



The Holocaust and the United Nations
Outreach Programme

The Last Flight of **PETR GINZ**



© Illustration by Cory Godbey. Based on the artwork of Petr Ginz

Study Guide

“The Holocaust was a time of terror and uncertainty for Jewish children and their families. Despite their fears, many children, like Petr Ginz, bravely faced this danger armed with creativity and strength. And like Petr, many were robbed of the opportunity to grow into adults. We will never know what they could have contributed to our world had they lived, but we can be sure of our obligation to remember and honour all victims of this tragedy. The best tribute to their memory is an ongoing effort to teach the universal lessons of the Holocaust so that no such horror is ever visited on future generations.”

BAN Ki-moon,
United Nations Secretary-General

27 January 2012

“The seed of a creative idea does not die in mud and scum. Even there it will germinate and spread its blossom like a star shining in darkness.”*

Petr Ginz

* Petr Ginz, *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*, ed. Chava Pressburger, trans. Elena Lappin (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 133.

The Last Flight of **PETR GINZ**

STUDY GUIDE



United Nations

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4. Petr Ginz (1928 – 1944); Page 7 from the story "Ferda's Adventures", 1940 ; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem
5. Illustration by Cory Godbey

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FOREWORD

BY KIYO AKASAKA, United Nations Under-Secretary-General
for Communications and Public Information



With this study guide, we honour the memory of Petr Ginz, an extraordinary young Jewish boy from Prague who perished in the Holocaust.

Through his story, you will learn how important it is to stand up against hatred and prejudice. As you learn more about the Holocaust and the significance of remembering this history today, we hope you will discover its connection to your own life and community.

Petr was one of a million and a half promising and innocent young Jewish children who died in the Holocaust. We cannot take a glimpse into Petr's life without being filled with deep sadness over the loss of this unique and talented young boy. He was not afraid to resist the Nazis in the best way he knew how - through humour, composition and illustration.

When the Jewish children in school were forced to wear the yellow Star of David to set them apart from the other students, Petr saw each of them as "sheriffs," relying on his sense of humour to help him cope with the situation. In getting to know him through his writings and works of art, we long to meet the adult that Petr would have become.

Some children managed to survive the Holocaust while in hiding, and others fled to safe havens before it was too late. Among those who survived, many were orphaned, or left without anyone to protect or care for them. The child survivors are an inspiration to us. We are deeply touched by their resilient spirits and ability to build new lives out of the devastation of the Holocaust.

This study guide serves as a companion to the film *The Last Flight of Petr Ginz*, which was directed by Sandy Dickson of The Documentary Film Programme at Wake Forest University, and Churchill Roberts of The Documentary Institute at the University of Florida, and which is largely based on *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*. We are particularly grateful to Chava Pressburger, Petr's sister, who is a child survivor of the Holocaust, for sharing her personal memories, photos and Petr's creative works with us.

By opening a window into Petr's world, we encourage you to think of all the other children whose talents and dreams were lost with them in the Holocaust. Today, the United Nations remembers those children and pledges to continue working to ensure the protection of the lives and rights of children around the world.

KIYO AKASAKA

MESSAGE FOR STUDENTS

BY CHAVA PRESSBURGER, formerly Eva Ginz

I am very honoured that the United Nations has produced this study guide as a companion to the film about my late brother, *The Last Flight of Petr Ginz*, so that young people around the world can learn how destructive hatred and prejudice are.

Education is fundamental to the creation of a better future. However, sometimes it is misused to spread hatred, murder, and an inhuman ideology, such as Nazism. The Nazis taught young people to believe that a "superior" white European (Aryan) race must conquer the world and subjugate the "inferior" races. These hate-mongers murdered those whom they believed had no right to live, first and foremost the Jews.

A million and a half Jewish children were murdered in the Holocaust – Petr was one of them. I hope that Petr's story will represent one important example of the great loss that was caused by this terrible act of inhumanity. I hope that it will help lead the next generation to propagate truth and not lies, and to incite them to create and not destroy, help each other and not murder, love and not hate.



Petr wrote his diary in Prague from 1941 to 1942, when Czechoslovakia was already under German occupation. Yet, his diary entries do not express his emotions regarding the threat that our family was living under. His many books and illustrations show the depth of his talent and desire to learn. Petr was deported to the ghetto and transit camp Terezin (Theresienstadt) in 1942, where he became aware of the horrors that were happening. Despite this, it is clear to me that his activities there show that he believed that he would return to his "real life" one day and that he would live to make a contribution to the world.

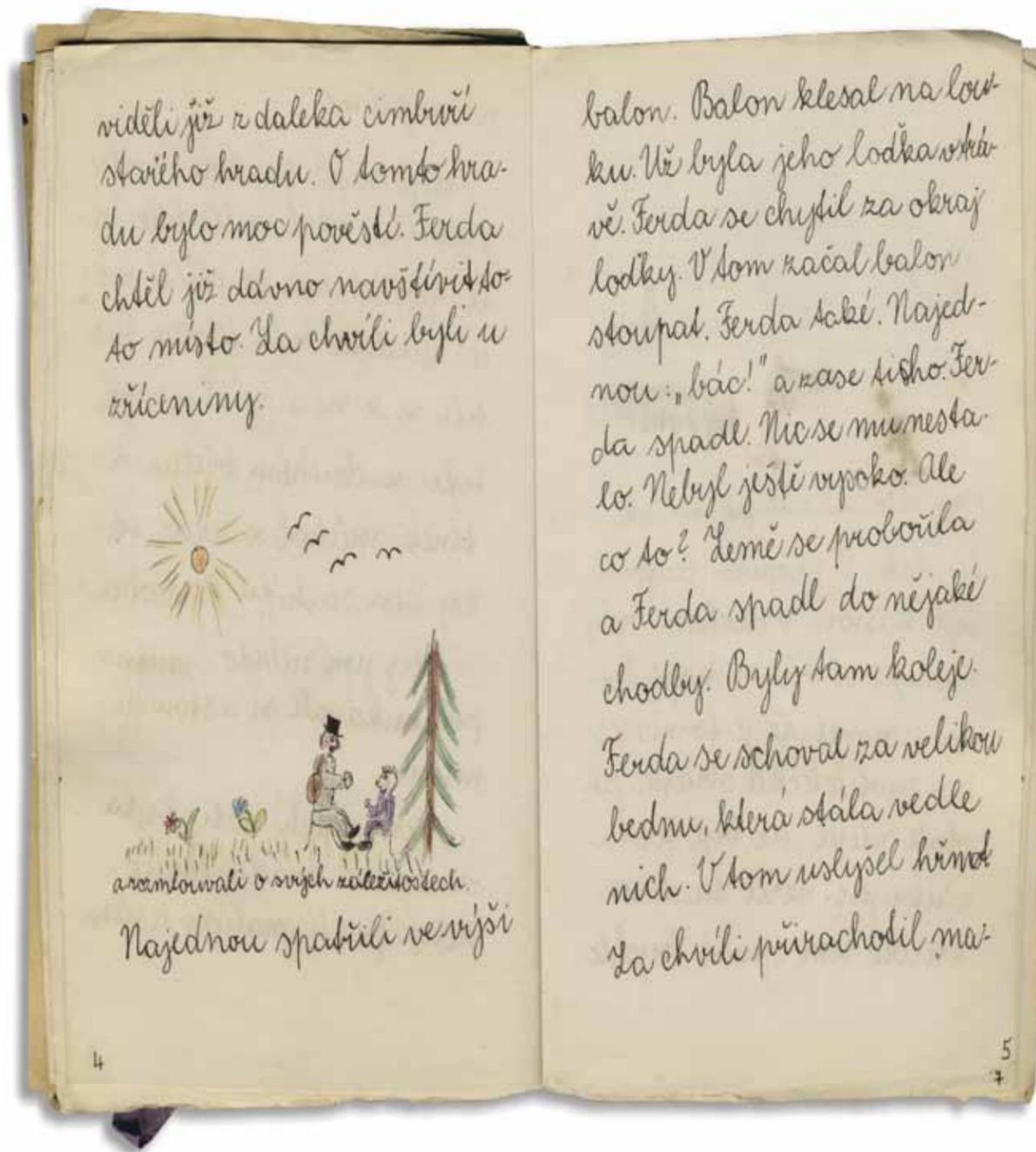
That day was not to come, for Petr would be murdered in a gas chamber in Auschwitz in 1944 when he was just 16 years old. While Petr did not return to us, he did make a valuable contribution to the world through his art and writings. It took incredible courage to speak his mind in his underground magazine titled *Vedem*, when surely he risked death if discovered. I am proud that Petr's legacy lives on.

The diary that Petr wrote while still at home in Prague was discovered in a mysterious way 60 years after it was written. Found by an unknown Czech citizen in a house he bought that once belonged to a close friend of our family, it is not clear how the diary ended up there. I myself found a second diary, or list of tasks that Petr set out to learn or had mastered in Terezin. Together with his illustrations and books, these are my treasures. I am pleased to share them with you in this study guide and film, in the hopes that you, too, will be inspired by Petr to help make this a better world for all.

FERDA'S ADVENTURES

Petr's story "Ferda's Adventures" is about a boy named Ferda who is spending the day in the country with his father. Ferda sees a balloon descending and grabs it but cannot hold on. He drops and lands so hard the earth breaks open and he falls into a cave where he discovers a secret cache of German weapons. Ferda reports his discovery to the Czech authorities and becomes a hero.

Petr Ginz (1928 – 1944);
Pages 4-5 from the story "Ferda's
Adventures", 1940; Collection of the
Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem



AROUND THE WORLD IN A SECOND

Petr Ginz was born in 1928 in Prague, which at that time was the capital of Czechoslovakia. His parents, Otto and Maria Ginz, were married in Prague the year before he was born, and Petr's sister Eva was born there in 1930. Petr loved Prague, and as Eva tells us, walking the streets of the old city, they "always felt the magic, even as children".

During the early 1930s, some 35,000 Jews lived in Prague. After Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany in 1933, many German Jews fled to the city. Many more refugees arrived in Prague in 1938, after Hitler annexed Austria and the Sudeten region of Czechoslovakia. This increased the city's Jewish population to about 56,000.

Petr's family was a "mixed" family – his father was Jewish and his mother was born Christian, but she converted to Judaism when they married. Because Petr and Eva had one "Aryan" parent and one Jewish parent, they were considered by the Nazis to be "mischlinge of the first degree", or half Jewish.

Hitler and the Nazis wrongly believed the Jews to be an inferior race responsible for all the problems in Germany and Europe, and to be a threat to the biologically superior "Aryans". The terms, "Aryan", "Jew" and "Mischlinge" were defined by an additional decree made to

the Nuremberg Laws. The Nuremberg Laws had been adopted by the German Parliament in Nuremberg on 15 September 1935. They became the legal basis for discrimination against the Jews in Germany, and later in other places which came under Nazi authority, such as Prague. The second of the Nuremberg Laws, entitled "Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour", made marriages between "Aryans" and Jews illegal.¹ However, because Petr's parents were already married, his Jewish father was initially permitted to remain with his wife.

Petr's father spoke many languages and worked as a manager of the export department of a textile company in Prague. Petr's parents encouraged him and Eva in their education. They sent Petr to a special school for exceptional children after elementary school, which he attended for only one year before the Nazis arrived in Prague. Many members of Petr's extended family lived nearby, and he and Eva and their parents visited with them often. Petr had a happy early childhood in Prague, and a vivid imagination which enabled him to express himself in many different ways.

¹ The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.



Eva, Petr and Maria Ginz in Prague



Eva and Petr Ginz, 1934



The Ginz Family



Wedding of Maria and Otto Ginz, 8 March 1927

QUESTIONS

1. What do we know about Petr? What else would you like to learn about him?
2. In Petr's story "Ferda's Adventures", the boy discovers hidden German weapons and becomes a hero when he turns them in. What does the story say about what Petr believed was happening?
3. Why were Petr and his sister Eva discriminated against by the Nazis?

ACTIVITIES

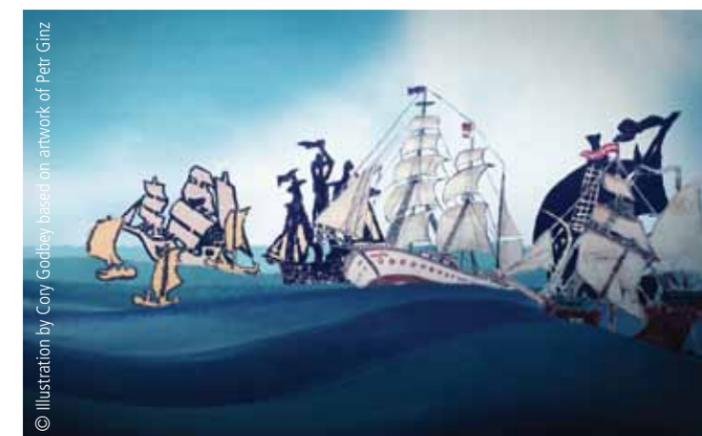
1. Research where the major Jewish communities were located in Europe before World War II.
2. Write a brief report on Jewish cultural traditions, including Jewish food, Jewish holidays and place of worship.
3. Compare Map 1 – Europe 1933 and Map 2 – German Territorial Gains Before the War, 1939, in the Annex. What happened to the countries in Europe between 1933 and 1939? Research how this affected the Jews living in those countries.

PETR'S IMAGINATION

Petr had a very creative mind and adventurous spirit. Petr's sister Eva tells us, "his favourite studies were always sciences...but he loved to draw. He always had a notebook with him and some pencils".

Petr was also greatly influenced by the writing of the French author Jules Verne, who was a pioneer of science-fiction writing. Verne wrote about air and space travel and voyages under the sea before these types of journey were a practical reality. According to Eva, "Petr read many books, but at his very young age, he preferred the books of Jules Verne. And I think that perhaps he read all the books Verne wrote. Jules Verne for example, wrote a novel titled *Around the World in Eighty Days*. Petr wrote a novel titled *Around the World in One Second*".

Between the ages of eight and fourteen Petr also wrote four other novels: *From Prague to China*, *The Wizard from Altay Mountains*, *Journey to the Centre of the Earth*, and *A Visit from Prehistory*.² In the beginning of his story about the monster Ka-du, Petr writes that this was a novel authored by Jules Verne which he discovered and translated into Czech. In reality the novel, *A Visit from Prehistory*, was written by Petr.



QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think adventure and travel by ship or flying machine was so appealing to Petr?
2. For what reason(s) do you think Petr decided to present his novel *A Visit from Prehistory* to the reader as if it were written by Jules Verne?
3. Considering Petr's interests and qualities, what might he have become as an adult?

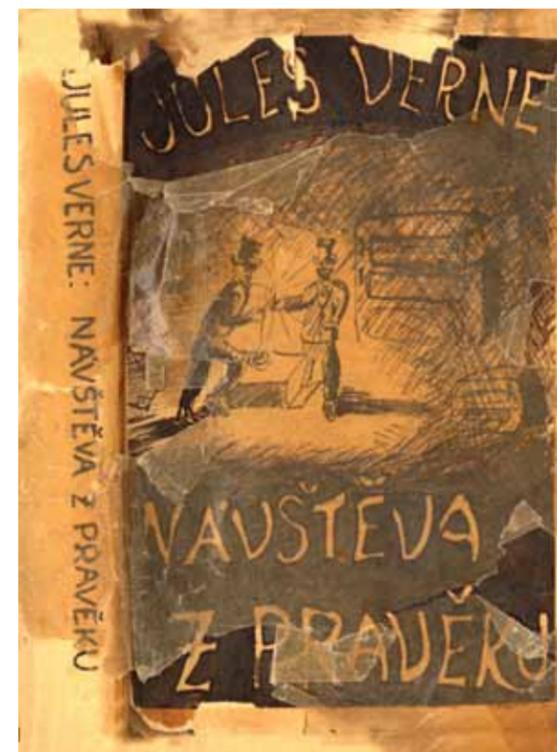
ACTIVITIES

1. Find titles of books written by Jules Verne. Discuss why you think Petr enjoyed them.
2. In the film we learn that asteroid 50413 was named for Petr. Research the asteroid and how it came to be named 50413 Petrginz.
3. Read the quote from Petr on the inside front cover of this study guide. Write what you think Petr meant by this and how it affected him.



From the private collection of Chava Pressburger

A Visit from Prehistory novel cover;
From the private collection of Chava Pressburger



² Petr Ginz, *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*, ed. Chava Pressburger, trans. Elena Lappin (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 11.

TIMELINE

- 8 Mar 1927 Otto and Maria Ginz marry
- 1 Feb 1928 Petr is born in Prague
- 21 Feb 1930 Eva, Petr's sister, is born



Petr Ginz (1928-1944); Illustration from *A Visit from Prehistory*; From the private collection of Chava Pressburger

KA-DU COMES

The Nazis occupied Prague on 15 March 1939. They declared the entire western region of Czechoslovakia, which included Prague, the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (see Map 2 in the Annex). This meant the area belonged to the Greater German Reich and the 92,000 members of its Jewish community were subject to the authority of the Nazis. The eastern region of Czechoslovakia became Slovakia. Immediately after occupation, the Nazis began to place restrictions on the Jewish population. In June, a decree was issued barring Jews from almost all economic activity, and much Jewish property was seized. When World War II broke out in September 1939, Jews were fired from their jobs, denied commercial goods, and their freedom of movement was restricted. By November, Jews could not travel freely on public transportation and Jewish children had been expelled from schools.

The Jewish Religious Council of Prague was ordered to take a census of the Jewish population in the Protectorate in September 1941, and Jews were required to wear yellow stars and to live separately from the rest of the population. Petr began writing in his diary on 19 September 1941, and in that entry he wrote about and illustrated the yellow star badge Jews were forced to wear (see image). The Nazis used the rule of law to enforce restrictions on Jews and because of the yellow star they could easily identify them.

Jews were also required to register for transports. Petr and his family received a summons to register on 26 October 1941.³ The majority of the Jewish population in Prague, like Petr and his family, were sent to Terezin. The transports from Prague to Terezin began in November 1941. Terezin was a small fortress town in northwestern Czechoslovakia which became a ghetto and transit camp for the Jews of Bohemia and Moravia, some elderly, wealthy and especially well-known German Jews, and several thousand Jews from the Netherlands and Denmark. It was Nazi officer Reinhard Heydrich who proposed the establishment of Terezin as a transit camp, or holding station on the way to Auschwitz and other killing centres in the East (see Map 3 in the Annex).⁴

Reinhard Heydrich was the acting governor of Bohemia and Moravia, also known as "Reichsprotektor of the Czech lands", as well as the head of the Nazi Security Police, the Security Service and the Reich Security Main Office. He organized the Wannsee Conference, held on 20 January 1942 at a villa in Wannsee, Berlin, where the "Final Solution" was coordinated by top Nazi officials. The "Final Solution" was the name for the Nazis' plan to "solve the Jewish question" by murdering all of the Jews in Europe – 11 million by the Nazis' definition of who was a Jew. The implementation of the Nazis' plan resulted in the systematic murder of six million Jews during World War II, known as the Holocaust. At the same time, the Nazis targeted other victims on ideological, racial and political grounds, including Roma and Sinti, killing tens of thousands more innocent people.



The Nazis arrive in Prague, March 1939



Pages from the Diary of Petr Ginz; From the private collection of Chava Pressburger

³ Petr Ginz, *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*, ed. Chava Pressburger, trans. Elena Lappin (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 38.

⁴ The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.



Jewish resistance fighters in the forest in Czechoslovakia, 1944

© Ghetto Fighters' House / Krael

Reinhard Heydrich, known for his cruelty and brutality, was also referred to as the "Butcher of Prague". His car was bombed by Czech resistance fighters on 27 May 1942, and he died of wounds from this attack on 4 June 1942. The assassination of Heydrich is perhaps the most well-known act of Czech resistance to the Nazis. It was very dangerous and most often impossible to resist the Nazis. However when Jews, and some non-Jews, learned about the Nazis' plans, many chose to resist despite the great risks that it posed to them. Resistance was often organized by underground groups and took many forms, including smuggling goods, armed rebellion, hiding in forests and other places, and coordinating cultural activities. In retaliation for the assassination of Heydrich, the Nazis destroyed the village of Lidice, where they believed members of the resistance lived. They murdered all of the men, deported the women to the Ravensbrück concentration camp, and sent the children to the Chelmno killing centre.⁵

⁵ The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

TIMELINE

15 Mar 1939 Nazis arrive in Prague	1 Sep 1939 Germany invades Poland, WWII begins in Europe	19 Sep 1941 Petr's first diary entry, Jews must wear yellow stars	16 Oct 1941 Transports from Prague to Lodz ghetto begin	26 Oct 1941 Petr and family must register for transports	Nov 1941 Transports to Terezin begin	20 Jan 1942 Wannsee Conference	1 Feb 1942 Petr's 14th Birthday; he is eligible for transport	27 May 1942 Heydrich's assassination	10 Jun 1942 Massacre of Lidice
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Poem by Petr Ginz

(excerpts)

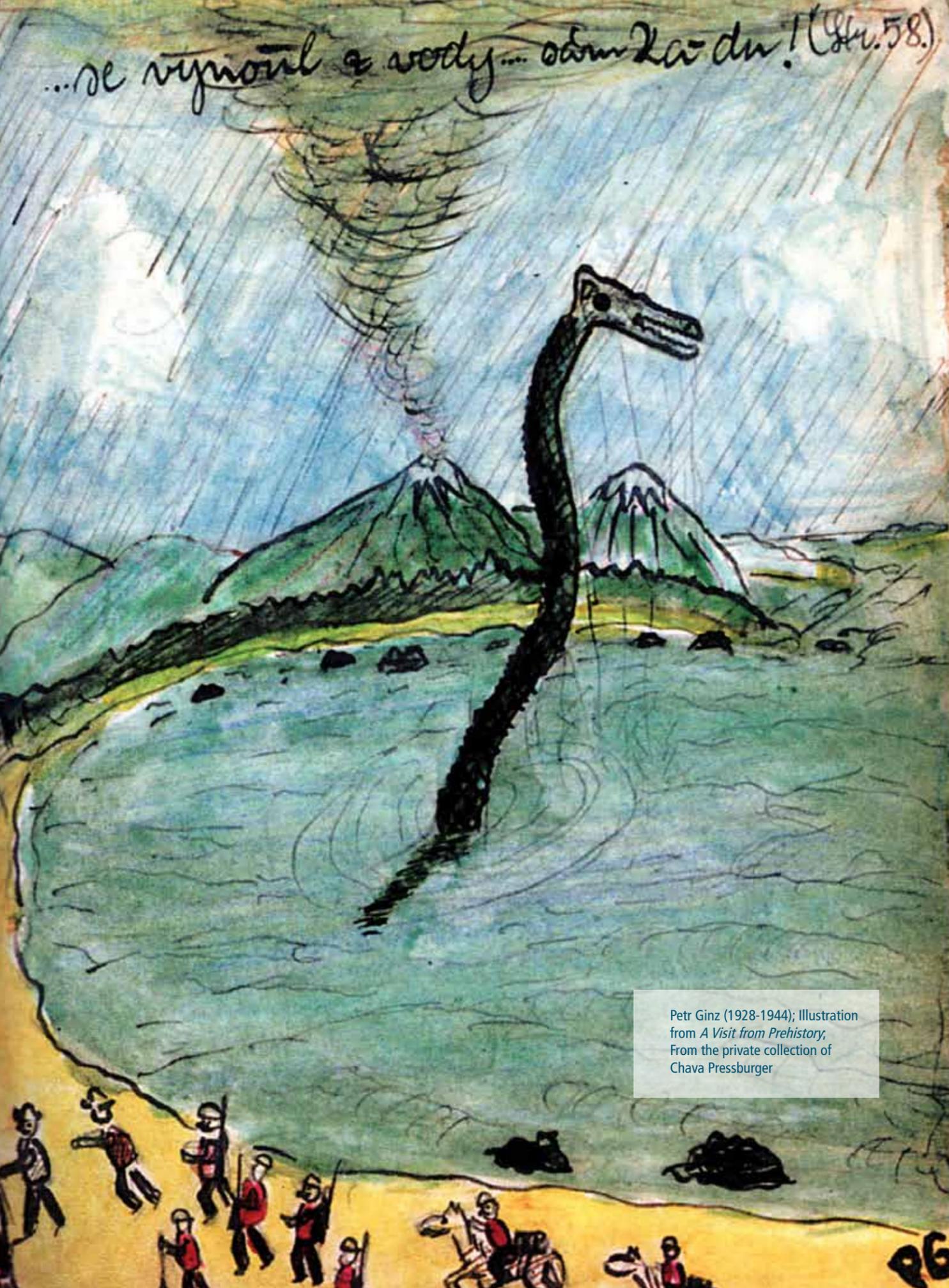
Today it's clear to everyone
who is a Jew and who's an Aryan,
because you'll know Jews near and far
by their black and yellow star.

Always, after eight o'clock,
be at home and click the lock;
work only labouring with pick or hoe,
and do not listen to the radio.
You're not allowed to own a mutt;
barbers can't give your hair a cut;
a female Jew who once was rich
can't have a dog, even a bitch,
she cannot send her kids to school
must shop from three to five
since that's the rule.

And if you are a clever Jew
you'll close off bank accounts and you
will give up other habits too
like meeting Aryans you knew.

He used to be allowed a swag,
suitcase, rucksack, or carpetbag.
Now he has lost even those rights
but every Jew lowers his sights
and follows all the rules he's got
and doesn't care one little jot.⁶

⁶ Petr Ginz, *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*, ed. Chava Pressburger, trans. Elena Lappin (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 59-61.



Petr Ginz (1928-1944); Illustration from *A Visit from Prehistory*, From the private collection of Chava Pressburger

HEROES CONFRONT KA-DU

The concentrated areas in cities where all Jews were required to live, separate from the rest of the population, are called “ghettos”. After the Nazis began to implement the “Final Solution”, the fact that Jews were made to live together in ghettos facilitated the Nazis’ efforts to deport them. Jews were sent on trucks, ships and by foot, but mostly by train, to concentration camps, labour camps and killing centres in Eastern Europe. The Nazis used the rail system which covered all of Europe to transport them on trains, largely in crowded cattle cars. The cars were sealed from the outside, and the deportees were kept inside for days without water or food until they reached their destination. The transports were very organized and required a great deal of coordination between many groups such as Nazi security forces, the Ministry of Transportation, local authorities and railroad officials. The Nazis attempted to portray the transports as “resettlement” of the Jewish population for work in the East, but in fact, most of these people were being sent to their death.⁷



Roma and Sinti were also persecuted, deported and killed by the Nazis



Jews boarding a deportation train in Chelmno, Poland

Petr wrote about the day he left Prague on a transport after he arrived in Terezin. He had been working in a typewriter repair shop on 22 October 1942, when he learned that his name had been included on the transport list for Terezin, and had to leave that same evening. Petr remembered when the manager of the shop told him the news, and he said goodbye to everyone in case he would not see them again. Then he walked home, trying to absorb the noises that he would not hear again for a long time, while hiding his star so that nobody would notice Jews still lived in the house. Petr’s family did not have to move from their home because the apartment was registered in his mother’s name. He was told to select which things he wanted to bring with him, and he chose to bring: a supply of paper, linoleum and small knives for cutting it, his unfinished novel *The Wizard of Altay Mountains*, and a few watercolour paints. Petr wrote that he was more concerned with losing these items than anything else. Petr described his goodbye with his father, who kissed him several times, and his Aunt Nada, who gave him the last kiss. He then turned over his suitcases, hoping that he would see his belongings again someday.

QUESTIONS

1. In the story about Ka-du, Petr imagines that the monster would be defeated. What was actually happening in Europe at the time?
2. Why does Petr question the fact that elderly people like his grandmother were included in the transports?
3. How did Petr react to the news that he was going to leave in a transport? Why didn’t he have to leave before he reached age fourteen?

ACTIVITIES

1. Examine the cover of this study guide. Analyze the design in terms of what you have learned about Petr so far, and then create your own cover for this study guide.
2. The Nazis required the Jews to live in concentrated areas in cities called “ghettos” during the Holocaust. Research and report on what life was like for them in a ghetto.
3. Study Map 3 in the Annex on deportations. What countries were the Jews deported from?

“Mancinka, don’t get frightened, I’m in a transport. Mummy was immediately beside herself; she started crying, she didn’t know what to do. I comforted her.”⁸

TIMELINE

9 Jul 1942
Petr’s grandmother transported to Terezin

22 Oct 1942
Petr learns he must join a transport

⁷ The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

⁸ Petr Ginz, *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*, ed. Chava Pressburger, trans. Elena Lappin (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 19.

THE MADMAN'S PLOT

The ghetto and transit camp of Terezin was located 40 kilometres north of Prague. Some 140,000 Jews passed through Terezin between 23 November 1941, when the first transports arrived from Prague, and its liberation in May 1945. Petr was transported to Terezin on 22 October 1942, and lived there for two years. Terezin had a vibrant cultural life, despite the terrible overcrowding and the constant presence of disease, starvation and fear of transports. As the population included many well known Jews, there were artists, writers, musicians, actors and academics who contributed to underground cultural activities. Terezin was operated by the Nazis, guarded by Czech police officers, and the internal affairs were run by the Jewish ghetto administration called the "Council of Elders". The children lived in separate homes and were secretly educated, which was an effort by the Council of Elders to make their lives a bit more normal. The International Committee of the Red Cross visited Terezin on 23 June 1944 to investigate the living conditions, but by instituting temporary improvements – such as a café and flower gardens – the Nazis succeeded in deceiving the Red Cross delegation.⁹

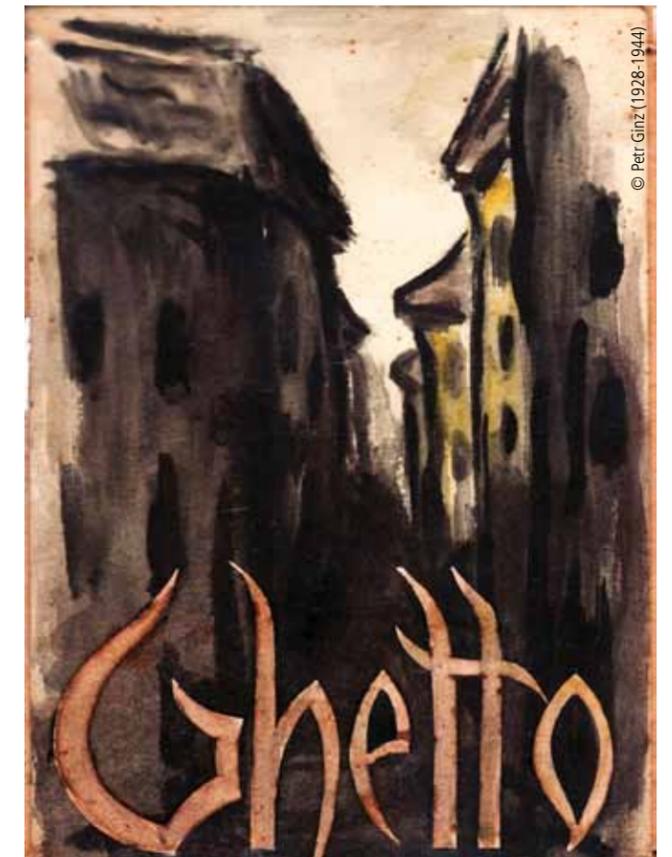
Petr and the other boys in Home Number One of Barrack L417 produced a weekly underground magazine from July 1942 to September 1944 called *Vedem*, which means "We Lead". Petr was the editor of *Vedem* and a frequent contributor. He commissioned articles for the magazine, hounded those late with their submissions, and if there were not enough articles he wrote them himself under a pseudonym. Petr was very well-liked and respected for his abilities. *Vedem* published items such as opinion pieces, artwork, poems, reflections about the past and future, quotes of the week, descriptive pieces on individuals and informative pieces on Terezin. The writing was of impressive quality and full of humour and the boys' emotions – friendship, sadness and helplessness about their situation, and hope that it would improve. However, as Petr approached age 16, the age he would be considered an adult, he grew thinner and more concerned.

Vedem was brought from Terezin to Prague after the war by the only boy from the group who remained in Terezin throughout the war, Zdenek Taussig. He had hidden the magazines in the blacksmith shop in Terezin where his father worked. The complete surviving collection of *Vedem* consisting of 800 original pages is now housed in the Terezin Memorial.¹⁰ About 200 of Petr's drawings and paintings were saved as well, most of them from the time he was imprisoned at Terezin, and they are now part of the collection of Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, in Jerusalem.

Ghetto, 1942-1944;
From the private collection
of Chava Pressburger



A street scene from a Nazi propaganda film.
Terezin, Czechoslovakia, 1944



Petr Ginz (1928-1944); Ghetto Barracks, 1944;
Watercolour on paper; Collection of the Yad
Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem;
Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa

⁹ The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

¹⁰ Marie Růt Krizkova, Kurt Jiří Kotouč and Zdeněk Ornest, eds. *We are Children Just the Same: Vedem, the Secret Magazine by the Boys of Terezin*. (Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1995), 59, 62, 64.

“For a year I’ve been stuck in an ugly hole; instead of your beauties, I’ve a few streets alone. Like a wild animal trapped in a cage I remember you, my Prague, a fairy tale of stone.”

Petr Ginz, *Vedem*¹¹

Petr was one of the few boys in Home Number One who still had family living in the Protectorate, and he often received parcels with food and other items from his parents, which he shared willingly. He wrote to his parents and sister Eva with details about Terezin and his life there, and made requests for items to be sent to him, such as a book on sociology and cough drops for his grandmother. Petr’s grandmother had arrived in Terezin a few months before him, and Petr went to see her each evening until she died there in 1943. Eva was sent to Terezin after she turned fourteen, and upon her arrival in May 1944, she was locked in the barracks for three days. Petr came to the window each day and brought her food. Their uncle Emil and his children, their cousins Pavel and Hana, were also in Terezin. Petr and Pavel were transported to Auschwitz on 28 September 1944. Pavel ultimately died in another camp, Dachau, and Petr was killed in Auschwitz soon after arrival there. Uncle Emil was also transported to Auschwitz and never returned. Otto, Petr’s father, was sent to Terezin on 10 February 1945. Eva, Otto and Hana survived.

Around 30,000 people died in Terezin, 88,000 were deported from Terezin to killing centres (of which only 3,000 survived) and 19,000 survived who remained in Terezin or were transferred to Sweden or Switzerland. Of the 15,000 children who were in Terezin, only about 150 survived.¹²

“Crying was heard from everywhere. We quickly ran and brought the boys two slices of bread, so they won’t be hungry. I pushed my way through the crowd, crawled under the rope that separated it from the barracks, and handed Petr the bread through the window. I still had time to touch his hand through the bars and already the ghetto cop chased me away. Lucky it ended there. Now the boys are gone and all we have left of them are empty beds.”

Eva Ginz¹³



Rooftops and Towers of Prague, 1942-1944; Watercolour and India ink on paper; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem; Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa

QUESTIONS

1. How did the Nazis succeed in deceiving the Red Cross delegation at Terezin?
2. Petr writes in Terezin that every person and organization has two faces. What do you think he meant by this?
3. How did Petr change after he had been in Terezin for a year, and why?

ACTIVITIES

1. Write a poem or short story about Petr or about life for children in Terezin.
2. Research the magazine *Vedem* on the internet. Find one or two articles from *Vedem* that show the boys’ courage or defiance of the Nazis.
3. Examine Map 4 of Terezin in the Annex. Research the Small Fortress and what it was used for.

¹¹ Marie Rút Krizkova, Kurt Jiři Kotouč and Zdeněk Ornest, eds. *We are Children Just the Same: Vedem, the Secret Magazine by the Boys of Terezin* (Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1995), 69-70.

¹² The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs’ and Heroes’ Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

¹³ Petr and Pavel’s transport to Auschwitz, from the diary of Eva Ginz, as printed in Petr Ginz, *The Diary of Petr Ginz, 1941-1942*, ed. Chava Pressburger, trans. Elena Lappin (New York: Grove Press, 2007), 129.

TIMELINE



THE POWER OF PETR’S IMAGINATION

Petr’s powerful imagination continued working until he took his final steps at Auschwitz, as evidenced in his artwork and his writing. In the film *The Last Flight of Petr Ginz*, the Senior Art Curator for Yad Vashem, Yehudit Shendar, explained how strong his creative side was, despite the difficulties he encountered every day living in the ghetto away from his family. “Making art is embedded in someone to such an extent, that even life such as it was in Terezin, for many artists and Petr for sure, did not cut the urge to make art.”

Petr’s imagination enabled him to go places and see things in his mind’s eye that others had not. For example, Petr drew Moon Landscape in Terezin before anyone had travelled to the moon. Petr was drawing something that at the time was radical. There were no photographs taken by astronauts picturing the surface of the moon yet. Petr thinking about outer space while he was terrorized, incarcerated and in a place where so much was taken from him, shows that no one can ever take away a person’s imagination.



A Square in the Terezin Ghetto, 1944; Watercolour and pencil on paper; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem; Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa



Moon Landscape, 1942-1944; Pencil on paper; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem; Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa



During Petr’s two years in Terezin, he also painted many pictures of his surroundings, and developed a style in his use of colour and light that communicated how he saw the world at that time. Two examples of this are Petr’s drawings of “Ghetto” and “A Square in the Terezin Ghetto”. As explained by Ms. Shendar, the Holocaust is often viewed as something straightforward or a black and white phenomenon, but it wasn’t. Every day life went on, despite the persecution and murder. In Terezin, in spite of the very famous saying ‘there were no butterflies in the ghetto’, there were butterflies and there were flowers blooming. And at the same time people were summoned every Tuesday to the transports, which were transports to their deaths.

Petr’s imagination and creativity also became a means for him to resist the Nazis, by expressing his thoughts in articles published in the magazine *Vedem*. Through its stories and illustrations, Petr conveys his determination to maintain his free will and independence by not surrendering to the Nazis. In the *Vedem* cover pictured here, which was drawn by Petr, each of the three cannon balls has been given a different label: “humour”, “laughter” and “satire”.

QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think that Petr chose to draw the surface of the moon while he was a prisoner in Terezin?
2. Why did Petr draw the ghetto both as a dark, frightening place and as a bright and colourful place?
3. Explain the symbolism behind Petr’s drawing of the cannon and cannon balls on the *Vedem* cover.

ACTIVITIES

1. Children produced many drawings while imprisoned in Terezin. Find examples of other works of art by children and discuss.
2. Research more about the life that children led in Terezin. Explain how their activities may have influenced Petr’s art and writings.
3. The famous saying about Terezin “there were no butterflies” comes from a poem written by the Jewish Czech poet Pavel Friedman. Find and read his poem “The Butterfly”, and discuss.

Vedem, 1942-1944, Watercolour and pencil on paper; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem; Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa



Petr Ginz (1928-1944); Vase with flowers, 1942-1944; Watercolour on paper; Collection of the Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem; Gift of Otto Ginz, Haifa

KA-DU'S DESTRUCTION



Jewish children and youth survivors at the time of liberation, Buchenwald, Germany, April 1945

The Nazis handed Terezin over to the Red Cross on 3 May 1945, and it was liberated on 8 May by the Soviet army.¹⁴ Otto and Eva Ginz left Terezin and returned home to Prague on 14 May 1945. The Allies had defeated the Nazis and their collaborators, and the war was over in Europe. Together with her parents, Eva waited and hoped for Petr to return home to Prague. Eva pledged that she would write the date in her Terezin diary when Petr returned, but he never came back. It was about ten years later that their mother learned from someone who left Terezin on the same transport as Petr, that immediately upon arrival in Auschwitz the prisoners underwent selection, or were sorted into groups, and Petr's group went directly into the gas chambers.¹⁵

Following the horrors of the Holocaust, world leaders who had joined forces to end World War II felt a strong need for a way for countries to work together to prevent future wars, and improve the living conditions of people everywhere. They realized that this was only possible if all nations pledged their cooperation and support through a global organization. Thus, the United Nations (UN) was born to try to achieve world peace, social progress and human rights for all. The Organization formally came into existence on 24 October 1945, with 51 countries considered to be the founding Members. There are currently 193 nations which are Members, working to improve the quality of life of people around the world.

The United Nations took an important step to help stop mass violence on 9 December 1948 by adopting the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which declares genocide a crime under international law. The Holocaust was a genocide, which is defined as acts committed with the intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial or religious group. And while the Nazis were tried for their crimes in the Nuremberg trials held in Germany after the war ended, at that time there was no permanent international criminal court in place to ensure that all persons would be held responsible for their actions in the future, but today there is. In July 2002, the International Criminal Court (ICC), located in The Hague in The Netherlands, was created to try persons responsible for the crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. The United Nations also established a Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.



Children after the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen camp, Germany, April 1945

¹⁴ The Holocaust Resource Center, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

¹⁵ Marie Rút Krizkova, Kurt Jiří Kotouč and Zdeněk Ornest, eds. *We are Children Just the Same: Vedem, the Secret Magazine by the Boys of Terezin* (Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1995), 70-75.



United Nations building in New York



The UN has four main purposes

- To help keep peace
- To develop friendly relationships between countries
- To help achieve social and economic development and protect human rights
- To provide a forum where nations can work together to achieve these goals

The principle of human rights for all is protected in both the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted on 10 December 1948), reflecting how deeply the United Nations was shaped by the experience of World War II and the Holocaust. And even though children enjoy the same human rights as adults, United Nations Member States decided that children also should have special protection under international law, and adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 20 November 1989. This Convention sets forth the individual rights that any person under 18 years requires to develop his or her full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse. More countries have ratified this Convention than any other human rights treaty in history.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did world leaders create the United Nations?
2. What is genocide? What else could the United Nations do to help prevent or stop it?
3. What are the basic rights that all children should have?

ACTIVITES

1. Visit the United Nations website at <http://www.un.org>. What is the main responsibility of each of the six main bodies of the United Nations?
2. Study the summary of the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the Annex. Provide examples of the rights that were denied to Petr and the Jewish people during the Holocaust.
3. Research the term "genocide". Write a short summary on Raphael Lemkin and the definition of genocide, according to the United Nations Convention.



United Nations Security Council Chamber

TIMELINE

3 May 1945
Terezin handed over to the Red Cross

8 May 1945
The Soviets liberate Terezin

14 May 1945
Eva and Otto Ginz arrive home

24 Oct 1945
United Nations was established

CHILDREN AND THE HOLOCAUST

Following the rise to power of the Nazis, Jewish children became victims of anti-Semitic legislation, first in Germany and as time passed, in every country the Nazis conquered or with which they forged an alliance. Jewish children were separated from their non-Jewish playmates and expelled from state-sponsored schools. They saw their parents lose the right to support their families, and often witnessed the descent of the family unit into an abyss of despair.¹⁶

Faced with the deteriorating situation, parents searched for safe havens for their children. Some 10,000 Jewish children managed to escape to Great Britain from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland through a series of rescue efforts between 1938 and 1940 known as the Kindertransport, meaning "Children's Transport". The British government had agreed to allow unaccompanied refugee children to enter the country on temporary travel visas, if private citizens or organizations committed to pay for each child's care and eventual emigration.¹⁷

When World War II broke out and anti-Semitic legislation worsened, the suffering of Jewish children increased. Many were forced into ghettos, cut off from the world. Starvation and disease were a constant presence in the ghettos, and many children died there. Fighting for their lives and those of their families, some children acted as smugglers, risking their lives bringing food into the ghettos and becoming central to their families' survival. Some children were smuggled to safety or raised in secret by non-Jews, but these were relatively few in number.

Due to the collapse of the traditional Jewish leadership structure, Jewish youth movements played a significant role within the community. They organized underground educational and cultural activities in the ghetto and sometimes in the camps, as well as armed resistance movements. One of the most famous acts of resistance was the Warsaw ghetto uprising, which was led and fought by youth.



Nazis pursue child smugglers in the Warsaw ghetto



Arrival of the first Kindertransport from Germany to the United Kingdom, 1938

¹⁶ The International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

¹⁷ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Holocaust Encyclopedia, "Kindertransport, 1938-1940", www.ushmm.org.



Elderly Jewish woman with young children on the way to the gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland, May 1944

© Collection of the Yad Vashem Photo Archive

Some children, like Petr, wrote in diaries during the Holocaust. Also like Petr, many wrote to record facts. Others used their diaries as an outlet to express the emotions and pain they experienced, or wrote as an act of resistance, to show that they would not be defeated by the Nazis. The story of a young Jewish girl named Anne Frank is perhaps the most well known of the children who perished in the Holocaust, as the diary she wrote while hiding in an attic in Amsterdam has been published and widely read throughout the world.

When the deportations to the killing centres began, the vast majority of children were sent to their deaths. In some cases, teenagers, who were able to work, managed to survive. As many children were too young or weak to work, they were frequently sent immediately to their deaths. By the end of World War II, the Nazis and their collaborators were responsible for the deaths of six million Jews, one and a half million of which were children.

The unique Yad Vashem Children's Memorial (see photo), hollowed out from an underground cavern, is a tribute to the Jewish children who perished during the Holocaust. Memorial candles, a customary Jewish tradition to remember the dead, are reflected infinitely in a dark and somber space, creating the impression of millions of stars shining in the night sky. The names of murdered children, their ages and countries of origin can be heard in the background.¹⁸

¹⁸ Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, <http://www.yadvashem.org>.

QUESTIONS

1. What happened to Jewish children during the Holocaust?
2. What was the Kindertransport?
3. How did some children in the ghettos manage to survive?

ACTIVITIES

1. Anne Frank wrote a diary while hiding with her family in an attic in Amsterdam during the Holocaust. Search for other examples of diaries written by children during the Holocaust. Why do you think they chose to do so?
2. Find a story of a child who was on the kindertransport. Share his story with your classmates.
3. Find information on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. What role did youth play in it?

Entrance to the Children's Memorial at Yad Vashem Jerusalem, Israel



© Collection of the Yad Vashem Photo Archive

HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

The Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, who was part of the US Columbia spacecraft crew, wanted to take something representative of the Holocaust into space with him in 2003. Yad Vashem gave him a copy of Petr Ginz's drawing Moon Landscape, showing the Earth viewed from the moon. By taking Petr's illustration with him into space, Ilan Ramon believed that he was realizing Petr's dream of travelling into space. When the spacecraft tragically exploded on 1 February 2003, Petr's drawing became famous. The publicity led to the discovery of Petr's diary in a house in Prague, which once belonged to a close friend of the Ginz family. The postal stamp pictured here was published in the Czech Republic following the explosion of the spacecraft, in memory of Ilan Ramon and the crew, and of Petr. Also in remembrance of Petr, an asteroid was named in his honour – 50413 Petriginz.

Petr's story has captivated many since then, underscoring the importance of remembering Jews and other minorities, who were victims of Nazi persecution. On 24 January 2005, the United Nations General Assembly marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi death camps with a Special Session. Then on 1 November 2005, the General Assembly passed an historic resolution on Holocaust Remembrance (60/7), which established 27 January as an annual International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and called for an outreach programme on the Holocaust and the United Nations to warn against the dangers of hatred, bigotry, prejudice and racism in order to help prevent genocide. The theme of the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme is "Remembrance and Beyond", which highlights the two main elements of the programme: honouring the memory of the victims and helping to prevent future acts of genocide. This programme helps to ensure that the history of the Holocaust and its universal lessons are passed on to future generations through educational materials, films, seminars and social media campaigns. A second resolution (61/255) condemning Holocaust denial was adopted by the General Assembly on 26 January 2007. In 2008, the United Nations published a Holocaust Remembrance stamp, which was launched in the New York, Geneva and Vienna offices (pictured below).

Since its inception, the Holocaust Programme has worked closely with Holocaust survivors to ensure that their stories are heard and heeded as a warning of the consequences of anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination. It has provided ongoing support to the global network of United Nations information centres in the organization of commemorative ceremonies and other events for young people on 27 January. In all of its activities, the Holocaust Programme draws essential links between the underlying causes of genocide, the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust and the promotion of human rights and democratic values today.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Petr's story become well known?
2. What is the purpose of the United Nations resolution on Holocaust Remembrance?
3. What can students do to help promote human rights?

ACTIVITIES

1. Organize a candle lighting ceremony around 27 January in honour of the six million Jewish people and countless other minorities who were victims of the Nazis during World War II. Select articles from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (see page 29) to be read during the ceremony.
2. Create a poster for Holocaust Remembrance Day. Choose an appropriate theme you think best expresses what Petr might have wanted you to remember.
3. Share information about your Holocaust Remembrance activities by either posting on "The Last Flight of Petr Ginz" Facebook page or emailing to holocaustremembrance@un.org.



© Pavel Hrach (graphic design), Václav Fajt (engraving)

Miniature sheet and stamp featuring the drawing Moon landscape by Petr Ginz (1928–1944), Printed by Poštovní tiskárna cenin Praha, a. s., Issued by the Czech Ministry of Informatics on 20 January 2005



United Nations Holocaust Remembrance stamp

Marie Mirlande Noel, student of the College of St. Elizabeth, New Jersey, shared her experience visiting the former camps in Poland during the 2007 Holocaust memorial ceremony at the United Nations



© UN Photo/Milovan Grant

GLOSSARY

- Allies** – the forces opposing Nazi Germany in World War II, which included the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union.
- “Aryan”** – non-Jews who were considered by the Nazis to be part of a white European “superior” race.
- Auschwitz** – one of the largest Nazi killing centres to which Petr was sent from Terezin, and where he died in the gas chambers. Around one million Jews were murdered by the Nazis in this camp.
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** – United Nations convention adopted on 9 December 1948 which declares genocide a crime under international law.
- Convention on the Rights of the Child** – United Nations convention adopted on 20 November 1989 which sets forth the individual rights those under 18 years of age require to develop their full potential, free from hunger and want, neglect and abuse.
- Concentration camp** – type of camp established by the Nazis to detain without trial, and often murder, their political opponents and minorities they deemed undesirable, such as Jews, Roma and Sinti, homosexuals, and the disabled.
- Deportation** – the name for the process by which Jews and other victims of the Nazis were sent from their homes to ghettos, camps and killing centres.
- Discrimination** – any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, or gender.
- “Final Solution”** – the Nazis’ plan to solve the “Jewish Question” by murdering all the Jews in Europe.
- Genocide** – acts committed with the intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.
- Ghetto** – a city section where Jews were forced to live, separate from the rest of the population.
- Holocaust** – the systematic and state-sponsored murder of approximately six million Jews by the German Nazis and their collaborators during World War II.
- Human rights** – rights which all humans possess, regardless of their nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status.
- International Committee of the Red Cross** – an organization which aims to protect and provide assistance to victims of war and internal violence. A delegation from this organization was deceived by the Nazis when it visited Terezin to investigate the living conditions there.
- Ka-du** – the name of the monster that represents Hitler in *A Visit from Prehistory*, Petr’s allegory about the Nazi party.
- Killing centre** – a camp established by the Nazis in occupied Poland for the primary purpose of mass murder. These camps are also known as extermination camps.
- Labour camp** – camp where prisoners were forced by the Nazis to work under brutal conditions to further the German war effort.
- Lidice** – a village which was the site of a massacre ordered by the Nazis following the assassination of the top Nazi official in Prague, Reinhard Heydrich.
- Mischlinge** – person with some Jewish ancestry, who was considered part Jewish.
- Nuremberg Laws** – laws adopted on 15 September 1935 which became the legal basis for the racist, anti-Jewish policy in Germany and later in other places which came under Nazi control.
- Prague** – the capital of the Czech Republic. It was formerly the capital of Czechoslovakia, and during World War II the capital of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Petr was born in this city and lived there with his family until age 14.
- Resistance** – actions taken by both Jews and non-Jews against the Nazis. Smuggling goods and organizing underground cultural activities are some examples of resistance during World War II.
- Terezin** – a ghetto and transit camp in Czechoslovakia to which Petr was taken from Prague.
- Transit camp** – camp where Jews and other victims of the Nazis were held before being sent to other camps or killing centres.
- Transports** – Jews and other groups targeted by the Nazis were sent by trucks, ships and on foot, but mostly by train, to concentration camps, labour camps and killing centres in Eastern Europe.
- United Nations** – a global organization born out of World War II to try to achieve world peace, social progress and human rights for all.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights** – United Nations declaration adopted on 10 December 1948, which states the rights all humans are entitled to, and that the respect of these rights is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.
- Vedem** – an underground magazine produced weekly by the children in barracks L417 in Terezin from July 1942 to September 1944. It was illustrated and handwritten by the children, and edited by Petr. The word literally means “We lead”.
- Wannsee Conference** – a meeting of top Nazi officials in Wannsee, a suburb of Berlin, where the “Final Solution” was coordinated.
- Yellow star** – a badge with a yellow Star of David, which the Nazis forced all Jews to wear to distinguish them from the rest of the population.

MAPS



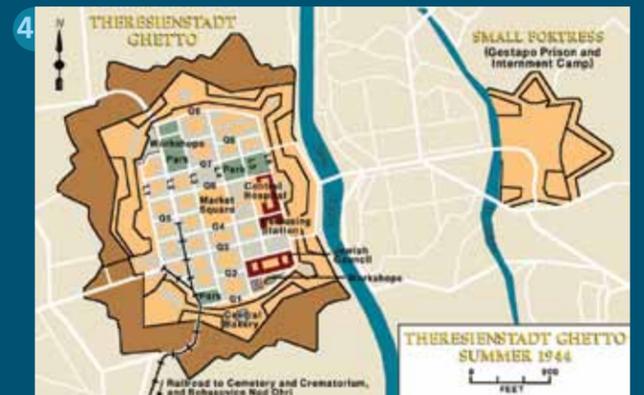
Europe 1933



German Territorial Gains Before the War, August 1939



Major Deportations to Extermination Camps, 1942-1944



Theresienstadt ghetto, summer 1944

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: A SYNOPSIS

This abbreviated version of the 30 Articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹⁹ provides an overview of the principal rights and freedoms that are every person’s birthright. The first two articles are fundamental principles underlying all human rights. Articles 3 to 21 comprise civil and political rights. Articles 22 to 27 refer to economic, social and cultural rights. The last three articles provide a framework of solidarity safeguarding the universal enjoyment of all human rights.

Article 1 Right to freedom and equality in dignity and rights

Article 2 Freedom from discrimination

Article 3 Right to life, liberty and security of person

Article 4 Freedom from slavery and servitude

Article 5 Freedom from torture or degrading treatment

Article 6 Right to recognition as a person before the law

Article 7 Right to equal consideration before the law

Article 8 Right to remedy through a competent tribunal

Article 9 Freedom from arbitrary arrest or exile

Article 10 Right to a fair trial or public hearing

Article 11 Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty

Article 12 Freedom from interference with privacy, including home, family and correspondence

Article 13 Right to freedom of movement and residence in one’s own country and to leave and return at will

Article 14 Right to asylum

Article 15 Right to a nationality and freedom to change it

Article 16 Right to marriage and protection of family

Article 17 Right to own property

Article 18 Freedom of belief and religion

Article 19 Freedom of opinion and information

Article 20 Right to peaceful assembly and association

Article 21 Right to participate in government and free elections and to equal access to public service

Article 22 Right to social security

Article 23 Right to work and fair pay for work

Article 24 Right to rest and leisure

Article 25 Right to adequate standard of living for health and well-being

Article 26 Right to education

Article 27 Right to participate in the cultural life of the community

Article 28 Right to social order assuring human rights

Article 29 Responsibility to community essential to free and full development of the individual

Article 30 Freedom from State or other interference in any of the above rights

¹⁹ UN Briefing Paper: Human Rights Today. A United Nations Priority. DPI, United Nations. October 1998, p. 59. [Please see the complete Universal Declaration of Human Rights at <http://www.ohchr.org> or <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>]

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Terezin Memorial: <http://www.pamatnik-terezin.cz/en?lang=en&lang=en>

Vedem magazine website: <http://www.vedem-terezin.cz>

UNITED NATIONS SOURCES

Charter of the United Nations: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/>

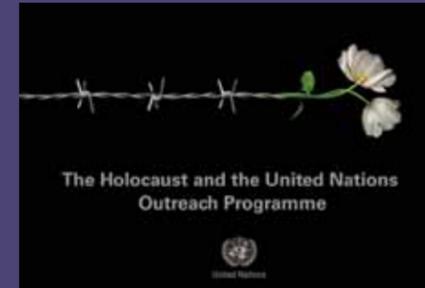
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Convention on the Rights of the Child: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

United Nations Cyberschoolbus: <http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/>

The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme: <http://www.un.org/holocaustremembrance>

United Nations website: <http://www.un.org>



United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/7 on Holocaust Remembrance called for the establishment of a programme of outreach on the subject of the "Holocaust and the United Nations" and measures to mobilize civil society for Holocaust remembrance and education in order to help prevent future acts of genocide. Since its establishment by the Department of Public Information in 2006, the Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme has developed an international network of civil society partners and a multi-faceted programme that includes: online and print educational products, social media campaigns, student video conferences, a Discussion Papers Journal, DVDs, seminars and training programmes, a film series, book signings, a permanent exhibit at United Nations Headquarters in New York, and the annual worldwide observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust on 27 January.

The Holocaust Programme has worked closely with Holocaust survivors to ensure that their stories are heard and heeded as a warning of the consequences of anti-Semitism and other forms of discrimination. It also continues to combat Holocaust denial, through educational events and information materials. In all of its activities, the Holocaust Programme draws essential links between the underlying causes of genocide, the lessons to be learned from the Holocaust and the promotion of human rights and democratic values today.

For more information, please write to: holocaustremembrance@un.org or visit www.un.org/holocaustremembrance



The Documentary Film Program (DFP) at Wake Forest University engages national and international communities and organizations in public conversations about significant issues related to social justice and human and civil rights. DFP faculty members produce professional-quality films and related digital projects, as well as offer undergraduate courses and graduate degree programs in documentary filmmaking and visual storytelling. For more information, please see www.wfu.edu/documentary



Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, is dedicated to Holocaust commemoration, research, documentation and education, and imparts the legacy of the Holocaust through its archives, library, school, museums and recognition of the Righteous Among the Nations. Drawing on the memories of the past, Yad Vashem aims to protect basic human values and strengthen commitment to Jewish continuity. Please visit www.yadvashem.org



ABOUT THE STUDY GUIDE

The Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, in partnership with The International School for Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem, The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, and The Documentary Film Program at Wake Forest University, has produced this study guide for middle and high school students to accompany the film *The Last Flight of Petr Ginz*. The film is a production of The Documentary Film Program at Wake Forest University and The Documentary Institute at The University of Florida, and tells the story of a young Jewish boy from Prague named Petr Ginz, who loved to write and draw.

Petr began writing in a diary in 1941, when he was 13 years old and living in Prague under Nazi occupation. Through the factual and succinct telling of his daily deeds – school, home, a walk in the afternoon, a list of books he read, visiting friends – and his expressive illustrations, Petr draws us into a world of wonder, inspiration, creativity and imagination. At the age of 14, Petr was taken from his family in Prague and sent to the ghetto and transit camp of Terezin. Petr continued writing and creating art during his two years in Terezin, until the Nazis sent him to his death at Auschwitz when he was only 16 years old.

This study guide attempts to open a window into Petr's life through his creativity. His imagination was his only escape from the Nazis – it transported him home to Prague, to outer space, and to other far away places beyond the confines of Terezin, where he was imprisoned. Petr's writings and artwork can give us insight into the experience of one Jewish boy and how he dealt with the circumstances he found himself in during World War II. Through Petr's story, we might begin to understand something about the history and human tragedy that was the Holocaust.

The study guide is also available at
www.un.org/holocaustremembrance



United Nations

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