Behind Enemy Lines: World War II Civilian Resistance Efforts in Europe

by

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August 31, 2019

Cover of the underground Yiddish newspaper, *Jugend Shtimme (Voice of the Youth)*, which was distributed in the Warsaw Ghetto. The Yiddish caption reads "Fascism must be smashed!" Date: 1941 | Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Introduction

The notion that perception is reality is often false. During World War II, the Nazis put their long-held plans of annihilating the Jews from Europe into action. Members of other groups they believed to be inferior were also targeted, such as those with developmental or mental issues, Romani, homosexuals, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Many people are of the opinion that their victims went to their fates passively, sometimes described with the cliché of going "like a lamb to the slaughter". The well-known Warsaw Ghetto Uprising is widely recognized as one of the few, if not only, attempts at resistance. While it is true that many of the doomed did not resist

much, if at all, important considerations to keep in mind are that for the most part these individuals were unarmed due to Nazi-imposed gun control laws, they were minorities who were vastly outnumbered, and many of their neighbors were either Nazi sympathizers or outright collaborators themselves. It is also important to note that their captors constantly and deliberately lied to these people, routinely telling them they were going to work camps for a short time, or sent them to live in other areas, when in truth death was their ultimate predetermined destination.

However, there was in fact a great deal of resistance, armed and unarmed, conducted by the Jews of Europe as well as by others. Many fighting groups, known as partisans, took up arms wherever they could find them, often living in the forests and engaging in fierce gun battles with German soldiers, and committing acts of sabotage. Interestingly, these partisans were not solely composed of young men. There were women fighting alongside the men—strong and courageous females who refused to submit to the Nazi war machine. Nonviolent acts of resistance were also undertaken by a group known as The Female Couriers. These young Jewish women had blonde hair, blue eyes, and were able to pass as Aryan. The Female Couriers often infiltrated the German lines with forged identity cards and acted as spies, relaying important intelligence back to the partisans in the woods. This was highly dangerous work, and some ultimately paid with their lives. In addition to these Jewish women, there were non-Jews carrying on similar acts of espionage, as well as young children who embarked on similar missions. This paper will shed light on some of these little-known and unrecognized stories of bravery, heroism, and fierce resistance in the face of a strong and overpowering enemy.

Our gratitude goes to Pace University's Office for Student Success Assistant Director Nasreen Hussein, Assistant Vice-President for Undergraduate Education Dr. Susan Maxam, and

to the curators at Yad Vashem: The World Holocaust Remembrance Center in Jerusalem, Israel, who provided on-site access to their extensive archives and databases. We deeply appreciate the generous and valuable support we have received for this project.

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New York, NY

August, 2019

Hannah Senesh

Hannah Senesh, born in Budapest, Hungary on July 17, 1921 was put to death in her birth city on November 7, 1944 at the age of twenty-three. She symbolizes courage and resilience for leaving her life and freedom behind in an attempt to save many Jews throughout Europe during World War II. Hannah was born to mother Catherine Salzberger and father Bela Senesh, a successful playwright who passed

Fig. 1. Hannah Senesh. Courtesy National Library of Israel.

away when she was just six years old. She spoke French, German, Hungarian, English, and also learned Hebrew when she emigrated from Hungary to British Mandate Palestine. Hannah began writing in a diary at the age of thirteen, which has been preserved. Her journal enables readers to view her life, thoughts, hopes, and struggles through her perspective. Throughout her short life, she struggled with her Jewish identity and wavered between being ethnically proud of her Jewish heritage and being unsure of whether or not she believed in God at all. As she joined the Zionist movement, she lost her religious beliefs and became an atheist, which was quite common among the early Zionists. Although never a communist, Hannah read Karl Marx during this period which may have influenced her thoughts and ideas concerning Judaism, as communism and religion usually do not complement each other well. She set out on a mission to aid her community; she always believed that the world was not all evil, even when everything around her was crumbling. She wanted to be part of something bigger than herself and attempt to secretly help Jews, fully aware of the dangers if she were caught.

At the age of 13, Hannah began to showcase her literary talents when she decided to keep a diary, wherein she would write about her thoughts and all that was occurring in her life. Her first diary entry, written on September 7, 1934 reads, “This morning we visited Daddy’s grave. How sad that we had to become acquainted with the cemetery so early in life. But I feel that even from beyond the grave Daddy is helping us, if in no other way than with his name. I don’t think he could have left us a greater legacy” (Senesh 3). Hannah was born into a wealthy, well-known Hungarian-Jewish family and in her October 7, 1934 entry she touches on going to synagogue and how, “Those afternoon services are so odd; it seems one does everything but pray. The girls talk and look down at the boys, and the boys talk and look up at the girls – this is what the entire

thing consists of" (Senesh 3). She criticizes her peers for being disrespectful during a time that is supposed to be dedicated to prayer and worship.

Furthermore, Hannah began expanding on her writing, adding in two poems she wrote over the summer of 1934, one that she created for her mother's birthday and another about life. She writes,

"I guess I was born to be a philosopher because in all things I see life in miniature: in the day (morning, noon, evening), in the river (source, course, outlet), in the seasons (spring, summer, fall, winter)–everything is like birth, life, death" (Senesh 8).

She explains that these are the reasons why she is always thinking about the cycle of life, but she assures her readers that it is "not the way romantic little girls do who are so sure they will never marry, and die young–but as the great, everlasting laws of nature." This is the poem:

Life is a brief and hurtling day.

Pain and striving fill every page.

Just enough to glance around,

Register a face or sound

and – life's been around" (Senesh 9).

Hannah was only fourteen and already exhibited a talent for writing, which would later inspire many people throughout the world as she proved to be incredibly courageous and resilient.

On September 18, 1936, Hannah touched on her religious beliefs once more stating, "I am not quite clear just how I stand: synagogue, religion, the question of God. About the last and most difficult question I am the least disturbed. I believe in God–even if I can't express just

how" (19). She writes that she does not find the synagogue important, as Judaism resides within her way of thinking. She can pray at home and does not necessarily need to be in a designated place of organized worship in order to do so. Hannah had her own set beliefs, and did not follow the crowd. Just a few months later a Literary Society secretary election was closed to Jews, as the person elected could only be Protestant. Hannah writes, "To my way of thinking, you have to be someone exceptional to fight anti-Semitism, which is the most difficult kind of fight" (25). Hannah began to recognize what it is truly like to be Jewish while living in a society that is set up in a way to make it harder for Jews to succeed and reach their goals. She goes on to compare what her life would have been like had she been born into a Christian family instead: "every profession would be open to me. I would become a teacher, and that would be the end of it. As it is, perhaps I'll succeed in getting into the profession for which, according to my abilities, I am most suited" (25). Hannah believed that one's faith was sacred, and her belief in religion is the reason she was so strong at a young age. Hannah observed injustice early on in her life and she would later be a part of the driving force to resist it.

Moreover, anti-Semitism was becoming more prevalent throughout Europe and Hannah began to notice the world becoming much darker. In September of 1937, she was nominated for office for the Literary Society and was elected by her classmates. The Literary Society decided to hold a new election, nominating two other girls. Hannah writes, "This clearly indicated that they did not want a Jew – me, that is – to become an officer" (43). She no longer wanted anything to do with the Literary Society; had she simply lost the election, she would not have thought twice about it, but she was deliberately discriminated against because of her religion. A year later, the hatred toward Jews got worse. On September 27, 1938 Hannah writes, "Negotiations,

Mussolini's and Hitler's speeches, Chamberlain's flights back and forth, news bulletins concerning mobilization, denials. There have been practice air-raid alerts, and the situation remains unchanged. One wonders, will there be a war, or won't there? Though the atmosphere is explosive, I still believe there will be peace, perhaps only because I can't just possibly imagine war" (65). As a seventeen-year-old, Hannah should not have had to worry about a war happening and whether or not she was going to survive. Even when the dark clouds were rolling in, she still tried to see small glimpses of sunlight; only wanting to see the good that was left during this time of her life.

In addition, throughout this period in Hannah's life, she began to face difficulties with her religion; as she wavered from practicing with pride to questioning her faith. On October 1, 1938, Hannah states, "I would like to be as good as possible to Mother, to wear my Jewishness with pride, to be well thought of in my class at school, and I would very much like always to be able to believe and trust in God. There are times I cannot, and at such times I attempt to force myself to believe completely, firmly, with total certainty. I wonder, though, if anyone exists who never doubted? Yet I don't think it is possible to have complete faith until after one has known some doubt and considerable deep meditation" (66). It is completely understandable for her to have these doubts; questioning and arguing are important components of Jewish study that provide alternatives to blindly following religious dogma. It was only 26 days later that she wrote she had become a Zionist: "This word stands for a tremendous number of things. To me it means, in short, that I now consciously and strongly feel I am a Jew and am proud of it. My primary aim is to go to Palestine, to work for it. Of course this did not develop from one day to the next; it was a gradual development" (67). Hannah states that she used to attack the Zionist movement just three

years prior, but she slowly embraced the idea. She explains that she wanted to start learning Hebrew and attend a youth group. Her newfound pride was beautiful and she found something that she wanted to be a part of; it was something that made her happy and that she felt gave her life meaning.

Eventually, Hannah decided to immigrate to British Mandate Palestine after finishing her high school studies, although she admits, "it's painful to tear myself away from my Hungarian sentiments, I must do so in my interest, and the interests of Jewry… Whoever is aware of his Jewishness cannot continue with his eyes shut. As yet, our aims are not entirely definite, nor am I sure what profession I'll choose. But I don't want to work only for myself and in my own interests, but for the mutual good of Jewish aims. Perhaps these are but the vague and confused thought and fantasies of youth, but I think I will have the fortitude, strength, and ability to realize these dreams" (68). From a young age, Hannah knew she wanted to be part of something bigger than herself; she wanted to assist those around her, in her community rather than to just satisfy her own needs. Hannah immigrated to Palestine in 1939 to study at an all-girls agricultural school in Nahalal. World War II had begun in September of 1939 and five days after her move, she wrote how spiritually low she had felt on the eve of Yom Kippur. Thinking about all she had left behind to be in Palestine, she was no longer sure she had made the right decision. She speaks of not losing sight of her goal, stating, "I would like to feel that by being here I am fulfilling a mission, not just vegetating. Here almost every life is the fulfillment of a mission" (86). The importance and emphasis of fulfilling a mission later tied into her heroism as she took on an incredible and dangerous assignment to save Jews who were across the Hungarian border.

After undertaking a two-year agricultural course, Hannah decided she would join the kibbutz in Sdott Yam. Judith Tydor Baumel[1] states, "Her choice was motivated by the preference of maintaining an anonymous status." Hannah did not want to simply be known as Bela Senesh's daughter, which would have occurred had she joined a primarily Hungarian kibbutz. On September 21, 1941, Hannah touches on war and religion as Rosh Hashanah approaches stating, "Now what can I say about the world around me–the world that is virtually destroying itself? Or about the tens of thousands of people perishing daily? How shall I grieve for them on the eve of Rosh Hashanah? About the suffering, the pain, the injustice… what can I say, and to whom? He knows–thus there is nothing for me to say on this solemn evening" (132). Hannah felt guilty about having the opportunity to celebrate this Jewish holiday while millions of other Jews were being enslaved, dehumanized, and murdered throughout Europe. She felt as though she could not have prayed about it because God already knew it was happening. She goes on to write, "Do I believe in God? I don't know. For me He is more a symbol and expression of the moral forces which I believe. Despite everything, I believe the world was created for good and there is nothing on earth so evil that a ray of light can't sleep through, or a pinch of good can't be seen" (133). One again, she looked past the cruelty in the world and focused on the positive aspects of life, even if there were very few of them.

Hannah decided in January of 1943 that she would go to Hungary and assist in organizing youth immigration along with making sure her mother Catherine could get out. She had already spent three days in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem trying to make arrangements, and in February a man visited the kibbutz when, according to *My Jewish Learning*, he "made overtures towards Senesh

[1] Professor at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat-Gan, Israel

to join a clandestine military project whose ultimate purpose was to offer aid to beleaguered European Jewry." This was a secret military mission to help suffering Jews. Hannah writes that it was, "still only in the planning stage, but he promised to bring the matter up before the enlistment committee since he considers me admirably suited for the mission" (Senesh 157). Hannah spent three months waiting for a call to be sent out and it was all she was able to think about. She had no doubts regarding what she was about to do for her people and her mother. Hannah believed that she would be able to complete her mission and recorded, "I see everything that has happened to me so far as preparation and training for the mission ahead" (159). This mission was one that Hannah truly believed was something bigger than herself. She would get the opportunity to help Jews and allies alike, and end their suffering at the hands of Nazi soldiers and sympathizers.

At the beginning of 1944, parachutists from Palestine were dropped in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Yugoslavia, and Romania, "with a double mission: a formal mission – gathering intelligence for the British army and another, secret mission: saving Jews." The Hannah Senesh Legacy Foundation stated that the purpose of the mission was to help the Allied efforts throughout Europe and contact cornered Jewish Partisans. Over 200 individuals were chosen for the European mission to go through rigorous training, while only a handful were sent to Cairo, with Hannah being one of them. She writes in her diary on January 11, 1944, "This week I leave for Egypt. I'm a soldier. Concerning the circumstances of my enlistment, and my feelings in connection with it, and with all that led up to it, I don't want to write. I want to believe that what I've done, and will do, are right. Time will tell the rest" (163). This was Hannah's final diary entry before her execution.

Hannah parachuted into Yugoslavia in March of 1944 with the goal of ultimately crossing into Hungary, and she stayed in the country with Tito's partisans for three months. Hannah wrote a poem titled "Blessed is the Match:"

Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.

Blessed is the flame that burns in the secret fastness of the heart.

Blessed is the heart with strength to stop its beating for honor's sake.

Blessed is the match consumed in kindling flame.

–Hannah Senesh

This poem captures commitment for her cause; the fire burning inside of her to do whatever it took to finish out her mission. On June 7, 1944, Hannah crossed the Hungarian border and was immediately captured by the police. It has been reported that she was brutally tortured over the span of several months for information, but despite the inhumane treatment and the conditions she lived in, her lips were sealed. The Nazis attempted to force her to speak by threatening to arrest her mother, but Hannah still refused to cooperate. She defended her actions at her trial in October of 1944 and did not request clemency; her strength and courage were expressed by her refusal to be blindfolded for her execution. At the age of 23, she stared down her murderers and then gazed up at the sky before being put to death by a firing squad on November 7, 1944.

While in prison, Hannah had written her mother a poem which was later, "found in the pocket of her skirt after her execution," states *The Jewish Standard*. The poem reads as follows:

My dearest Mother,

I don't know what to say–

Just two things:

A million thanks

Forgive me if possible.

You know well why there is no need for words.

With infinite love,

Your daughter

–Hannah Senesh

After her death, her mother escaped from the Budapest death march and according to *My Jewish Learning*, "hid in that city until its liberation by the Soviet forces in January 1945" where she later immigrated to Palestine with Hannah's brother Gyuri. Catherine Senesh published fifteen editions of Hannah's diary, poetry, and plays. *The Jewish Virtual Library* writes that "In 1950, Senesh's remains were brought to Israel and re-interred at the military cemetery on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem." Her diary and other works have been published and some of her poems have been turned into songs; for example, Hannah's poem "Eli, Eli" became Israel's second national anthem. According to *The New World Encyclopedia*, after the Cold War ended Hannah Senesh was officially and posthumously exonerated of all charges against her in Hungary.

Hannah Senesh lives on through her literary work and her courage is recognized across the globe. She symbolizes strength and radiated light. She gave up a life of potential freedom in an effort to fight against anti-Semitism and refused to beg for mercy when given the opportunity to do so. Hannah is the epitome of selflessness and courage; she wanted to help those around her. Even through all of the vile events happening in and around Europe during the short time she lived, she believed the world was created for good. Despite her own personal struggles with

religion, she never abandoned the Jews she wanted so badly to save. Her work continues to inspire as people across the world read her diary entries and poems.

Bernard Musmand

"I disliked the Germans — as I mentioned many times, I spoke German fluently, I learned it in school and so on, and I knew it fluently. At the end of the war, I have refused to talk it, to speak it, and I have kept my word. I have not spoken German since then. I know it's hateful, I know what the Germans did for Israel, but I can't forget. The famous word, I can forgive but I can't forget."

–Bernard Musmand

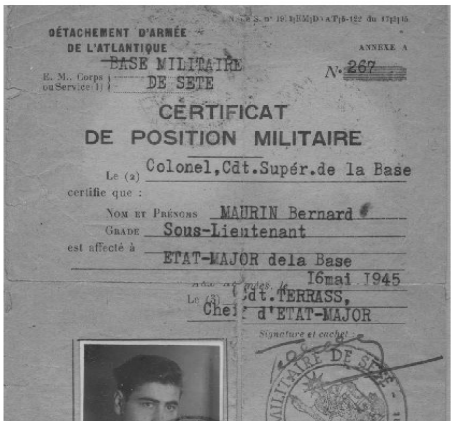
Fig. 2. French Jewish partisan Bernard Musmand with Simone, a member of the French resistance. Courtesy Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation.

Bernard Musmand was born in Metz, France on March 3, 1930. Metz shares a border with Germany, therefore, German was taught in schools. Bernard's Jewish family moved to the south of France, outside of German control, after the Nazis took over much of Europe during World War II, and sent him to a Catholic boarding school. At the age of 12, Bernard became a courier for the *Sixieme*, a resistance group located in a small city called Rodez. Working with the *Sixieme,* he transported forged papers such as false ID cards and counterfeit ration cards for people trying to escape Nazi persecution. Being that he was young and spoke perfect German, he was able to complete his missions without raising much suspicion. Eventually word had spread and the Gestapo went to the boarding school searching for him. However, the headmaster created an escape plan before

the Nazis were able to apprehend him. Bernard was able to escape to another city in southern France, Millaut, where he again joined the Sixieme, followed by an armed resistance group. At the age of 14, he went into battle against the Nazi troops. Bernard's ability to speak German, learn Catholic prayers, and travel quickly, saved his life under the Nazi regime. Had it not been for these skills, as well as the dean risking his own life to take Bernard in and help him escape, he most likely would have not survived the Holocaust.

If Bernard were to successfully pose as a devout Catholic while attending school, then he was required to embrace and fully understand the religion. Musmand recalls a day that he was informed he would have to partake in communion and confession, stating, "I didn't know the first thing about anything. So, I got a hold of a Bible that night, and I spent half the night in the bathroom studying the Bible, the prayers you have to say for confession, and I passed" (Musmand*)*. Had he not known what prayers to say or what to do the next day, he most likely would have raised suspicions and been taken away; it was through his perseverance that he was able to succeed. Bernard was forced to grow up much sooner than he should have, and far more quickly than his non-Jewish peers had to. He touches on this topic and says, "You grow up fast when you have to. You know, and when you know it's your life or, you know, so you do things which you think are not possible. And as I always say, you have to be young to be a hero, because you don't know any better" (Musmand). He explains that he had the choice to grow up fast or essentially wait for his life to be taken from him.

Subsequently, when he was 15, Bernard was promoted to a Second Lieutenant in the French Army and found himself working a desk job, not the action


DÉTACHEMENT D'ARMÉE
DE L'ATLANTIQUE
BASE MILITAIRE
DE SETE
ANNEXE A
N° 267
CERTIFICAT
DE POSITION MILITAIRE
Le (a) Colonel,Cdt.Supér.de la Base
certifie que :
NOM ET PRÉNOMS MAURIN Bernard
GRADE Sous-Lieutenant
est affecté à ETAT-MAJOR dela Base
16mai 1945
Le Cdt.TERRASS,
Chef d'ETAT-MAJOR
Signature et cachet

he expected or wanted, claiming, “That was not my idea of being in an army.” Then, he states that he did not want to be just a “Jew in a concentration camp. And I wanted to go [to Germany] as a conqueror, [a] French Jew” (Musmand). He did not want to waste his youth away sitting at a desk or perishing in a concentration camp; he wanted to be a part of the action. He wanted to fight the Nazis. Bernard submitted an application to be transferred, but it was rejected three times before it was revealed that he was barely a 16-year-old Jewish boy. Within 48 hours, he was demobilized and then back in school just two weeks later.

In May of 1944, Bernard was sent to deliver a package by Sixieme to a small-town hotel owner in Fijac. Bernard states that the packages would typically “contain false ID cards [and] false rationing cards” (Musmand). Upon arriving at the hotel, the owner no longer wanted to accept the package, as it was believed that Nazis were on their way to occupy the town and make arrests. Instead, Bernard went to a nearby train station and hid the undelivered package behind bags. Shortly afterward he met a German railroad police officer who appeared to be in his 50s. He began speaking to him in German and was invited into his office while “the Germans were arresting some like seven, eight hundred French people, Frenchmen to be sent to Germany as foreign workers” (Musmand). Had he not thought quickly enough, and been able to speak perfect German, he would have been questioned which would have seemed suspicious enough to arrest.

During World War II, Bernard’s family textile business was destroyed and they immigrated to Brooklyn, NY. He disliked Germans growing up, so after the war ended, he states, “I have refused to talk it, to speak it, and I have kept my word” (Musmand). He went on to say that he knew it was hateful to live this way, but he would never forget what was done to his community. He later moved to New York City to become a stockbroker on Wall Street and met

the love of his life, Milicent. He was a colon cancer survivor and cared for Milicent for 39 years through the illness that eventually caused her death in 1992. According to his obituary in *The Portland Press Herald*, Bernard moved to Maine for the remaining years of his life where he spent time with his sons and grandchildren and frequently visited his synagogue. Bernard lost his long battle with a heart condition on January 31, 2010 but his memory will live on through the courageous legacy he left behind.

Bernard Musmand was born to be a fighter and proved himself throughout his life. From a young age, he posed as a faithful Christian in order to attend a Catholic boarding school where he vigorously studied Catholicism. Had it not been for this, and the dean of his school helping him escape possible questioning by the police, he probably would have been captured and sent away. Being young and able to speak German fluently, he provided the perfect advantage for the resistance group he was part of, allowing him to travel quickly by train and speak to anyone who may have questioned him. There were many times when Bernard's life was on the line and after every close call, he still decided to persevere in his resistance. He was truly a hero and his remembrance as a Jewish Partisan will continue to live on through his legacy.

Tema Snajderman

Tema Sznajderman was one of the very first Female Couriers, an organization of special messengers and resistance workers during World War II. Tema was born in Warsaw in 1917 to a nonreligious Jewish family

and spoke Polish at home. Her mother died when Tema was only 12 years old, forcing Tema, her sister Rahel, and brother Shlomo to grow up quickly. Her father remarried within a year of her mother's death and two half-sisters were born, Bella and Yaffah. Upon graduating from school, Tema decided to pursue nursing and worked in a hospital where she met future fiancé Mordechai Tenenbaum, a member of the He-Halutz-Dror youth movement, which she later joined as a means to socialize with other young people. After World War II broke out, the youth movements Tema belonged to proved to be quite helpful for the Jewish communities throughout Europe. She, along with other female couriers, were able to pass as non-Jews because they had blonde hair and blue eyes. Risking their lives traveling over heavily-guarded borders, through many ghettos, and entering occupied and dangerous lands, these couriers distributed forged documents and papers, money, weapons, and ammunition across borders. This job was highly dangerous as well as vital to the resistance efforts and to the partisans who were engaging in combat with the Germans. Tema possessed a strong will to resist, and she wanted other Jews to join her in this resistance as well. She wanted to spread her courage through Europe and into every community she helped and recruited from; she did not want the Jews to back down, but rather to show the Nazis that they would not allow themselves to be dehumanized and murdered.

Fig. 5. (L to R) Tema Sznajderman, Bela Hazan and Lonka Korzybrodska. Members of the He-Halutz Ha-Za'ir-Dror movement. Courtesy Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

According to the *Jewish Women's Archive*, in June of 1936 the Jewish newspaper *Hynt* published that on the first day of a pogrom (violent rioting aimed at the massacre of Jews) in Minsk Mazovyetsk, Mordechai, Tema and her

sister Rahel had been arrested and later released. They had gone to Minsk Mazovyetsk to see for themselves what had been happening there and "perhaps to encourage the Jews of the city not to flee but to stay and fight" states Bronia Klibanski. Tema did not want the Jews to live in fear; instead she wanted retaliation and for them to fight for their land and freedom. Tema and Mordechai had experienced similar tragedies around the same time period which had strengthened their relationship: Tenenbaum's father passed away at the beginning of 1938 and Mordechai left home a few months later to join the He-Halutz youth movement. Around the same time, Tema's father also passed away and, according to Bronia Klibanski, "when World War II broke out on September 1, 1939, her home took a direct hit in a German bombing, which killed her mother and her sister Bella. Her six-year-old sister Yaffah moved to Minsk Mazovyetsk at the family's demand." Yaffah was the only one of the family to survive the Holocaust and it is clear that Tema had received her courageous traits from her family. Her family put their own lives at stake by remaining in their home and sending Yaffah away, knowing that they were not safe to remain home and paid the ultimate price to help ensure that Yaffah would be kept safe throughout the war. Tema also had a strong desire to save others, as she risked her life many times in order to try to save as many Jews as she possibly could.

Tema, along with the members of the Dror kibbutz, left Warsaw and were able to make contact with areas that were under Soviet control where many refugees decided to join, "including the *shelihim* (emissaries)


Bescheinigung

Es wird bescheinigt, dass
Herr/Frau Majewska Wanda
geboren 2.VIII.1916
in Warschau
bei unserem Betriebe seit 12.VI
beschäftigt ist.

Krakau, den 12.IX 1942

KRAKAU
m.b.H.

KABELWERK KRAKAU
BETRIEBSGESELLSCHAFT m.b.H.

Fig. 6. Tema Sznajderman forged work ID card. Courtesy Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

from Palestine and those who had certificates or entry visas to countries abroad. Members of the training farms (*kibbutz hakhsharot*), who for years had waited to immigrate to Palestine, unfortunately did not receive certificates." Explaining that tensions had risen as everyone recognized the dangers they would face if they stayed in occupied areas and looked for possible ways to get out of Europe. Tema and Mordechai prepared the emigration of the emissaries from Palestine and the Jews who had the proper papers and certificates through the help of the Joint Distribution Committee, a Jewish relief organization based in New York City, had their travel expenses taken care of. They also offered help to those without the required papers, by forging documents from the British government confirming that the certificates for each person were to be received in Turkey, allowing the emigration of as many people as possible. They traveled through Moscow and Odessa to Turkey and arrived in Palestine two months later. Tema took on the risk of being caught in order to safely guide those in need to shelter, knowing that she would face gruesome and deadly consequences if captured. Tema was utterly selfless and repeatedly displayed this courage.

Moreover, many Jews in the beginning of the war believed that the persecution by the Nazis was only temporary.They tried to lead normal lives and many faced identity crises. Being German and Jewish "forced many to confront wrenching dilemmas: To stay or go? Where and how?" writes Eilat Gordin Levitan. Many Jews did not believe that their lives would be in danger, they thought this would blow over in a matter of time. The majority of women who lived in Eastern Europe were blonde-haired and blue-eyed and they spoke perfect Polish, indistinguishable from the "Aryan" master race Hitler desired to create. Couriers like Tema are the reason why so much information was able to spread to Jews who were in the dark about what

was going on outside of the ghettos. In June of 1941, the Nazis launched a surprise attack against the Soviets, with whom they had previously signed a non-aggression treaty, "German mobile killing units began mass shooting operations in which entire Jewish communities were murdered in a single day," states Lenore J. Weitzman. After these massacres, Tema remained in Lithuania visiting other ghettos and was the first person to transport documented proof of the mass murder of Jews in Ponary, an extermination site close to Vilna. She traveled through Europe with survivors of the attack and other members to share information about the resistance and the situation of the Jews, along with money to try to encourage others to join the movement. She returned to Warsaw and "gave detailed reports about what was going on in every place she had visited," which were later published in the underground newspapers (Klibanski). These excursions were hazardous and required enormous amounts of courage and heroism and it was extremely important for the Jews to receive the information that the Nazis were trying to keep from them. Tema exemplified what it took to be a courier during World War II and, had it not been for her valor, many Jews would have been cut off from the world and some would not have been saved.

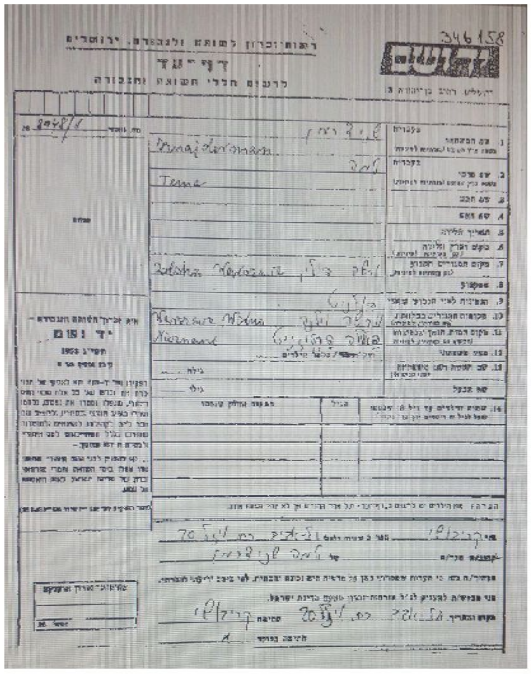


Fig. 7. Tema Sznajderman paperwork and data for her entry into the Hall of Names at Yad Vashem. Courtesy of Yad

In addition, many Jewish leaders in the ghettos believed that what happened in Vilna could not ever happen in their ghetto because "the killings would not be economically or politically or practically rational (for the Germans)," writes Weitzman. It was incredibly difficult for the couriers to convince the Jewish

leadership in the ghettos that they were indeed in danger and needed to resist. On the other hand, the younger generations took note of what the leaders of the resistance movement had told them. Along with the Jews of the ghetto in Kovno who were so isolated, the youth did not know of the recent massacre in Vilna. After they had been informed, the *Kovno Judenrat* immediately began planning resistance efforts; they worked directly with the Jewish Fighting Organization (JFO) in the ghetto and the Jewish Police provided military training to teach the resistance members how to properly use weapons. On January 11, 1943, Sznajderman traveled to Warsaw to bring the JFO "money and instructions for manufacturing grenades and Molotov cocktails—a gasoline bomb" (Klibanski). Two days later, a telegram was received from Tema; she had successfully crossed the border into the *Generalgouvernement*, a German zone of occupation established after the invasion of Poland by Nazi Germany. This was the last time anyone had heard from her. She was able to steal German documents, including copies of pamphlets from German government ministers about the planned extermination of Jews, deliver them to London through members of the Polish Underground, and she then entered the ghetto once again. Her husband, Mordechai tried to send many telegrams and letters to all of her friends, but he never received a single response. Daniel Seaman of *The Jewis*h *News Syndicate* writes of Tema's death: "It is known that she was transferred to the Treblinka extermination camp after being captured in the Warsaw Ghetto on January 18, 1943, during one of her many excursions to the place."

Tema Sznajderman symbolized the spirit of what it meant to fight back during the Holocaust, as she helped bring the resistance of many Jews to life and brought an abundance of resources to Jews who otherwise would not have had them. She risked her life many times in order to transmit sensitive information, recruit members, and move weapons into and out of the

ghettos. She was one of the first resisters and couriers of World War II and she helped spread the resistance movement quickly and quietly. Tema Sznajderman symbolizes heroism and her legacy of ethnic pride and active resistance will continue to live on.

Although Tema did not survive the war, others who were carrying out similar missions did, and some of their recollections during the post-war years shed valuable light on the kinds of activities these underground resistance workers engaged in. For example, in written testimony provided to Yad Vashem, Rejza Klingberg recounted her experiences as a member of the Jewish Fighting Organization, known as the JFO. Rejza was born on August 8, 1920, in Krakow, Poland. During the war she was active in the Krakow Ghetto, as well as in Bochnia, Koszyce, Sandomierz, and in a number of other locations. After the German occupation of Poland, Rejza moved to Koszyce with her parents, where she remained until 1942. She maintained contact with several of her girlfriends by letter, subsequently learning of "the fate of the Jews in Tarnow and Warsaw." At this point Rejza began to act and she helped members of Hashomer Hatzair, a resistance group, organize into a fighting organization ("Rejza Klingberg Testimony").

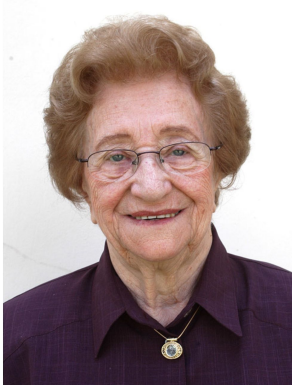
Rejza received a "forged Aryan document" from the underground enabling her, like Tema, to pass as a non-Jew, whereupon she moved back to Krakow. She then met Roman Leibowicz, whose code name in the resistance was Laban. He was a leader of another underground group and Rejza began working with him to help facilitate the production of "forged documents in a printing press in the Krakow Ghetto." Word began to spread of a planned deportation of Jews in the Krakow Ghetto, and Rejza moved back to Koszyce with a girlfriend as the underground group split up and Rejza awaited further instructions from Laban. Shortly following Rejza's arrival, a deportation from Koszyce was imminent and she returned to Krakow

once again. Her parents planned on hiding out in a bunker as the Koszyce deportation got underway, which meant a period of separation and lack of contact for Rejza and her family. Tragically, Rejza was then notified that her sister was betrayed by another Jewish youth and was executed while en route to join their parents at Koszyce ("Rejza Klingberg Testimony").

Shortly thereafter, Rejza traveled to Glogow to deliver a gun to the members of the ZOB located in Krakow. She subsequently moved to Bochnia, where she met her parents after they were transferred from Koszyce. It was around this time that Rejza took on the role of being "responsible for the contact between the underground members inside" the Krakow Ghetto, those on the outside, and those between the leadership of the non-Jewish members of the resistance. Rejza moved to Sandomierz where she wandered in the villages of the area, trying to "clarify the fate of the Jewish fighters who had been transferred from Krakow and whose location had been lost." She made daily visits to the ghetto, acting "as a courier between the headquarters people who were in hiding on the Aryan side and between the [Jewish] underground members in the ghetto." Rejza then moved into "hiding in a barracks of the hospital" where approximately "13 others were also staying" ("Rejza Klingberg Testimony").

Plans were then set in motion to attack two coffee shops that were popular places of entertainment with the German elite in Krakow, like the Cygenaria and the Esplanada. Fellow resistance agents Antek Zuckerman and Ewa Follman traveled to Krakow from Warsaw "to brief and train the underground members before the attack." The resulting explosion at the Cygenaria was successful; however, the attack on the Esplanada failed "due to unknown reasons." Following these two attacks, armed Gestapo officers arrived in the bunker and proceeded to separate the women and men. The occupants of the bunker were then interrogated in order for

the Gestapo to learn the locations of Dolek Liebesking and Laban. The Gestapo then transferred all of the members of the underground to the Gestapo on Pomorska Street, after "making a false threat to execute the witness by shooting, on charges of distributing the underground's leaflets" ("Rejza Klingberg Testimony").

Chasia Bornstein 

Chasia Bornstein, born in 1921 in Grodno, Poland, was raised in a *traditional* family, meaning there was likely a degree of religious belief with or without any engagement in actual daily ritual practices. At the age of 12, Chasia "joined the Hashomer Hatzair youth movement" where she excelled and developed herself to the point of eventually becoming a leader of the organization. In June of 1941, when she was twenty years old, she joined the Grodno Underground. In November of that same year, the "ghetto was established," and Chasia took responsibility for keeping the young people occupied as a deterrent to their "roaming the streets with nothing to do." Trying to keep them positive despite the increasing difficulties for the Jews in Poland, she often told the young people stories of one day "emigrating to Israel, thus planting hope and strength in the hearts of her young charges" ("Chasia Bornstein").

At the same time Chasia was working with the youth, along with other members of the underground organization, she was assisting refugees who were fleeing Nazi persecution from

Western Poland. Her resistance activities extended beyond these difficult tasks as she was also "part of the attempts to organize a ghetto uprising." Like Tema and Rejza, one of Chasia's roles in the underground was that of a courier, and she was dispatched to Bialystock. There she took on the alias of an Aryan woman named Helena Stasziwak. An uprising was attempted in Bialystock that failed and, after this setback, Chasia worked strictly as a courier "for the partisan brigade hiding in the forests" ("Chasia Bornstein").

In what seems like quite a dangerous cover, Chasia worked in the daytime—as her Aryan alter-ego Helena—for the family of an SS officer. After nightfall, she "smuggled weapons, armaments, food and medicines, and gathered intelligence for the partisans." In collaboration with other couriers, "she also organized a cell of Germans who helped the partisans." The incredibly busy Chasia then created a map of Bialystock for the Red Army Command and, thanks in large part to Chasia's mapmaking skills, Bialystock was captured without any losses. For their contributions to the war effort, Chasia and the other couriers who were involved in this successful mission were recognized with "the highest decoration awarded to civilians" ("Chasia Bornstein"). However, the long-awaited end of the war did not mean that Chasia would rest.

In the post-war period, "Chasia opened the first orphanage for Jewish children in Lodz." By 1947, Chasia had

Fig. 5. Refugees aboard the Theordore Herzl in Haifa, being sent through a disinfecting station prior to being deported to Cyprus by the ruling British. Chasia Bornstein and the orphans she was rescuing were also aboard. Courtesy United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

500 children under her wing as they boarded the illegal immigration ship *Theodore Herzl*, bound for Haifa. The ship was intercepted when it arrived, and the undocumented passengers were immediately deported to Cyprus by the British authorities. While in exile in Cyprus, Chasia continued her work with young people, running "educational activities in a youth camp." Six months after their deportation, Chasia and her group all successfully found their way to Israel. According to the Yad Vashem database, up until 2006, Chasia continued to maintain warm relationships with many of the former members of her youth group. Eventually, Chasia married and became a member of the Kibbutz Lehavot Habashan. She worked as an educator and art teacher at Tel Hal College. As of 2006, Chasia has three daughters, eleven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren, after which her trail runs cold.

Faye Schulman

"All that I went through to survive other Jews also experienced. There are accounts of suffering far worse than my own. I, after all, survived all my dangerous missions, while thousands of Jewish boys and girls fell in battle, losing their lives heroically fighting for freedom. These heroes were buried in the woods with no monuments, stones or signs. Nobody will ever know what they went through and where they lie. The woods in White Russia are filled with the dead. The ground is drenched in Jewish blood."

–Faye Schulman

Faye Schulman was born on November 28, 1919 in Lenin, Poland to a large Orthodox Jewish family. She had gained photography skills while assisting her brother in his photography business. The Nazis invaded Lenin in 1941, trapping Faye's family in a ghetto. Her two older brothers were sent to labor camps and the Nazis murdered almost every person in the ghetto including Faye's parents, sisters, and younger brother. They let those deemed *useful* to live, one

of them being Faye for her photographic talents. The Nazis ordered Faye to develop photos of the slaughter and she made extra copies to keep for herself in secret, to serve as an account of some of the atrocities committed during the Holocaust. In 1942, Faye ran away to the forests during a partisan raid and joined the Molotava Brigade, a resistance group that mainly consisted of "escaped Soviet Army POWs." They welcomed her only because her brother-in-law was a doctor and they needed someone who knew even the slightest bit about medicine. Faye became a nurse for the group, serving in this manner from 1942 to 1944, without any previous formal medical training or experience. Within these two years, she was able to recover her photography equipment, taking hundreds of photographs, learning to develop the negatives under blankets and during the day, as well as facing the many hardships of resistance life during the Holocaust.

On June 24, 1942, the Nazi army occupied the town that Faye and her family had resided in without incurring any resistance from the Jews. Faye writes of the resulting anxiety in her autobiography titled, *A Partisan's Memoir: Woman of the Holocaust,* "The Nazis began to implement their persecution of the Jews" (Schulman 65). Local residents were forced to work for the Nazis with no pay; they were made to sweep the streets, clean the soldier's horses, wash their undergarments, and scrub the floors without compensation. Faye describes it as "a hard day of forced labor without payment or food" (66). In addition to contributing to the slave labor all of the Jews were forced to engage in, the Nazis allowed her to become a photographer again to process their film. Faye would occasionally get extra food for her photography work. Most of these images were of the persecution and massacre of Jews as "the Nazis were obsessed with documenting their activities and took many photographs," writes Faye. Although she despised doing this, she felt it would save her life, and she eventually gained a reputation for her skill. She

describes how increasingly restrictive her community had become since the Nazis took over the government in Lenin and recalls the desolate streets, “except for Nazi Soldiers who patrolled with unleashed dogs. When the Nazis pointed to a Jew and shouted ‘*Jude!’* the dogs would attack and tear the person apart” (69). The Nazis had stolen many valuable items from the Jewish townspeople such as leather goods, fur, gold, and necessities such as pillows and blankets. Then they issued an order stating that Jews were no longer allowed to own any fur clothes: “every fur collar sewn on a cloth coat had to be cut off and given to the Nazis” (69). The Nazis used each new rule to see how far they were able to push the Jewish communities into doing what they wanted, and if orders were not followed, that person was to be killed. They instilled fear into the communities they occupied and weaponized it against the Jews to keep them in order.

Not only did Faye witness change in her town since the occupation by the Nazis, but she also saw incredibly gruesome atrocities that motivated her to fight against them and join the resistance. In her memoir, she writes how the soldiers would often use the Jews for their own amusement. She explains that during the cold winter months, the Jews were forced to hand shovel the streets, highways, and sidewalks. Older men and women were ordered up onto their roofs to clean off the snow. When the younger people offered their help, the Nazis refused it, as “they had more fun watching old men climb up, slip on a steep, icy roof, fall down and break a leg, an arm or a couple of ribs” (73). She then writes about another amusement for the Nazis that is an incredibly horrible, graphic story that involved a couple with six-month-old twins: “One day, two Nazis walked into their house and took the twins into the backyard. One Nazi held the babies, tore out their arms and legs and threw them high into the air. The other Nazi aimed and shot at these limbs for target practice. They amused themselves, laughing, until both babies were

torn to pieces" (73). The Nazis found pleasure in the suffering of Jews, tearing apart whole *babies* just because they felt like it and were able to get away with doing so. The hate these vicious individuals had for people belonging to a different religious group ran so deep that they viewed innocent babies as being subhuman.

In addition, on May 10, 1942, a ghetto was created in Lenin. The entire Jewish community was forced out of their homes and into a very small part of town and approximately 2,000 people were jammed into the area with 50-60 people crowded per tiny house. In her memoir, Faye describes how the ghetto was enclosed by barbed wire with only one gate to enter and "it was forbidden for Jews to leave the ghetto. Only those with special permits which allowed them to work outside the ghetto could venture out and then they had to be accompanied by soldiers to and from work" (77). The Jews, although free from concentration camps for the time being, were imprisoned and heavily restricted by the Nazis. They were trapped in revolting conditions. They would be without food for days, did not have any warm clothes, and illnesses and diseases such as typhus ran rampant in the ghetto. Some of the Christians residing in the town would often attempt to smuggle food for the Jews in the ghetto, an incredibly dangerous act that was punishable by death. Faye describes herself as "one of the lucky ones who had a permit which allowed me to leave the ghetto in order to continue my work in the photo studio located in our old house. For the time being our house had remained unoccupied. The photo equipment and supplies were still there, as was the darkroom. All Jewish homes outside the ghetto were now left unlocked, under the nominal care of the *soltis,* the head of the gentile community" (79). The Jews' valuable belongings had been stolen by the Nazis and were to be shipped to Germany. Although Faye was allowed to go back to her house and develop the photographs for the Nazis,

she no longer had a *home*. All of her family's treasured items had been stripped away along with any trace of their history of living there.

One early morning in the ghetto there was a round-up by the Nazis for the first time. Faye writes that they all thought they were going to be killed by the soldiers because three trenches had been dug during the weeks prior. All of the Jews who stood together were counted before being ordered back into the ghetto, and those who tried to get by without going to the assembly were later hunted down and murdered. On August 14, 1942, the Nazis carried out several massacres in Lenin and Mikashevich. Because Faye was a skilled photographer for the soldiers, she was taken along with 26 other people who were skilled in trades, ordered into a synagogue, and allowed to live. She writes, "I knew these were the last minutes of my family's life. I felt I was drowning in an ocean of pain and sorrow. I didn't want to be left by myself. What was the point of being the only survivor of my family? I wanted to run out and die with the rest of my family. The others in the synagogue held me inside against my wishes. They said if I ran out, they would all be killed" (87). The majority of Faye's family was killed shortly after: her parents, both of her sisters, her younger brother, her brother-in-law, her sister-in-law, her nieces, and nephews all died. A total of 1,850 Jews were exterminated and the Nazis photographed many of the murders. They later gave the films to Faye for her to develop and she secretly made copies for herself. When the shooting ended, Faye "climbed down from the attic and walked to the arc where the Torahs were kept. I sat down in front of this familiar symbol of my people. I didn't cry; I was frozen with shock. I couldn't move any part of my body. I just stared at the curtain behind which the Torahs were kept. Oh, God, will it ever be possible for me to avenge these acts? God, where are You? Good people, where are you? Where is justice?" (90). Faye was in

shock and could not believe that God was letting these brutal killings and mistreatment of her people occur throughout Europe. She wanted so badly to get revenge and take matters into her own hands.

Consequently, after the murders of her family and the entire community of the ghetto, Faye lived in a house with five other families who were "the sole Jewish survivors of Lenin" (95). She suddenly heard shooting and realized that Lenin was being attacked by the Soviet partisans. She watched the people running outside through the window and in a video interview titled "Daring to Resist: Three Women Face the Holocaust," Faye recalls this moment and says, "Partisans were running. Nazi soldiers were running. The bullets were still in the air; I could see sparkles in the air. And I wanted to run away to join the partisans. Right away I took–I tore off the yellow star from the front and from the back no more to show that I am Jewish." She found a commander of a partisan group mainly made up of non-Jewish, Russian, German prison camp escapee soldiers and asked to join though it was unheard of for a Jewish girl with no combat training to join the

Fig. 9. Faye Schulman, pictured the only woman with all male partisans. Courtesy Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation.

Fig. 10. Faye Schulman pictured holding a rifle while wearing her leopard print coat. Courtesy Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation.

partisans. The commander accepted her because he thought she would be able to care for the sick or wounded, despite not having any medical background, since her brother-in-law was a doctor. Faye says, “I wasn’t afraid of blood, but I was afraid of a rifle also. I never had a rifle in my hand.” She often thought of how much her life had changed; she learned how to care for wounded people and perform operations on operating tables made of tree branches. The partisans raided nearby towns for food, weapons, and medicine. During a raid that was conducted in her hometown, Faye recovered her photography equipment, family photos, and leopard skin coat, which would prove useful during the winter months. Wherever the Nazis stayed, they were ordered to burn the houses to the ground when they were finished there. When she entered her childhood home, she pictured her “whole family alive there and everybody’s talking to me and everybody’s saying, ‘good, do something, fight back, revenge, kill the enemies!’ Another partisan walks and he looked at me and he said, ‘What do you think?’ Like, what do I think? So, I said to myself all in the seconds, what do I think? The police [are] stationed here, I won’t be living here, the family’s killed, who will live here, to leave it for the enemy? I said right away, ‘Burn it.’” (Schulman “Daring”). They set the house on fire and Faye took photographs of her old home as it was going up in flames. If she was not going to be able to live in it, then the Nazis who had stolen everything from her would not live there either. The resistance group Faye belonged to was composed of non-Jews who would not have taken her in had she not agreed to become a nurse to the group. She kept her Jewish identity a secret from her fellow comrades and only ate potatoes during Passover. Rokhl Kafrissen writes in her article “A Partisan’s Passover,” “without a family, without a home, her only means of observance was through dietary restriction. Since the usual partisan meal was pork-based soup and bread, Shulman had to find excuses to

miss communal meals as well as a way to eat her potatoes undetected" (Kafrissen). Celebrating in secret was a way for Faye to have control over her situation. She documented her life in photos for two years as she lived in the forest; Faye made "sun prints" by taking a negative and putting it next to photographic paper and holding it in the direction of the sun so that the light could transfer the image from the negative onto the paper. Throughout the war, Faye learned to become a nurse and how to handle a gun, demonstrating her drive to resist the Nazis. In an interview with The Memory Project based in Canada, Faye recounts her mother who always told her to stay away from guns, "I was afraid of a rifle even. I remember when a Polish officer came to our house to take some pictures and he left the rifle in the corner. My mother used to say, 'Don't go to this room, there is a rifle. It might fire.' Now the rifle is my pillow." She had gone from being afraid of standing in the same room as a rifle to sleeping with one and learning how to handle it in ways that she never dreamed she would.

At one point she and a comrade were ordered to travel to another partisan group and deliver a handful of messages when it started to rain as they left. Their commander suggested taking a boat as it would be safer as Nazis surrounded the area and they were in danger of being attacked or ambushed. Her partner decided to get out of the boat first and pull it inland so that Faye would not have to walk in the waist-high water. As soon as he stepped on land, he walked onto a land mine and it exploded, tearing him to pieces. Faye recalls in an interview with The Memory Project that she "couldn't find his body. And I was left alone now in the woods. Nobody around. All, all by myself surrounded by Nazis all over." She was forced between two paths splitting in opposite directions. If she were captured: "they would torture me, try to force me to betray my group and then hang me. I found myself on the edge of despair…I walked and

walked, and it seemed there was no end to the wilderness. I had nothing to eat all day…Suddenly, I heard a noise. As I moved closer, I realized it was voices, people talking in Russian. Yes! Yes! This was what I knew. There were partisans! I was in the right place. These were my partisans" (Schulman *Memoir* 151-54). She had a 50% chance of choosing the incorrect path, leading to her torture and death, but she followed her instincts and made it back to safety.

One night, she was sitting with the partisans around the fire singing songs about how great the end of the war would be and they could all go back home. In the video interview titled "Daring to Resist: Three Women Face the Holocaust" Faye states, "And I was sitting and singing with them and thinking to myself, not for me. Who will wait for me? Where will I go? Which train station will I take? Where to go? I have nobody to, to, to greet me. I have nobody to bring me flowers." Faye spent two years fighting with the partisans and, by the summer of 1944, they made their way into Russia and helped liberate it from Nazi control. However, Faye describes this as the worst time in her life because the town that once held 45,000 Jewish people was now empty. She did not know what to do with her life and she felt completely isolated. Though it seemed horrible, there were some silver-linings: she had received a well-paying photography job for the new Pinsk government, earned medals for her courage, and received news that two of her brothers were still alive, one of whom was living with another Jewish partisan named Morris Schulman. The Jewish Partisan

Fig. 11. Faye Schulman in leopard print coat with male partisans. Courtesy Jewish Partisan Educational Foundation.

Education Foundation writes that Faye and Morris “enjoyed a prosperous life as decorated Soviet partisans, but wanted to leave Pinsk, Poland, which reminded them of ‘a graveyard’” (JPEF). They lived together in the Landsberg Displaced Persons Camps of Germany for three years and later immigrated to Canada in 1948.

Faye Schulman lived out the final chapter of her life in Toronto, Canada, with two children and six grandchildren. Had Faye not witnessed all the atrocities that she did during the war, she would not have had the motivation to join the resistance and fight. The opportunity to join the partisans arose by chance and she proved herself worthy as she photographed her two years with the partisans, served as a nurse, and learned to practice battlefield medicine. Faye Schulman continued to speak to audiences about her experience during the Holocaust and as a partisan resistance fighter until she passed away in 2015 at the age of 99.

The Jewish partisans were courageous individuals in Europe who all fought for the same cause, though their individual reasons for fighting may have differed. They disprove the notion that Jews did nothing to attempt to end the persecution in Europe, whereas many did fight back. Each member had a very important and specific role to play and each plan of action had to be executed perfectly if they were to stay unknown to the Nazis. While various partisans have perished, they live on through their bravery, works of art, and stories passed on via their testimonies and family members. They fought for justice and were incredibly selfless as they all risked their lives each time they completed a mission. They saved many Jews by smuggling in weapons, ammunition, and food into the ghettos, while smuggling many Jews out. When members of the partisans were caught by Nazis and their lives were in imminent danger, they routinely refused to give up any information about where their comrades were located nor what

their identities were. Even when the Nazis attempted to bribe them with a lighter sentence or threaten to kill their families, they did not speak. Many partisans who were caught by the Nazis were murdered, dying for their cause so that others could live.

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