



# BUKOLINK

## "To be a Bukovinian"

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,Dear Friends

On January 27<sup>th</sup>, 1945 the Auschwitz death camp was liberated by the Red Army. In 2005, the United Nations' General Assembly set this date to be known as "International Holocaust Remembrance :Day". The U.N. resolution has three main sections

*1. The United Nations encourages Member States to develop programs to help younger generations learn lessons from the Holocaust in order to prevent similar crimes against humanity in the future.*

*The U.N. rejects any attempt to completely or partially .2 deny the fact that the Holocaust was an actual historical .event*

*The United Nations condemns any acts of religious .3 intolerance, racism or violence against ethnic and/or religious .groups*

In many places around the world, including Israel, this date is noted in different ways. Auschwitz-Birkenau, Bergen-Belsen, Dachau and the like, have become well-known names when it comes to speaking about the Holocaust. You can visit the concentration and extermination camps which have become museums, where victims' hair, mountains of suitcases, and piles of eyeglasses which reflect the horrors that occurred, are

displayed. You can almost touch the horror and breathe in the air  
.that once surrounded them

Not so our Holocaust; our 'Shoah' has no signs, no camps, no exhibits, no museums, nothing to touch; just vast fields and forests where our brothers and sisters walked endlessly, or were murdered and dumped by the roadside. There are dozens of mass graves and many others which have not yet been found. This is the "The Forgotten Cemetery of Transnistria" and "The Silent Holocaust", or for the layman, also known as; "The Romanian Holocaust" and "Transnistria"; which are, unfortunately, virtually unknown by most.

Except for the Jews of Iasi and Dorohoi, the Romanian Fascists did not kill the original Romanian Jews; those loyal to the "Old Romania", but attacked only the "peripheral" Jews whose loyalty to  
.Romania was seemingly questionable

The Romanian Fascists did not hand over their Jews to Nazi Germany; but organized their own cruel Holocaust instead. Communist Romania added insult to injury by hiding and denying that it had carried out the brutal murder of tens of thousands of Jews and then expelling the survivors to hell in Transnistria's  
.ghettos, forced labor and death camps

For several years now, we have been working intensively, most noticeably in cooperation with A.M.I.R., ("The Organization of Romanian Jews in Israel"), to bring to the attention and to expose the public to the facts of the Holocaust that occurred in Transnistria, and to give the "Romanian Holocaust", once and for  
.all, the place it deserves in the lexicon of the Holocaust

,Best regards

,Yochanan Ron Singer

Chairman and President

# **The Ghettos and Death Camps of Transnistria**

**Written by Dr. Yosef Govrin**

The name "Transnistria" was the name to the region between the Dniester and Bug rivers in western Ukraine by the occupying Romanian authorities. The armies of Nazi Germany and Fascist Romania had occupied it in July 1941, two weeks after opening a "lightning war" (Blitzkrieg) against the Soviet Union. Since they were not prepared, despite intelligence information which had come to Stalin's attention as to Germany's plans to attack the Soviet Union; the result was that the Red Army was forced to retreat as quickly as possible eastward

Germany transferred control of Transnistria to the Romanian administration under the terms of the "Tighina Agreement" signed in August 1941. There, 136 ghettos, concentration and extermination camps were built and all the Jews of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Dorohoi were deported in the fall of 1941 and summer of 1942, (the total number is estimated at 130,000 people ), by order of the Fascist leader of Romania, Marshal Ion Antonescu, with his sights on gradual, yet total elimination.

Expulsion was preceded by mass murder of Jews in Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina (whose number is estimated at 120,000 people) carried out by the invading Romanian army and local assistants as a reprisal for the Jews who had welcomed the Red Army with demonstrations of joy, and when Romania was forced - by a Soviet ultimatum - to hand over these areas to the Soviet Union on June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1940 - following the secret protocol in the nonaggression agreement between the U.S.S.R. and Germany (called the "Molotov-Ribbentrop" Pact), signed in Moscow on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1939, that divided areas of land between them without Romania's knowledge

During the deportations to Transnistria, carried out under tremendous cruelty or in Transnistria itself; tens of thousands of Jews lost their lives due to hunger, cold, exhaustion, the huge typhus epidemic and executions. Many found refuge in stables and hundreds had to dig mass graves and then they themselves were executed. Day by day, especially in the winter of 1941/42 they collected the corpses in carts, often naked, to bring them to a mass .grave

The most treacherous camps were Bogdanovka (48,000 deaths), Amchatka (5000), and Vertozhin (23,000: on the Bessarabian side of the Dniester on

the way to Transnistria), Domnovka (18,000) and Pechora, and Wafnierka. In Odessa, 25,000 local Jews were killed by the Romanian army. The survivors were deported to ghettos as well as the Jews of Bessarabia, Bukovina and Dorohoi district. The most notable ghettos were in the cities of Mogilev, Sharigrad, Kofigrad and Bershad. The deportees who had managed to survive (50,000) in Transnistria were liberated by the Red Army in March 1944, and gradually returned to their homes, as the Red Army advanced towards Romania and the west

This Holocaust, carried out by order of Antonescu, was different from that carried out by Nazi Germany in many ways

**Firstly**; Romania was not an occupied country, but an ally of Germany's who had acted on its own before the "Wannsee Conference". The Conference had convened in January 1942 to discuss the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question

**Secondly**, Transnistria did not have any active means of extermination, such as in Auschwitz and other extermination camps in Poland, Germany and Austria

**Thirdly**, the Jewish leadership in most ghettos in Transnistria, who had served as leaders of the Jewish communities in Bukovina before their deportation, sought to reduce the number of victims as much as possible by preventing however possible the continuation of the deportation to the death camps- even by paying bribes to the local Romanian administration

**Fourth**, the Jewish community in Bucharest, working in cooperation with the World Zionist Organization, had finally gained approval to provide assistance to the refugees, including shipments of food packages, medicines and even money (smuggled in by Romanian soldiers)

**Fifth**, an initiative for the establishment of local hospitals, orphanages and even schools for 1<sup>st</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> grades was underway

**Sixth**, the establishment of a metal foundry under the direction of the engineer Siegfried Jagendorf, expelled from the city of Rădăuți in Mogilev, employed hundreds of Jewish workers for a small salary. This was important, since it allowed the families a small income (about 3,000 PCM), to obtain housing permits thus preventing their deportations ordered by the city's governor

**Finally**, there was the great success of the Jewish community's leadership in Bucharest, headed by Wilhelm Filderman, with the return of 2,000 orphans from Transnistria to Romania and the return of deportees to their homes in Dorohoi in the fall of 1943. This was accomplished with the approval of dictator Ion Antonescu, who had granted his consent due to the Red Army's advancement towards Romania, and the almost certain near defeat of Germany, whom Romania had fought alongside. Both had suffered very heavy losses and together, those two countries that had perpetrated

the Holocaust in Bessarabia, Bukovina and Dorohoi where a large part of the .Holocaust had taken place, were soon to be overtaken

□



## TRANSNISTRIA

## "Joseph's story"



This picture was sent to us by our friend Yossi Melman and taken while his family had to wear the yellow star

I was born in Chernovitz on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1940, the son of Charles and Susanne Melman. At this time, Chernovitz was controlled by the Soviet Union, due to the Hitler-Stalin agreements. With the outbreak of the war the city was occupied by Romania (July 1941)

In October 1941, the Romanians set up the ghetto in Chernovitz. Our family was forced out of our apartment and moved to the ghetto, where life was unbearable due to the overcrowding and the prohibition to go out to the city for the most elementary things

My late father, a textile engineer, was working at the time at a textile factory in the city which also supplied goods to the army. The Romanian government considered this to be an essential enterprise for the war effort

When they started to expel the Jews to Transnistria, the authorities offered to keep my father in town for the needs of the government; but rest of the family would have to be sent. My father of course refused, but the owners of the factory intervened indicating my father's necessity at the plant, which meant that our family was able to stay at the ghetto and not be deported

Later on, the expulsion of the Jews of Chernovitz stopped altogether due to the activity of Mayor Traian Popovich, who saved twenty thousand Jews by helping them remain in the city. We continued to live in the city under the Romanian Fascist regime until the liberation of the city by the Red Army on March 30, 1944. In 1946 our family moved to Romania

## Joseph's Identity Card



- .The ID card was a permit to stay in the city of Chernovitz
- .The two images are the two sides of the certificate
- Such certificates were issued to all Jews in the city by Romanian authorities, the Regional Department for Jewish Affairs
- .Losing it could automatically cause revoke permission to live in the city

On one side of the certificate the address and picture appeared, with additional information for the Population Register, the Jewish population census and other licenses. On the other side of the certificate the shape of the Star of David in yellow can be seen in the background which was utilized .by the census registration for the Jewish population

## Chronology of the Holocaust" - January 1939"

*January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939* - a ban on working with the German Jews goes into effect

*January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1939* - Hitler's Reichstag speech takes place, with the caveat that if war breaks out, the "Jewish race" will be destroyed in Europe

Hitler's speech in the German Reichstag on this date is considered to be one of his major public announcements on anti-Semitism. This speech is also repeatedly quoted by Hitler during the war, in order to continue to carry out the murder of the Jews.

:The following are excerpts from the speech

Before our eyes an embarrassing spectacle is revealed, when the entire democratic world, that showers its mercy on the poor and tortured Jewish people, becomes tough when facing its inalienable duty to help. The claims that they present to not help them actually justify us Germans and Italians

They say; (the Democrats), "We cannot take in the Jews!" Yet in these empires their population density does not exceed 10 persons per square kilometer, while Germany her population density is 135 persons per square kilometer

They declare: "We cannot take them unless we are supplied with - for example from Germany - a certain amount of capital for the expense of immigration

After all, for centuries, Germany was good enough to receive these elements; those who had nothing except infectious diseases, both political and physical. What they possess today, was purchased at the expense of the not so clever German people, with the help of the most debased ....manipulations

Today we are merely paying back this people what it has brought upon itself. In the past, the German people lost their life savings after decades of



honest work; as a result of the inflation that the Jews plotted and carried  
"....out

## **Recipe Corner from the Bukovinian Kitchen**

### **Borscht" by Bruria Klein"**

**"On these cold days there is nothing like a steaming bowl of soup"**

#### **:Ingredients**

Kilogram "shpondra" meat cut into pieces of 3-4 cm.1  
Kilogram beets - 1/2 kg coarsely grated and -1/2 kg cut into small cubes 1  
carrots - diced 2  
grated head of celery 1/2  
chopped finely stalks of celery (without leaves) 2  
cloves crushed garlic 4-5  
Half a bunch of parsley, chopped  
Salt to taste  
teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon lemon salt to start - (add more later but 1/4  
.start at 1/4 teaspoon each)  
A 'pinch' of sugar

#### **:Preparation**

.Cook the meat, beets, carrots, celery for about an hour  
Add the crushed garlic, salt, lemon salt and sugar and continue to cook until  
.the meat softens  
.Add the parsley and correct seasonings  
  
.In a separate pot, cook cubes of potatoes until soft  
  
.Place some potatoes in each bowl and serve the soup over the potatoes

**!!!Enjoy**

Translated from the Hebrew edition, "Bukomeyda", by Carol Elias