

The Boy with Six names

GLOSSARY & REFLECTION

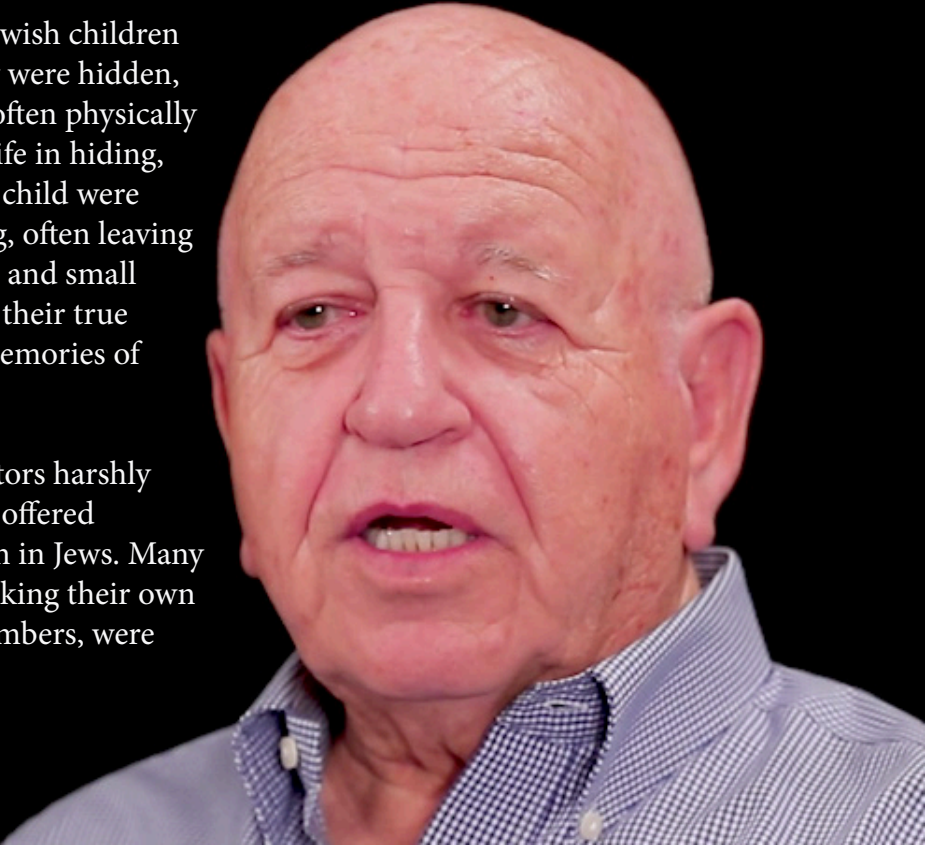
LOS ANGELES MUSEUM OF THE
HOLOCAUST



BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA: In March, 1939, the independent state of Slovakia was created as an ally of Nazi Germany. Slovak Jews were quickly subjected to humiliation, persecution, and restriction. In November 1940, Slovakia joined the Axis Powers, participating in the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Slovakia became the first Axis partner to consent to the deportation of its Jewish citizens, signing an agreement with Germany in March 1942 permitting the deportations. Between March and October 1942, Slovak authorities imprisoned about 57,000 Slovak Jews in concentration camps within the country, then transported them to the border of Germany to turn them over to the SS. Most of those deported ended up at Auschwitz, Majdanek, and Sobibor concentration camps. By the end of the Holocaust, German and Slovak authorities deported more than 70,000 Jews from Slovakia, 60,000 of whom would be murdered.

HIDDEN CHILDREN: Thousands of Jewish children survived the Holocaust because they were hidden, sometimes with false identities and often physically concealed from the outside world. Life in hiding, and the actual act of hiding a Jewish child were extremely dangerous and frightening, often leaving severe psychological impacts. Babies and small children often grew up not knowing their true name or identity, and without any memories of their real families.

German officials and their collaborators harshly penalized those who aided Jews and offered rewards to individuals willing to turn in Jews. Many of those who hid Jewish children, risking their own lives and the lives of their family members, were non-Jews.



SCHUTZSTAFFEL: The SS, led by Heinrich Himmler, was the major paramilitary organization under Hitler. It maintained the police state of Nazi Germany, which encompassed the Gestapo, soldiers of the Waffen SS, and concentration and death camp guards. From the beginning of the Nazi regime, Hitler entrusted the SS first and foremost with the removal and eventual murder of political and so-called racial enemies of the regime. The SS was staffed by men who perceived themselves as the “racial elite” of the Nazi future, and was ultimately charged with the leadership of the “Final Solution,” or the murder of all European Jews. The branch that guarded the concentration camps was known for their extreme brutality and carried out numerous war crimes during WWII. Following the Holocaust, neo-Nazis and other white supremacists resurrected the SS unit symbols to continue inciting fear and asserting racial superiority.



GHETTOIZATION: Beginning in 1939, Jews were forced into designated, cramped, and sealed areas of cities called ghettos. The largest of these ghettos was established in Warsaw, where nearly half a million Jews were interned in horrid conditions. The German authorities attained several goals by establishing the ghettos: they gathered large numbers of Jews together under conditions of severe congestion and close supervision, limited their food and medical supply leading to death, deprived them of their property, exploited their labor, isolated them from the rest of the world, made them vulnerable and unprepared at crucial moments, and incited the local population against the Jews, whom they already resented.



RAVENSBRÜCK: The Ravensbrück concentration camp was the largest camp for women. By the end of 1942, the female inmate population of Ravensbrück was about 10,000 and by January 1945, the camp had more than 50,000 prisoners. The barracks were extremely overcrowded, the sanitary conditions were terrible, and prisoners in the camp were subjected to periodic “selections” in which Germans isolated those considered too weak or injured to work and killed them.

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU: Located in German-occupied Poland, construction of the Auschwitz camp complex began in April 1940. Like most concentration camps, Auschwitz I was constructed for three primary purposes: to incarcerate real and perceived enemies of the state; to supply a free labor force; and to kill targeted groups. Auschwitz-Birkenau was immense, with sections for women, men, Roma, and families. During the first half of 1942, the SS expanded gassing operations and capabilities at the camp to accommodate the large numbers of Jews being deported and murdered. The best estimates of the number of victims murdered at the Auschwitz camp complex indicate 1.1 million people were killed between 1940-1945.

Konz.-Lager Auschwitz

Folgende Anordnungen sind beim Schriftverkehr mit Häftlingen zu beachten:

- 1.) Jeder **Schutzhäftling** darf im Monat zweimal von seinen Angehörigen Post empfangen und an sie absenden. Die Briefe an die Häftlinge müssen gut lesbar mit Tinte geschrieben sein und dürfen nur zwei Seiten je 15 Zeilen enthalten. Briefumschläge müssen ungefaltet sein. In einen Brief darf nur 1 Briefmarke à 12 Pf. oder 6 Pf. beilegt werden. Alles Andere ist verboten. Postkarten haben 10 Zeilen. Lichtbilder dürfen als Post nicht verwendet werden.
- 2.) **Geldsendungen** sind nur durch Postanweisung gestattet.
- 3.) Es ist **darauf zu achten**, dass bei Geld oder Postsendungen die genaue Adresse, bestehend aus Name, Geburtsdatum, und Häftlings-Nummer, auf die Sendungen zu schreiben ist. Wenn die Adresse fehlerhaft ist, geht die Post an den Absender zurück oder wird vernichtet.
- 4.) **Zeitungen** sind gestattet, dürfen aber nur durch die Poststelle des K.L. Auschwitz bestellt werden.
- 5.) **Pakete** dürfen nicht geschickt werden, da die Häftlinge im Lager alles kaufen können.
- 6.) **Entlassungsgesuche** aus der Schutzhaft an die Lagerleitung sind zwecklos.
- 7.) **Sprecherlaubnis** und Besuche von Häftlingen im Konzentrationslager sind grundsätzlich nicht gestattet.

Der Lagerkommandant.

Absender:
Name: ...
Schoren am: ...
Häftl.-Nr.: 45829

Meine Anschrift:
Janet ...
11/11 1892
XV. ...

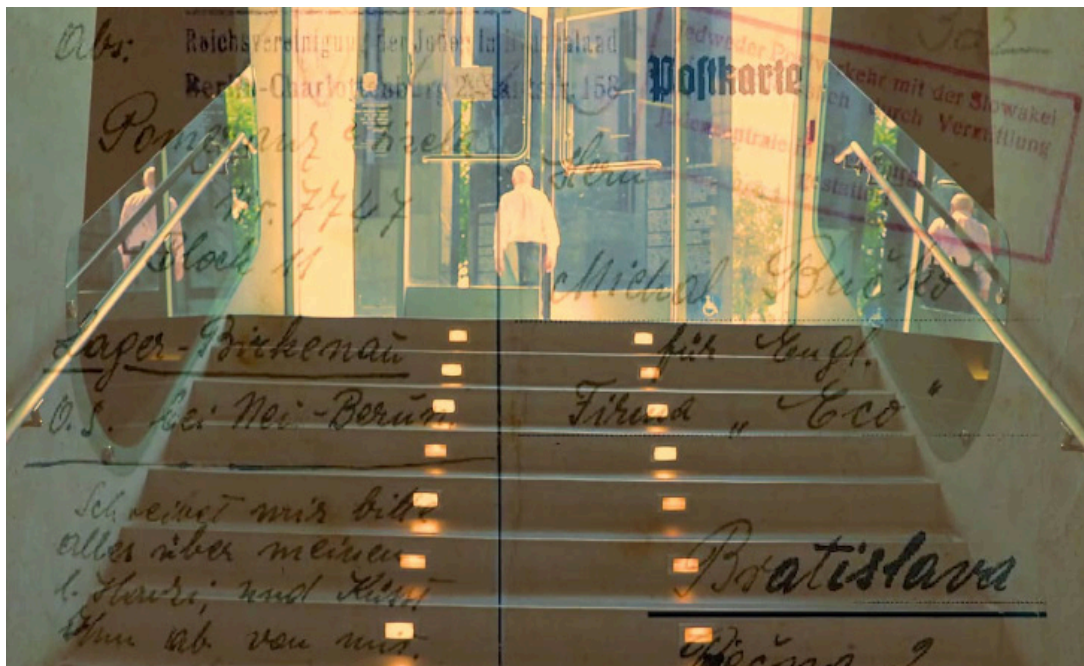
POSTCARDS OUT OF AUSCHWITZ: Prisoners at Nazi concentration camps in German territory were allowed to send and receive mail on a very limited basis. Letters written to and by Nazi concentration camp prisoners were subject to the scrutiny of regulations: generally, letters had to be written in German and were censored by S.S. personnel; they were sent on special preprinted stationary; sending money was permitted but packages were not; and newspapers were permitted but only if ordered through the concentration camp post office. Though inmates could, in theory, send or receive two letters or cards each month, the regulations governing correspondence could be suspended arbitrarily and without notice.

REHABILITATION IN SWEDEN: Near the end of the war, the Swedish Red Cross managed to transfer the last 14,000 women in the Ravensbrück camp, including 2,000 Jews, to Sweden for rehabilitation. Following the end of the war and liberation of the camps, thousands of survivors were brought to hospitals and displaced persons camps to heal and start new lives in Sweden. By the late 1950s, half of these Jewish refugees emigrated to the United States, Canada, and Israel, like Jerry's mother.

BRITISH MANDATE IN ISRAEL: In the early 1920s, the U.K. committed to the establishment of a Jewish national home in the British Mandate in Palestine. However, affected by Arab pressure, the British withdrew their support for the Jewish state and created strict quotas to limit Jewish immigration. However, the violence and destruction of the Holocaust forced Jews to desperately emigrate, including to the British Mandate through a policy called Aliya Bet, meaning illegal immigration. Approximately 530,000 immigrants entered the British Mandate from 1900-1948, when the State of Israel was established; one-quarter of that number entered by way of Aliya Bet.

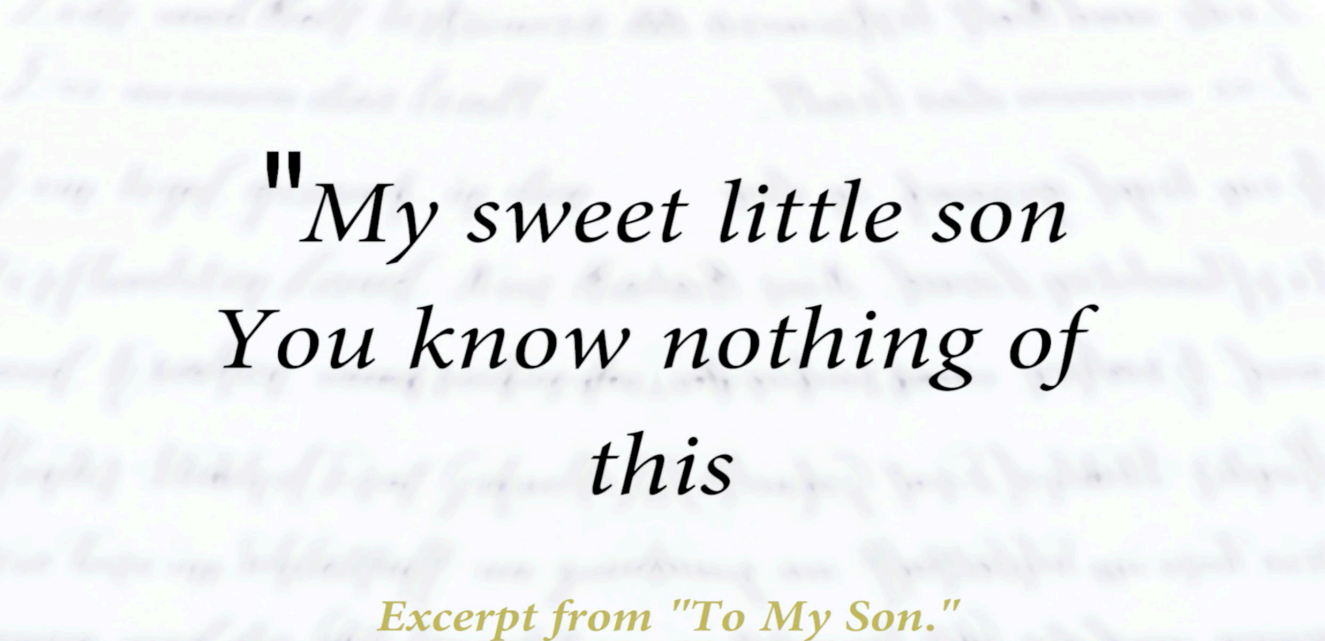


CYPRUS DETENTION CAMPS: Between August 1946 and May 1948, the British government intercepted more than 50,000 Holocaust survivors seeking to resettle in the British Mandate and interned them in detention camps established on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus. The detention camps were under constant guard, surrounded by barbed wire, and conditions were harsh, which led to intense psychological and physical harm for many of the survivors. Following the establishment of the state of Israel in May 1948, the Cyprus detention camps ceased operation and those imprisoned were able to enter Israel.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What surprised you about Jerry's story? Were there any parts of his story that changed your understanding of the Holocaust, or what life was like for children in hiding?
2. How do you think Jerry felt before, during, and after the war?
3. What is in a name? How do Jerry's six different names reflect his life story? Can you remember what they were, and why he was given each of them?
4. How is a name connected to personal identity? How was Jerry's identity impacted by his experience? What does your name mean to you and your identity?
5. What does the term upstander mean? Can you identify a few upstanders in Jerry's story, and the role they played in saving his life?
6. Describe Jerry's relationship with his mother- what do you think she means to him and how has she inspired him? How and why are interpersonal relationships important during difficult times?
7. What artifacts or objects are important to Jerry and this story? why? What do Jerry's mom's poems mean to her? to him? Write a poem of your own to describe how you feel and what is going on around you.
8. In the video, Jerry urges us to "study history, because it has a tendency of repeating itself." What do you think he means by this? Can you think of another reason that it is important to study history?



*"My sweet little son
You know nothing of
this*

Excerpt from "To My Son."