

MAGNA CARTA

NULLUS LIBER HOMO CAPIATUR
VEL IMPRISONETUR, AUT
DISSEISIETUR AUT UTLAGETUR,
AUT ALIQUO MODO DESTRUATUR.
NEC SUPER EUM IBIMUS, NEC
SUPER EUM MITTEMUS, NISI PER
LEGALE JUDICIUM PARIUM
SUORUM VEL PER LEGEM TERRE

REX. JOHN III. 1215



— OFER IDAN —



WHY "MAGNA CARTA"?

MAGNA CARTA, a British document signed by king John in 1215, was not a constitution. It was not even written for all the British subjects. Yet, it was the beginning of modern democracy.

The **BEATLES** gave us a great song: **ALL WE NEED IS LOVE**. I believe that love is not enough. The world desperately needs leaders who remember what love is, what nature is to us, how we can live better and change things for the future of our children and our planet.
The clock is ticking.

Ofer Idan

Credits:

The photocopy of the letter on page 104, which was published on August 27th, 1947, is printed here
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The copy of first page of YEDIOTH AHRONOTH from June 6th 1967 3rd edition on page 48 is printed with
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MAGNA CARTA BY OFER IDAN
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Mr. General Secretary,

This book is printed as a special letter for you.

Every country, state and nation have their private "MAGNA CARTA". This is why I named my exhibition with this name.

I am the son of a refugee who escaped from Nazi Germany in 1940 on his way to build new life in Palestine. We, in Israel, know very well what it means to be a refugee, to live in camps, to be oppressed, abused and killed by the millions.

The birth of Israel, after 2000 years in exile, was a miracle by any measure. We never forgot our land, we never left it. Jewish communities have been living here always.

This book tells the story of my exhibition, my people, my country and my private life. I cannot separate all these. In between the exhibition is also telling the story of democracy in which we believe strongly.

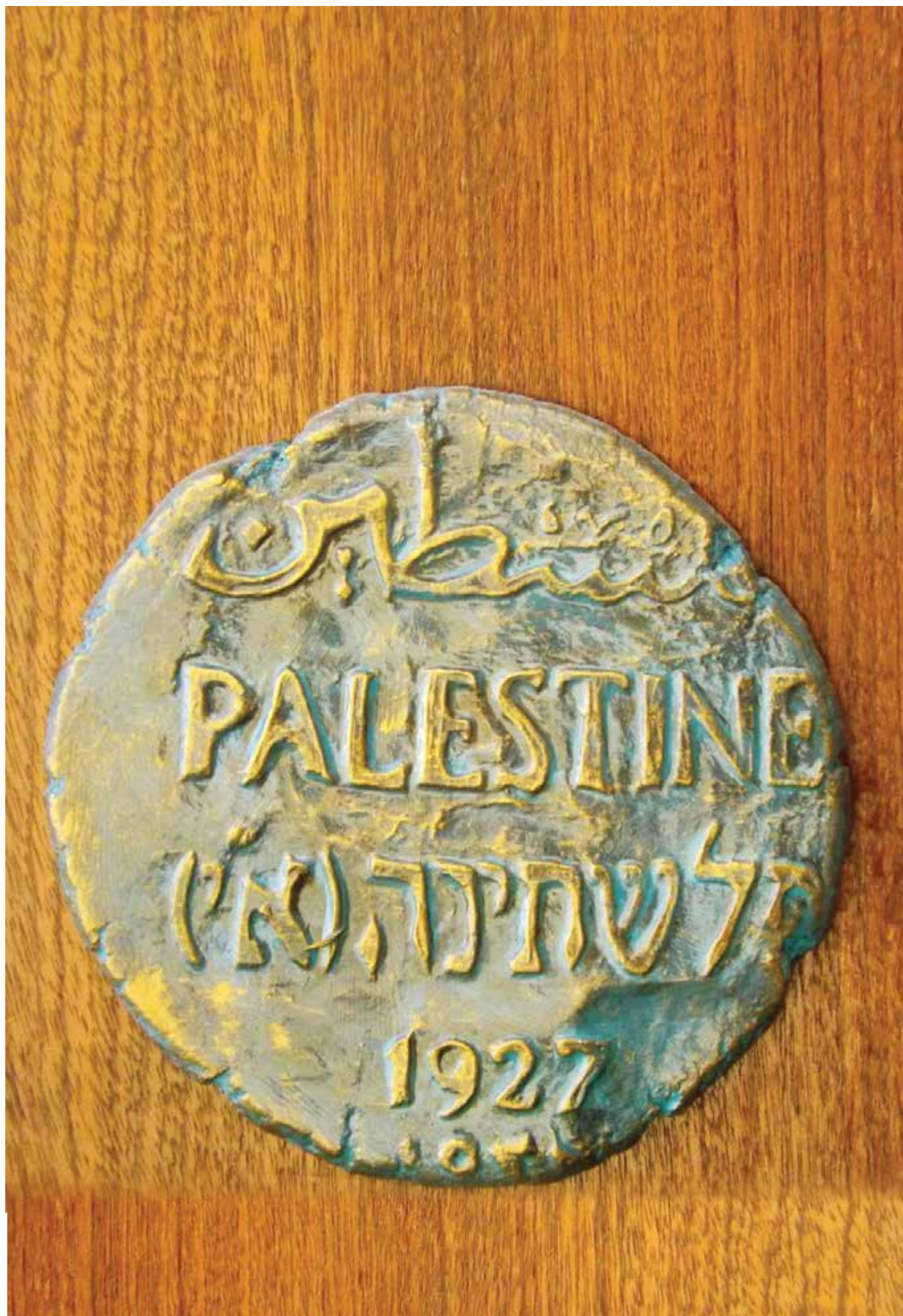
The exhibition was born in 2001, due to the fact that I discovered that I suffer from PTSD: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This because I took part in a war 28 years earlier, in 1973. I never spoke about the war till 2001 and the copper foil you see in this book helped me to start talking.

I ask you, please, to invite me with this exhibition, to present it in the UN center in New York. Nor as a formal ambassador of Israel but as a citizen, a father and a grandfather who wants to tell his story, to tell that the people in Israel wish for peace and better future. No politics involved.

I send a copy to our Israeli ambassador, Mr. Danny Danon, and to FORWARD ASSOCIATION, the publishers of FORVERTS, the Jewish paper in NYC. They have a part inside this book.

With all due respect,

OFER IDAN
ISRAEL, 2017



PALESTINE, 1927

The coin on page 4 appears to be ancient, but actually, I made it with clay and gave it the impression of being antique bronze. Each and every conqueror of the Holy Land left behind a legacy of coins, coins of gold, silver, bronze and other metals. Through these coins, the entire story of this agonizing land unfolds.

This specific coin shows many things: Hebrew, Arabic and English – the three official languages of the land at the time of the British Mandate in Palestine. Arabic is also an official language today, but few Israelis speak it.

The name Palestine is written on the coin in three languages. This coin that I made tries to express the ancient nature of the land.

Magna Carta shows a few coins like this one, from different times throughout history, reminders of bloody wars when new armies won this land from others.

Coins were always used for two purposes: first, as a means of payment in markets; second, to display a likeness of the current ruler of the land. Most coins carried the figure of a king or an emperor.

Israeli coins, in ancient times, never displayed likenesses. It was against religious doctrine. On those antique Israeli coins you can see leaves of trees, musical instruments, palm trees and items which belong to the Holy Temple.

The State of Israel had used some or all of these symbols on the new coins since its inception. Pictures of people can be found on banknotes. In other countries pictures of monarchs and other living leaders are imprinted on coins. Not in Israel, however.



CHAPLIN

In the 1950's, I was a child. My heroes were Laurel and Hardy, Charlie Chaplin, Tom and Jerry, Mickey Mouse and all their friends. I was very naïve and far removed from trouble. We lived in Ramat Gan, close to Tel Aviv, and life looked promising. Next door there lived a wonderful family: Dr. Naji Chitayat from Iraq, his wife and three sons. One day they all disappeared from my life without notice.

Charles Spencer Chaplin doesn't need my help to be famous. When I was a child, everyone knew who he was. The children didn't know that he was also the producer, the director and sometimes even the composer of his films. He was funny and he made us laugh. That was all we wanted.

Chaplin is part of my exhibition because he represents at least two sides of society: the eternal tramp who had nothing and the producer who had everything. In America people always have the choice to be one of the two, even if they have never considered it.

America feared socialism and communism as far back as I can remember, especially when Russia was involved. The Russians detested the American way of life. Not surprising. Every Russian citizen got a job from the state, education – free, housing – free, but life was very modest, to say the least. No one was hungry, perhaps; but no one could get rich. What a perfect world.

Being a little boy, I never knew anything about socialism or communism. All I knew was that I loved those funny movies.

Something good happened to Russia and many Jews were allowed to leave to Israel. Everyone can visit Russia today. I believe that most of the fears on all sides disappeared.

Winds of change.



TEL HAI

The lion on page 8 is made of copper foil. It is one of my very first works. The real lion is a big stone statue in Tel Hai, a small place in the Northern Galilee in Israel, next to kibbutz Kfar Gil'adi. The lion was made by a sculptor named Melnikov in memory of eight pioneers who were killed there in 1919-1920. The town Kiryat Shmona is named after these eight men and women.

It all began when a group of pioneers came to live on that little farm. They desperately needed help to protect themselves: guns, ammunition, more people and more equipment. They sent coded messages to Tel Aviv and asked for assistance. In the letters, they referred to hammers instead of guns, nails instead of bullets, and more.

The leadership in Tel Aviv disagreed regarding the body responsible for the help – the labor organizations or the defense organizations? While they were still arguing, disaster arrived. Before all of this happened, the bosses in Tel Aviv asked Joseph Trumpeldor to go to Tel Hai to see how bad the situation was. Trumpeldor, who had been an officer in the Russian army in 1905-1906, lost an arm in the battle against Japan and spent time as POW in a Japanese prison. You can still visit the museum in Japan where a special department was dedicated on his behalf.

Trumpeldor came to Tel Hai and saw what the needs were. He wrote letters to the leadership that, unfortunately, did not help much. On March 1, 1920, Trumpeldor was killed together with five of his friends.

The myth attributes the quote: "Never mind, it is good to die for our country" to Trumpeldor. My last recollection from Ramat Gan, in 1960, before moving to Ashkelon, was the ceremony we had in the school yard in memory of Trumpeldor and Tel Hai, 40 years after the event. A few days later we moved to Ashkelon. That's why the Chitayats disappeared from my life.

Winds of change.



ASHKELON

As you already know, in 1960, my family moved to the small town of Ashkelon, less than 10 miles north of the Gaza Strip. My father and his brother had started a new metal business there several years earlier, and they decided that it was time to move with the families.

Ashkelon is very old, probably older than Jerusalem. We used to hike and pick up ancient coins from the dunes which surrounded all the new neighborhoods. It seems that in ancient times Ashkelon had produced coins for many customers throughout the Middle East.

Every contractor in Ashkelon knows that when digging the foundations of a new building, ancient statues or sarcophagi may be uncovered. Roman tombs, Byzantine basilica, different pieces of pottery and glass are among the artifacts that have been discovered. As far as I know, the first archeological excavation in the modern era took place in Ashkelon.

If you visit Ashkelon, you might be surprised by the variety of remains that you can see there, starting from the Canaanite Period or even earlier periods, such as the Chalcolithic Age, approximately 3000 years B.C. or before.

A high level of drinking water enabled the development of agriculture and this resulted in wine and oil. These, in turn, needed pottery for storage, and as a result, the local harbor was born. According to the number of antique churches, the population justified all these services, inside and outside the walls of Ashkelon.

The coin Ackalon symbolizes the richness of the coin minting industry in this small town. This coin displays the image of a dove, one of its symbols.

On page 10 you see a Canaanite arch which was found under the hills in Ashkelon. It was built appx. In the year 1950 B.C.



RON AND IDAN

Moshe Ron and Haim Idan were two brothers who left Ramat Gan in 1957, and started a new life in a place where the government offered low-priced land. They received 5000 square meters upon which they opened a metal workshop, the first business of its kind in Ashkelon. Farmers and builders, mechanics and small factories quickly became their clients.

Until 1960, the brothers drove the old American Dodge pictured on page 12 from Ramat Gan to Ashkelon and back daily, a difficult drive in those days. In 1960 they decided to move to Ashkelon.

In the upper picture on page 12, you can see the brothers in their metal workshop, together with some of their workers. Many of the workers initially lived in a ma'abara, a type of temporary or transitory housing common in Israel at that time. Later, the state provided proper housing for the immigrants.

The two brothers originally came from Berlin, Germany. They were considered to be professional and precise in their work, and were very much appreciated by their clients.

They produced cowsheds for farmers around Ashkelon and parts for solar panels for Miromit, a factory that produced solar water heaters, as well as many other products.

One of Ron and Idan's largest clients died suddenly, leaving not only a wife and four small daughters, but also a huge debt to Ron and Idan. Their dream of success died too early.

In the small picture below, on page 12, you see the brothers in Berlin, in approximately 1935.



THE MIDWIFE

I don't really remember how many children of her own Salima Darwish had, but she brought many more babies into the world those she gave birth to herself. You see, Salima Darwish was a midwife in Iraq and she continued in the ma'abara of Ashkelon after immigrating to Israel. In the picture, on page 14, she is leaning against the porch on the left. Salima came to Israel alone with her children, and I knew them all. They also lived in the ma'abara, but by the end of the 1950s, they had already settled in their new homes.

In the ma'abara, Salima's daughter Tirtza worked in a kindergarten, even though she was not yet 14 years old. You can see her sitting in the middle of the photo, surrounded by the children she taught. Every day after work, she had to wash her shirt for the next day; it was the only shirt she had.

Tirtza and her mother worked in an Orthodox Jewish kindergarten which was supported by the Agudat Israel party, whose purpose was to recruit people for their party, and this was the only job they were able to obtain during this period.

Living in the ma'abara was difficult. There was no running water, no electricity and no telephone. Those who had radios connected them to car batteries which they had to charge in a garage in Ashkelon. Neighbors came to sit under their windows whenever a football game was broadcast. Television did not exist in Israel until 1968.

For the Sabbath, people made cholent, a special Sabbath dish of meat, vegetables and legumes, which was cooked very slowly over a special kerosene stove. The pot was covered with a blanket, to prevent the heat from escaping. Many times the blanket caught fire, and the house burned down. With no vehicle, no telephone, and no water available, the house was lost, together with the food. Most of the families were religious, and due to the prohibition of extinguishing a fire on the Sabbath, no one was prepared to put out the fire.

Most importantly, the government gave every family a booklet of food stamps, as is visible behind the photo on the left. This was the only way to purchase basic foods. Families had to be registered at specific grocery stores. Only at stores where they were registered, were they allowed to buy flour, sugar, eggs, meat, chocolate, margarine and chicken, and only in limited, rationed quantities. Rationing was used throughout Israel. People had to follow publicized instructions for use of the food stamps. Those were the 1950s.

But of course, there was also the black market. Imagine that.



HORSE POWER

During the years 1948-1960, the State of Israel absorbed more than one million new immigrants. By far this was a task that no country had ever faced before: more than doubling its population in such a short period of time. In 1948, the population in Israel was approximately 650,000 people. These people had to improvise housing, schools, clinics and many more facilities for all of the refugees pouring in from Europe, North Africa, Iraq, Yemen and many other countries. Many of these countries allowed their Jewish citizens to leave for Israel. Yet some forced them to give up all of their property, and forbade them to return in the future. There was even a special stamp put in their passports: exiting without the possibility of returning.

Upon their arrival in Israel, refugees were given temporary places to live: transit camps with tents, wooden huts or tin huts, all without water, electricity or telephones. A camp such as this was called a ma'abara.

Very soon after this, Solel Boneh and other construction companies started building settlements and neighborhoods all over the country. In the smaller settlements, people were settled according to their country of origin in order to make their absorption into the country easier. Thus you could find villages where all the residents were Yemenites, Rumanians or Iraqis, for example. In towns and temporary camps, there was often greater diversity.

As you can see on page 16, the local means of transportation were very modest. Work was plentiful; newcomers who wanted to work were offered simple jobs and were given on-the-job training to learn a trade.

Many new factories were also built. Yuval Gad in Ashkelon, for example, produced giant cement pipes to transfer water from the north of the country to the south. At certain points in time, the factory had 2000 workers, some of whom walked to and from their ma'abara every day. The best welders were the Yemenites, so I was told by the manager of the metal department, Mr. Peter Erben, a survivor from Teresienstat and Auschwitz.

Everyone did his share in the building of this old-new country. We witnessed times which will never happen again in the life of this country.

That's why we love it.



YAPONKA

According to a story from the 1930s, the masons in Haifa invented the name yaponka for this wheelbarrow used to carry wet cement, as it reminded them of a Japanese rickshaw. For many years, it was a commonly found item at building sites in Israel and I don't know where they came from.

One day, a friend came to me with a box loaded with old pictures. He said that he had been told to clean out a building and was instructed to throw everything into the dumpster. I couldn't believe my eyes: 120 pictures of buildings from the early years of the State of Israel. Needless to say, I keep them all. You can see some of them here.

When I started going to school in Ashkelon, I was one of the minority of children in the class who were native Hebrew speakers. Most of my classmates spoke other languages in the schoolyard – Rumanian, Persian, Russian, Polish, Hindu, Hungarian, French, Arabic [spoken by immigrants from Morocco, Tunis, Iraq, Libya, Egypt and others], Spanish, English, German [Austria]. In fact, I'm sure I've forgotten a language or two.

And new families kept arriving. Our school was not able to handle the continuing influx of new children, so for two years, we attended school in two shifts: half of the classes met at 8.00 AM and the other half met at 12.00 noon. We had a cafeteria in school. Children of families who couldn't afford to serve meals during the day were able to have cooked meals at school. We also learned basic cooking, and worked in the cafeteria in shifts.

Twice a month, the same cafeteria became a movie theater, and we were able to watch movies for about 20 cents a ticket. Imagine life in our school.

I miss the days of the yaponka.



1960

As I have already told you, 1960 was a turning point in my life. We left a big town in the center of the country, and began a new life in the southern town of Ashkelon. The state of Israel had replaced its former currency with new coins and banknotes, an example of which you can see on page 20. The coin displayed is a magnified replica of 10 agorot made of clay, but made to look like bronze. The banknote is a one-lira note, printed in 1958, but put into circulation only in 1960. It was very symbolic for me.

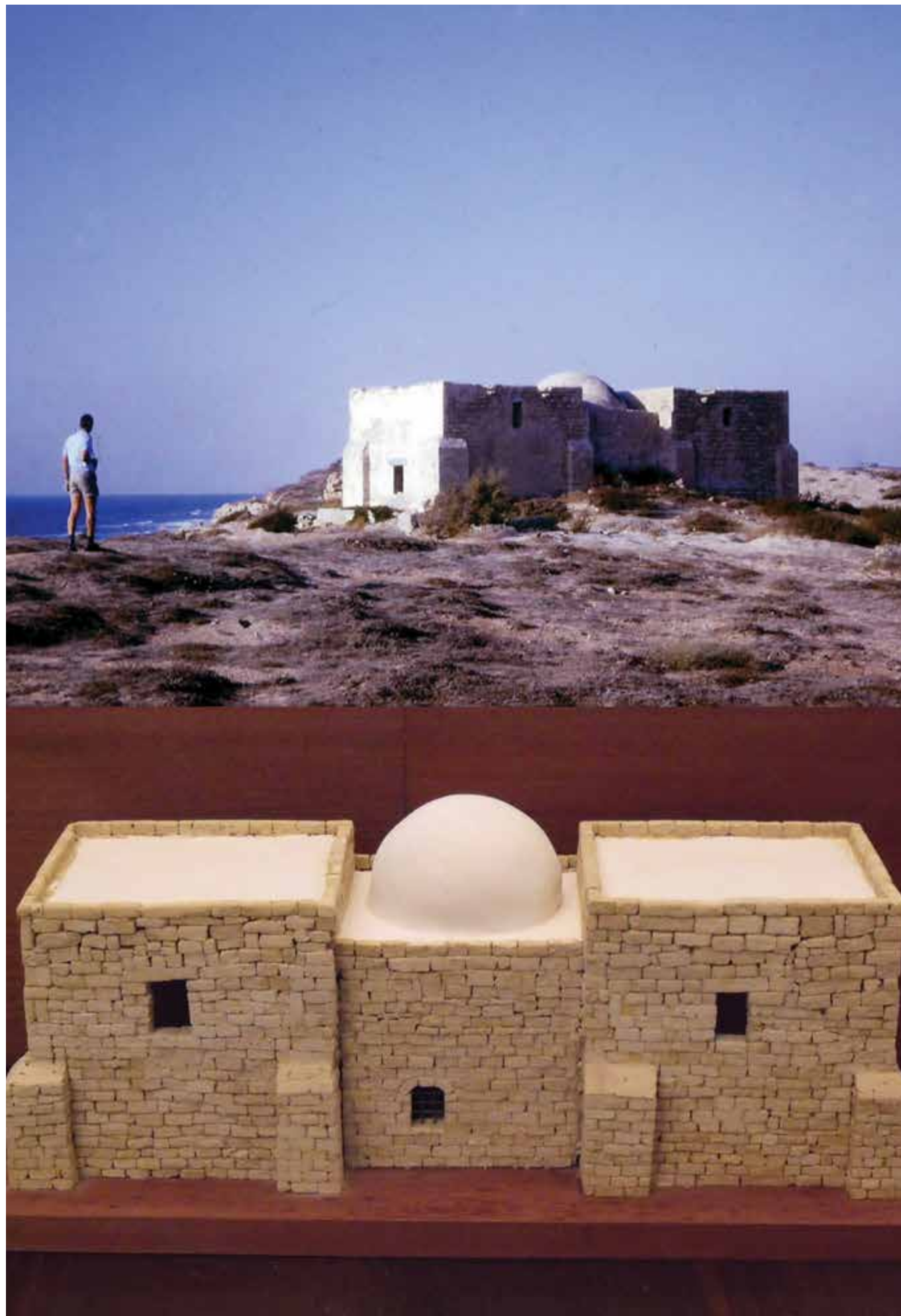
The stamp is something else and doesn't belong directly to that year. The seven-branched menorah that you see on the stamp was used in the Holy Temple in Jerusalem until the year 70 AD. We know that because on the Arch of Titus in Rome, this same menorah appears, carried by slaves, presumably Hebrews enslaved by Titus after destroying the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

This same menorah decorates many coins and stamps in the State of Israel, evidence of Israel's national heritage and of the return of the Jewish people to its land following nearly 2000 years of exile.

One of the hobbies we developed in Ashkelon was to search for ancient coins. No matter where you searched throughout the endless dunes around the city, you could find coins from Roman, Greek, Crusader, Ottoman and other periods. A number of outstanding coin collections from Ashkelon were donated to museums.

In Magna Carta, I produced a number of clay replicas of ancient coins from different periods, painted in gold, silver, bronze or copper. This helped me to ally my fears that one day the only thing remaining of my country would be a few coins in the sand.

This was important for me to prevent. This is why I went to fight for my country more than once. Details later



SHEIK AWAD

The tomb you see on page 22 was not built all at once. The initial central room of 25 square meters was built in the 13th century by Mamluk masons. Much later, two additional rooms of seven meter long were added as places for visitors to rest, one on each side of the initial room. Today, the whole building is in danger of collapse, as the cliff it stands upon is eroding. With the sea pounding from below, and the winds gusting from above it has little chance of long-term survival.

The model of the tomb under the photo is 50 cm long and it took me a full year to complete. I first produced the bricks, and only upon completion of that phase was I able to start building the model.

In the center of Majdal, the ancient part of today's Ashkelon, you can still visit an old mosque that was built at the same time as this tomb, possibly by the same masons.

The landscape of Ashkelon today is totally different. This photo of the tomb was taken by Eran Adomi, a student from Ashkelon, in 1965. His father was the reception manager of Dagon, the first hotel in the town. He spent a great deal of time hiking with his camera, and fortunately, documented this landscape.

I don't know who Sheik Awad was. But if you visit Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon, you might be surprised to find that on the hospital grounds, there is an open mosque, a memorial to Nabi Hussein, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad. Many Muslim tourists come from different countries to visit and pray there even today.

The alleged tomb is not really Hussein's. History tells that only his head was actually buried there. I suggest that you google it, if you wish. It is a real mystery. Among all other antique graves in Ashkelon, archeologists found at least one Roman tomb with fresco paintings on the walls. In other places, graves of dogs were found.



BALFOUR

The letter on page 24 needs no explanation. On November 2, 1917, General Allenby was on his way to conquer Palestine. Balfour recognized the fact that there were minorities in Palestine, and their rights had to be protected. He also displayed concern for the rights of Jews all over the world.

Something went wrong after 1922, when the British Mandate in Palestine was established. This letter seemed forgotten; the good spirit that had been displayed by the British only five years earlier had disappeared.

When riots occurred during the years 1936-1939, the British government, together with the Hebrew labor union builder, Solel Boneh, covered the country with fortresses. The settlers working on the building sites stole iron, cement and other goods, stocking them for days to come. There is an often-told story of a British supervisor coming to a kibbutz in the south to inspect the work in the nearby site, named Iraq-Suidan. The secretary took him to the mess hall, gave him a bottle of Scotch and the supervisor returned to Jerusalem very happy. This is one anecdote of many that reflected that period of time.

When Arabs began sabotaging the Tapline*, a pipeline used to transfer oil from Iraq to Haifa Bay, they established the Special Night Squads (SNS). Orde Wingate was sent to Palestine to train local forces for these missions to protect the oil line. This non-Jewish officer loved the Bible and showed great dedication to the Jewish people. Unfortunately, he was transferred to Burma, where he was killed. During his time in Palestine, however, he provided both training and knowledge that were used by the Haganah, a Jewish militia used for self-defense during the British Mandate.

During World War II, the British army was preoccupied with the war in North Africa. The rest is history. In 1917, both Lord Balfour and Great Britain were the angels of the day.

*Trans-Arabian Pipeline

השבועה

בנשק זה המזפקד בידי
על ידי ארגון ההגנה
בארץ ישראל אלהם
באויבי עמי, בעד
מולדתי, בלי כניעה
ובמסירות נפש



HAGANAH

The word ***haganah*** means defense in Hebrew. The Haganah was established in 1920 under a labor party, the umbrella of the trade union in Palestine – the Histadrut, in order to defend the Jewish settlements and their workers. The Haganah began with static defense, and only later built specific secondary units with different goals.

The biggest organization that grew out of the Haganah was most likely the Palmach. The Palmach initially trained as a guerilla army, with the support of the British Mandate, who feared a possible German or Italian invasion from the south. The British even built bunkers on Mount Carmel – not far from where Haifa University is today – for Palmach units in case of an attack from the sea. The code name for these bunkers was Massada B, as told to me by Major General Yitzhak Pundak*, who was responsible for deploying his soldiers if and when an attack came, although it never did.

The emblem of the Haganah was a sword intertwined with an olive branch. When the State of Israel was established, the Haganah became the Israel Defense Forces, the formal army of the new state. The emblem of the Haganah is incorporated into the IDF emblem today.

The Haganah belonged to the workers in Palestine. One of the chairmen of the Histadrut was David Ben Gurion, who later became the first prime minister of the nascent state of ISRAEL, after declaring its independence in May 1948.

You may be aware that this organization was on the left side of the political spectrum. Its ideology was based on thinkers like Berl Katzenelson and A.D. Gordon. The first was the editor of Davar, the newspaper of the relevant party and of all the kibbutzim and their workers, in addition to the trade unions, that were connected and loyal to this paper and party.

Many kibbutzim were founded upon the values of Russian socialism. These kibbutzim established a newspaper called Al Hamishmar as well as a new political party – ***Mapam***.

On page 26 you can a miniature wooden rifle under the oath that members of the Haganah were required to take when swearing in.

*Yitzhak Pundak joined the Haganah in 1933. In the War of Independence, he was a battalion commander and a brigade commander. In 2017, at the age of nearly 104, he still lectures to the IDF, as well as to other organizations.



PALMACH

The Palmach, the military arm of the Haganah, was established by the Palmach in 1941. Previous to this, the Haganah consisted of small guards and garrisons only; with the establishment of the Palmach, the organization grew and received formal support and budgets.

The Haganah founded this guerilla army with the help of the British government in Palestine. As I have already written, The situation in North Africa at that time appeared threatening, and the plan was to prepare forces to stop any possible invasion. Those precautions seemed crucial at that time.

In 1942, in the throes of World War II, Montgomery won the battle against Rommel in El Alamein, and the British government ceased its support to the Palmach. However, it was too late to stop the young army. The platoons went on training and working under the nose of the British, mostly in kibbutzim, where they had places to camouflage their activities and hide their weapons and ammunition. In addition, by working in the kibbutz, these platoons helped to support the budget of the activities for which they no longer had sponsors.

Yitzhak Sade was the commander of the Palmach. He reported directly to the management of the headquarters of the Hagana.

The Palmach [with the Palyam, the beginning of the navy] also brought ships of illegal immigrants from Europe and from countries outside of Europe who built settlements. This ingathering of the exiles enriched the culture of the unborn state with literature and music.

On page 28, you can see a 20X30 cm copper-on-wood representation of the emblem of the Palmach: two ears of wheat and a sword, reflecting the intertwining of defense and agriculture.



ETZEL

During its 28 years of existence, the Haganah kept a low profile in the struggle against the British Mandate. The leadership of the Haganah insisted on limiting protests to those which were legal, as much as possible. Some members, however, believed the struggle must be far more intense. These members withdrew from the Haganah, and in 1931, Etzel – sometimes called the Irgun – was born. Etzel's main purpose was to attack; passive defense was not enough.

Etzel began fighting against the British in Palestine after the pogrom in Hebron in 1929. As the struggle escalated, and Jews were arrested, jailed, exiled to far away countries, or even executed by the British, more violent methods were sanctioned. The atmosphere in Palestine became increasingly heated.

One of the leaders and founders of the the Irgun was Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Jabotinsky was a writer, a poet, and a geographer. He was also a great speaker, the head of the organization Beitar and a founder of Revisionist Zionism. In one of his books, he wrote "collect iron, choose a king and learn to laugh". [Samson, a book by Jabotinsky].

Jabotinsky died in 1940 at the age of 60. When World War II began, David Raziel ordered the cessation of hostilities against the British. Instead, Etzel was ordered to support them against Nazi Germany. Despite this, Etzel was considered a terror organization by the British Mandate. The Irgun later established a political party called Herut (Freedom).

On page 30 you can see the 20X30 cm copper foil on wood bas-relief emblem of Etzel.



LEHI

The Stern Gang was an underground resistance movement comprised of extremists who had broken away from Etzel. Their leader was Avraham Stern, whose code name was Yair. Members of the Stern Gang hid from the authorities and changed their places of concealment daily. They were detested by both the Palmach and Etzel, and they were turned in to the British forces by their rivals time and again.

On February 12, 1942, the British Secret Police caught Yair, who had been hiding in the closet of a small room on the roof of a building on Mizrahi B Street. A wet shaving brush spotted by a detective gave him away. Yair was then tied to a chair and executed. The detectives claimed later that he had been trying to escape.

After Yair's death, the group renamed themselves ***Fighters for the Freedom of Israel***. The acronym for this in Hebrew is Lehi.

Among the members of Lehi were Yitzhak Shamir, whose code name was Michael, and who later became prime minister of Israel, and Geula Cohen, who later became a member of the Knesset, or Israeli parliament.

In Palestine, Lehi attempted to assassinate high officials of the British Mandate. They sabotaged roads, railways and British facilities. They even set off bombs in three different locations in London.

The fear in the other organizations in Palestine was that the Lehi members were spoiling the relations with the British and endangering the prospects for independence.

On page 32, you can see a 20x30 cm emblem of Lehi carved in white wood.



"מסיבת התה של בוסטון"

"אין מיסוי ללא ייצוג", כלל גדול בדמוקרטיה. למתיישבי צפון אמריקה לא היה ייצוג בפרלמנט הבריטי אבל המלך דרש מהם את המסים על כל סחורה שהגיעה לאמריקה או יצאה ממנה. למתיישבים זה נמאס וב-1773 הטילו אל מי נמל בוסטון את כל מטען התה שהיה על סיפון האניות העוגנות בנמל.



BOSTON TEA PARTY

The symbolic, imaginary ship pictured on page 34, represents the night of December 16, 1773. On that night, 342 chests of tea were thrown overboard in the Boston Harbor. This was one of the triggers of the Revolutionary War of the United States of America.

The main complaint of the colonists in North America was their refusal to pay taxes to the British Crown unless they had direct representation in the British Parliament: "No taxation without representation". As British fleets ruled the high seas, they had the power to collect taxes from any and all who used these waters as a mode of transportation. In the Boston Harbor, there were ships with goods on board, including tea. The colonists threw the tea overboard, rather than pay the taxes on it that were demanded by the British.

As is well known, the British Empire lost the war. The United States of America was born in 1776. The first battle of the Revolutionary War took place in Lexington, Massachusetts on April 19, 1775. Ralph Waldo Emerson later wrote the Concord Hymn, where he refers to the first shot of the battle as "the shot heard round the world".

Another important ship worth mentioning is the **Mayflower**, the first ship of colonists to arrive in America in 1620. They landed near Cape Cod, even invented Thanksgiving.

There was a book once in America: Who's Who. I don't know if it is still printed. Every significant person in USA was listed in this book, together with their titles, if they had one. Next to some of the names in the book you could find only two letters: MF. This showed that their ancestors had arrived in America on board the Mayflower.



ALLONS ENFANTS DE LA PATRIE!*

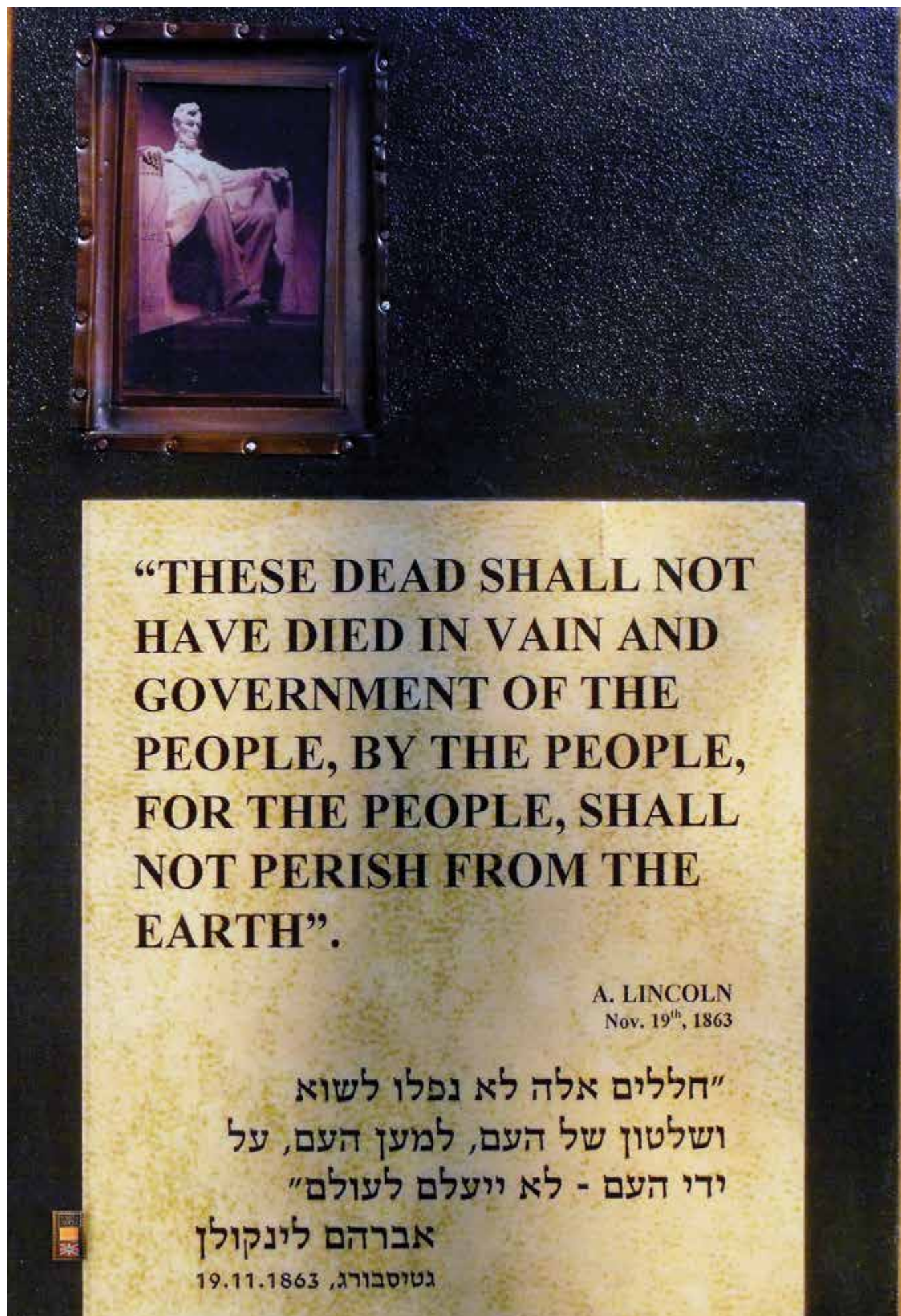
*These are the first words of the French national anthem, La Marseillaise [Let's go, children of the homeland]. Unexpectedly, soaked with blood, but they sing only part of it, thanks heaven. On July 14, 1789 the rebels brought down the Bastille and the corrupt reign of the Bourbons, including all their allies. The French people had three more royal dynasties before: Capet, Valois and Orleans. Crowning a new king was not an option. This time, the citizens had decided to take destiny into their own hands.

From that day, the highest honor was simply to be called citizen. The royalty and aristocracy, who had rudely exploited the public without conscience, were incarcerated or hanged from "Madame Guillotine". L'Assemblée Constituante de 1789 drafted a constitution, and the first French Republic, a democracy, was born.

France was always innovative and open minded in areas of culture, fashion, music and the arts. Philosophers and thinkers in Paris always led the world in many ways. Nevertheless, it was in 1894 in France when Alfred Dreyfus, an officer, was accused of treason only because of his Jewish origin. Four years later in 1898, however, it was a French newspaper that published the famous open letter of Emile Zola, **J'accuse!**, on its front page. This letter was published in L'Aurore, a French newspaper that was owned and edited by Georges Clemenceau, who was not afraid to state the truth.

France had mistaken, France knew how to correct that. Can the world correct mistakes? I hope so.

On page 36 you can see a 20x30 cm copper foil on wood bas-relief of the guillotine.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

As president of the United States, Abraham Lincoln was responsible for the liberation of millions of slaves through the Emancipation Proclamation. This act followed a long list of events in America, such as the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Missouri Compromise, the Dred Scott case, and the book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The trigger for the Civil War was the secession of seven Southern states from the union, and the North's refusal to let them go. According to Wikipedia, the number of casualties was between 620,000 to 750,000, numbers greater than all American casualties from World War I and World War II combined. Some sources suggest that the cost of this war was \$60 billion. The Revolutionary War, in comparison, cost \$2.4 billion only and it is estimated that the number of casualties in battle was close to 8,000, not including the 17,000 or more who died of disease or poor conditions in British prisons, mostly on ships.

I dare to say that it is obvious that civil wars can be very expensive. Everywhere. It takes strong leadership to start one and sometimes you need even stronger leaders to avoid them.





ROSETTA STONE

In 1799, after Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Egypt, the Rosetta Stone was found by a soldier in the city of Rashid (Rosetta in English), a port city in the Nile Delta. In 1801, after the British defeated the French in Egypt, the stone was transferred to the British Museum in London.

The stone contained a decree that was issued in the city of Memphis. The stone was written in three languages: two forms of Ancient Egyptian – hieroglyphic script and Demotic script – and Ancient Greek. The stone was deciphered by Egyptologists, and in 1822, the interpretation was declared complete by Champollion.

The stone was engraved in the year 196 BC. At that time, hieroglyphics were no longer in use. The people who made the stone may have been thinking about future generations, and wanted to create a "dictionary" to interpret hieroglyphics that were inscribed on monuments, tombs and other artifacts.

Paper was not in use in Egypt of that time, but rather Egyptian documents were written on papyrus. The Old Testament was written on parchment, with ink produced from concentrated pomegranate juice. Ancient scrolls from that era were found 2,000 years later near the Dead Sea, where they had been well preserved due to the dry weather.

Writing on stone was the safest way to assure that the writing would endure for a very long time.

The stone on page 40 is a 13" replica of the Rosetta Stone I bought in the site of the British Museum.



GOLDEN HISTORY

Two pieces of history in the exhibition are painted gold. They are models of two different settlements which were first of their kinds.

The upper photo is the first hut in Dgania, the first kibbutz in Palestine, built at the southern end of the Sea of Galilee in 1909, the same year that Tel Aviv was established. Palestine was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire until 1917, when General Allenby conquered it from the Turkish Sultan.

The second photo is of Tel Amal, or what is today called Nir David, another kibbutz, which was built overnight under the nose of the British police and army in 1936. Building new settlements was forbidden by the British. Nevertheless, if someone built a house at night, including a roof on it, it was against Turkish law to destroy it. Turkish law was the law of the land, and the British Mandate respected and adopted it. The Arab revolt that year forced something special. The new method was called 'Stockade and Tower'.

When we were high school students, we used to hike quite a lot. We visited such places, like Dgania and Tel Amal, learning about the history of the state of Israel. This was for us golden information about the beginning of our old-new country. The settlers in 1909 were pioneers who paved ways for others who planned to come. The world then was before the two big wars. But in Russia and other places, Jews had already experienced pogroms and the ground had started to burn far earlier.

The hardest reminder at that time was in Kishinev, in 1903. In 1897, Theodor Herzl established the First Zionist Congress. This was part of Jewish pioneers' motivation at that time.



RAMSES

There were many Pharaohs, not only the one that we are familiar with. Ancient Egypt had a number of dynasties and we had close 'relations'. Joseph, son of Jacob, interpreted the dreams of one of the Pharaohs. As a result, he became a senior minister in Egypt. The slavery of Israel in Egypt started much later, when a new Pharaoh arose who did not know who Joseph was and who the Israelites were, so says the Bible.

One of these early Pharaohs conquered Canaan, the land that was the crossroads between Europe, Asia and Africa. All empires wanted this land, as it was an important junction, something that becomes crystal clear when looking at a map. For many centuries, this land was called Palestine, as 3,200 years ago the foreign conquerors that arrived from the sea called Philistines. This name Palestine was probably given by the Romans, a thousand years later or more. But I want to start earlier. Some dates are not accurate and there are gaps. Ramses was only one of the conquerors, long before the others:

The first Holy Temple was built in Jerusalem in 990 BC by King Solomon. It was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's army from Babylon in 586BC.

The Persians ruled in Canaan from 539 BC to 332 BC.

The Greeks ruled from 332 BC to 63 BC.

The Romans ruled from 63 BC to 324 AD [In 70 AD, the Second Holy Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed; Masada fell in 73 AD]

The Byzantines ruled from 324 to 638 AD

The Crusaders ruled from 1096 to 1228 AD.

The Mamluks ruled from 1260 to 1517 AD.

The Ottomans ruled from 1517 AD to 1917 AD.

The British ruled from 1917 to 1948 AD.

In 1799, NAPOLEON conquered Palestine for a short time. [Acre never surrendered].

In 1948, the State of Israel declared its independence. All the other conquerors above returned to their home lands. They had options.

The only people who had a state in Palestine before all these conquerors are the Jews. King Cyrus the Great of Persia announced to the Jewish diaspora in his kingdom that those who believe in God may go back to their homeland and worship their God there. You can see his words in the last sentence of the Bible, the Old Testament. quote here:

2 Chronicles 36, 23:

"This is what Cyrus king of Persia says: " 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build a temple for him at Jerusalem in Judah. Any of his people among you may go up, and may the LORD their God be with them.' "

The work you can see on page 44 is a 20x30 cm bronze-painted clay bas-relief on canvas.



CONSTITUTIONS

Constitutions are serious documents. Countries produce them when they are first founded; sometimes they amend them or replace them. Sports organizations write them to clarify and document the basic rules of the game; these, too, can be updated, if necessary. Peoples and religions have books that include the elements of each religion and laws to follow. In my eyes – all these are different kinds of constitutions. Not all of them are supported officially by the states. People cannot decide to become citizens of a new country without that country's permission. Some states don't allow their citizens to leave. In sports, you must be a good athlete in order for a club to allow you to become a member. Converting from one religion to another is often more difficult; Judaism, for example, doesn't accept new members very easily. Islam, on the other hand, is very open: you simply have to repeat a specific sentence before witnesses, and you become a Muslim.

The written laws of religions are very strict. In Judaism, there is the law of the Bible. In order to produce a new Torah scroll, scribes copy it by hand, letter by letter, on special parchment. They are not allowed to change a letter. Jews have kept their tradition for thousands of years and this has kept the Jewish people from assimilating. Those who didn't keep the law often joined other communities. Some preferred a non-orthodox form of Judaism.

Some countries legislate the separation of religion and state. Others do not. In order to become a citizen of a country, there are number of paths, such as being born there, being born to a citizen of the country, marrying a citizen, applying for citizenship as a resident or immigrant, and requesting political asylum.

In Israel, however, there is an additional unique path for attaining citizenship: Any Jew is entitled to receive citizenship automatically under the Law of Return. Jews claiming citizenship under this law are provided support for housing, learning Hebrew and finding work. In addition, they are entitled to tax benefits on both income and on goods that they import or buy in Israel that are considered essential to the beginning their new life.

On page 46, you see a section of the Ten Commandments on a 20x30 cm on a copper bas-relief.



THE SIX DAY WAR

Gamal Abdel Nasser, the president of Egypt, announced that he intended to block the sea straits south of Israel and stated that if Israel was interested in war, he welcomed it. He was speaking to officers in Bir Gafgafa, in the Sinai Peninsula, on Israel's 19th Independence Day, in 1967. Only several days later, he ordered the UN forces to leave their posts on the border between Egypt and Israel, along the Gaza strip. Winds of war began to blow in the Middle East. Israel started quietly mobilizing all reserve units which gathered under camouflage in the Negev Desert in the south of Israel. Many citizens started digging fox holes in their yards; they blacked out their windows with paper to prevent light from being seen by planes. Sandbags were piled up near hospitals. Car lights were painted blue.

In the meanwhile, Nasser created alliances with Syria and Jordan. Israel was trapped from three sides. So, rather than waiting for the first blow to fall, Israel attacked preemptively. Within three hours, the Egyptian air force was completely destroyed, while they were still on the ground. The Sinai Peninsula was taken in two days. After Jordan and Syria began shelling the Galilee and Jerusalem, as a result, they lost the Golan Heights and the West Bank.

The war began on Monday, June 5, 1967. The borders of Israel which had been defined in 1949 were called The Green Line; therefore, any land captured during the Six Day War was considered beyond The Green Line. When President Sadat of Egypt signed the peace treaty with Israel in 1979, Sinai was returned to Egypt. King Hussein also signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1994. However, the Palestinians claim ownership of the West Bank. Peace with Syria still seems very far off.

On page 48: The June 6, 1967 newspaper headline proclaims that "The IDF Reaches The Old City of Jerusalem. The IDF Calls for Gazan Residents to raise white flags. Israeli Forces Attack the Golan Heights."

Israeli intelligence tapped and recorded a call between Nasser of Egypt and King Hussein of Jordan, as they attempted to find a way to blame the USA support Israel as the cause of their failure in the war. Their alliance failed.

The page from Yedioth Aharonoth on 6.6.67 on page 48 is printed here with courtesy of the publisher.



SIX DAYS AND ONE GIRL

Monday morning, June 6th. 1967. For three weeks we had been preparing ourselves for the coming war. All 11th graders were assigned to the local hospital and were divided into shifts. Some went to the post office to help with the mail. Most of the men had been drafted, and extra hands were needed all over. Drivers on roads became unusually polite and patient. Everybody did his best to help whatever way he or she could. Nobody knew when the war would begin.

7.45 AM, June 6TH 1967. We were on our way to school when sirens suddenly pierced the air. We ran to school and we were sent directly to the shelters. A short while later, we were allowed to go home and our shifts in the hospital began. We very quickly found ourselves carrying stretchers. Busses, helicopters and ambulances arrived loaded with injured soldiers.

After the war ended, I continued to visit the orthopedic ward in the hospital. Every afternoon I came to help the wounded soldiers with whatever was necessary. Some needed books to read; others needed cigars (cigarettes were free); others needed little things that their families could not supply because they were too far away. The staff was very busy with the medical routine.

One of the wounded soldiers was a female soldier. When the war had already ended, a military team of which she was a member was assigned to an interesting mission. While on the way, the vehicle ran over a mine. She was badly hurt in her back, and was partially paralyzed. I came every evening to see the soldiers, and spent time with her, helping her with supper, as she was in a cast and couldn't feed herself. After she left the hospital, she sent me a letter and the photo you see on page 50, thanking me for the help and time I spent with her. Before printing this book I went to see her, 50 years after the war. I didn't want to surprise her; I simply wanted to be sure about the facts. She told me that I helped her not only with supper, but rather paid attention to her and was there for her, providing emotional support. It was the fact that we, the youth, brought hope for a better future. We were there for her, and her neighbors appreciated what we, the young volunteers, did for all of them, all of the injured, suffering soldiers.

This is my memory of that war. One of them.



DOMES OF THE ROCK

After the war ended, in June 1967, we discovered places we had never seen before. One of them, naturally, was the Old City of Jerusalem. When you approach the Old City, you cannot ignore the golden dome in the middle of your view. Before 1967, we in Israel could see it only from a distance.

Many people mistakenly call this mosque in the heart of Jerusalem the Mosque of Omar. The real name tells us that under this mosque there is a rock. This rock is the place where the two Jewish Holy Temples stood 2,000 years ago. Here Abraham was told by the Almighty to bring his son, Isaac, and to sacrifice him. But this is not the whole story. Later, around the year 1,000 BC, King David purchased a barn from Aravna right here, on the same mountain, in the same spot where his son, King Solomon would build the first Holy Temple.

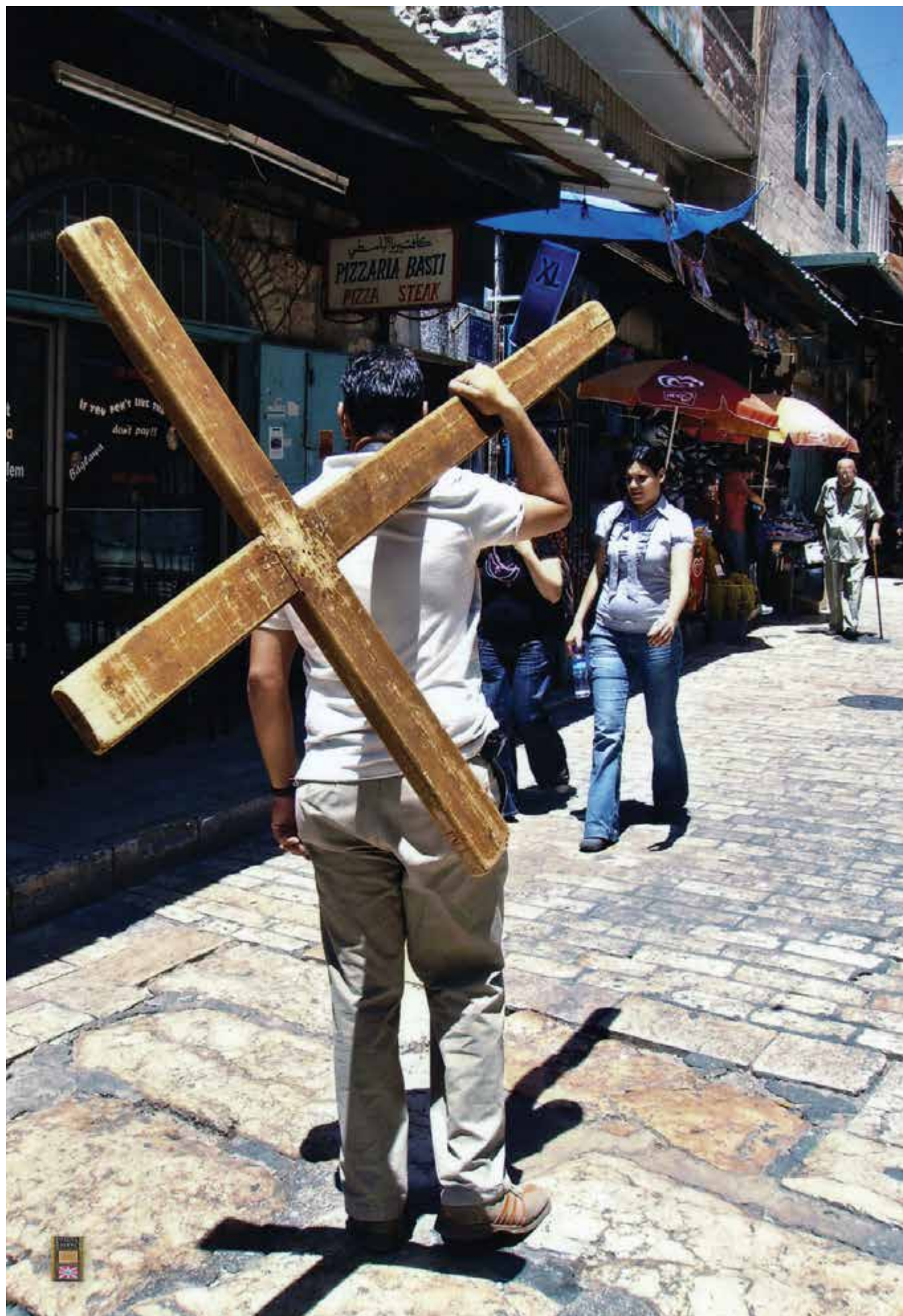
According to the Jewish calendar, the year 2017 is exactly 5,777 since the creation of the world. So says the Jewish tradition.

Creation began on a rock called Even Hashtiya, or foundation rock. This rock is said to be the foundation upon which the entire world was created. It is the base of all the rest.

The rock under the mosque is sacred even to Muslims. Even though it's not mentioned in the holy Quran, all prophets before Muhammad prayed there. According to scholars, even Jerusalem is not mentioned in the Quran.

One day I climbed to the roof of the Austrian Hospice in the Old City of Jerusalem. The view of the golden dome is spectacular from there, especially in the afternoon, as the sun is setting in the west.

That was the time of day when I took the picture you see on page 52.



THE CROSS

There are many Christians around the world who save a penny a day throughout their lives, dreaming that one day, they will be able to see Jerusalem and the Holy Land. Some come to Israel from South America, Europe, East Asia and other distant places.

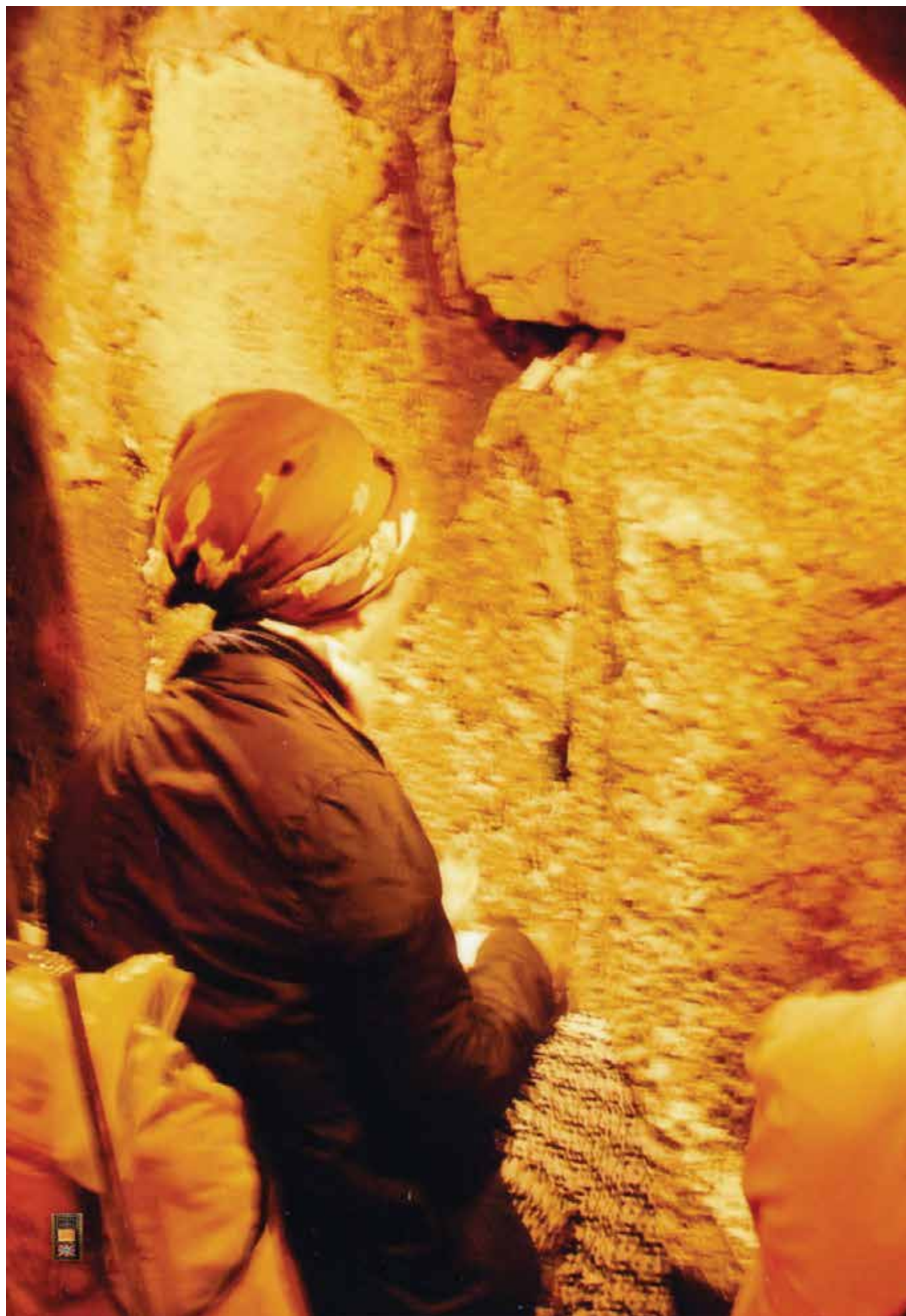
If you observe these tourists carefully, you can see how modest most of them are. They come to see the churches, they visit Jesus Christ's tomb, as many believe, and they barely dare to touch or kiss the stone. Watching them is a spiritual experience in itself.

Some of these pilgrims do even more. They want to feel what their savior felt when he was carrying the cross along the Via Dolorosa. They carry a cross on their backs, sometimes with thorns on their heads, attempting to feel what Jesus felt in his most agonizing moments. I cherish such people, people who truly believe and follow their faith without hurting a soul. They are beautiful people.

The man in the photo on page 54 is not a pilgrim. He is a hardworking man who works for the Jerusalem municipality. He carries the cross for the pilgrims, preparing it for the next pilgrim to come and carry it along Via Dolorosa.

I wonder how many people know what the Jerusalem Syndrome is. It is known to psychologists that some people who come to Jerusalem start having visions and feelings of obsession about being spiritually connected to the holy city. Some believe that they are prophets or poets; some dress like people did in the time of the Bible; some do other bizarre things. It happens to Jews, Christians and Muslims from diverse backgrounds. There are many explanations and references to this syndrome online, for people who wish to know more.

I don't think this kind of syndrome exists in other places in the world.



EVEN HASHTIA

The woman on page 56 appears to spend her days praying for the Messiah to come. She sits in one of the underground tunnels in the northern part of the Wailing Wall. This is the closest place you can get from the Israeli side to Even Hashtiya, the Foundation Rock, which is located under the Dome of the Rock. If you read page 53, you already know what this place is and what it means to observant Jews.

Some people may think the dream of the Jewish people to return to the Holy Land is strange. There is no precedent in history of a nation that lost its country, and then returned to it 2000 years later.

David Ben Gurion, the founding prime minister of Israel, once said that if you do not believe in miracles in Israel, you are not realistic. Just the fact of our being here IS a miracle by any measure.

The faith of Jewish women throughout history was often considered the main strength that enabled us to maintain our traditions in Diaspora. Many family names are taken from maternal names, such as Rivkin, Sorkin and Hankin. Other family names are those of professions, such as Schumacher, Fleischer, and Buchbinder. Yet a third group of family names are places like towns and cities, such as Krakowski, Berliner, and more.

When a person arrives in Israel as a newcomer, and declares that he or she is a Jew, immigration authorities request documentation. If the has no papers, among the questions asked are: "What do you remember from the holidays?" Sometimes the proof lies in Jewish slang that has passed from generation to generation in the family. It's not easy being a Jew; it's not always easy to prove it. Believe me.



DAKAR

On April 8, 1945 the British Royal Navy launched a new submarine called the HMS **Totem**. World War II was almost over, and the young submarine did not have many opportunities to fight against the Nazi or the Japanese fleets.

In 1965, twenty years later, Totem was sold to Israel and the Israeli crew was trained by the Royal Navy. On January 9, 1968 the submarine left the Portsmouth Harbor with a new crew, a new commander – Yaakov Raanan – and a new name: Dakar, meaning swordfish.

The maiden voyage was scheduled to end in the Haifa harbor a few days later. On January 24 at 6:00 AM, the last location of the Dakar – south of the island of Crete in Greece – was recorded, and 18 hours later, the last transmission from the submarine was received.

A buoy from the submarine was found near the shores of Gaza a year after the submarine's disappearance. This fact misled those searching for the Dakar, and sent them on a wild goose chase.

Only on May 28th, 1999, 31 years after its disappearance, the remains of the submarine Dakar were discovered at a depth of 3000 meters not far from its original course by a ship called the Nauticus. A number of remnants of the submarine were recovered, and they are on display in the naval museum in Haifa today.

The loss of Dakar in 1968 was a shock for all citizens of Israel. I was in the 12th grade at that time, and one of my classmates had a brother on board of the Dakar. After the national pride following the victory in the Six Day War, the morale of the nation fell. How do you lose a submarine with 69 people during times of peace?

This tragedy has never left my mind. When I started building **Magna Carta**, the 20x30 cm copper bas-relief memorial page that I made, displayed on page 58, helped me to cope with the pain that I still felt.



THE FLAG

This flag you see on page 60 is stained with red paint. This is the best way I found to express my feelings about the Yom Kippur War, the war which took us, the citizens of Israel, by surprise. It was Saturday, October 6, 1973. At eight o'clock in the morning, I heard somebody knocking at our door. Only 40 days earlier, I had married my young wife. She asked me who was crazy enough to bother us at such an early hour on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. "Beats me," I replied, but I jumped to answer the door.

Yossi Fein, an old friend, was standing at the door. "We are at war," he informed me. "Grab a bag and be ready to leave." I invited him in.

"How do you know? There are no radio broadcasts on Yom Kippur. Are you insane?"

"No," he responded. "I was listening to the BBC. They said that war will break out in Israel today". I got the chills. BBC never lied before.

Sure enough, 2 hours later, a soldier came to my house with orders for me to report in at the central bus station at noon. Meanwhile, military and other vehicles could be seen in the streets, a foreign vision on this holy day. I packed everything that I might need, including a bottle of banana liquor, saying to myself and to my worried wife that our wars are short and swift, and I'll be back in no time.

On that morning I had no idea that in the next 20 days I would be fighting for the literal survival of my country, that we would lose 2569 soldiers, that my unit alone would have 119 fatalities, in addition to many more POWs and injuries, and that I would not be released for another 150 days. The fact that the people were surprised does not mean that the leadership was surprised. The intelligence community, the prime minister and others had received warnings. King Hussein, our neighbor to the east, had met several times with Prime Minister Golda Meir. The intelligence's estimate was that the probability of war was very low.

When I returned home for short furloughs, I discovered that many friends at home had been killed too. I couldn't stand the flowing information. I never told anyone where I had been, what my brigade did, or how many casualties we suffered. Only 28 years later did I begin to speak. That was after I realized that my life was in ruins as a result of that bloody war. And that was how Magna Carta was born. That is why I painted the flag red.



MISSOURI

When we arrived at the front in the Sinai Peninsula, nobody knew exactly where the Egyptian army was. They had crossed the Suez Canal with boats and removed the sand batteries with water hoses. How simple, how efficient. They attacked all Israeli outposts along the canal with artillery and invaded all the grounds surrounding them. We didn't know in real time, but the Egyptian intelligence had done their homework very well: before the war they had stolen the code maps of our intelligence, matched them to their Arabic maps, and during the war they listened to our radio network. Thus, they knew exactly where we were going to be or to attack. The code name of these maps was "Sirius".

The big egg-shaped section you see on page 62 was code-named "Missouri" on the maps. After many days of fighting and laying the Rolling Bridge across the canal, it was necessary to widen the 'corridor' around the bridge. Many Israeli units had already crossed the canal to its west bank, and they were vulnerable. Battalion 410 was given a mission to clear Missouri of the enemy. One of the threats was the mass of Egyptian units on Missouri. We were told that before the attack, eight quadruplets of jet fighters would prepare the area to make our job easier. Instead of eight quadruplets, we received two pairs only, and they came a few hours too late due to other missions.

We started the assault with 26 tanks and we finished with four. Many tanks were badly hit. Many people were killed, wounded or missing. Later we realized that they had been captured as POWs. I was the driver of the battalion commander who was leading the battle. Our tank was hit several times during that battle, losing a front wheel, an air filter and sustaining additional damages. We couldn't understand how our crippled tank kept moving.

Many years after the war, we produced a film about it. Our commander stated on camera that he knew that the attack on Missouri was a suicide mission. He added that he hadn't dared to disobey the orders because he had to serve as example to his soldiers.

I remembered then the book trilogy **General Panfilov** by A. Bek. The commander of our brigade, Tuvia Raviv, tried to avoid this horrifying battle but the high command would not accept his opinion. (His photos can be seen on pages 68, bottom right and on page 70.)



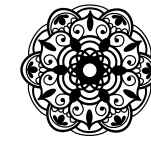
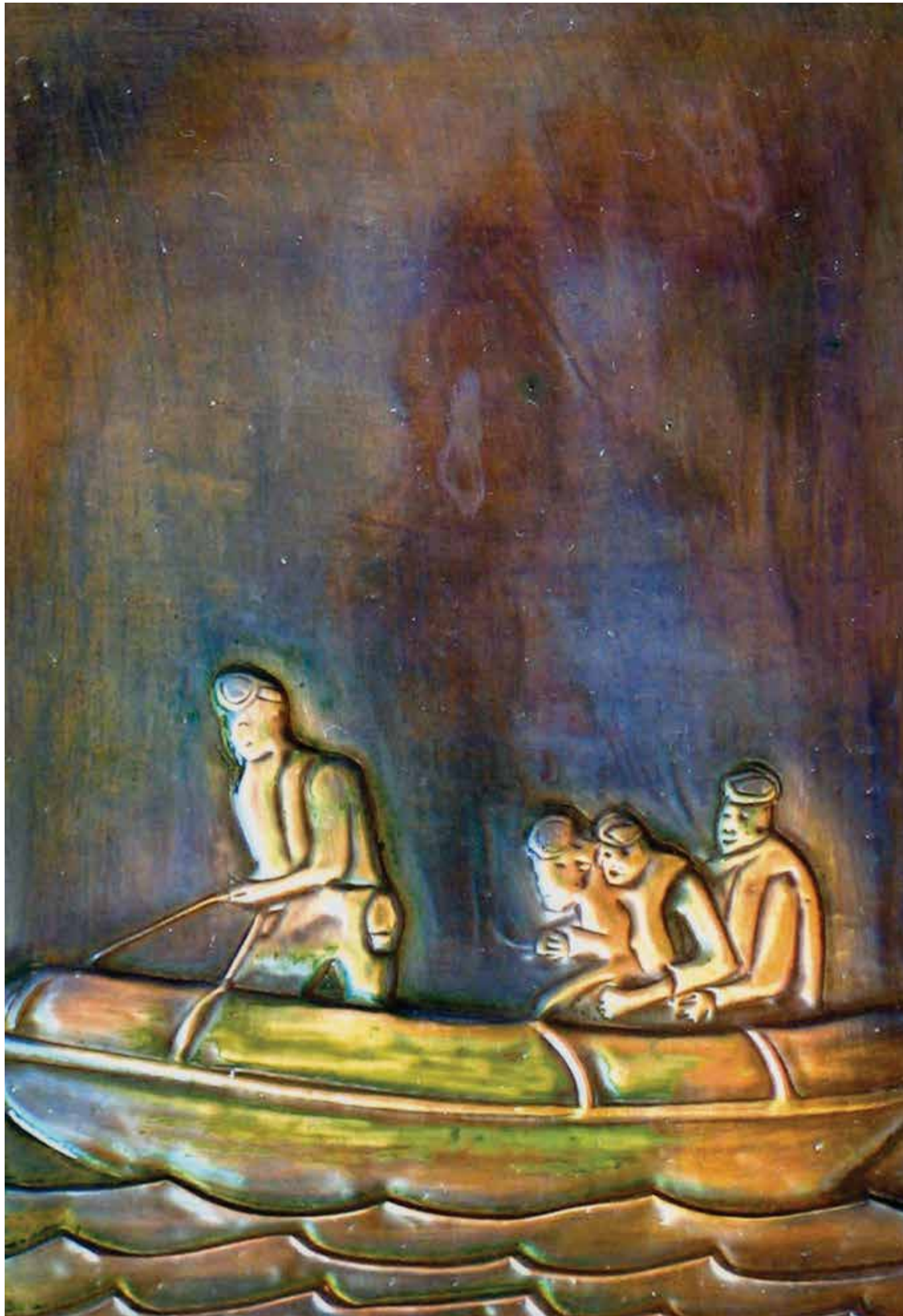
PHANTOMS AND GHOSTS

The war in October 1973 surprised us with two things on the battlefield. One was the anti-aircraft missiles fired against our airplanes, which made it almost impossible to support the forces on the ground. The second was a small anti-tank missile which was efficient, quick and accurate. Its Russian name was Malyutka but we called it the Sagger. All Egyptian infantry units were equipped with missiles of this kind. They were light and easy to operate. They were kept in an aluminum case which needed no maintenance. The operator simply placed the missile on the ground, sighted a target, and fired by pushing a button and navigating with a 'joystick'. The missile contained a thin electrical wire attached to it by which a signal is transmitted to the navigation system, and the soldier was able to thereby correct the ballistic orbit of the missile. The targeted tank could not discern the missile flying towards it. A neighboring tank could see the flame behind it, and in theory, could warn the targeted tank.

There is nothing a tank could do to hide from this devil. Due to the electrical wires attached to the missile, it is possible that a tank could hide behind a barbed-wire fence in which the missile's electrical wire would become tangled. Unfortunately, barbed-wire fences do not exist in battlefields. A tank might also have been able to change its position, if the missile's origin had been known and if there had been time.

Both the anti-aircraft missiles and the Sagger missiles were like ghosts. Many jetfighters were intercepted by those anti-aircraft missiles. After we crossed the Suez, however, the picture changed. Tanks rushed to destroy the batteries of those ground-to-air missiles in order to remove the threat to the Israeli Air Force, and the air space was free to Israel again.

On page 64, you see a 20X30cm, copper foil bas-relief on wood of an F4 PHANTOM JET FIGHTER. Jet fighters like these protected us when we were attacked by Egyptian fighter jets. Many of them never made it back home. To their victims, they appeared like ghosts. So did the sappers.



ZODIACS ON THE SUEZ

The Yom Kippur War was at its turning point. The IDF had transported three different kinds of bridges for use in crossing the Suez Canal: the rolling bridge, the pontoon bridge and the Gillois amphibious bridge. Gillois bridge's units were purchased in France several years earlier as leftover scrap metal from World War II. Uri Gazit from Merkavim (an Israeli transportation company) went to France, transported the bridges to a bus garage in Israel, and prepared them for the next war.

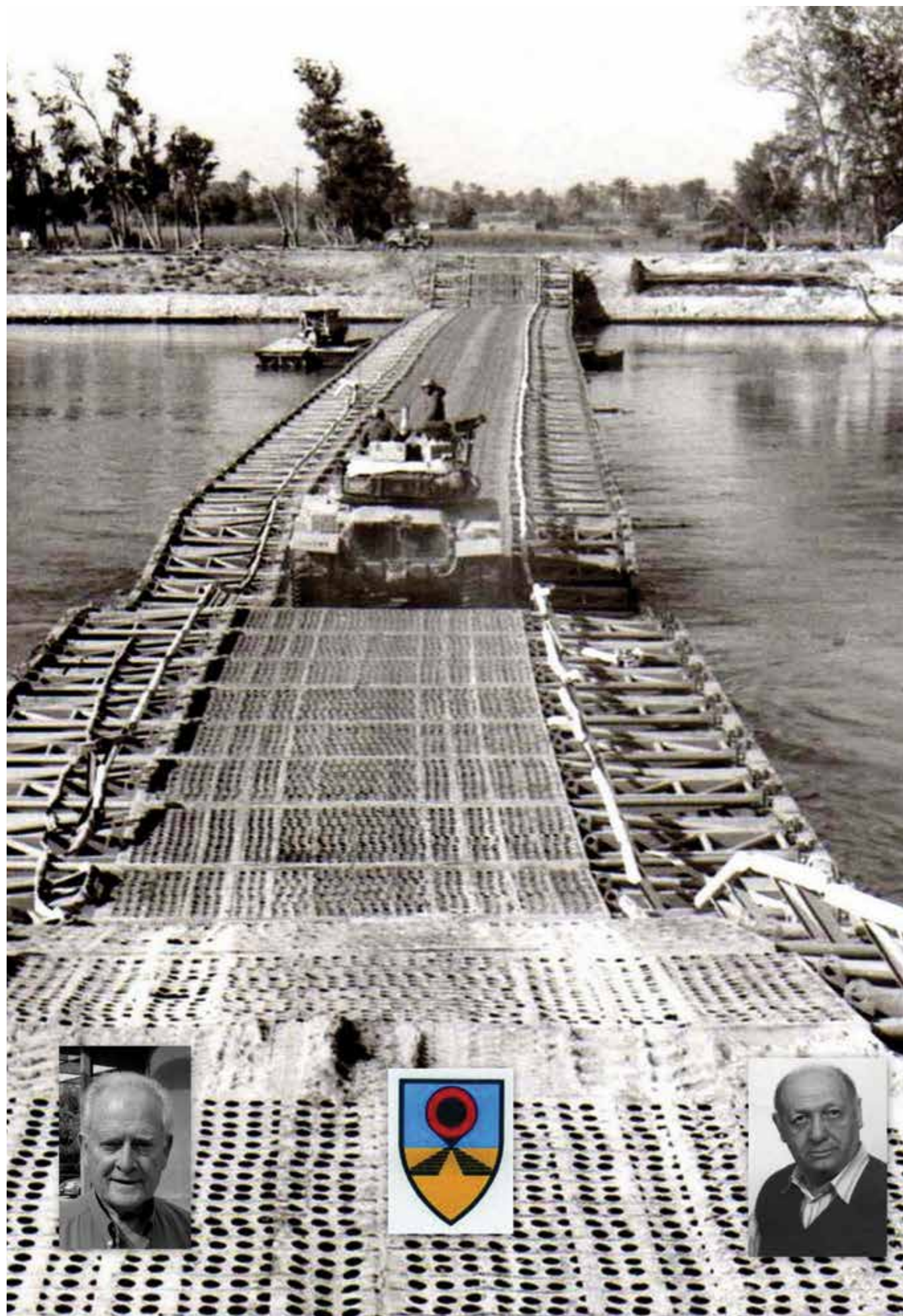
The rolling bridge was an Israeli invention. It weighed 220 tons, was 220m long, and it was meant to be used during battle as an assault bridge during a battle. The only brigade that had proper training before the war for towing it was engaged in fighting in the Yom Kippur War on the Golan Heights. When another brigade started towing the bridge, they broke it unwillingly and unexpectedly. The plan was to cross the canal on October 15. On that night, the IDF had to clear the way to the Suez, but the bridge had not yet been put in place. Battalion 410 created an attack somewhere else as a deception; as a result, the Egyptians didn't notice that a group of soldiers had been moving silently towards the water with zodiac boats on their backs, preparing to secure a bridgehead on the west bank of the Suez Canal.

Meanwhile, at the Tirtur-Lexicon crossroads, a tank battle had begun from both directions. Earlier, paratroopers had been brought from Sharm El Sheikh to join the battle at the crossroads. All units sustained heavy losses in that area, which was mistakenly named The Chinese Farm. All ways to the canal were heavily blocked; the rolling bridge was waiting broken. The Gillois light vehicles, which were considered the last option, began transporting tanks to the west bank of the Canal under the nose of the Egyptians. They didn't need roads.

On October 18, the bridge was repaired and ready to move. Battalion 410 was harnessed to the bridge and at 1:00 AM on October 19, the bridge was operable.

When the young soldiers were walking through the dark night before the crossing, with the boats on their backs, we knew then that they were marching towards unknown fate. Our hearts and prayers accompanied them with heavy feelings.

On page 66: a zodiac crossing the Suez. 20x30cm. copper foil.



BRIDGE OVER TROUBLED WATER

October 18, 1973. The commander of the crossing of the Suez Canal was **Major General Yaakov Even***. Before towing the heavy bridge into the Canal, he joined our tank to check the situation of the road. The route was a dirt road, fraught with potholes and bumps. Since the bridge cannot be turned more than a few degrees, you must be able to see the way far ahead. The operation was under the responsibility of the engineering corps. Bulldozers had to flatten the way ahead of us as we moved, filling in all the holes the best possible. We started patrolling the route before noon, without the bridge.

After receiving approval, we returned to the tanks of battalion 410, and prepared for the towing. Movement was slow, and we were exposed to Egyptian artillery and jet bomber raids. The bulldozers led the entire column, also sustaining many attacks. The engineering commander, Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Tenne tried to hide under a small bridge. Unfortunately, an Egyptian officer was hiding there too, and Johnny was killed. During the whole operation, about 20 people of the engineering corps lost their lives there. Sometimes we forget them and their bravery.

While I was driving my tank that day, I wasn't allowed to leave it or to get out at all. I saw the road through the periscopes only, and the bridge was behind me. I saw nothing there. All I could see, sometimes in the sky, were the phantom jets that gave us some protection from those who attacked us all day long. We were more or less like sitting ducks. That is why you see a phantom jet in the image on page 64.

*Picture at the bottom left on page 68 is Major General Jackie Even. Picture on the right is Colonel Tuvia Raviv, the commander of Brigade 600.



TUVYA RAVIV

Colonel Tuvya Raviv was born in 1934 in Yugoslavia. When he was four years old, his father died and his mother was left with two little boys. The years brought hell on Europe, and the family of three escaped to Hungary using forged documents, hid in a village with a Christian family for some time, and then wandered from place to place like many Jews. In 1948, they arrived in Israel. In 1952, Tuvya joined the armored corps, and advanced from one unit to another, commanding a platoon, a battalion and a brigade, among other roles along the way.

In the beginning of the 1970s, Tuvya had been assigned to establish a new brigade of M60, the tanks that Israel had only recently received from the United States. In 1973, he led his brigade in the Yom Kippur War, losing 119 men in that war.

In the middle of the war, Tuvya received an order to transfer one of his battalions to another brigade. From that moment, he had to complete all of his missions with two battalions only. These battalions fought almost non-stop, and suffered many casualties. Nevertheless, all the missions were fulfilled to the letter. Including the opening of Tirtur Axis before towing the rolling bridge.

On October 21, battalion 410 received an order to attack the area code-named Missouri. Earlier, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan had met Tuvya near the battlefield, put his hand on his chest, and told him that he bore the future of the State of Israel upon his shoulders. Tuvya realized that the battle was going to be a disaster and tried to prevent it. The results were very sad but the order was followed.

After the war, Tuvya served as the Israel's IDF attaché in Ankara, Turkey, and later he as a special agent of the Jewish Agency to Yugoslavia in the 1990's where he helped to rescue many Jewish families from the civil war. Tuvya wrote a book about his work in Yugoslavia, the land that he had left as a child.

In the upper picture on page 70, you Tuvya in the middle. On the right is Uzi Bar Tzur, Tuvya's driver since the the war in 1956, when he received the highest decoration in IDF for saving Tuvya's life, after being wounded in battle. On the left you see Yair Aharonowitz, the intelligence officer of Brigade 600. In the lower picture you see Major General Jackie Even on the left, Tuvya next to him and Yair is on the right.

The pictures on page 70 are provided by the courtesy of Yair Aharonowitz, today Professor Emeritus at Tel Aviv University. The photographer was Shimon Abramov, Tuvya's second driver.



COMING HOME

I spent the year before the Yom Kippur War in law school at Tel Aviv University. I worked mornings, and studied afternoons and evenings. I had no wealthy sponsors, and I am not afraid of work. As stated previously, I got married that summer, and I was very happy. After the war, I studied an additional year at the university, but my head wasn't really there. So I left my studies, and started working with children, initially as a volunteer. No matter what I did, the war never left my head. I was later invited to work in a paid position. I moved forward and got great jobs. Many of them ended because I always found myself fighting with the management. Thus I changed jobs approximately 50 times in 28 years. Some years I had two jobs at the same time; I taught in the mornings and drove a fork-lift at nights, for example. I couldn't sleep in any case.

The only stable occupation in my life was the army. Once or twice a year I was summoned to reserve duty. Even when I tried to explain that the number of days I missed work for reserves put my job in danger, my explanations fell on deaf ears. In any case, I had always believed that the country was more important than the individual. In any case, I knew I would have to look for a new job within a short time...

On the Israel Independence Day in 2001, I called a friend from my platoon, Battalion 410. I simply wanted to wish him a good holiday. He told me to write down a phone number of a doctor at Tel Hashomer Hospital. "Why?" I asked. "Because you have PTSD," he answered. What the heck? After 28 years?

The man was right. Whenever I visited him on his farm in the Galilee, I had a new job... when he woke up for work at 4:00 AM, he would find me guarding on the roof of his house...

When I finally met the right doctor, it took him three minutes to confirm what I had already heard. When I asked him to write the diagnostics in a letter, two months later, I sat quietly. He wrote the letter and when I saw him signing it, I burst into tears.

It took me a split second only to understand that in the past 28 years, I hadn't really returned from the war.

On page 72: a 20x30 copper foil bas-relief of a lonely tank on its way home.



GAZA KIDS

As time goes by, I get older. In 1993, I am still called for reserve duty to my unit, but I do not climb into the tanks anymore; too old, too heavy. As a driver, they assign me, together with others, to drive lighter vehicles for younger units who need drivers. In the winter of 1993, I found myself spending 30 days in Gaza City.

One morning, as I was driving a command car in one of the main streets of the city, I saw three children watching the cars near one of the houses. I slowed down and decided that it was worth a picture. I stopped and turned off the engine. My commander didn't understand what was going on. He was less than half my age.

"Wait a minute", I said. I got out of the car without my rifle. I took my camera and approached the surprised children. I let them see that I was unarmed. They saw that I was quite old compared to the others.

Then I smiled, raised my camera and took one shot. They were surprised and went inside to the yard. When I developed the film, I was happy.

If you look carefully at the picture on page 74, you may notice that these are three siblings. The boy on the right is wearing a handmade, knitted sweater with the colors of the Palestinian flag. His sister, in the middle, has a sweatshirt with Minnie Mouse on it. What a surprise! Kids are kids even in Gaza City.

I wonder what happened to these three children. Are they still alive? They would be about 40 today. Did any of them join Hamas?

In July 1967, after the 6 days war, we visited Gaza on regular basis, as civilians. We came from Ashkelon every weekend to do our shoppings. When I was serving in the war, in October 1973, so was my father. One of his workers had come to Ashkelon every day from Gaza, until the war began. Unexpectedly, he came to visit my mother during the war, carrying baskets of vegetables he brought from Gaza. What has happened since those times?



PRISONERS

When I spent time in Gaza, in 1993, I was also sent to guard one of the prisons there, a prison for minimum security. The facility looked more like a summer camp and the local Israeli commander invited us, the reservists, to his office to be briefed about our duties in the prison. He was very polite and before doing anything else, he ordered coffee for all of us.

On the walls in his office, there were many different decorations made of wood, stones and ink drawings on white fabric. When we asked about these works of art, the commander answered that these were works of the prisoners. I was surprised. When we went to see the camp, I began to understand.

The prisoners kept themselves busy all day long. They cooked for themselves, played basketball, studied and prayed. Sometimes one of them gave lectures about politics and history – even about Israel's politics – and about the underground movements during the time of the British mandate. This opened my eyes to many things. Those who didn't want to be with the others did handcrafts of many kinds. When I saw them working with matches, Popsicle sticks and other materials, I didn't know that one day I would use what I learned to produce my exhibition **Magna Carta**. These prisoners had a lot of time and endless patience. They used smooth, rounded stones and polished them on paving stones. In that way, they made hearts and other decorations. With the pieces of wood, they built model ships, planes and houses. For drawing they used white handkerchiefs and colored pens. On page 76, you see one of these drawings which I received from a prisoner in that camp. Amazing.

It's a strange world, isn't it? In that one month of service I did many different jobs. During the day, I was a driver, and at night I was a guard. Among the checkpoints I was sent to guard, was the office of my niece from Ashkelon. Next to her office, there was a nice sergeant. For a week, I guarded their roof at nights. Today my niece and that sergeant have three children. Two of them are already soldiers.

Will we ever stop sending our children to the army?



TOOTH PASTE AND SHAVING CREAM TUBES

On page 77, I told you about the ways in which prisoners in Gaza used simple materials creatively to do many kinds of arts and crafts projects in prison.

On page 78, you see an opened, flattened tube of shaving cream that I didn't mention on page 77, because it deserves a special page. Tubes like this served as basis for many works of art with which I started my exhibition *Magna Carta* eight years later, in 2001.

When you are a free man, and you have enough time and money, you can buy sheets of copper foil in the right places. They are not very expensive, but they are not easy to come by when you are a prisoner. When you stay in a refugee camp, they are luxury items. With the price of one roll, you can feed your family two days; maybe more. Tubes such as the one on page 78, however, are made of zinc, a very soft metal which is easy to work with.

When I was patrolling in *Jebalya*, a big refugee camp in northern Gaza, I was astonished to see that most of the fences were made of old solar receptors brought from Israel. Gazans working in Israel recycled every possible material for building, materials such as used tin and water pipes. Poverty was reflected from every street corner.

The prisoners did not waste the empty tubes of toothpaste or shaving cream. They cut them open, flattened them till they were smooth, and used them for their art. On page 78, I produced an example to demonstrate this process.

This is how I did all of my copper work. Amazing. Very cheap. Ingenious.



JUDE

The word Jude in German means Jew. It was written in the center of the yellow Stars of David during the Holocaust in Germany and all countries occupied by Germany.

In the photo on page 80, you see the only work of art that I have ever sold from my exhibition, and it happened by accident. I displayed my work in a bazaar in Ashkelon, without any intention of selling. I was simply glad that people stopped to ask questions.

One of the visitors asked me questions in English. Later I realized that he was a German tourist. When he asked about this particular item, I thought I would scare him off if I said the price was 500 New Israeli Shekels (approximately \$125). He put his hand in his pocket, took out the money, and completely surprised me. I had to give the desired work.

This piece of work is unique. Most of the others tell the history of human rights and civil rights. In the case of this piece, however, because it symbolizes that all civil and human rights were erased by the Nazi government, led by one man who had decided that the Aryan race was the best, the one and only race that was superior and had the right to rule other races.

During that dark era, Jews lost the right to study in universities, to own shops, to sit on public benches, to live in certain neighborhoods, to walk freely, to live where they wanted, to leave their country, and – ultimately – to live at all.

The weight of this symbol is the antithesis in the history of all the rights of humankind.

As simple as that.

Finally, I can tell you that the man who bought that piece lives in Berlin, which is somewhat of a comfort. Luckily, I kept a photo of this work to display.



MISSILE ON THE ROOF

For five years, I have been working days and nights to build this exhibition. I started with copper foil, and then moved to other materials.

If you remember, it was in 2001 when I was surprised to discover that I had been suffering from PTSD since 1973, and with this discovery came great anger; anger about myself, about the army, and about the war. I was angry about my twice-dismantled family; about all the lost time in my life. Working with copper became an outlet for my energy, as well as for a lot of my rage. There was no one to blame.

The wooden house you see on page 82 enabled me to combine the war, the fear and the missiles launched from Gaza to Sderot, not far from Ashkelon. It is a small house by any measure. 60 cm long by 20cm wide, and the roof is hinged in order to be able to see the inside. I also wired it with electricity. The red roof is penetrated by a missile painted black.

When I exhibited Magna Carta in the city of Arad, Israel in March 2006, people were surprised: why the missile? It was hard to explain. How can anyone explain their fears? Is it possible for nightmares to come true?

Nobody needs to answer this question to me.

This fear is what the Magna Carta exhibition is all about.



SARCOPHAGI

As I have told you, Ashkelon is a very old town with very rich history. When you plan building a new house in Ashkelon, you must keep in mind surprises that may be hidden under the sand. For example, Mr. T. never believed his eyes when a bulldozer he hired started the work in his new plot. The bulldozer hit something very rigid in the ground. When he went down to check what it was, he opened his eyes with astonishment. On page 84 you see two sarcophagi, very nicely carved in white marble. Following the law he notified the authorities and the work was stopped before it started. Archeologists identified the art from the Roman times, probably the 3rd century AD.

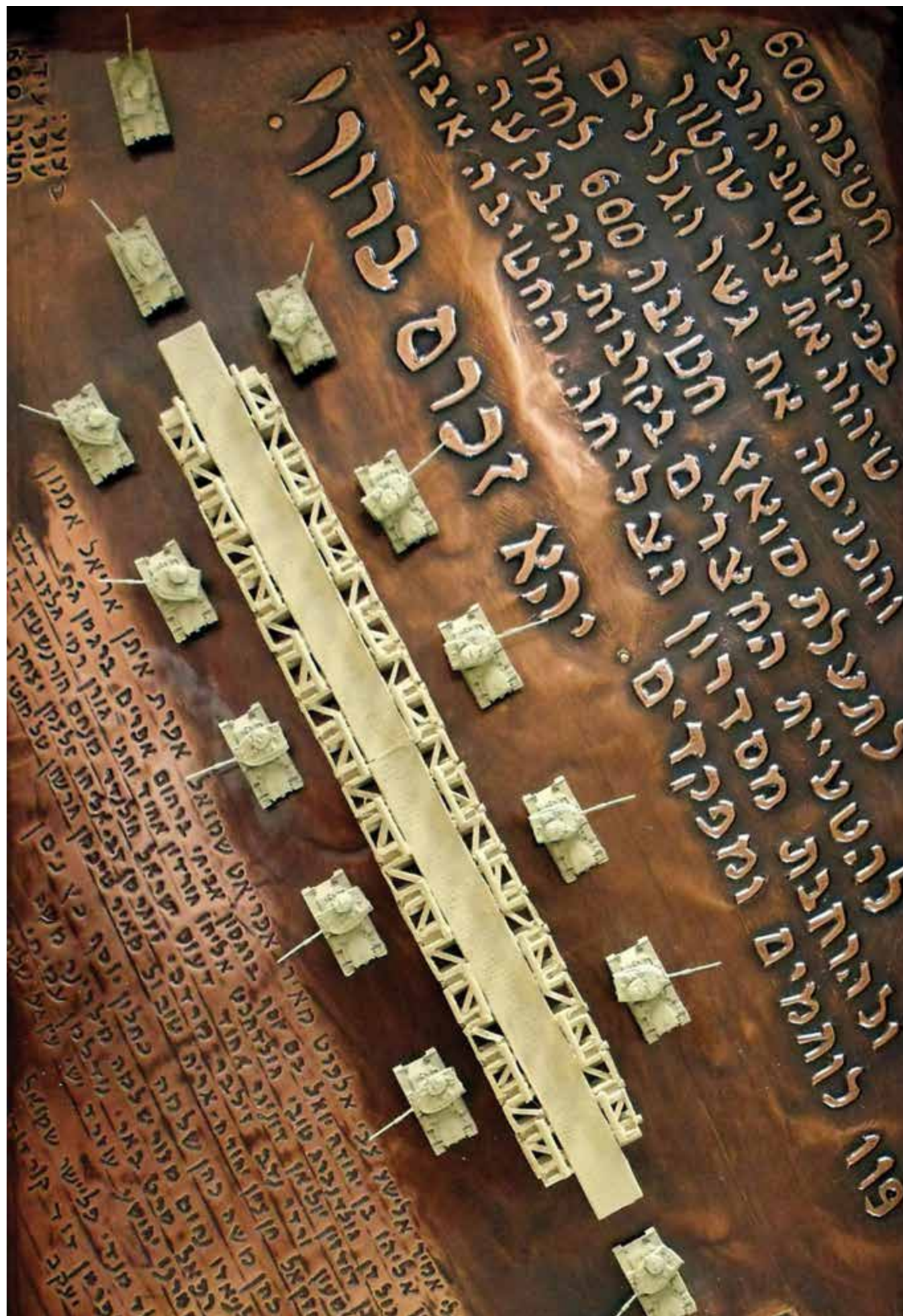
Today, these two beautiful creations can be seen in the center of Afridar, next to other findings from Ashkelon.

Afridar, a modern neighborhood, is a unique story. When the state of Israel was born, the Jewish community in South Africa decided to establish a new town in Israel which would be built by South African standards. They collected 750,000£ and Afridar was the result of this donation. Architects* in South Africa planned the commercial center like Greek-roman buildings. The neighborhood absorbed families from South Africa and until this day you can find streets named Johannesburg, Capstat and South Africa Boulevard in this neighborhood.

When this neighborhood was established, its name was simply Ashkelon. The old town was called Migdal-Gad.

In September 1955 these two municipal councils were united and since then they are called Ashkelon.

*architects involved in the planning of Afridar to my best knowledge were: Jack Barnett, Norman Hanson, Roy Kantarowich and Dov Carmi.



MINI BRIDGE

It took me a few weeks to find the manufacturer of these mini-tanks. Each tank is 2 cm long. The manufacturer lives in the United States, and I ordered a few dozen tanks. The birds-eye view on page 86 does not show the details of the bridge, but this is not the issue.

In order to view the picture correctly, you have to turn the book 90 degrees counter-clockwise. The story I tell in the upper-left corner is, in short, what Brigade 600 did in the Yom Kippur War. In the lower-right corner, I incorporated 119 names of our friends, friends who did not return from the war. Between those two sections, you can see the tanks ready to be harnessed to the bridge before towing it. I personally drove the lead tank of the commander of Battalion 410, which was never harnessed to the bridge. As we were leading the bridge, we became a clear target for attacks.

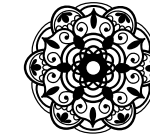
The director of *The Armored Corps Memorial Site and Museum at Latrun*, saw a picture of this work online. The sizes are 58 cm by 31 cm; really small. He invited me and asked me to bring this work with the mini-bridge. While we were drinking coffee, he told me that he wanted to display my work in the room of miniatures, at the entrance to the site. I was very excited and felt proud, for my brigade, not for myself.

Then, after thinking for a while, he said that there was a problem: the upper left side of my work deals with **battle heritage**; the lower-right side deals with memorializing the fallen soldiers. We don't mix these two in Latrun, he told me, and he asked me to make a new bas-relief, without the 119 names of my friends.

I tried to remain calm. I told him that these friends were the only reason that we were sitting and having coffee together.

"This is our policy," he started to repeat the explanation.

I got up and left, leaving him surprised. I didn't want my name there. No sir. My dead friends deserve to be there much more than I want to see mine.



PARATROOPERS

The crossing of the Suez Canal was codenamed Operation **"Knights of the Heart"**. This was a combined operation that involved units from many different branches of the armed forces. The different units received photos of the area from the Israeli Air Force which had been taken previously, but no one knew all of the details in those pictures or in the battle arena. Thus, for example, tanks were identified well, but infantry foxholes were totally ignored or not visible. This small detail had catastrophic results.

Several attempts were made to take the Tirtur-Lexicon crossroads. Several units failed. When paratroopers were sent to try and capture it on foot, very little information was given to them about all the above. When they began their attack, they met with enormous resistance from infantry that they had known nothing about. They had trusted the minimal information they had received, and it wasn't sufficient.

Experts say today that the battle between our tanks and the Egyptians' tanks on the nights of October 15 and 16 was one of the hardest ever in history of IDF, and the tanks of both sides literally touched each other because the mixture of smoke and fog prevented them from seeing properly.

As a result of many factors, and due to complex circumstances, the towing of the Rolling Bridge was delayed until October 18. When towing time arrived, one lonely tank of the commander of Battalion 410 started to check the Tirtur road, before approving the beginning of the towing. Major general Jackie Even joined us in our tank, as I already told here.

Somewhere, on the north side of the Tirtur Axis, while we were checking the road, we were shocked when we discovered 50 bodies of dead soldiers who had been killed on the night of the 15th. An order was given to our infantry platoon to come and pick up all of these brave warriors. They had been sent two nights earlier to clear the junction, but had been unable to do so because of the amassing of Egyptian units there. Only after that were we able to continue our mission of checking the road.

Those 50 bodies belonged to two different units. 40 were paratroopers of Battalion 890 who had tried to clear the junction, two nights earlier, and the other ten were armored corps soldiers, from Battalion 100 who came to help on the same night. No one was able to enter that battlefield in real time. One officer was found alive.

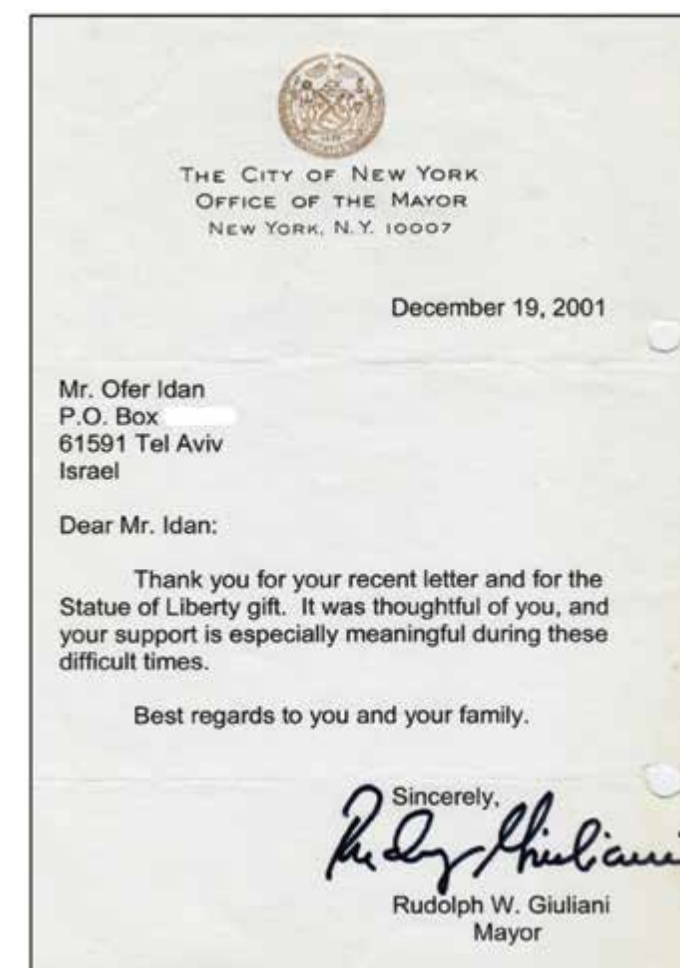
On page 88, you see a 20 cm x 30 cm memorial copper foil work I made for these brave paratroopers who never had a chance.



TEARS FOR NEW YORK

On September 11, 2001, the World Trade Center in New York City was completely demolished when hit by airplanes hijacked by terrorists. Two towers, thousands of people and one great shock to all. No one anticipated that and brave people tried to help: firefighters, policemen, first responders and many others. Too late, too little. Many of these brave men and women lost their lives too. Nothing could prepare anyone to this.

When I heard the news, I sat at my desk, and attempted to collect my thoughts and feelings. Eventually, I decided to create what I was feeling on a sheet of copper. You see the results on page 90. Under the tearing eyes of Miss Liberty I added a few words for Mayor Giuliani and I sent it to New York. Never in my dreams did I think that this dear, busy man was going to find time to send me a letter. See for yourself:





MISS LIBERTY

America has always been open to immigrants and refugees from all over the world. The gate to this great country was always by way of New York. That is why this "New Colossus" was put in the entrance to NY harbor. It was a gift from the French people about 100 years after the French revolution.

On the wall at the entrance to this monument, you can read the poem ***The new colossus*** by Emma Lazarus, welcoming all the needy people who come to seek refuge in the new world, and offering them a place to find food and lodging.

The situation around the globe has changed today. The free entrance to the United States is no longer free. Evil forces have forced the rules to change. Even the great country of the United States must protect its citizens against wrongdoers.

A century ago, more or less, many of the immigrants arriving in the US were Jews who had escaped from Europe. Too many events in the old world had caused the bells of alarm to toll. The Jews who arrived started their lives anew. The daily Jewish newspaper FORVRTS, or The Forward, was born in 1897 and is still being published today in Yiddish, and also in English.

Many trade unions, as well as other institutions, owe their existence to Jewish workers. Even the theatre and cinema benefited from Jewish talents. I remember the ***Ballad of Joe Hill***. The beginning wasn't easy. Everyone must see this movie.

I am not sure that immigrants would be allowed to publish a newspaper in other countries that easily. Maybe. The American constitution defends the right to say, print or publish whatever you want freely, unless it is illegal.

I like it the First Amendment of the Constitution. Some countries don't even have a constitution to amend.

Page 92: The statue in the exhibition: 6" tall, bought in a gift shop in NYC

№ 50 1892.

Die

23. Jahrgang.

jüdische Presse.

Organ für die Gesamtinteressen des Judenthums.

Diese Zeitung erscheint jeden Donnerstag.
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Berlin, den 15. Dezember 1892.

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Discite moniti!

Berlin, 14. Dezember.

Eine ereignisreiche Woche liegt hinter uns, und fast scheint es unglaublich, daß eine solche Fülle von tief einschneidenden Geschehnissen in die knappe Spanne von kaum acht Tagen sich zusammengedrängt. Der Wochenchronist steht vor einer harten Aufgabe, wenn er diese Geschehnisse, die in so jäher Folge einander folgen, nachprüfend analysieren, in ihrem Verlauf und ihren Wirkungen darstellen soll. Und was ließe sich zudem sagen, das nicht jeder halbwegs aufmerksame Beobachter der Tagesereignisse aus eigener Beurteilung sich sagt? Und was braucht thatsächlich mehr gesagt zu werden, als die Constatirung der einen bedrückend traurigen Wahrheit, daß der Ernst der Lage sich in einem Umfange verschärft hat, den auch der ängstlichste Schwarzseher vor Kurzem noch nicht für möglich gehalten hat? Während im Gerichtssaale zu Moabit das denkbar widerwärtigste Schauspiel sich aufrollte, Aylwardt und seine Gumpen als gewerbmäßige Verleumder gebrandmarkt wurden, welche mit der Ehre nicht etwa bloß von Einzelpersonen, nein auch des Staates und seiner Institutionen das schamloseste Spiel treiben — erachten nahezu zwölfhundert Wähler denselben Aylwardt der höchsten Würde für werth, welche die Bürger dem Bürger zu verleihen vermögen, des Mandats eines Volksvertreters! Der klägliche Geißel, der nicht für eine einzige seiner gesprochenen und geschriebenen Behauptungen auch nur den Schatten einer Rechtfertigung anzuführen vermag, dessen einziges „Verdienst“ die Kunst ist, zu verleumden, zu denunciren, die niedrigsten Instincte der durch wirth-

schafliches Unbehagen erregten Massen aufzustacheln und von diesem schmählichen Gewerbe sein Dasein zu fristen — dieser klägliche Geißel wird nicht etwa vom Pöbel der Hauptstadt, nein, von einer ländlichen Bevölkerung in die Vertretung des deutschen Reiches entsandt! Thorheit, über die Thatsache sich hinwegzusehen, daß die Reichstagswahl in Arnswalde-Friedeberg einen Abgrund von satanischem Haß offenbart, der nicht nur jede politische Moral zerstört, sondern auch davor nicht zurückbeugen wird, von nichtswürdigen Neben zu verbrecherischen Thaten fortzuschreiten!

Freilich man würde das Zusammentreffen der Wahl und der Beurtheilung Aylwardt's als ein minder bedrohliches Symptom gelten lassen können, wenn es sich bloß um den mährischen Wahlkreis handelte, welcher ihn zu seinem Vertreter im Reichstage sich ausgesucht und auf den Schild gehoben. Aber der conservative Parteitag hat dargethan, daß es sich nicht bloß um einen vereinzelt Bezirk handelt. Die conservative Partei bekennet sich zum Antisemitismus und nicht nur zu diesem, sondern auch zu der schmachvollen demagogischen Agitation, durch welche die Wahl Aylwardt's erzwungen wurde. Es ist auf dem conservativen Parteitage nicht anders hergegangen, als es in den Spielunken hergeht, in denen die antisemitischen Versammlungen abgehalten werden; die Pastoren und auch eiliche Landräthe, ja sogar Politiker von dem Rufe des Herrn v. Rauchaupst haben erschreckend schnell die Sprache der antisemitischen Hezer sich angeeignet. Aus dem Munde von Edelheuten, welche Aemter des Staates bekleiden und den Offiziersrock getragen haben, hörte man, wenn ein Redner es wagte, vor dem Antisemitismus zu warnen, den pöbel-



1892

As far as I know, Else Maschke, was born in Poland in 1892.

In that year, Alfred Dreyfus, the French Jewish officer, wasn't yet known as a traitor in France. This would happen only two years later. The First Zionist Congress would meet in Basel, Switzerland only in 1897, after Theodor Herzl attended the Dreyfus trial as a reporter for his paper, **Neue Freie Presse** in Vienna, and observed the events in Paris, as well as many others.

One day I was shopping in a **flea market** in Tel Aviv. I do that quite often. Suddenly I saw the newspaper you see on page 94. It appeared new — as if it had been printed the day before. Someone had probably kept safely in a drawer somewhere at home.

By reading this paper, you can see how rich Jewish life in Germany was at the end of the 19th century. People bought and sold chocolate and crystals; business was just fine, not to mention synagogues and culture. Everything seemed as if life would be safe and sound forever.

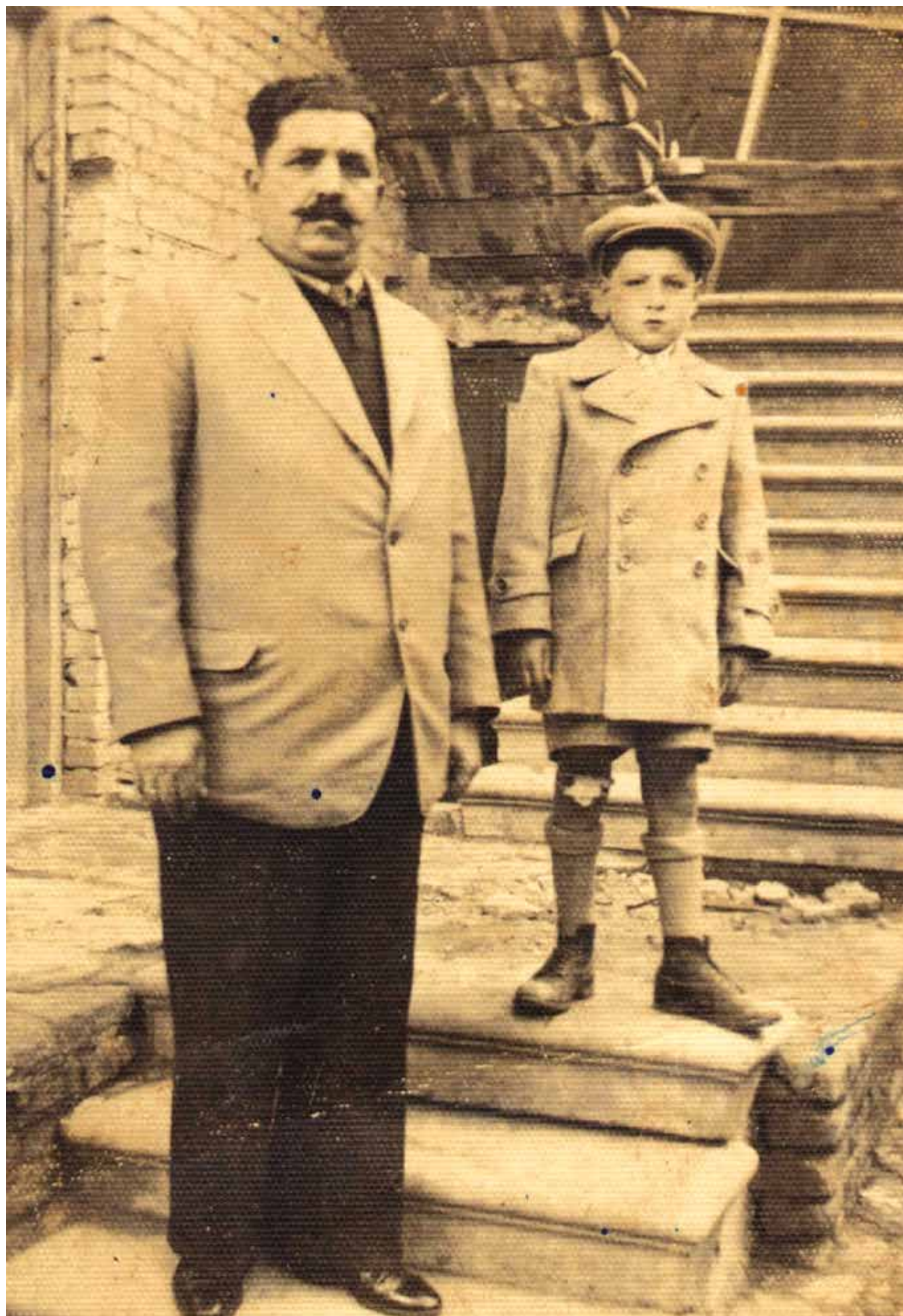
Else Maschke married Paul Kosminski who was younger than she was, and they immigrated to Berlin, Germany. Many members of the two families did the same. Some of them lived in 7 Immanuelkirschstrasse in Berlin. In the Great War, today known as World War I, Paul Kosminski served in the German army.

The Kosminskis brought four boys into the world. When the Second World War broke out, the four boys escaped to Palestine. Their parents preferred to stay in Berlin. As a former soldier of the Kaiser, Paul Kosminski felt very safe in Berlin.

On page 110, you see part of the platform in Berlin's railway station. 800 Jews were transported from there directly to Auschwitz on October 26, 1942. Else Kosminski was one of them. Her husband was on another transport, thirteen months later.

Two of their sons, Hans and Manfred, arrived in Ashkelon, as you already know: Haim Idan and Moshe Ron.

Yes. Else Maschke and Paul Kosminski were my **grandparents** whom I never had the chance to meet. My father never mentioned them at home. I understand why.



THE LITTLE IMMIGRANT

told by the Jewish underground to get ready to leave quickly, as they had to walk across the border to Algeria. The police didn't like the Jews leaving in that way, and the underground leaders did their best. The time was November 1947.

When they approached the harbor, in Algeria, after a rough night in Ujda sleeping in a synagogue, they were told to keep distance from the sea, in the dark. Reuven, the little boy, joined the leader and together, they were the first to arrive at the small boat which was waiting for them. Suddenly, there was a lot of noise; a big light came out of nowhere and a strong hand grabbed Reuven, the eight and a half year old boy, and pulled him into to the boat. The man who was with him disappeared and the boat sailed quickly and silently out to sea. Reuven was in shock. His family was left far behind.

After a few hours of sailing silently, the boat approached a real ship. The crew invited Reuven aboard and he didn't dare disobey. This ship was gathering passengers onto a second ship which headed for Palestine. When they finally met that ship – **Haportzim** – Reuven climbed onto the new vessel, hoping for the best. Everyone on board was hoping and praying to get to the Promised Land.

On the night of November 29, Reuven remembers seeing people on the ship listening to the radio and starting to sing and dance. Later he heard that the United Nations had approved the Partition Plan for Palestine and for the Jewish state. On their way, they sailed close to the Egyptian shore in order to camouflage their direction. People on board hid under sails when soldiers came to search.

When the ship approached Tel Aviv, rowboats from **Hapoel** boats club came to help the illegal immigrants. On the shore they sneaked through a large water pipe straight next to the Hilton Hotel. People who were waiting for them took them immediately to their homes. A stupid reporter who wrote about it in his newspaper the following day caused the British government to subtract the number of immigrants from the annual quota of legal certificates.

Reuven was well organized. A family friend had been notified about the lone child, and he took him to his home in Jaffa. In the photo on page 98, you see him – Aaron Elnekave – together with Reuven Ben Harush, in his first week in Palestine. The photo was sent to Reuven's family in Morocco through the rabbi there.



CHIBBI

Chibbi is the nickname of Hersch Echtenberg from Warsaw, Poland. Today he has a new name: Tzvi Misgav, and he is 88 years old. In 1939, the Polish Jews felt that the ground in Poland had started burning under their feet. The reason was the pact between Molotov and Ribbentrop. Shmuel Echtenberg took his son Hersch and they escaped to Bialistok, their first stop on a very long journey. Many Jews did the same. The father and son left behind the mother and two little brothers: Moishelah and Shloimeleh, hoping to reunite when the war was over. They never met again.

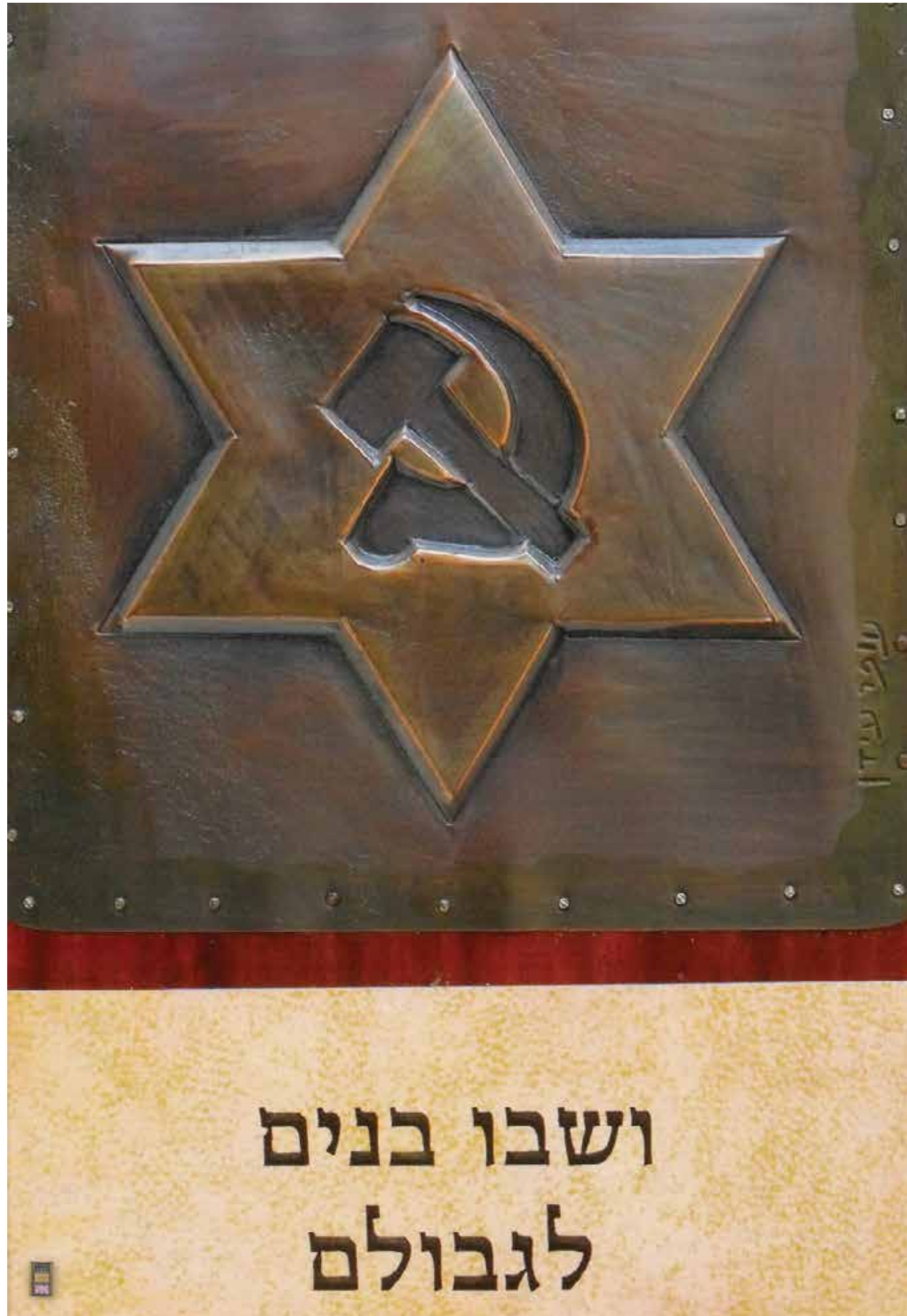
When Shmuel and Hersch attempted to return home, the ways were blocked for Jews. They had heard that there was work in the east, 6000 km of where they were. They started off on a journey that led them from one labor camp to another; some camps had **Internat** (Russian for boarding schools) for children and some did not. Lice were everywhere, food was rare, and fighting with non-Jewish boys was the daily menu for Chibbi.

They moved from Siberia to Iran. Poland had published an order that all Polish men must return to Poland to be conscripted into the army. Shmuel found a train that would take him to Poland, but the officers didn't allow children such as Chibbi to enlist. After many tears, Chibbi was allowed to join his father.

I can't tell all the details, but Chibbi was separated from his father and found himself traveling to Tehran, together with many other children who were alone, most of whom were Jewish orphans. In a special camp, he was taken in by a lady after he was identified as a Jewish child, and a short time later, the Jewish Agency added him to the group of The **Tehran Children**. Those children were put on a ship to Karachi, Pakistan. From Karachi, they were taken on a second ship to the Suez Canal. In Kantara, Egypt, they were put on a train that took them to Palestine. When they finally stopped at Kibbutz Na'an, in Palestine, hundreds of people were waiting for them, expecting to hear news about their families who remained in Poland.

This group of about 700 hundred children was the first of its kind. When they were cruising in the Indian Ocean, the Royal British Navy gave them an escort of 20 ships. All the world followed this journey which had taken more than three years since they had left their homes. That escort tells you the importance of this special group.

On page 100, you see Chibbi after the long voyage to Palestine.



IMMIGRANTS

No matter where they live, their efforts to fit into a new country fail the minute someone points a finger at them and calls them by the name of the countrymen they left behind forever.

America and Israel are typical states of immigration. Since 1990, a million Jews were allowed to leave for Israel. Glasnost had carried on its wings freedom that had never existed before in the former Soviet Union. A million Jews immigrated to Israel as a result. Most of them were educated, hardworking people and highly motivated to fit in the Israeli society.

In Russia, they were called Jews. In Israel, the Jewish state, people called them Russians. All the immigrants know the bitter feeling of "self-definition". They'll never forget where I came from? It's annoying, to say the least.

When we speak about Russia, there is a question of religion. In the former Soviet Union, religion was almost outlawed. People were measured by their loyalty to the state, their work, the party, the army. Many Jews did not practice Judaism. Now, after arriving in Israel, they are required to prove that they are Jews. Not simple after so many years without religious life.

Being Jewish is determined by the religion of one's mother. The children of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother are not recognized as Jews, according to Orthodox Jewish law.

The work you see on page 102 represents the never-ending conflict: is a person who looks Jewish actually Russian? Or the contrary: is a person who looks Russian actually Jewish? The question may be valid for immigrants from all countries.

I am just being facetious with this silly, artificial "game". For immigrants, however, it is not a game and it's not silly at all; in fact, some Israelis often show these immigrants disrespect. We sometimes forget that we are former immigrants ourselves, and instead of embracing the newcomers, we do exactly the opposite.

This must stop.



EXODUS

Exodus is the name of the second book of the Old Testament. There you can read about the first exodus in the world: the people of Israel leaving Egypt, escaping from Pharaoh and from slavery. This Exodus marked the birth of **Passover**; after which the Jews received the Torah from Moses on Mount Sinai, and thus began the 40-year march towards the land of Canaan.

The movie **Exodus** is something else. In this film, there was a ship called Olympia with 650 refugees that sailed from Cyprus to Palestine. The real ship's original name was **President Warfield**. The Haganah purchased it from in US to bring 4,500 Jews from France to Palestine after the Holocaust. They gave the ship a new name: Yetzia 1947 or Exodus 1947.

After its voyage through the Mediterranean, a voyage that the British Navy was very much aware of, the ship was attacked on Palestine's shores. Few people aboard were killed or wounded; all of the passengers were forced to board three small ships which took them back to Hamburg, Germany.

Before Hamburg, The three ships made a stop in Port De Bouc, France. One of the refugees threw a letter in a bottle into the water and a reporter found it. A day later, it was published in "Forverts", the Jewish newspaper in New York. (See copy of the letter and its writer on page 104) On the way to Hamburg, a baby died on board one of these ships. It was in the bay of Biscay. The British sailors gave him a naval burial, while all three ships paused on their journey to salute the little refugee who was born free.

In Hamburg, the refugees were taken to new camps. Many of them came to the State of Israel after independence was declared in Israel, in 1948.

On the opening of the Magna Carta exhibition in Arad, in March 2006, the captain of real Exodus, Ike **Aharonovich**, was the guest of honor and he told the story. [on page 104, with the bottle] The letter in Yiddish which had been thrown into the sea, was given to me by the children of its writer – Avraham Blasblag. He was later the mayor of my town, Ashkelon.

The letter on page 104 was first publishes on august 27th. 1947 and it is printed here by the courtesy of "FORWARD ASSOSSIATION" in New York, march 2017



ATS SOLDIER

The ATS, Auxiliary Territorial Services, was part of the British Army. When Ben Gurion addressed the public in Palestine, during World War II, **The White paper** issued by the local British government limited the entrance of Jewish immigrants to Palestine. Nobody really knew the full extent of what was happening to the Jews in Europe, but it was obvious that they needed to escape. No country opened its doors for them.

"We must resist the **White Paper** as if there were no war", said Ben Gurion. "On the other hand, we must assist the British as if there was no white paper", Ben Gurion added. **The Old Man**, as he was affectionately called in Hebrew, was very smart.

Many women in Palestine volunteered for the ATS, including married women with children. Many other volunteers became truck drivers, infantry and artillery soldiers, paratroopers and more. One of these women was Rivka Birman from Tel Aviv. After basic training in Sarafand, she was sent to Cairo, Egypt. She was posted in a military hospital where wounded soldiers arrived from the western desert after fighting the German tank divisions of Rommel and others.

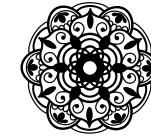
No one knew, but Private Birman secretly kept a personal diary. In her diary, she told an imaginary friend about her work in her ward, about the difficulty of the work and about the unfriendly British orderly. She copied letters that she wrote to her family back home, and also letters to a secret lover; letters that he never received.

The most interesting parts of her diary were about her work with the wounded soldiers. While she was taking care of them, they told her about the battles they had fought in. They felt much better after talking about the horrors of the battlefields.

Those who didn't want to talk were very sad and quiet. Without knowing it, Rivka Birman had discovered the beginnings of PTSD.

The photo you see on page 106 was taken by "Photo Ramses" in Cairo. Rivka's short haircut was compulsory to all nurses because of lice. Imagine that.

That was my mother.



GERMAN ID

On September 18, 1939, Hans Kosminski got his new ID. You cannot see the back side of this ID, where they printed a big J, the first letter of the word **Jude**, or Jew. But on the inside they didn't miss much.

On the right, they took thumbprints. Between his first and last names, they added a most obviously Jewish name: Israel, they nailed his picture with special thumbtacks which can't be removed to forge the document, and they added the official stamp of the Nazi government with the swastika. Hans didn't remain in Germany for long. He was a member of **Habonim**, a Jewish youth movement. Habonim reserved places for him and his parents on a train whose destination was Vienna. When he packed his suitcase and asked his parents to join him, his father – Paul Kosminski – said that they were loyal German citizens, and, as such, they were safe where they are. Hans never saw them again.

From the train, Hans and his friends sailed to Constanza, in Rumania. After a long chilling wait, they joined a ship called the Hilda, and sailed to Palestine. The British coast guard caught them near Haifa, as they entered the bay. The men on board dismantled crucial parts of the ship, and crippled the ship. The British forces, who wanted to send the people on board back to Europe, were forced to let them get off the ship, and sent them directly to Atlit Detainee Camp. After a few weeks, they received certificates and were released as legal immigrants.

At first, Hans was sent to a Kibbutz. He didn't like living the socialist life of the kibbutz, so he left and moved to Tel Aviv. One day he met a young girl who had just been released from the British Army. She was working in a restaurant in Beilinson Hospital at Petach Tikva. Hans liked the girl and they started dating. The couple fell in love and Hans wanted more. Why not? Said the girl. I only want a gold ring...

When her parents heard about the wedding plans, they were not really surprised. WWII had ended a month earlier, and people had begun to live again. The bride's younger sister had already set a date for her wedding, on June 26th. So they made a double wedding...

Hans Kosminski lost his parents. But he found a wife and started a new family in a new country. That's my dad.



LAST TRAIN FROM BERLIN

June 2016. My first time in Berlin. On my shopping list, I had included a miniature train for my exhibition. I found a miniature shop in Scharlottenburg, right next to my hotel. What a luck. It is a huge shop, and I wandered from room to room, not really knowing what I was looking for.

On the back of one shelf, nearly hidden from view, I saw a shiny, cast-iron locomotive. See the upper photo on page 110. I asked the manager to take it out for me. The manager said that this was a memento given to employees upon their retirement from the train company **Berliner Bahnen**. They manufactured trains.

"How much does it cost?" I asked.

He looked under the wooden basis and said, "It's not very cheap – it costs €115."

I smiled and said that that was ok. Then I started looking for miniature cars for my grandson. They cost from €0.99 up to €3 each, secondhand, of course. I picked 10 different models which I had never seen in Israel and put them on the counter, preparing to pay for all of them. The manager started wrapping each one.

I estimated that all my shopping there would come to €135. I put my hand in my pocket, trying to find my money. By the way, I asked the manager who was wrapping my train whether he knew when this locomotive had been in service. "Yes", he answered, "Between 1920 and 1950."

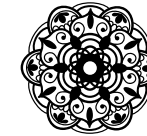
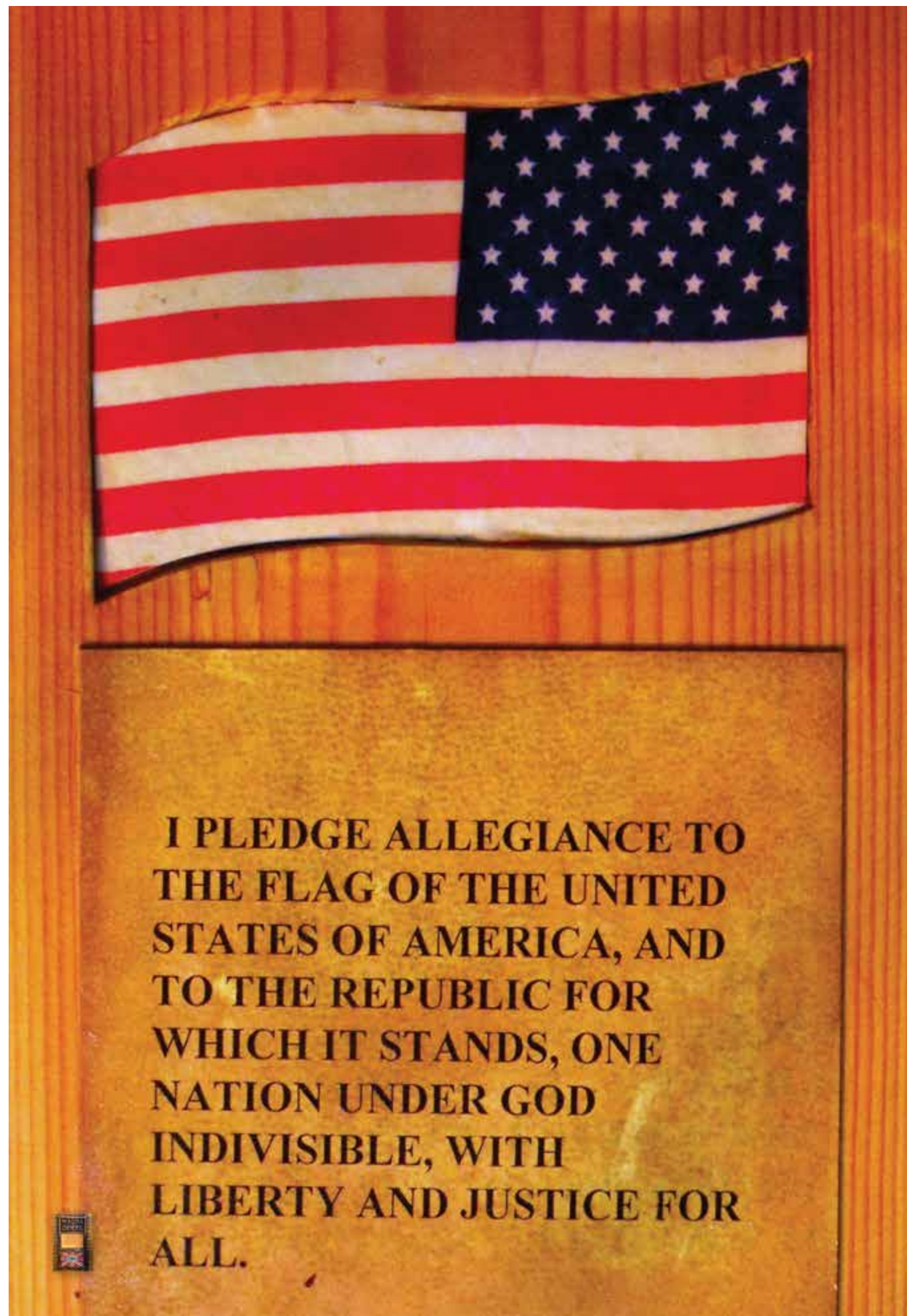
"Well, one of these trains probably transported my grandparents from Berlin to Auschwitz," I told him.

The man choked. "It will be €100 total," he said.

"No sir," I replied. "I am paying full price for my train". I put the money on the counter and left the shop.

Poor soul. He was not responsible for the murder of my family...

In the lower photo on page 110, you can see the date 26.10.1942. This appears on the train platform in Berlin today where the municipality added the date of the transport when my grandmother Else **Kosminski** was sent to Auschwitz. The picture was taken in 2006 by my cousin Alon Ron. I have never had enough courage to visit the house where they had lived, where my father had lived as a child and where the SS soldiers came to take my grandparents to their last train.



PLEDGE AND JUSTICE

As far as I can tell, most American children (and citizens) can recite the Pledge of Allegiance, the text you can read here on page 112, by heart. Every immigrant who wants to become an American citizen must know it, among other things. It's basic knowledge.

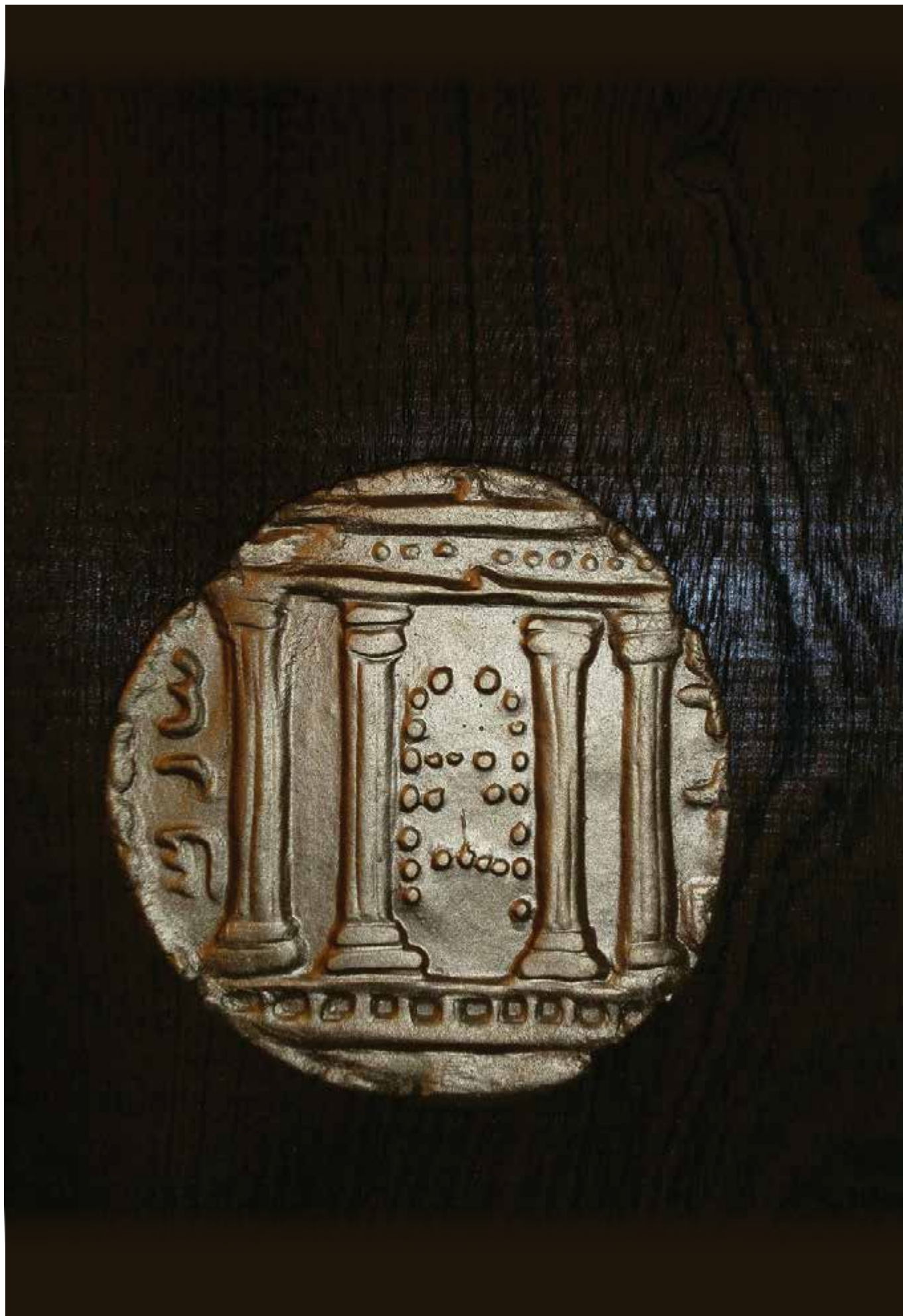
When I was in high school, we learned some American literature. The most patriotic story I remember is "*The Devil and Daniel Webster*" by Stephen Vincent Bennet.

The story tells about a man who named his horses *Constitution* and *Constellation*. It was thrilling to me. His voice coming out of his grave – "Neighbor, how stands the union?" – was touching. I have read quite a lot about America, starting with Tom Sawyer and his friends and others, of course. The best book ever, in my opinion, is *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. In this book, I remember a conversation between Jem Finch and his father, Atticus, after Tom Robinson had been convicted.

Jem asks his father why normal people convicted a man who was not capable of committing the crime in the case. This must be changed, he argues. His father answers that changing that would entail amending the constitution. His son suggests that he go to Washington to do it. The father replies that he is not likely to see that change in his lifetime; in fact, were Jem to see it, he would be an old man.

These are not quotations, but I hope the meaning is clear.

Social and legal changes are not simple; nor are they short. Significant changes can take very long time. But somewhere, someday, someone must start making them, everywhere!



BAR KOCHBA

One of the Jewish heroes, in ancient times, was Bar Kochba. He led a rebellion against the Roman rulers in Palestine starting in the year 132 AD, held out for less than three years, and died in 135 AD.

The coin on page 114 is a replica of a coin from the time of Bar Kochba's reign of the small state over which he ruled. The gold paint is my idea for the exhibition. On one side, Bar Kochba wrote his first name, **Shimon**, and on the other side he wrote **Freedom for Jerusalem**.

Bar Kochba's revolt wasn't the first in the history of this land. The first one took place in the year 167 B.C, led by Mattathias Ben Johanan who had five sons. Together, they revolted against the Seleucid Empire who ruled over Palestine from Syria. The Hashmonean Dynasty, led by Mattathias and his sons, established a free state after cleaning and purifying the Second Holy Temple in Jerusalem. These events are the origins of the **Chanukah** holiday that Jews celebrate until today.

In the year 66 AD, the second revolt against the Roman rulers began, following the death of King Agrippa. The small kingdom of Judea fell into turmoil, and Rome was not pleased. Vespasian and Titus were sent from Rome to suppress the rebels. In the year 70 AD, the Second Temple fell to the Romans, and was destroyed; thousands of Jews were killed, while the rest were taken prisoners and forced to become slaves. Masada was captured in 73 AD. The zealots on Masada didn't wait for the Tenth Legion of the Romans. When they saw the walls on fire, they made a lottery and 10 chosen men killed their families, 960 women and children, and then committed suicide. They preferred death over slavery. The date: 15th of Nissan. First day of Passover. **[According to Titus Flavius Iosephus, 'wars of the Jews'. Book VII chapter 9].**

Since those times – and even earlier – Jews have hoped and prayed for the return to their homeland. In the 20th century, it finally happened.

I rest my case.



I WAS THERE

Have you ever seen anyone playing checkers against himself using tanks? Ask Benjamin Patton*. He runs a workshop called ***I Was There*** for war veterans with PTSD. He usually conducts it in the US, but he also did it twice for IDF veterans in Israel, at Natal, the Israeli trauma center in Tel Aviv. I was there twice also: once as a 'client'; once as a mentor. The picture you see at the top of page 116 was snapped from a film that I made there with friends. In the picture at the bottom, you can see Ben doing overtime hours after a day of shooting.

Many people all over the world today show symptoms of PTSD. It happens on battlefields, in fires, to fire fighters, in disasters like 9/11 and even after rape. Many stories online tell us of the many American veterans who have committed suicide because of PTSD. You can't see it, but It happens to veterans who have returned from WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and other wars.

In my opinion, the main reason for suicide is the sensation of loneliness and isolation. No matter what others think, the injured man feels alone, even when surrounded by people. Strangers can't understand that. People with PTSD have often lost faith in their country, in values like love and friendship. All these are in addition to nightmares, smells, noises and other physical phenomena. PTSD sufferers cannot stand surprises.

The movie ***First Blood*** with Sylvester Stallone represented the idea very well. At the end of the movie, Rambo cries and tells his commander that in Vietnam he could fly a chopper or drive a tank. Today he cannot keep a job as simple as washing cars for even two weeks. If you noticed the way he was dressed, you could understand his way of life, especially when he was wandering, looking for his buddies from Vietnam.

A friend from Florida tells me that many of those veterans also suffer from overweight or obesity. That fact leads to more health problems. No wonder they feel rejected by society.

People like Ben Patton are angels for people like us. We need many more like him. They help forsaken people show their faces and start talking and smiling again. A glimmer of hope appears on their horizon.

In Israel, children in Gaza, and in the kibbutzim and towns like Sderot on the border with Gaza have suffered from missiles and mortar shells for years. Many are candidates for PTSD. I hope the State takes care of them now, before it's too late.

*Yes. He is the grandson of General George S. Patton who didn't believe in PTSD.



THE WALL

The picture on page 118 shows part of my work on a wall in my studio today. The chests on the floor contain the rest because there is not enough room for everything on one wall. Some of the exhibits on the wall as well as some in the chests are not included in this book.

I am not an artist, nor even a professional photographer. I consider myself more like a "technician" of the history I know. I also confess: I know very little. Those who want to know more must look in other places.

My dream is to see my work on the walls of the United Nations. My reflections do not belong to one state only. Prevention of hunger, wars and illness is a worldwide challenge.

My target is to find leaders with good will. I am sure they exist everywhere. They just need a little push, a reminder.

I wish to share all this with the world.



YOSSI BINDER

Yossi was born in Rumania in 1942. He came to Israel in 1950; to Ashkelon. In 1960, he was drafted into the artillery corps where he specialized in communications and instructed young soldiers. In 1968, Yossi graduated from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Faculty of Law, passed the bar examination and got married. In 1970, his son was born. On October 6, 1973, the Yom Kippur War surprised the State of Israel. Yossi was drafted, like all of us, and was sent to the front in Sinai, near the Suez Canal. On October 22, Yossi was killed. He was buried in Ashkelon, in a military cemetery, right next to a group of his students who were also killed in the same war.

When we were in 12th grade, in 1967-68, Yossi taught us Civics. In the very first lesson, he initiated a debate which ended with conclusions about the definition of the word "state": a state is a defined territory, with a defined population and a defined legal system. Fifty years later, I feel that we are not yet there.

Hence, this exhibition is dedicated to our beloved teacher, Yossi Binder, who gave his life for us.



TOMORROW

The secret is education. More education means a better world, a world with less violence. Dean Kamen established an organization called **FIRST**. In 2017, many thousands of children in many countries participate in *FIRST ROBOTICS COMPETITIONS*, building robots with the cooperation and support from NASA.

This project integrates teachers, parents, mentors, sponsors, industry and more, creating a worldwide spirit. All of the participants are volunteers. You can find the organization online; you may be surprised.

If a program like FIRST is implemented in multiple disciplines in schools, we might be surprised by the motivation created in pupils everywhere. In this way, cooperation among different entities within communities could create a fresh, new approach in any school which adopts the methodology that Kamen has paved for us. We don't need extra money to start these kinds of programs. Parent-Teacher Associations will have new content; the community will thrive. When children feel that their opinions matter, they will thrive as well.

In 2010, I uploaded a video on YouTube, as a tribute to Dean Kamen. It is in English. And you are welcome to watch it. You may like it. Mr. Kamen deserves the tribute.

If we don't let our children to take part in planning their future, they may not be a part of it. We are boring them.

Let's go to the future. Together.

"This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds I will remember my covenant..."

Genesis 9

