

MATANEL FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY REPORT

Program:
Year: 2013

Please present your activity report according to the following lines. The whole rapport will not exceed 2 or 3 pages (as word document).

Name of the Program: **Research and investigation of the mass killing sites of Jews and video recorder interviews of non Jews witnesses to the crimes committed by the Nazis in the Ukraine, Russia, Belarus Poland, Romania, Moldova and Luthuania.**

Year of activity: 2013

Name of the report's writer: Hanna Yakunina

Function of the report's writer: Eastern Europe affaires assistant

1- Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):

Yahad - In Unum is the leading research organization investigating the mass executions of 2.2 million Jews and an unknown number of Roma/Gypsy people in Eastern Europe between 1941 and 1944. While the atrocities of the concentration camps are well-known, this genocide perpetrated as far east as Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Romania or even part of Poland is not common knowledge. Until today the work of Yahad – in Unum has confirmed the location of hundreds of mass graves, many previously unknown. Up today, about 3000 Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Russian, Moldovan, Romanian and Lithuanian witnesses to the executions have been interviewed and their testimony recorded. Yahad – in Unum’s research has accelerated in recent months as investigators race to identify and document as many of the graves as possible while remaining witnesses are still alive. Yahad also started in 2013 a specific research on Lithuanian genocide.

2- The main achievements during the last year of activity (main achievements, number of events, number of participants, etc.):

Yahad-In Unum’s work is conducted on three fronts –archival research, field research trips to actual sites, and educational activities and programs. The field research trips by Yahad-In Unum’s researchers are prepared by archival studies cross checking with the archival funds: the archives of the Soviet Extraordinary State Commission of 1944 today accessible at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., the Polish archives from the National Memory Institute, the archives of German Juridical investigation of the national socialist crimes accessible at the German Archives of Ludwisburg, Germany, and Romanian archives from the Romanian Information Service and the General Inspectorate of Romanian Police. Their findings provide the background information for the research on the ground.

In 2013, more than 35650 archival pages (including German, Soviet, Polish, Romanian archives, Ukrainian KGB – SBU archives, Lithuanian KGB and Moldova KGB archives) were collected and studied at Yahad- In Unum's research center in Paris to prepare the on-the-ground research. Yahad – In Unum has increased the archival research in order to provide the necessary background information needed for the 13 investigation trips and 3 pilot research trips scheduled in 2013.

From January 1st to December 6th, 2013, 576 new testimonies have been recorded during 13 investigation trips and 3 pilot research trips and 333 mass killing sites were registered.

In 2013, we have translated a total of 178 witness testimonies.

To this day, Yahad has effectuated research concerning 1,337 execution sites in 7 different countries and has gathered 3,580 testimonies during the course of its 79 investigative research trips.

In 2013, there were 12,554 visitors to Yahad's website, with 62.9% new visitors.

From January 1st to December 31, 2013, Yahad-In Unum edited and digitalized 844 testimonies video recorded during research travels, which can be consulted at the Research Center in Paris and at the Research Center of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Another goal was to expand our researches in Lithuania.

In 2013, YIU made two research trips in Lithuania :

September, 2013, Region of Vilnius (Pilot)

From the 15th to the 2nd of September, 2013, Yahad-In Unum conducted a pilot research trip to the region of Vilnius in Lithuania.

During this trip, Yahad-In Unum had several objectives: to understand the specifics of the country, to collect information about the historical context, to meet Lithuanians to evaluate the possibility of conducting video interviews about the Holocaust, to understand the relationship of Lithuanians to their past, and finally to meet eyewitnesses of mass shootings of the Jewish population.

This pilot research trip of Yahad-In Unum to Lithuania was fruitful and encouraging. The team conducted interviews with outstanding witnesses who agreed to speak on camera. During these few days, the team interviewed seven witnesses and identified three execution sites.

November – December, 2013, Region of Vilnius

Yahad-In Unum led a second research trip to Lithuania from the 22nd of November to the 6th of December, 2013, in the *apskritis* of Siauliai, close to the Latvian border, where the investigation team visited more than 30 cities and villages.

Before the beginning of the Second World War, the area was mostly inhabited by Lithuanians and Jews. The arrival of Germans in late June of 1941 was followed by the rapid establishment of a local administration and police, supported by Lithuanian nationalists from partisan units that emerged during the retreat of the Soviet troops. These interim authorities played an important role in the implementation of anti-Jewish measures. The testimonies recorded by the association established three inherent characteristics of the Holocaust in the Region: the precocity of mass shooting, the active participation of Lithuanians in the executions and the systematic looting of Jewish private goods.

During this research trip, Yahad-In Unum recorded 32 interviews and identified 15 sites of mass graves. Some of them are not commemorated.

Another achievement was **our educational and academic program expansion.**

EUROPE

"Witnesses of proximity and representations of shootings of Jews on Soviet territory"

On June 7, 2013, Yahad organized in partnership with the CNRS, the workshop "Witnesses of proximity and representations of shootings of Jews on Soviet territory" which highlighted various themes and issues raised by the testimony of "neighbors" including two majors: the status of witness testimony of proximity and the various representations of shootings by those involved.

This multidisciplinary meeting was attended by high-level experts of trauma, such as psychoanalyst Gampel (Tel Aviv University), neuroscientists such as Burnot and Dauchot (Inserm), anthropologists such as Rechtman (IRIS, EHESS), sovietologists such as Blum (CERCEC, EHESS), and several Yahad researchers.

"Wars, Mass Murders, Genocides"

In 2012-2013, Yahad organized in partnership with the ESCP, under the direction of Patrick Desbois and Edouard Husson, a seminar entitled "Wars, Mass Murders, Genocides." This seminar was for students of the ESCP from around the world, and was devoted to the study of mass violence perpetrated throughout the 20th century, from the Armenian genocide to the genocide in Rwanda. One of the five sessions was devoted to the presentation of the history of the Holocaust in the East and the work of Yahad - In Unum.

Educational Seminar, Caen Memorial

On the 9th and the 10th of November, Yahad organized in partnership with the Caen Memorial, an educational seminar which was attended by 20 teachers from France, Bosnia, Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Greece, Latvia, Germany and the United States at the Caen Memorial on the theme of "How to teach the Holocaust in the East? ".

International researchers, including members of the Scientific Committee of Yahad - In Unum, Denis Peschanski and Martin Holler, evoked historical perspectives of the Holocaust in the East as well as the persecution of Gypsies; in addition, the latest research results were presented by Yahad members.

"Massacre of the Gypsies in Eastern Europe" / "Mass Massacres on Russian Territory"

On December 9th 2013, Yahad organized two workshops. One on the "Massacre of the Gypsies in Eastern Europe," during which Yahad invited several international experts, such as Martin Holler (Humboldt University), Henriette Asséo (EHESS) and Vasile Ionescu (Media Diversity Institute) to present the results of this research, as well as the hypothesis and pertaining questions. Using the recorded witness testimonies done by the Yahad teams and based on case studies, the researchers of Yahad and the invited participants deepened their knowledge of the history of massacres of Gypsies and the specifics surrounding these events.

The second workshop was on subject the "Mass Massacres on Russian Territory." Yahad, with several experts such as Nicolas Werth (PTWI), Dieter Pohl (University of Klagenfurt), Andrej Angrick (Foundation for the Promotion of Culture, Hamburg, Germany) studied the various problems encountered on the ground due to the multiplicity of groups of victims of the Nazis, the proximity of the front, and the relatively short duration of the occupation.

Archbishop of Paris Monseigneur Vingt-Trois and Bishops from France and Spain, Visit Auschwitz-Birkenau

From February 4th to the 6th, Archbishop André Vingt-Trois, Archbishop of Paris, led a delegation of thirteen French and Spanish bishops to Krakow, Poland to visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp. They also met with Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz, Archbishop of Krakow, and members of the Polish episcopate.

Conference at the Hotel de Ville, Paris

At the invitation of Bertrand Delanoë, Mayor of Paris, and Catherine Vieu-Charier, Deputy Mayor, in charge of veterans affairs and commemoration, Yahad-In Unum presented its research at the Hotel de Ville auditorium.

The first part of the night was dedicated to Yahad's investigative work on the "Holocaust by Bullets. Father Patrick Desbois explained the fieldwork in depth using the specific example of a trip to Moldavia led by Yahad, where mass graves of Jewish victims were found with the assistance of a team of Roma investigators. In the second part, Costel Nastasie, President of Roma Dignity, who worked with Yahad in the field in Romania and Moldavia, and Andrej Umansky, Historical Consultant for the organization, presented Yahad's research on Roma persecution in Eastern Europe.

UNITED STATES & CANADA

New York University, New York

On Monday, April 1, 2013, Father Patrick Desbois delivered "Holocaust by Bullets: Uncovering the Reality of Genocide in Eastern Europe during World War II", a lecture at New York University. John Sexton, President of NYU, provided an introduction. There was also be a screening of a documentary film on Yahad's research.

On Wednesday, April 3, 2013. NYU's "French House" hosted a conference with Father Patrick Desbois and also screened the documentary "Mass Murder of Roma

during World War II". Antonin Baudry, Cultural Counselor at the French Embassy in the United States introduced the discussion.

Georgetown University, Washington D.C.

On July 18, Father Patrick Desbois was at Georgetown University in Washington DC as a visiting professor. He participated in the training program for teachers organized by the Jan Karski Institute for research on the Holocaust.

For the last two years, this program has trained secondary school teachers in order to create a network of specialists able to disseminate current research on the Holocaust and other genocides to the younger generations in all schools across the United States. Participants receive a certificate of "Research on the Holocaust and Genocides" at the end of six days of training.

The program is led by the faculty of Georgetown University, such as P. Dennis McManus, Director of the Jan Karski Institute, and also by guests, including Irene Weiss, Holocaust survivor, David Friedman, Director of the Anti-Defamation League of Washington and Father Patrick Desbois.

University of Winnipeg, Canada

On May 1, Father Desbois was the keynote speaker at the 12th Annual Holocaust Symposium at the University of Winnipeg sponsored by the Freeman Family Foundation Holocaust Education Centre and Gail Asper and Michael Paterson. The following day, he participated in a public dialogue with Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire who was Force Commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda. Naomi Azrieli, a Canadian academic and philanthropist, moderated this rich and interesting exchange.

On May 3, 2013, the University of Winnipeg awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity honoris causa to Father Patrick Desbois. The ceremony took place with 200 attendees at the Science Complex at the university's Richardson College for the Environment and Science Complex.

"Lyndon Baines Johnson Moral Courage Award" - Houston Holocaust Museum

On April 30th, on the occasion of Father Patrick Desbois receiving the "Lyndon Baines Johnson Moral Courage Award," former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright honored the work of Yahad-In Unum. The Award dinner is an annual event held by the Holocaust Museum of Houston "to recognize those unique individuals who, through a single act or a lifetime off behavior, have shown the moral courage to do the right thing under extraordinarily difficult circumstances." In addition to Father Desbois, previous honorees included Bob Dole, Steven Spielberg, Colin Powell, Elie Wiesel and John Prendergast.

"2013 Hope for Humanity Award" - Dallas Holocaust Museum

On October 30, the Dallas Holocaust Museum/Center for Education and Tolerance presented the "2013 Hope for Humanity Award" to Father Patrick Desbois, president of Yahad - In Unum, and survivors of the Holocaust in the Dallas/Fort Worth area.

U.S. State Department features Yahad-In Unum - Commemoration of Holocaust Victims

The US State Department highlighted Yahad's work on January 28 on the occasion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Excerpts of witness testimonies recorded by Yahad-In Unum's team in Eastern Europe were presented to illustrate the organization's research. The commemoration received nearly a hundred attendees, including several diplomatic personnel, and was organized at the George Marshall Center Auditorium by His Excellency Michael Kozak, US Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.

Yahad Continues Work with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Patrice Bensimon, Director of the Yahad - In Unum Research Center, attended the general meeting of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, which brought together delegations from 31 member countries from October 6th to the 10th in Toronto, Canada.

This meeting advanced the multi-year plan that governs the organization's work in research, education, archives, on Holocaust commemoration days and massacre sites. The program for the "Killing Sites - Research and Remembrance" conference was also announced.

3- The evaluation (methodology, results, comparisons with the precedent year, conclusions for the future...):

Yahad - in Unum has three aims:

1. To restore dignity to thousands of Jews who were murdered and thrown into mass graves;
2. To fight against Holocaust denial;
3. To uncover, disseminate historical information on hundreds of mass murder sites that are totally unknown.

From January 1st to December 6th, 2013, 576 new testimonies have been recorded during 13 investigation trips and 3 pilot research trips and 333 mass killing sites were registered.

In 2013, we have translated a total of 178 witness testimonies.

To this day, Yahad has effectuated research concerning 1,337 execution sites in 7 different countries and has gathered 3,580 testimonies during the course of its 79 investigative research trips.

In 2013, there were 12,554 visitors to Yahad's website, with 62.9% new visitors.

4- Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:

The development of Yahad - In Unum will continue in 2014 on three levels:

- Field Research :

Research trips concerning the murder of Jews by shooting and the localization of execution sites in the Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Poland, Moldova and Lithuania

Research trips to interview Roma survivors in Romania, Macedonia, Moldova and Serbia.

Research trips to interview survivors and witnesses to the massacres of the indigenous people and the families of the disappeared in Guatemala

- Academic and educational activities (studying the Holocaust to fight against mass violence today)

International dissemination of the research results through academic activities and the publication of educational and communication tools. Organization of seminars at the university level and for history teachers at the school level, international conferences to deepen the knowledge of the Holocaust and to fight against new mass violence. Teaching the Holocaust to minorities to learn to fight against violence.

- Accessibility of results

The online interactive map to view research results of the association village by village, the consultation of testimonies via the internet through an online video library, and the creation of a traveling exhibition on the persecution of the Roma Eastern Europe.

5- A summary table – as PDF document – specifying the progress in the program since the beginning of the encouragement by the Matanel Foundation according to the main parameters and objectives such as:

Events	Number of participants	Number of beneficiaries
14 Research travels in 2012	150	/
13 + 3 Research travels in 2013	150	/
International symposium 2013: - Holocaust Symposium at the University of Winnipeg	20	200
Educational events 2013 in Europe: - Workshop on witnesses in partnership with CNRS - Seminar “Wars, Mass Murders, Genocides” in partnership with ESCP - Educational seminar “How to teach the Holocaust in the East?” in partnership with the Caen Memorial - Two workshops : “Massacre of Gypsies in Eastern Europe” and “Mass Massacres on Russian territory” - Conference on Yahad’s investigative work at the Hotel de Ville	10 30 25 40 5	200 30 2000 200 150
Educational events 2013 in USA: - Several conferences in NYU - Training program in Georgetown University	150	150

Please join the Evaluation Report, the Financial Report and the list of the participants to the program (PDF documents)

Please joint photos – as photos – and any document connected to the program which will seems to you relevant – as PDF document.