvinist and Catholic churches; 300 Portuguese Jews, the “wellborn”, members of the Spanish-Portuguese-Israelite community in Holland; 50 members of the “Blue Rider Group” that belonged to the German Expressionist art movement; the Barneveld group of 650 Jews selected for their exceptional contribution to the Dutch State and its culture – for example the President of the Dutch Red Cross, the deputy-Governor of Dutch Indonesia, scientists, intellectuals, artists, physicians, industrialists and others, who were brought to Barneveld in 1943 under the protection of Karel Johannes Frederiks, then-Secretary General of the Dutch Interior Office, and were transferred to Theresienstadt on September 4, 1944. Over half of them were Jews of German descent. They were protected from the transports from Theresienstadt until the liberation. Most of the deportees arrived from the Westerbork transit camp in Holland but also from the Bergen-Belsen camp in Germany – while most of Dutch Jews were deported directly to the extermination camps of Sobibor and Auschwitz.

4,924 Jews Arrived in Transports from Holland to Theresienstadt:

1. On April 22, 1943 transport XXIV/ 1 from Amsterdam with 297 prisoners, mostly German Jews.
2. On January 20, 1944 transport XXIV/2 from Westerbork with 872 prisoners.
3. On January 27, 1944 transport XXIV/3 from Bergen-Belsen in freight cars, 283 prisoners in bad condition.
4. On February 26, 1944 transport XXIV/4 from Westerbork with 809 prisoners.
5. On April 7, 1944 transport XXIV/5 from Holland with 289 prisoners.
6. On August 2, 1944 transport XXIV/6 from Holland with

223 prisoners.

7. On September 6, 1944, transport XXIV/7 from Westerbork with 2,081 prisoners, the largest transport to Theresienstadt.

Life in Theresienstadt

The Jews who were deported from Holland included privileged individuals of various citizenships who discovered to their distress that even the “preferred” Theresienstadt camp had transports going east. Though Dutch Jews were deemed a single group by the veteran prisoners of Theresienstadt, upon their arrival in the ghetto they were divided into two groups according to their country of origin, and each group adjusted differently to life in the camp. Most of the “German Dutch” who immigrated to Holland from Germany and Austria were adults, were fluent in German and were more involved in the life and the work in the camp. The situation was different for the “Dutch Dutch” who arrived as entire families. The more educated among them who knew German could be integrated into the prisoners’ community but for the uneducated Jew who did not know German, life in Theresienstadt was more difficult.



The arrival of a transport to ghetto Theresienstadt

In January 1944 the technical department and the housing department of the ghetto were required to evacuate within four days 3,300 Czech women and children who lived in the Hamburg barracks, and transfer them into the other barracks which were already overcrowded. The Hamburg barracks were cleaned and disinfected and prepared quickly to accommodate the transports from Holland which were considered privileged. The rooms prepared for them were designed for a smaller number of people and did not include bunk beds. Giving Dutch Jews the preferred rooms and the worsening conditions of the Czech women and children caused deep animosity between Czech and Dutch Jews. According to Siegfried van den Bergh, a Jew of Dutch descent, this made the Czechs want to get back at the Dutch, con them or slander them before the camp Commandant Rahm with unfounded complaints, and the Dutch Jews realized bitterly that all the preferred jobs were at the hands of the Czech Jews. Due to the different

characteristics of the deportees from Holland it was difficult for them to unite into an influential group in the ghetto. Most of the Dutch parents did not want to place their children in the children's houses and youth houses and therefore only few children who arrived in the transports from Holland were placed in children's houses in the ghetto. In the spring and summer of 1944 Prof. Jehuda Lion Palache organized classes and a children's house for 100 Dutch children up to the age of 14 in the Hamburg barracks, where Dutch was the spoken language. The Dutch Jews were the only group which did not receive packages from outside, so the third Elder of the Jews, Dr. Benjamin Murmelstein, organized special meals for the Dutch children, and took care of clothing for those Dutch Jews whose luggage was confiscated.

The Exploitation of Dutch Jews for the Germans' Deception Efforts

The first transport of privileged Jews from Amsterdam, mostly native of Germany, arrived in passenger cars, because Seyss-Inquart, the Commissioner of the Reich in Holland, regarded it as a propaganda maneuver, as if it was a "transfer of residence". In January 20, 1944 the Germans photographed the arrival of a transport of Dutch Jews which included well-known personalities, and their reception by the second Elder of the Jews, Dr. Paul Eppstein, for a planned Nazi propaganda film about Theresienstadt. In the course of beautifying Theresienstadt for the visit of the International Red Cross delegation on June 23, 1944, special attention was given to improving the accommodations and the facades of the buildings where Dutch and Danish Jews lived, which were within the path of the visit. The most privileged among them were later forced by the Germans to forcibly participate in the propaganda film shot in the ghetto in September 1944 – "Theresienstadt – a Documentary from a Jewish Resettlement Region".

Representation of Dutch Jews in the Ghetto's Council of Elders

Early in September 1944, Prof. David Cohen, one of the former heads of the Joodse Raad in Holland, arrived in Theresienstadt from Westerbork. He was added to the Council of Elders as the representative of Dutch Jews, but according to van den Bergh, who previously worked in the Joodse Raad, Cohen concentrated on the welfare of his cronies and ignored the rest of Dutch Jews in the ghetto, who remained without protection. In December 1944 Edward Moritz Mayer, who was a Professor at Leiden University, was elected to the Fifth Council of Elders as the representative of Dutch Jews and indeed acted on their behalf.

3,010 Dutch Jews (61.5%) were deported from Theresienstadt to Auschwitz. 169 Dutch Jews died in Theresienstadt.

The Liberation

On February 5, 1945, 433 Dutch Jews, 286 women and 147 men, were selected to leave on a transport to freedom from Theresienstadt to Switzerland. On Liberation Day on May 8, 1945, there were 1,295 Dutch Jews in Theresienstadt. Including those who left for Switzerland, then, 1,728 Dutch Jews survived in Theresienstadt, out of 4,924 (35%) of the deportees from Holland, a high percentage compared with the low percentage of Dutch Jews who survived in Auschwitz (1.48%). On June 6–8 Dutch Jews left Theresienstadt for Pilsen and from there went to Holland. However, the return of the "German Dutch" was full of difficulties, since they did not have Dutch citizenship and could not demand their return to Holland.

Danish Jews in Theresienstadt Ghetto

Danish Jews comprised the smallest group among the Jews in Theresienstadt (less than 1%), but their arrival had an enormous impact on the life of the rest of the prisoners and on the ghetto's external development. Early in October 1943 the Germans planned the extermination of Danish Jews. Following the combined efforts of the Danish authorities, the Danish underground, and the Jewish community, most of the Jews of Denmark (over 7,000) were smuggled to Sweden on boats.

Still, the Germans captured 476 Jews who were left behind, and they were detained and deported to Theresienstadt ghetto. On October 5, 1943 the first transport arrived with 83 deported Danish Jews, on October 6 the second transport arrived with 198 people, and on October 14 arrived 175 people. They were 464 in total (including 8 Jews who arrived in the ghetto individually. Among them was the rabbi Dr. Max Friediger, the former chief rabbi of Denmark, who was added to the Elders Council in the ghetto as the representative of Danish Jews until the liberation. On November 4, 1943, it was agreed between Adolph Eichmann, and Werner Best, the Reich Commissioner of occupied Denmark, that all Danish Jews (including Jews without citizenship who were in Denmark as refugees) who were deported from Denmark will remain in Theresienstadt (i.e. will not be sent to Auschwitz), and that the representatives of the Central Danish Administration and of the Red Cross will visit them.

The Reich Main Security Office approved the agreement with one reservation: "It is undesirable that the visit will take place before the spring of 1944". The date of the visit was postponed again and again in order to have time to prepare the ghetto. The Germans' approval of the visit, and the developments following the visit, had decisive implications for the character of the Theresienstadt ghetto later on, and for the fate of its Jewish prisoners in the spring and autumn of 1944.

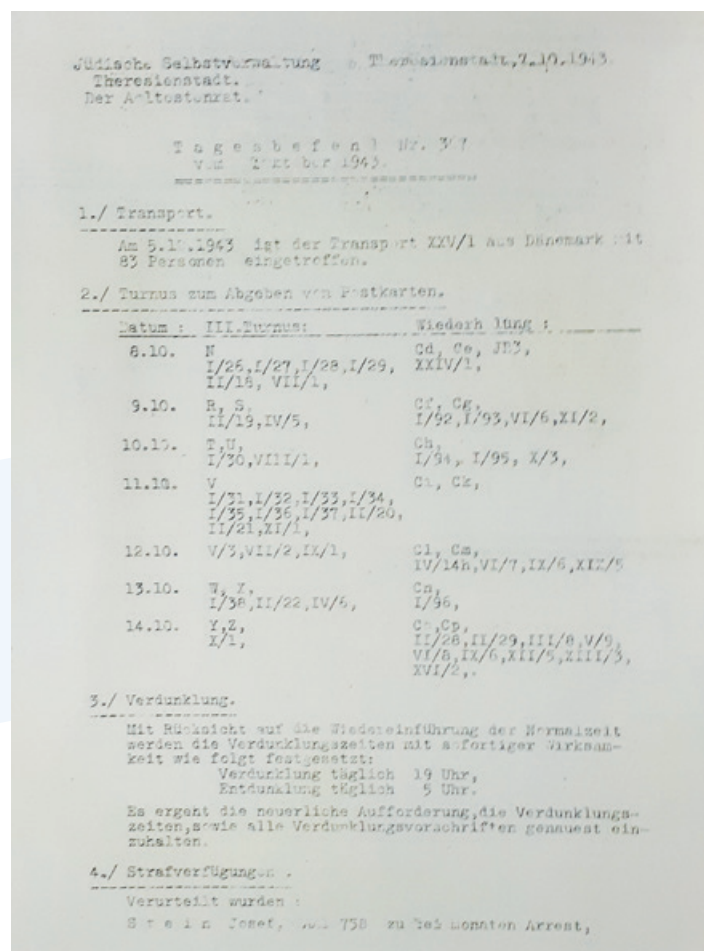
The Reception of Danish Jews in the Ghetto

In contrast with the usual proceeding, upon their arrival in Theresienstadt, those on the first transport from Denmark were not sent with their luggage to the "normal" reception procedure (the Schleuse), but had a sort of "official welcome reception" held by Dr. Paul Eppstein, the second Jewish Elder in the ghetto, in the Aussig barracks, with the ghetto command, Haindl's men (Gestapo), and other S.S. personnel present. Eppstein told them that each one of them was supposed to work according to his qualifications, and told them about the self-government of the town, its institutions and well developed cultural life. All this to convince the "newcomers" to write soothing postcards to Denmark. After the postcards were collected, the newcomers "earned" their actual reception to the camp – their money and all their valuables were taken from them, and they were compelled to wear the yellow star on their clothing (which they did not have to wear in Denmark) like all the rest of the prisoners in the ghetto. Initially the Danish Jews were confined to isolated wooden barracks which became vacant after the children from Bialystok were sent from the ghetto. Later, they were housed in better accommodations inside the ghetto, though only few of them were deemed "privileged". In contrast with the other Jewish prisoners who lived in oppressively overcrowded barracks, separated from their families, Danish Jews could be housed with their families. They were allowed to send and receive letters, received a regular shipment of food and medicines from private Danish organizations, under the auspices of the Welfare Ministry and the Social Security office in Denmark, and from June 1944 through the Danish Red Cross. The food packages were beneficial for their health and were used for trade with other prisoners, with the Czech gendarmes and with S.S. personnel, and occasionally for bribing as well. Those packages were also important for their psychological impact – they were evidence that the prisoners were not forgotten, and that there was hope that someone would act to rescue them. Of all the privileges given to the Danish Jews who were deported to Theresienstadt, the most important was the immunity from transport, which applied to everyone deported from Denmark whether or not they were Danish citizens.

The Visit of the International Red Cross Delegation in Theresienstadt and its Consequences for the Danish Jews and for the Ghetto

In October 1943 the Danish request to visit the Jews who were deported from Denmark to Theresienstadt, and the persistent requests of Dr. Ronald Marty, the head of the international Red Cross delegation in Berlin, from the Reich authorities, to visit Theresienstadt and examine the living conditions of the Jews in the ghetto, were approved in principle by Himmler. The success of the visit was very important for Himmler, under the assumption that presenting the "good" condition of the Jews in Theresienstadt will refute the reports on

their extermination and will serve as his alibi, and will help his negotiations with the Western allies against the Soviet Union and Communism, and to save Germany. Vast plans for "beautifying the town" were made by the German authorities before the visit of the international Red Cross delegation in Theresienstadt, which was set for June 23, 1944, in order to show it off to international organizations as a model Jewish camp and as part of the Nazi propaganda campaign. Since the Danish Jews were at the core of this visit, early in June 1944 those of them who were considered by the German to be the most representative were moved to separate apartments and were allowed to have their own family life. All the other Danish Jews were moved to three renovated furnished houses with single beds, which had tables and chairs, which were not in the prisoners' residences in the camp. The sick and exhausted were also moved there in case someone asked about them, so that they could be presented easily. On June 22, 1944, one day before the day of the visit, all the Danish men were summoned by Eppstein for a muster. With Eichmann's representative Ernst Moehs and the camp Commandant Karl Rahm present, he



A day order for the arrival of Danish Jews in the ghetto

announced the German instructions, how to behave and what to answer during the visit. Finally, he threatened them that if they do not follow the instructions fully, the German will halt the food shipments, and all the Danish Jews will be sent from the ghetto on the next transport "east". On June 23, 1944 the

international Red Cross delegation arrived in Theresienstadt, and included two representatives from Denmark: Frans Hvass, the director of the political department in the Danish Foreign Office, Dr. Juel Henningsen, an inspector from the Health Ministry in Copenhagen, a representative of the Danish Red Cross; and Dr. Maurice Rossel, a representative of the international Red Cross.

In 1972 Hvass explained that during the visit in 1944 he and Henningsen directed their attention at the health condition of the Danish Jews, their clothes and their living conditions. "In Denmark there was an impression that Theresienstadt was a very primitive concentration camp, full of 'Muselmänner' collapsing in the street and dying in multitudes." Their impression was very different and led to the positive tone of the report which did include several critical comments on the housing accommodations which were "overcrowded". They were told that Theresienstadt was not a transit camp but a final destination and the Germans announced explicitly that no Dane was transported from there. After the visit had been concluded the Danish representatives compared their impressions with those of the Swiss representative and found that they were similar. The visit of the Danish representatives in Theresienstadt had positive consequences for Danish Jews imprisoned there. The Germans reconfirmed officially that they will not be deported from Theresienstadt. The shipment of packages to them was officially allowed and was organized from that point on by the Red Cross, which undertook their mail service, and a big shipment of books was delivered to them from Denmark at their request.

However, the German satisfaction with the visit in the ghetto had tragic ramifications for the Jews in Theresienstadt, of whom 18,402 were deported to Auschwitz in October 1944, and for those who were deported from the ghetto to the "family camp" built for them in Birkenau. Immediately after the visit their fate was decided, and they were selected for extermination like the rest of the Auschwitz prisoners. There were 11,000 Jews left in the ghetto, those 65 years and up and all the Danish Jews.

The Liberation of Danish Jews and its Influence on the Prisoners in Theresienstadt

In February 1945, the Count Folke Bernadotte, Vice President of the Swedish Red Cross, met with Himmler and succeeded to get his consent for the immediate release of all Scandinavian prisoners from the concentration camps: first to transfer them to the Neuengamme concentration camp in Germany and later to Denmark and to Sweden. The Germans, however, did not agree to include Jews among them.

Since Bernadotte elected to continue the rescue efforts in Theresienstadt without the Danish Jews, the Danish prisoners decided to rescue their country's Jews from Theresienstadt by themselves. Dr. Johannes Holm, head of the Danish Health Services in the combined Red Cross branch of Denmark and

Sweden, was assisted by S.S. Obersturmbannführer (Lieutenant Colonel) Dr. Rennau, Himmler's liaison with Bernadotte. With great effort the two managed to receive from the Gestapo in Berlin the necessary documents for the release of Danish Jews, and to immediately travel to the German command center in Theresienstadt. The camp Commandant stipulated that Danish Jews could be released only with the consent of the Minister of State Karl Hermann Frank. Holm and Rennau traveled to Prague and received Frank's consent. Rabbi Friedberg was summoned to the command center and was notified that all Danish Jews should pack their belongings for their release. The morning of April 15, 1945 was an exciting day for all the prisoners in Theresienstadt. 425 Danish Jews (50 of whom died in the camp) boarded the buses of the Swedish Red Cross, "the white buses". Among them were three children born in the ghetto, four women (Czech Jews) who married Danes and Danish born Jew who joined their group in the ghetto.

The departure of the Danes symbolized the realization of the dream of all the Jews in the ghetto, who had been dreaming for years of going back home. "They were not envied... they were loved, because thanks to them vital food provisions were received by the inhabitants." All the prisoners came to say goodbye. "Swedish drivers drove slowly from the ghetto outside and led Jews to life, to freedom. People stood there dazed, shouted and waved... crowded up to Q7 and 'Victoria' and into the closed quarter... The orchestra played, and a spring morning was above in its glow." Two days later they arrived at the Danish border town of Padborg and from there they were transported by ferry to Malmö, Sweden. ■



The white buses for the Jews of Denmark, April 1945

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