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East German mission, 1989.

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A LIVING
MEMORIAL
TO THE
HOLOCAUST

MUSEUM
OF
JEWISH
HERITAGE

November 3, 1988

David Altshuler
Director

Rabbi Philip Hiat
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10021

Dear Phil:

Thank you once more for meeting with us and sharing the news of your trip to Europe and your contacts made on our behalf in East Germany. Your value to us as an ambassador of goodwill and scholar is inestimable. For that reason I want you to focus on those aspects of any transactions involving potential acquisitions of artifacts for our collections. Because our board and legal counsel insist that we bend over backwards regarding various technicalities of acquisition I thought it would be helpful to inform you of some of the guidelines and strictures we must operate under as a museum.

For example:

1. The Museum of Jewish Heritage is liable and responsible for all artifacts that enter our possession.
2. Due to the strict laws enforced by Eastern bloc countries regarding the export of items and in accordance with stringent customs procedures for museums in the United States, we cannot simply accept items that are mailed to our premises. Certain procedures must be followed prior to accepting any objects. It is also impossible for the Museum to return items that are not acceptable for the collection without proper international customs paperwork.
3. Prior to the Museum accepting any objects into its collection the following information must be received, in writing:
 - a. Donor name
 - b. Description of item(s)
 - c. Valuation, if available
 - d. Provenance, who currently owns the object? How did it come into his/her possession?

I think it would be best if we could consolidate all this information prior to shipment. For insurance purposes we need to arrange for proper and safe transport of all donations to the Museum. The most sensible process would be for you to work directly with our Acquisitions Coordinator, Deborah Wolff. Ms. Wolff has had a great deal of experience in international shipping as well as with the customs procedures of Eastern bloc countries. If you keep Debbie fully informed she will be most helpful to you in this area.

One last item, all purchases for the Museum must first be cleared with the Board. If you are offered an object for purchase please provide us with all the aforementioned information as well as the purchase price. This information can then be passed on for approval.

I want to do everything possible to facilitate the very important work you are doing on behalf of the Museum of Jewish Heritage, however you must understand our need to adhere to the these guidelines.

Best wishes for a safe trip.

Warm regards,

David Altshuler

DA:mb

FOX, ROTHSCHILD,
O'BRIEN &
FRANKEL

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February 8, 1989

TO: Stanley Dreyfus
Phil Hiat
Bob Kopell
Matt Ross
Marvin Rumpler

FROM: Horace A. Stern

Please substitute the enclosed pages for the comparable ones in the East German Mission diary that I gave you at the Executive Committee meeting in New York. They should correct several incorrect statements of fact in the original version.

Any comments that any of you have would be very much appreciated.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1988

Promptly at 1:00 P. M., the private car which Joan and I had ordered on the recommendation of friends, arrived at our door, and we were soon on our way to JFK Airport in New York. The trip over was uneventful, although the traffic at the tail end of the drive was quite slow, partly, I think, because of the effect of the New York Marathon, which was taking place that day. Nevertheless, we arrived at JFK ahead of our scheduled meeting time of 3:30 P. M. The first news that greeted us when we arrived was that Rabbi Alexander Schindler the President of the U.A.H.C., who had last been in Germany as an American serviceman in World War II, and who was to lead the mission and play an important role in everything we were to do in Germany, would not be going with us. He had been taken ill a day or two earlier and was, at that very moment, on his way to New York's University Hospital where, as we learned while we were in Germany, he was diagnosed as having a kidney infection. That put an immediate damper on the first day, because we knew how much Alex had been looking forward to the trip, albeit with mixed feelings about going back to Germany (his birthplace), and because we knew that his non-participation would take away a very important element from the events that were to follow.

By 4:30, most of the group had assembled for the American Air Lines flight to Frankfurt, West Germany. I say "most," because some members had already gone on to Europe days earlier, and others were flying to Frankfurt from other American cities.

First came a series of liturgical melodies by a variety of composers, sung by a magnificent 26-voice choir from Leipzig. The selections were regulars in every Shabbat service, including "L'Cha Dodi," "V'shamru," "Shema Kolaynu" and "Naariz Cho." With the exception of Lewis Lewandowski, much of whose music we use at home, the other composers were not ones I knew. The renditions, however, were both melodically and meaningfully done. What was particularly impressive about the performance was the fact that the choir is made up almost entirely of non-Jews who have a fondness for Jewish music.

Following a dramatic organ solo of a sonata by Felix Mendelsohn Bartholdy, we were treated to a combination orchestral, choral and solo (both sung and spoken) rendition of a Judische Chronik, that is, a history of the persecution of the Jews. This, too, was exceptionally well done, with the spoken lines adding a stark and effective dramatic note. After we returned to the hotel, we heard the concert several more times - it was on virtually every television channel.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1988

At 8:00 A.M., just as we were getting ready to go down to breakfast, Armed Forces Radio told us what we all expected to hear, namely, that George Bush had been elected President of the United States. It marked the first time, as I said earlier, that I had not been at home to hear the election returns since 1944. At breakfast, we learned that eight of our group had actually gone to the American

room, we watched the first act of "Nathan the Wise." But more about that later.

In the earlier program, we were again regaled by the Leipzig Choir, who were just as impressive as they had been on Tuesday night, and by Cantor Marcel Lang, who sang several selections, but none more dramatic or moving than the El Mole Rachamim with which the program ended, in which the cantor intoned, at the place normally reserved for the name of the deceased, the names of all the major concentration camps as part of the memorialization theme. In between, we had listened to seven speeches from various persons in positions of Jewish community leadership, including Moses Rosen, the Chief Rabbi of Roumania, and Gerhard Riegner, whom we had met on Monday night. All of the speeches, except Phil Hiat's rendition of the statement that Alex Schindler would have made, were in German, which was the first of the gruelling experiences to which I referred earlier. I understand only a few words and phrases in German, and it took an intense degree of concentration for me to extract from their presentations the messages they were trying to leave with us. Those messages ranged from expressions of appreciation to the government for its interest in the commemoration of Kristallnacht to statements deploring the inhumanity of what had happened a half century before, and even some calling for the reunification of the two Berlins. Fortunately, after we returned to the hotel, Marianne, who had taken copious notes, synopsized for us what each speaker had said. Each, in his or her own way, had told us how important the lessons of history were for us as

memory of those who had died between 1933 and 1945. A beautiful commemorative marble stone had been erected just inside the entrance of the cemetery, and a huge number of floral bouquets were impressively arrayed before it, placed by organizations and individuals (mostly non-Jewish) who wanted to express their sentiments in a tangible way. Promptly at 10:00 A.M., a government car delivered Erich Honecker to the site, where he joined a corps of other government leaders who had arrived earlier, in a tight formation directly in front of the commemorative stone. Clad almost uniformly in black coats and hats, they stood stiffly but respectfully at attention while Cantor Marcel Lang, with a scarf around his neck his only extra protection against the chill wind, again intoned the El Mole Rachamim as thrillingly as he had done the night before, then bowed solemnly and left. Our group remained behind for a short memorial service, despite the urging of some of the cemetery personnel that we should be on our way to the next public event. We stood at the grave bearing the name "Baeck" on the tombstone. Although the names of both the revered Rabbi Leo Baeck and his wife appear on it, only she is actually interred there. Leo Baeck, as the inscription indicates, is buried in London. Rabbi Stanley Dreyfus conducted a brief memorial service, in which his wife, Marianne, who is the granddaughter of Leo Baeck, read a moving tribute. We were again favored with the El Mole Rachamim, done this time by a young cantor from Brooklyn's Union Temple, Avery Tracht, who had joined our group that morning. The service brought back memories of the occasion

THE U.A.H.C. MISSION TO EAST GERMANY

One Man's Perspective

From November 6 to November 13, 1988, I was part of a mission to East Germany, more particularly, East Berlin, sponsored by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in connection with the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of Kristallnacht, the "Night of Broken Glass" on November 9, 1938, one of the most tragic events in Jewish history, when synagogues and Jewish places of business were desecrated and burned, and thousands of Jews were arrested and sent off to concentration camps. That event was the beginning, on the eve of World War II, of what the Nazis would later call the "Final Solution."

The trip was certainly not a vacation, but all the members of our group, approximately forty in number, became closely knit and friendly in the process, although some had never met most of the others before. I did not ask each person what his or her motivation was for going on the trip, but I think it safe to say that each of us sensed that it was a historic, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in a program which would, hopefully, answer many of the questions we had about what happened in 1938 in Germany, and how the German people reacted to it after two generations. Whether those questions were answered is something each participant must decide for himself or herself. I began this diary a week after the end of the trip, and am completing it almost two months later, and I am still far from certain whether mine were.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1988

Promptly at 1:00 P. M., the private car which Joan and I had ordered on the recommendation of friends, arrived at our door, and we were soon on our way to JFK Airport in New York. The trip over was uneventful, although the traffic at the tail end of the drive was quite slow, partly, I think, because of the effect of the New York Marathon, which was taking place that day. Nevertheless, we arrived at JFK ahead of our scheduled meeting time of 3:30 P.M. The first news that greeted us when we arrived was that Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the President of the U.A.H.C., who had left Germany fifty years earlier and had never been back there, and who was to lead the mission and play an important role in everything we were to do in Germany, would not be going with us. He had been taken ill a day or two earlier and was, at that very moment, on his way to New York's University Hospital where, as we learned while we were in Germany, he was diagnosed as having a kidney infection. That put an immediate damper on the first day, because we knew how much Alex had been looking forward to the trip, albeit with mixed feelings about going back to Germany, and because we knew that his non-participation would take away a very important element from the events that were to follow.

By 4:30, most of the group had assembled for the American Air Lines flight to Frankfurt, West Germany. I say "most," because some members had already gone on to Europe days earlier, and others were flying to Frankfurt from other American cities.

There were, nonetheless, about twenty-six of us from various parts of the country, mostly in the Eastern section, who had an initial opportunity to say hello and get to know a little bit about each other. It was particularly refreshing for Joan and me to see Sylvia and Henry Greenwald there, because Henry, who used to be a very active member of the U.A.H.C.'s Board of Trustees, but who has not been at all well, had not been to very many meetings during the last few years. As it was, he was in a wheel chair, which he needed throughout the trip, but since the Greenwalds' son, John, whom we were to meet in East Berlin, is a Secretary at the American Embassy there, they could not pass up this chance to be with him.

Precisely at 5:30 P.M., our 767 pulled away from the dock and we were airborne shortly afterward. Joan and I found ourselves seated right in the middle of a family of seven or eight, including three or four children, whose language was hard to understand. At first I thought it was a Scandinavian tongue, but one of the children used a word which sounded like "Mamika" in addressing her mother, and that led me to conclude that it was Slavic, perhaps Czech. Considering the difficulties a group that size might have encountered, the children were very well behaved and travelled without incident. Cocktails, which were free, and a better-than-average airline dinner (filet mignon as the entree) followed, and, at about 9:30, the lights were dimmed and the movie "18 Again," with George Burns, was shown. It's no Academy Award winner, but it was mildly entertaining and about right at the outset of what was to be a serious and sobering experience.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1988

We landed in Frankfurt at about 6:45 A.M., West German time, which was, of course, six hours later than our body time (I had already set my watch ahead). After a brief excursion through Customs and Passport Control, we found ourselves with almost three hours to kill while awaiting our Pan American flight to West Berlin. We spent the first half of that time perusing the shops of the huge, sprawling Frankfurt Airport, most of which were still closed or just getting ready to open for the day, and they ran the gamut from McDonald's to Harrod's. The last hour or so I spent sleeping on a chair in the Pan Am passenger lounge, trying to add at least some rest to what had been basically a sleepless night.

The flight to Berlin was uneventful, taking just about an hour in a jam-packed A-310 Airbus, and shortly after touchdown, we were in the bus which was to be our means of transportation for the week. There was only one casualty - Larry Sherman's luggage failed to arrive (he had flown from Chicago), but every man in the group gallantly offered jackets, suits, shirts and what-have-you for his use (the luggage arrived about two days later). After a brief drive through West Berlin, we arrived at the famous Checkpoint Charlie, established by the Allies at the end of the War, which divides the two Berlins, and through which most Easterners going West and Westerners going East must pass. Again, I say "most," because Charley is but one of twenty-one checkpoints, but it is the best known. In passing, it is important to remember that the entire city of

Berlin, West and East, is literally an island in the middle of a foreign country, East Germany. From this point on, however, I will refer to that country in the way the East Germans know it, namely, the German Democratic Republic, or GDR for short. Actually, they call it the DDR, which stands for Deutsches Demokratische Republik, three words that we were to hear over and over again during the next six days, from public platforms and on radio and television. The "other" Germany is the Federal Republic of Germany.

At Charley, our bus was boarded by a female guard who saluted us with a pleasant "Guten Tag," and immediately collected all our passports. During the ten minutes or so that she was inside the administration building, several of our group and Mr. Kurt Koch, from the travel agency in New York which had arranged the trip, debated the question of how difficult it might be to obtain visas which would permit us to travel freely between East and West Berlin on our own. That debate proved academic, however, when the guard returned with our passports, inside each of which was stuffed a special visa permitting free and unlimited passage in either direction. We were also joined by the two young women who were to be our guides throughout the week (except when we went to West Berlin, where they were not permitted to go). Their names were Marianne and Sabina (I never did learn their last names), and they immediately made forty friends by telling us that lunch would be waiting for us at our hotel after we checked in, followed by an optional walking tour in the immediate area.

Minutes later we found ourselves at the entrance of the Hotel Metropol on Friederichstrasse, where virtually the entire hotel management staff was waiting in the lobby to greet us, to tell us how pleased they were that we were there, and how much they wanted to make our stay as pleasant as possible. I am sure they had been told in advance that it was important that we get a good impression of East Germany and its people, but the welcome seemed genuine, and the service that the hotel gave us throughout our stay could not have been more satisfactory (notwithstanding an occasional gripe about the dining room service or the pricing policy for beverages). My room was on the 7th floor (actually the 8th, because the 1st floor is the one above the lobby), and immediately in front of the elevators, which made it very convenient. The room was quite attractive, with twin beds complete with thick down comforters. It had both television and radio, with Armed Forces radio providing English language news all day long.

Lunch was served in one of the 1st floor function rooms. The waitresses and kitchen staff were most attentive that first day, and the meal itself was excellent, consisting of a hot vegetable beef or ox-tail soup (I wasn't sure which), a very tasty beef kabob and a large assortment of small open-faced cold meat sandwiches. By the time we got back to our rooms, the luggage had been delivered to them, so we took a few minutes to unpack. We were told by our guides that if we wanted to go on an introductory tour of the center

of the city, we should be in the lobby at 3:15. Although we were all pretty tired at that point, having been up almost continuously for more than twenty-four hours, most of us opted to go.

I pause here to make several seemingly irrelevant observations, but ones which may help my readers to have a better impression of the country in which we found ourselves (I will have more to say about that later in this account). They have to do with money, language and German (GDR, that is) society.

1. In the Frankfurt Airport, some of our group went to the bank to convert their money. I wondered why they were doing that, in view of the fact that we were going to East Germany, and they were about to get West German marks. We learned not long after that that the West German currency was readily spendable in most of the GDR establishments, which also took American dollars, thus rendering conversion basically unnecessary. The exchange rate for those still intent on converting, was about 1.8 marks to the dollar (either Western or Eastern), with the actual rate fluctuating somewhere between 1.73 and 1.83, depending on whether one was buying or selling them. The only real caveat for the outsider is not to convert too much money into East German currency because it is not easy (although not impossible as we had at first believed) to convert it back when you leave the country.

2. The German language must be intimidating to the non-German, because it is guttural and is not a Romance language, which is what most Americans have studied (Latin, French, Spanish, etc.). Additionally, words tend to be very, very long, but most of them are long simply because they are, for the most part, compound words in which several words are strung together to express a concept, although the end result is one long word. For example, the formidable SPEZIALITATENRESTAURANT simply means a specialty restaurant (SPEZIALITATEN RESTAURANT), REPARATURARBEITEN means repair work (REPARATUR ARBEITEN), and LUFTVERKEHRSGESELLSCHAFT means aircraft workers association or union (LUFT VERKEHRS GESELLSCHAFT). Not as many people in East Germany are bilingual, at least not in German and English, as I quickly discovered when I visited an optician's shop behind the hotel to try to get my glasses fixed, and the proprietor replied "Nein" to my "Sprechen sie Englisch?" (I was, however, able to make myself understood.) As we learned later from Marianne, the second language in East German schools is, not surprisingly, Russian, with English only an optional third language along with French.

3. While the people walk the streets in what appears to be total freedom, East Germany is, after all, a Communist country, where, as we were to learn later, the government owns or controls almost everything, and nobody can really make a

great deal of money. The shops on the main street on which we walked, the famous Unter den Linden, all have lovely merchandise in the windows, but the shelves inside are, according to what we were told, sparsely filled. Most East Germans (they themselves do not use the "East") make modest livings and cannot afford much more than the basic necessities. On the other hand, as we also found out later, they really do not need much more, since the state furnishes medical and hospital care, education, pensions and all the extras that we in democratic countries have to pay for. There are two domestic automobiles in East Germany, the Trabant, which has a plastic body and a motor that sounds like a string of tin cans being tossed about, and the Wartburg, which has a metal body and is slightly larger, although both of them are quite small by our standards. Sabina told us that the price of those cars ranged between \$2,500.00 and \$3,000.00, although somewhat higher figures (but still quite low) were given to others. The apparent freedom of the East Germans has other limitations, too. As we learned from Marianne, they may not leave the country unless they are going to another Soviet bloc country, or to a country where they have relatives (even in the West), but whole families may not leave the country together. There has been some relaxation in the restrictions on travel to West Berlin, but certainly not what we would call "free."

In the schools, the curriculum, interestingly enough, includes the Nazi era and World War II (but not in West Germany), although, as events would show us in the ensuing days, the emphasis, in dealing with the Hitler era, is on what the "fascists" did. That term surprised me at first, because it is a designation which, as I grew up during those days, was generally applied only to the Italians, but it soon became apparent that the "fascist" reference stems from the Communist influence in the country, because Communism and fascism have always been, in the eyes of the Russians, the antitheses of each other.

Now, away from the irrelevant observations and back to the walking tour. Sabina took us for a stroll down the Unter den Linden, which is, indeed, lined with linden trees. There are no homes, but only commercial buildings and embassies on that thoroughfare. and the green-uniformed police were very much in evidence guarding each of the embassies. Several blocks away from the hotel, the Unter den Linden comes to an abrupt end about 200 meters short of the famous Brandenburg Gate, and, just beyond it, the infamous Berlin Wall. The space between the fence at the end of the street and the Wall is constantly patrolled by the police, and anyone trying to escape to the West would not only have to traverse those 200 meters of open space just to reach the Wall, but, as we were to see quite clearly on Friday when we were in West Berlin, another 200 meters of "no-man's land between the Wall and a second Wall on the actual border between the two Berlins. As we turned away from the Gate to start back,

Sabina pointed out a nearby construction site with a mound of earth marking it, and identified it as the place where the bunker had been where Adolf Hitler and Eva Braun had died. On the way back to the hotel, we passed the large, impressive Soviet Embassy with an imposing white bust of Lenin sitting directly in front of the entrance. Immediately next to it is the headquarters of Aeroflot, the Soviet national airline, also an impressive building.

Back at the hotel, we dressed for dinner, which was in another of the hotel's attractive private function rooms, and again the food and service were first rate. Before we began to eat, however, we were addressed by several leaders of the community, both governmental and Jewish community representatives. Kurt Loeffler, the State Secretary, told us that his government shared our anguish over the events of November 9, 1938, and wanted us to know that there was now a new Germany, which we could respect and trust. The president of the Berlin (East) Jewish community, Peter Kirschner, also spoke briefly, thanking us for coming and stressing how important it was that we were there. Several presentations were made by Rabbi Philip Hiat, filling in at the last minute for Rabbi Schindler, assisted by U.A.H.C. leaders Mel Merians, Matt Ross and B. J. Tanenbaum. The dinner that followed marked the end of a very long first day, and bed was a welcome spot, indeed, at about 10:30.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1988

The alarm went off at 7:00 A.M., and, after stealing a few more minutes sleep, I was up, shaved and dressed, and down for breakfast at 8:00 A.M., after listening to Armed Forces Radio reminding me that my fellow Americans back home would be going to the polls to elect a new president later that day. It felt strange to be so far away while my country's destiny for at least the next four years was being decided. It was, in fact, the first time since 1944, when I was in the service during World War II, that I had not been at home on Election Day. In any event, breakfast, as it would be every day thereafter, turned out to be a very attractive buffet, with several choices of juice, a cold cereal (something like corn flakes), and a generous choice of cold meats, all quite tasty, as well as bread or rolls and coffee. Shortly thereafter, we were back on our bus, heading for a city tour of metropolitan Berlin (as I said earlier, the Germans don't call it "East" Berlin). Two stops on the way are worth mentioning. The first was on Oranienburg Street, where the once beautiful Oranienburger Synagog, virtually destroyed on Kristallnacht, is being reconstructed by the East German government. Explaining its history and the reconstructionist was our new guide-for-a-day, Dr. Demps of Berlin's Humboldt University, who spoke only German, but whose words were translated for us by Sabina. Several of our group had the advantage of being able to speak and understand German, including Marianne Dreyfus, who is the granddaughter of Rabbi Leo Baeck. Although the new commemorative plaque on the front of the

synagog clearly indicated that the original building had been destroyed on Kristallnacht, we learned that the Germans (East) more commonly refer to that event as Pogromnacht, and we were to hear that word frequently from then on. Regrettably, the entire structure will not be restored, but only the facade and about 180 feet of the original 600-feet deep building will be rebuilt. It will not be a place of worship, but only a museum. The East German Jewish community is so small that it really does not need another synagogue, because the one in which we were to worship later in the week, the only functioning one in East Berlin, is more than adequate for that purpose.

The second stop was on Grosse Hamburg Strasse, where we found ourselves in what to all appearances was a small park, where a group of very small children was playing. But this was no ordinary park, for it was built on top of the graves of hundreds of Jews who had once been proud citizens of that city. The grave markers were gone, having been destroyed many years earlier. The remnants of that cemetery were two-fold, first, a stone and the outline of a bier where Moses Mendelsohn was believed to have been buried, and second, the wall of an adjoining building into which had been literally impressed the grave markers from half a dozen Jewish graves in an effort to keep them from being destroyed. A final stop was at an adjacent school building, once the oldest Jewish boys' school in Berlin. Near the door was a large bronze plaque telling the chilling story that this had been the spot where Jews had been rounded up by

the Nazis for deportation to the concentration camps at Sachsenhausen (which we were to visit the next day) and Theresienstadt.

From the park, we went to the American Embassy, just around the corner from our hotel, where we were greeted by Ambassador Meehan, a career diplomat nearing retirement, and three of his top staff people, including John Greenwald, who is the Embassy's Secretary for Political Affairs. They spoke briefly about the GDR, its relations with the United States, which are cordial but very limited, and their feelings about why we were there. As we prepared to leave, we were invited to come to the Embassy late that night - actually early the next morning - to hear the American election returns via satellite. Among the things we learned from the Embassy staff were that trade between East Germany and the U. S. is virtually non-existent (about \$60,000,000.00 one way and \$150,000,000.00 the other), and that, despite efforts to do something, there is almost no tourism from the United States to East Germany.

Lunch was on our own, but since neither Joan nor I was hungry, we used the lunch hour to do a little strolling on our own, visiting the magnificent new Grand Hotel, sporting a Hyatt-Regency style lobby, a regal staircase to the first floor and an open air space all the way up to a colored skylight eight stories up. As beautiful as it was, however, the hotel itself seemed empty, with only a handful of people in the lobby or in its highly recommended restaurants. The 350-400 marks room rate for a double room explained why.

At 1:30, it was back on the bus, in which we toured sections of the city we had not seen earlier, this time without leaving the bus. The many new buildings, as well as some old restored ones, were very impressive. I was astonished at the number of attractive apartment buildings where, we were told, the monthly rental was about 100 marks, including heat (about \$55.50). We were back at the hotel by 3:00, where we had about half an hour to get ready for a very unusual experience. Rabbi Hiat had told us that the Jews of West Berlin, led by Willy Brandt, would be conducting a silent march in their city at about 5:00 P.M. in memory of Kristallnacht, and asked us to participate in a similar march in East Berlin. The bus took us to a spot on the Unter den Linden where we got out, lit Yahrzeit candles (which were not easy to keep lit in the bitter, chilling wind that blew constantly that evening), and marched about a block to a parking lot facing Humboldt University, where we gathered in a small circle to maintain our unity as well as to try to keep warm. With the press and television media surrounding us in considerable numbers (they followed us everywhere for most of the time we were in East Germany), we were joined by a small group of Jews and non-Jews from California, who were on their way to Israel, and, at the approximate site where the Nazis had burned countless thousands of Jewish books in 1933, expressed the feelings that we had; the statements were simple, eloquent and moving. We concluded with recitations of the El Mole Rachamim and the Kaddish, following which many of our group were interviewed by the media. I found the recitation of the Kaddish at that spot particularly moving.

Dinner at the hotel was, once again, very good and very pleasant, although a trifle rushed, because we were due at the Schauspielhaus of Berlin for a truly wonderful concert. The concert hall had been rebuilt after the war - in fact, restored to its pre-war condition. To describe it as beautiful or majestic would be, in part, accurate, but also an understatement. It was breathtaking and magnificent, almost opulent and, in a country which is basically poor and struggling, somewhat out of character. The hall must have been easily four or five stories high from highly polished floor to ceiling. The entire front above the orchestra platform and a balcony on each side for an 80-voice choir, was covered with brilliant organ pipes, with the organ console in the center at their base. A two-tiered balcony ran along both side walls, each holding about three rows of seats that I could see. The ground floor accommodated perhaps 1,200 people in fixed-position arm chairs richly upholstered, with seats that could be raised and lowered. I could think of no concert hall I had been to anywhere else that was more impressive. Our group was about the last to arrive because, as we entered the hall, it was already filled with specially invited guests, and the performers were already on stage, ready to begin the special concert which had been arranged for the occasion. Attendance was by invitation only, but we (Joan and I) were indeed fortunate to have seats in the eighth row on the center aisle.

The production was called Gedenkkonzert, or "Concert of Remembrance," and was professionally and beautifully presented.

First came a series of liturgical melodies by a variety of composers, sung by a 26-voice choir from the Leipzig Synagog. The selections were regulars in every Shabbat service, including "L'Cha Dodi," "V'shamru," "Shema Kolaynu" and "Naariz cho." With the exception of Lewis Lewandowski, much of whose music we use at home, the other composers were not ones I knew. The renditions, however, were both melodically and meaningfully done. What was particularly impressive about the performance was the fact that the choir is made up almost entirely of non-Jews who have a fondness for Jewish music.

Following a dramatic organ solo of a sonata by Felix Mendelsohn Bartholdy, we were treated to a combination orchestral, choral and solo (both sung and spoken) rendition of a Judische Chronik, that is, a history of the persecution of the Jews. This, too, was exceptionally well done, with the spoken lines adding a stark and effective dramatic note. After we returned to the hotel, we heard the concert several more times - it was on virtually every television channel.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1988

At 8:00 A. M., just as we were getting ready to go down to breakfast, Armed Forces Radio told us what we all expected to hear, namely, that George Bush had been elected President of the United States. It marked the first time, as I said earlier, that I had not been at home to hear the election returns since 1944. At breakfast, we learned that eight of our group had actually gone to the American

Embassy to watch the election returns, and had been up since about 4:00 A.M., which would have been 10:00 P.M. the night before in the United States. No vote totals were announced, because the tally in some states was apparently still undecided, but we knew that the result was irreversible. We also heard the very disappointing news (at least to most) that Lowell Weicker had lost his Senate seat in Connecticut.

At 9:00 A. M., we were on the bus once again, this time for a never-to-be-forgotten trip to the former Nazi concentration camp known as Sachsenhausen, about twenty-five miles north of Berlin. It proved to be, at least for me, and I think for most of the others, a discomfiting and emotional experience, although a few who had been to Auschwitz and some of the other more notorious camps were less affected. The first surprise came when we arrived at the entrance to the camp, to find a number of other groups already there, several of which were made up of high school students learning about the camp as part of their history courses. There was also a group of Poles, because their forbears had been badly treated there, too.

Sachsenhausen was not the largest of the concentration camps, but it was the administrative center for all of the camps during the Hitler period. As we entered the gates in a cold, chilling wind, we were accompanied by Werner Handler, a 68-year old German Jew who had been an inmate in the camp in 1938, and hearing him tell about life (and death) there added a very real dimension to the occasion.

We gathered first in a huge, flat assembly area where, Werner said, the inmates assembled every morning for roll call. It was barren and ugly, with not a blade of grass anywhere on the cold, hard ground, but the wall with its guard towers and the barbed wire in front of it were grim reminders of the folly of trying to escape, which some inmates attempted, usually with fatal results because the barbed wire was charged with high voltage electricity. From there we moved on to one of the barracks or, as Werner called them, "huts," where the inmates had been housed. I had seen the crudely fashioned bunks many times before, in pictures and in movies, but seeing them in front of my eyes, with their burlap-covered straw mattresses, where many inmates were crowded into very tight quarters where they had to share their single blankets in order to keep warm, made me shudder both inwardly and outwardly. The sanitary and eating facilities were spartan, but since Sachsenhausen had originally been built to house political prisoners and prisoners of war, those facilities were a cut above those at other camps designed by the Nazis to solve the "Jewish problem." A second hut we visited had been converted mostly into a museum, and some of the objects preserved there, as well as the photographs and charts, were sobering reminders of man's inhumanity to man. Most disgusting to me was what appeared to be a height-measuring device, not unlike those found in doctors' offices (but made of wood), against which inmates were made to stand, under the pretext of having their heights measured, only to have an SS soldier, hidden by the partition between that room and the next, shoot them in the back of the head through the device. Even Werner

seemed to quiver when he told us about that. 200,000 men went to Sachsenhausen during the Nazi regime, and 110,000 of them died there, some in the manner I have just described, some from being worked too hard, some in the camp's gas chamber, and some by taking their own lives. The gas chamber and crematoria, which were our last stop in the camp, were only a shadow of what they had been, but just enough of them had been preserved so that, with the help of a scale-model reconstruction, we could get a very vivid picture of how they had been used during those terrible years.

I asked Werner, as we were on our way out, whether the people in Oranienburg, the town bordering the camp, had known what was going on there, having remembered the Xerox film (I believe it was called "Exodus") we used to show our religious school students in the years following the war, in which General Eisenhower, after liberating the concentration camps at Buchenwald and Bergen-Belsen (I think), forced the local townspeople to enter the camps and witness the piles of corpses. Werner quickly and emphatically said: "They knew!" He added, however, that they knew that the camp was being used for detention and punishment, but were probably unaware of the extent of the torture and killing being carried out. I wonder.

This was my second visit to a concentration camp. In 1976, when I had been in Brussels, Belgium, as a delegate to the Brussels II Conference on Soviet Jewry, I had been to Breendonk, a small camp just outside the city. That had been a sobering experience, but

Sachsenhausen sharpened my awareness of a period that I had lived through but really didn't understand fully. In retrospect and prospect, I shudder at the realization that one group of God's creatures could deal so maliciously and consciencelessly with another.

Back in Berlin, Joan and I had a pleasant and tasty luncheon at one of the Grand Hotel's many delightful eateries, the Stammhaus. We both thoroughly enjoyed the Schwartzbier which, true to its name, was almost black, and very rich. At 3:15, most of us gathered in one of the hotel's function rooms where Bob Hess, who is President of Brooklyn College and, along with his wife Fran, one of the real literati of the group, gave us a synopsis of Gotthold Lessing's "Nathan the Wise," which we were to see at the theatre that evening. Since the play is not well known, and was going to be performed entirely in German, the session was extremely valuable. Not only that, but Bob's presentation was so engaging that I found myself wishing that I were a college student again so that I could take a course with him, yes, even in his specialty, African History.

At 4:30, we were seated in the Deutsches Theatre, not too far from our hotel, for what was to be both a fascinating and gruelling experience. From 4:30 to 5:30, we heard a combination musical program and series of speeches relating to Kristallnacht and the Shoah, that day being, of course, the actual anniversary of Kristallnacht. At 7:30, after a sumptuous repast in the theatre's large reception

room, we watched the first act of "Nathan the Wise." But more about that later.

In the earlier program, we were again regaled by the Leipzig Synagog Choir, who were just as impressive as they had been on Tuesday night, and by its cantor, who did a variety of numbers, but none more dramatic or moving than the El Mole Rachamim with which the program ended, in which the cantor intoned, at the place normally reserved for the name of the deceased, the names of all the major concentration camps as part of the memorialization theme. In between, we had listened to seven speeches from various persons in positions of Jewish community leadership, including Moses Rosen, the Chief Rabbi of Roumania, and Gerhard Riegner, whom we had met on Monday night. All of the speeches, except Phil Hiat's rendition of the statement that Alex Schindler would have made, were in German, which was the first of the gruelling experiences to which I referred earlier. I understand only a few words and phrases in German, and it took an intense degree of concentration for me to extract from their presentations the messages they were trying to leave with us. Those messages ranged from expressions of appreciation to the government for its interest in the commemoration of Kristallnacht to statements deploring the inhumanity of what had happened a half century before, and even some calling for the reunification of the two Berlins. Fortunately, after we returned to the hotel, Marianne, who had taken copious notes, synopsisized for us what each speaker had said. Each, in his or her own way, had told us how important the lessons of history were for us as

Jews, and how significant were the events that were being commemorated during that week. I was pleasantly surprised at how much I had been able to grasp on my own.

Following the first program, everyone in the theatre moved downstairs to the reception room, where there was a huge variety of excellent foods and beverages, much more than the "snack" which Bob Kopell had told us we were going to get. Erich Honecker, the General Secretary of the East German Communist Party, was the center of attention as the media types crowded in on him. That made the food service something of an adventure, but we managed to enjoy ourselves. There was, however, something incongruous about the quantity and quality of the food in what is admittedly a poor country, and I wondered what the average East German would have thought if he or she could have been in that room.

One incident bears repeating. As we were standing at a counter enjoying the interlude, a short man wearing a Kipah, who was eating a few feet from us, hearing our English, asked where we were from, and then proceeded to tell us that he had family in Boston, Cincinnati and Miami, and that he had recently visited them under the government's policy which permits travel to the West to visit family members. He then informed us, somewhat sadly, that there are only 350 affiliated or, as he called them, "believing" Jews in East Germany. Since we had already learned that the one functioning synagog had about 180 members, that did not leave very many for the rest of the country.

The combination of food and wine, the heat of the second balcony of the theatre and the difficulty of listening to another presentation entirely in German (notwithstanding Bob Hess's heroic effort to make it easier for us) persuaded all of us who were still there to call it a day after the first act of "Nathan the Wise." That act alone took almost an hour and a half. What made it bearable even for that length of time was a combination of Bob's presentation and the fact that I was able to recognize the iambic pentameter in which the play was written, thanks to my high school Latin and English teachers who had first introduced me to iambic pentameter in Vergil's "Aeneid" and Longfellow's "Hiawatha," respectively.

There was more food back at the hotel for those who were still hungry. I wasn't, but it was astonishing to see how many were.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1988

Thursday was to be a kaleidoscope of public events with one private one worked in, all related to the events of the week which had brought us to the GDR.

We began with a trip to the Weissensee Cemetery, the largest Jewish cemetery in Germany. Stretching for hundreds of yards in all directions, much of which we simply did not have time to see, it is the final resting place of thousands of Jews who lived and died in Germany. We were there, however, to pay particular tribute to the

memory of those who had died between 1933 and 1945. A beautiful commemorative marble stone had been erected just inside the entrance of the cemetery, and a huge number of floral bouquets were impressively placed before it, brought by organizations and individuals (mostly non-Jewish) who wanted to express their sentiments in a tangible way. Promptly at 10:00 A.M., a government car delivered Erich Honecker to the site, where he joined a corps of other government leaders who had arrived earlier, in a tight formation directly in front of the commemorative stone. Clad almost uniformly in black coats and hats, they stood stiffly but respectfully at attention while the cantor from the Leipzig Synagog, with a scarf around his neck his only extra protection against the chill wind, again intoned the El Mole Rachamim as he had done the night before, then bowed solemnly and left. Our group remained behind for a short memorial service, despite the urging of some of the cemetery personnel that we should be on our way to the next public event. We stood at the grave bearing the name "Baeck" on the tombstone. Although the names of both the revered Rabbi Leo Baeck and his wife appear on it, only she is actually interred there. Leo Baeck, as the inscription indicates, is buried in London. Rabbi Stanley Dreyfus conducted a brief memorial service, in which his wife, Marianne, who is the granddaughter of Leo Baeck, read a moving tribute. We were again favored with the El Mole Rachamim, done this time by a young cantor from Brooklyn's Union Temple, Avery Tract, who had joined our group that morning. The service brought back memories of the occasion

when Dr. Baeck visited our congregation in Philadelphia not long after his release from Theresienstadt, and I had the privilege of writing an article for our Temple Bulletin about his very moving sermon. On the way out of the cemetery, we passed the graves of Herbert Baum, a leader of the resistance against the Nazis who had died at Sachsenhausen, and the great composer, Lewis Lewandowski, whose music we had just heard the day before.

From the cemetery, our bus took us to Oranienburg Strasse and the site of the Oranienburger Synagog, which we had visited on Tuesday. The street had been cordoned off by the police, and there were literally thousands of people crowded into the area in front of the synagog. Mr. Honecker and his entourage were again very much in evidence, and there was a brief but impressive ceremony followed by the unveiling of a bright bronze commemorative plaque on the front wall which, on Tuesday, had been partially obscured by the scaffolding in front of the building. We were able to view the ceremony from a reserved area close to the speakers' platform, to which we were quickly ushered, because we had gotten there a few minutes after the announced starting time of the program. I was astonished at the number of spectators in attendance, most of whom were, of course, non-Jewish, and who showed a keen interest in what was going on. Many of them crowded around the front of the building to take pictures of the plaque. The crowd included many school children who had been brought there as part of their educational process, which includes courses on the Nazi period and the Holocaust.

It was then back to the bus for a short drive to the Town Hall, where the tributes continued, this time by the local mayors or burgomeisters. The presiding official, Cultural Minister Hoffman, put his script down after his formal remarks, and in a show of emotion which was rare for the Germans we had heard from up to that point, told how, as a small boy on November 10, 1938, the morning after Kristallnacht, he had walked by the Oranienburger Synagog which had almost been destroyed, and that when he questioned his mother about it was told that Germany "would never be the same again." The Union of American Hebrew Congregations was especially honored, with Rabbi Hiat receiving a gift which will reside in our museum.

The burgomeisters proved to be excellent hosts as well, with a luncheon along the lines of Wednesday's dinner being served in the adjoining hall.

From the Town Hall, we drove to the site of the famous Hochschule, not a high school as its name literally translates, but actually a college organized for the advancement of Judaism (Wissenschaft des Judentums). Leo Baeck and Abraham Geiger were among its most famous alumni, which included some of the greatest Jewish scholars. As we gathered in front of the plaque on the wall of the building - it is no longer a school, we once more listened to the haunting strains of the El Mole Rachamim.

That ended the formal program for the afternoon, but many of us then opted to get off the bus at the Pergamonmuseum, where we viewed a magnificent reconstruction of the classical structures of Pergamon and of Babylon and other centers of ancient culture. The interior of the museum was literally overwhelming. with gigantic rooms accommodating whole reconstructed temples. After about an hour of wandering through the halls of the museum, we eschewed the bus ride back and walked to the hotel, perhaps six or seven blocks away.

At 7:00 P.M., we were at the Ephraim-Palais for a private showing of the current and very popular Jewish Exhibition, which the locals had lined up daily to see. In four or five rooms on each of two floors, which we were required to traverse wearing oversized slippers over our shoes in order to protect the floors, there was an incredible collection of letters, posters, military documents, periodicals, pictures and other memorabilia dealing with the Jews of Germany, with particular emphasis on the Hitler years. It was a fascinating and undoubtedly priceless collection, most components of which will, according to Mr. Simon, our personal guide, have to be returned to their lenders when the exhibition ends.

Although the exhibition was extremely worthwhile, I was disappointed with one aspect of it. Mr. Simon had allotted to us just one hour, from 7:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., the official closing time of the exhibition. It was simply not enough time for anyone to examine more than a fraction of the items with any degree of care. Mr. Simon had, in fact, only time to take us to each of the rooms for

five or six minutes, give us a brief synopsis of what the room contained, and then move on to the next room. The fact that there were other visitors wandering in and out of the same rooms and into and out of our group, did not make things any easier. In any event, each of us came away with a catalog of the exhibition, a gift from the museum for which members of the public had to pay ten marks, and if I can wade through its German-language text, I hope to fill in the details which our visit did not give us time to supply. I will, however, not soon forget one moment during the tour when Mr. Simon pointed out a letter in a glass show-case bearing a signature which he refused to identify, saying that he could not bring himself to pronounce the name. It was the signature of Heinrich Himmler.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1988

This was to be our day in West Berlin, and a very crowded day it turned out to be. Our faithful bus - well, no, this was a West Berlin bus specially engaged for the occasion - left the hotel at 9:00 A.M., arriving at Checkpoint Charley a few minutes later. The guard came aboard and collected all our passports after carefully comparing our faces with the pictures in the books. They were then returned to us, minus the visas; they would be returned to us when we came back.

As we emerged from the Checkpoint, our West German guide for the day came aboard. His name was Mikhail Weiss, and it seemed strange

that Marianne and Sabina were no longer with us. Unfortunately, they were not permitted to enter West Berlin, where neither of them had ever been, and we had to leave them behind in East Berlin. They probably could not admit it, but I sensed that they would very much like to have gone with us to the "other" Berlin. In any event, we had not gone more than a few blocks when the Berlin Wall came into view, this time, of course, from the West German side, and since West Germans can go right up to the wall, which they consider an abomination, it is covered with messages, crude art and graffiti, some of it very professional looking. Mikhail then made a comment, almost casually, which told us quite eloquently, that we were in West Berlin. He said, as nearly as I can remember, "On your right is the Berlin Wall, which is of absolutely no interest to us, and only concerns the Allied Powers and foreigners." He then took us to an observation point where we could climb to the top of a ten-foot platform and get a clear view of the long stretch of wall. It was an eye-opener.

There are, in fact, two walls, both built by the East Germans, with a no-man's land of 200 or 300 feet of open space between them, so that it was immediately clear how lopsided the odds are against someone successfully escaping from East to West. It was also depressing to be able to see across into the city from which we had just come, and immediately recognize some of the landmarks there with which we had just become familiar. It was even stranger several minutes later when we were at the West German side of the Brandenburg

Gate, knowing that we had only recently been standing on the other side, and the Unter den Linden was now the 6th of June Boulevard, in memory of the Russian Revolution. Even that was somewhat incongruous, since the Communist influence was much more in evidence on the East Berlin side. That side seemed so near, and yet so far away.

A whirlwind tour of West Berlin then followed, which lasted about two and a half hours, with two stops along the way. The first stop, for about 45 minutes, was at the Charlottenburg Palace, built by Frederick II as a gift to his wife, Sophie, where we had the opportunity to enjoy the considerable art collection on its walls, as well as a stunningly opulent dining room table fully set with china and silverware for 42 persons. The second, for about 20 minutes, was in front of Berlin's famous Hotel Kempinski, which was not the immediate attraction, although we stopped in the lobby for a souvenir to take home to Joan's Aunt Ruth, a legitimate world traveler in her younger days, who had always admired the Kempinski, but to visit the Jewish Community Center on the other side of the street. It is an extremely attractive and functional building with many graphic reminders of the Nazi period on display, the most dramatic of which was a large wall map of Europe pinpointing all of the concentration camps and disclosing the number of Jews who had died in each of them.

In between and before and after those stops, we drove through the famous Tiergarten District, saw the old and new symphonic halls,

the imposing Carillon and the Reichstag, the seat of governmental power until it was virtually destroyed by fire in 1933 - it was gray, grim and majestic as we drove completely around it. Our last contact with the Berlin Wall came at a point where eight gleaming white crosses stood at its base, each engraved with a name or the word "Unbekannt" (unknown) and the date on which he had lost his life attempting to scale the wall. The most recent date was February, 1987.

We were also treated to a close-up look at the Olympic Stadium, used in the now infamous 1936 games, the ones at which Adolf Hitler refused to acknowledge the accomplishments of Jesse Owens. Appropriately, one of the prominent streets adjacent to the stadium was called Jesse Owens Allee. From there, we moved on to the Grunewald, where we saw some of West Berlin's finest private homes, some traditional, some modern, all with some ground around them, but not quite up to American standards. In response to my question, our guide told us that the cost of one of those homes would be about one million marks (about \$550,000.00).

In the center of the commercial area of the city, particularly along the Kurfurstendamm, modeled after Paris' Champs Elysees, two things caught our attention. The first was the Kaiser Wilhelm Church, with the new modern structure standing right along side the ruins of the old one, apparently destroyed in a World War II air raid. The other was directly across the street the entrance to Berlin's famous KaDaWe department store. It was a signpost on which were

listed the twelve major Nazi concentration camps, below a message which told Berliners that what those places stood for must never be forgotten. It was really the only visible evidence we saw in West Berlin of that community's concern about the events of the week and their historical precedents. I wondered, but could not find out, whether the sign would be gone the following week.

From about 12:45 to 1:30, we had a fascinating visit with Rabbi Ernst Stein at the West Berlin Jewish Congregation. After entering through an ordinary doorway off the street, which gave no indication that it led to a synagogue, we walked down a darkened hallway at the end of which a large door opened onto an interior courtyard, where we were suddenly confronted with the beautiful exterior of the synagogue. It reminded me of the entrance to the synagogue in Curacao, where we had been six years earlier for that institution's celebration of its 250th anniversary. The interior was equally bright and attractive, and we learned that the original synagogue had been destroyed on Kristallnacht, and that the one we were in had been reconstructed in 1947, with the help of the West Berlin government.

After we were welcomed by a song impressively sung by the cantor a capella, Rabbi Stein said that he would take our questions for the remainder of our time together. Here are some of the answers he gave us:

1. There were more than 500,000 Jews in Germany before World War II.

2. There are 28,000 Jews in West Germany today, with about 650 of them in West Berlin.

3. 50% of the German Jews are Soviet emigres.

4. The members of Rabbi Stein's congregation are, in the main, successful and wealthy.

5. Although the congregation is affiliated with the World Union for Progressive Judaism (a fact not known to some of its orthodox members), its religious services are non-orthodox - not liberal, but not totally traditional, with the liturgy a combination of the orthodox Siddur, "Service of the Heart" and Rabbi Stein's own prayers.

6. The congregation has a full house on the High Holidays, but not more than 100-150 at other services. It will, however, have 28 Bar and Bat Mitzvahs during the year.

7. There is an intermarriage rate of 70%-75% in West Germany. In that connection, Rabbi Stein expressed interest in securing the U.A.H.C. materials on our Outreach program.

8. With respect to our visit to East Germany, Rabbi Stein made several pointed observations. First, he said that people really don't change with respect to anti-Semitism, and that the apparent diminution of its overt manifestations is simply the result of the fact that it is not presently acceptable to so display them. Secondly, he suggested that there are no human

differences between East Germans and West Germans, and that all of the East German activity in support of the Kristallnacht observance is only a flash in the pan. Along the same line, he cautioned us against allowing ourselves to be political pawns in what he perceived to be an East German effort to obtain "most favored nation" status from the United States and an invitation to Mr. Honecker to visit our country. When I asked him if he was suggesting that we should not have come, he quickly disclaimed that sentiment, but added that we should "be careful."

After an hour and a half of shopping at KaDaWe (simply the way the Germans pronounce the letters K, D and W) and strolling along the Kurfurstendamm, we reboarded our bus and were back at the Metropol at about 4:30 after again going through Checkpoint Charley. The visible difference between the two Berlins was never more apparent than it was at that moment, because we had suddenly moved from a world in which the traffic was heavy and constant, both vehicular and pedestrian, and the shops were laden with merchandise and teeming with activity, into one where the traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, was moderate, and where the shops had little merchandise and only a modest number of customers. Never had I experienced such an instantaneous comparison between the socialist and capitalist systems.

At 5:15, we were on our way to the East Berlin Jewish Congregation for Erev Shabbat services, at which Alex Schindler had been scheduled

to preach, blending the Armistice Day theme into the events which had brought us to Germany, In a city where there are only 180 members of the one active congregation, this was a banner occasion, with at least 300 people in attendance, including our group and some other visitors. The service was essentially orthodox, but following the service was quite an adventure, because the congregation had an assortment of prayer books which were not all alike, with publication dates ranging all the way from 1837 to 1922. For those who had particular difficulty following the service, because of (1) the variation in the prayer books, (2) the failure of the officiant to give page numbers or other clues, (3) the fact that the cantor (the congregation has no rabbi) read from a bimah which required him to read with his back to us, and (d) the strangeness of the Hebrew pronunciation and some of the melodies, there was the opportunity to admire the brilliantly ornate front of the sanctuary, which stood out in sharp contrast to the rest of the room, which was dark and drab. The reason for the distinction soon became apparent when we learned that when the Nazis were beginning their oppression of the Jews, they boarded up the front of the sanctuary and used the rest of it as a stable for their horses. But the front remained protected and thus retained most of its beauty, and only a little post-war rehabilitation was necessary to restore it to the condition in which we found it. We also found out that most of the congregation's sacred objects had been successfully removed and hidden from the Nazis during the war, and were now back in place and in use.

Back to the service - the men sat on the right, the women on the left, hence it was a traditional service, but I found it absorbing nonetheless, although it was a far cry from the way I ordinarily worship. Stanley Dreyfus' delivery of Alex Schindler's sermon was excellent, although the high ceiling and the empty spaces along both sides of the auditorium created a reverberation which made some of his words difficult to understand. Some heard it more distinctly than others, including a young American (not one of our group) who baited Stanley rather vigorously after the service, taking strong issue with Alex's comparing the Holocaust with the suffering of other peoples. Stanley handled the confrontation quite well, so that we were all able to enjoy a very elaborate Oneg Shabbat with the congregation, where both the Challah and the Bulgarian red wine were very tasty. I thought that the members of the congregation went out of their way to be friendly and hospitable, although the fact that many of them did not speak English made communication somewhat difficult. Some of our group, as we learned on our final night recap, thought that they had been aloof and unfriendly, but I believe that if there was aloofness, it resulted from the fact that they rarely have visitors from the West and may have been somewhat overwhelmed by the experience.

Dinner back at the Metropol was quite late because of the length of the service, but a number of us repaired to the Hallenbar on the 1st floor (not the lobby) for a nightcap before calling it a day.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1988

Nothing was formally scheduled for Saturday morning because it was Shabbat. Most of our people used the occasion for leisure activities, some museum visiting or last-minute purchases of gifts to take home. I opted to accompany the Dreyfuses and Bob Koppel to the synagogue for the second Shabbat service, because I thought that Stanley deserved an audience for the sermon (his own) he had been invited to preach that morning, and because there had been a serious suggestion the night before that the congregation might have difficulty achieving a minyan. Both reasons proved ill-founded, because (a) Stanley Dreyfus' sermon never materialized for reasons known only to the cantor who opted to eliminate it and (b) nearly 100 people, mostly males, showed up for the service, most, I suspect, to be part of a baby-naming, a rare event in either Germany these days. The service itself was subject to the same difficulties which had been present the night before and was somewhat longer, but, all in all, a very interesting experience. Phil Hiat was given an Aliyah and Stanley Dreyfus named the baby instead of delivering a sermon (there was none), an experience which Stanley later described as one of the most moving he had ever had.

As I think back now over the two services, I realize that I have failed to mention one component which made the Friday night service particularly memorable. A significant portion of it was chanted by Avery Tract, whose powerful, operatic quality voice filled the

sanctuary with the kind of musical power it had probably not heard or felt in at least a generation.

We returned to the hotel at a little after 11:30, where we had less than an hour to get a bite to eat before leaving for Potsdam, the final chapter of our East German odyssey. Since Joan was not hungry and wanted to read a bit, I hustled over to the Stammhaus at the Grand Hotel for a reprise of Wednesday's lunch experience. This time, since I was alone, I sat at the bar in an almost empty establishment to enjoy a Kindl-Brotchen and a glass of very good German beer on draft, the regular kind this time instead of the Schwarzbier we had previously enjoyed. At 12:30, we were all on the bus again, this time with our excellent East German guides, Marianne and Sabina, on the way to Potsdam, a drive of 60-75 minutes from Berlin. Actually, there was a shorter route, but it was one which would have taken us through parts of West Germany, where the guides were not permitted to go. On the way to Potsdam, we passed Schonefeld, the East German airport, into which we might have flown if we had opted to fly KLM via Amsterdam to East Berlin. I asked Kurt Koch of the travel agency which had arranged our trip, and who was with us almost constantly throughout the week, whether that had been considered, and he confirmed the fact that he had suggested such a routing, but had been told that the route through Frankfurt and West Berlin was preferable.

Since we had some extra time on the drive to Potsdam, Sabina used the opportunity to give us a precis on the East German political and socio-economic systems. It was fascinating, because it confirmed what we had been part of for almost a week, although most of us had not really focused on it. We learned, among other things, the following:

1. East Germany has a population of about 17,000,000, with East Berlin, its largest city, having about 1,200,000, followed by Leipzig and Dresden. Potsdam, where we were heading, numbers about 150,000.

2. The DDR (Deutsches Demokratische Republik) is a poor country, having very few products which it can export profitably.

3. There are five major political parties, of which the Marxist-Leninist Party is the largest, having about 2,200,000 registered members. It is the party which controls the government and whose leader, Erich Honecker, is the head of that government. None of the other parties, each of which, ironically, has the word "Democratic" in its name, has more than 50,000 members.

4. There is no unemployment in East Germany, and the average take-home pay for a citizen, after deductions for medical insurance and pension benefits, is about 800-900 marks (\$440-\$495) monthly.

5. All citizens have unlimited medical insurance coverage

and can receive treatment at any hospital or from any doctor free of charge.

6. Education is free, all the way through our equivalent of college and professional school, although only the first ten years are compulsory. A student entering a professional school must sign an agreement committing himself or herself to work for three years wherever the government determines there is a labor shortage, and is then guaranteed a position in the professional field for which he or she has studied.

7. There is a generous pension system which assures each individual a lifetime of 70%-75% of his or her salary after retirement, at age 65 for men and 60 for women.

8. Professional people, like doctors and lawyers, work for the state and are paid by the state, rather than by private clients.

It was Saturday and, unfortunately, virtually all of the shops in Potsdam were, as elsewhere in the country, closed for the afternoon. All we could do, therefore, during the first portion of our visit, was to stroll through the walking street (reminiscent of the Kalverstraadt in Amsterdam and the Strøget in Copenhagen), sightsee and do a little window shopping. After that, we were joined by a new guide who was familiar with Potsdam and its attractions, and she quickly steered us to two palaces which are tourist attractions there.

The first bore the rather non-Germanic name Sans Souci, built by Frederick Wilhelm II (i. e., Frederick the Great) for his summertime pleasure. A sumptuously ornate structure with only twelve rooms, almost all of which were in Prussian rococo style, featured gold filigree on the walls and ceilings. We cut short our visit there, which was not easy because of the slow room-by-room pace of our inspection necessitated by the layout of the building, but our guide wanted to be sure that we got to the second palace before it closed at 4:00 P.M. That was the Ceceliahof Palace, where the Potsdam Agreement was signed in 1945, and since it was some distance away, we had to get back on the bus and drive to it. As it was, we did not get there until after 4:00, but the guides there had been persuaded by ours to keep the palace open so that we would not be disappointed.

Ceceliahof was built in the early 20th Century, and while it is by no means plebeian, it is relatively simple in comparison to the grandeur of Sans Souci. I was reminded of the contrast between the Vanderbilt Mansion and the Roosevelt home in Hyde Park, New York. We stood in the main conference room, which featured a circular conference table perhaps ten feet in diameter with at least a dozen chairs placed around it. The guide very carefully pointed out the chair which had been occupied by President Harry Truman, who had chaired the Potsdam Conference very shortly after Franklin Roosevelt's death had catapulted him into the White House. She also identified the seats occupied by Clement Attlee, who had ousted Winston Churchill from the Prime Minister's post in Great Britain's first post-war election, and the one in which Joseph Stalin had sat, representing

the U.S.S.R. throughout the Conference. Although basically unrelated to the purpose of our trip to East Germany, this visit was, I think, particularly meaningful to all of us, and many memories flooded back for me and many others in the group as we stood before the enlarged life-size photograph on the wall of the conference room, staring at Truman, Attlee and Stalin and their respective compatriots, Secretary of State James Byrnes and Admiral Leahy, Ernest Bevan, and Andrei Gromyko and Vyacheslav Molotov, respectively. Since returning from the trip, I have asked many people, some of whom were adults in 1945, to name the three Great-Powers signatories to the Potsdam Agreement, and it is amazing how many of them, almost instinctively, named Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin.

A fascinating aspect of the Ceceliahof visit came when we stopped in the palace's modest gift shop, where some of us bought picture post cards to send or take home. One of the items on sale was a small brochure about the palace and the Potsdam Agreement, and since it contained an excellent picture of the conference room, better than most of us could have taken, many of us bought the English language version of it for one mark. The text was a real eye-opener, making none too kind references to the United States and its plans, during World War II, to "conquer the world," citing as evidence of that assertion the fact that the U. S. had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We were informed that the text had been composed in Russia after the war (the publication date was not ascertainable), and we were quickly reminded that the apparent accord reached in Potsdam had been replaced by suspicion and distrust soon afterward.

The trip back to East Berlin was relatively quiet and contemplative, with some using the time, in the growing darkness of the late afternoon, to catch up on lost sleep, while others, including me, used it to reflect on the momentous events of the preceding six days, in anticipation of the farewell dinner we would have back at the hotel and the recap of the trip which we had been told would follow. It would soon become apparent that reactions were very different, but more about that later.

Dinner was thoroughly enjoyable, with much picture taking and reminiscing. Each of us received a copy of "The Six Days of Destruction," by Elie Wiesel and Albert Friedlander, individually inscribed by Phil Hiat with a personal message, as well as a first day cover specially issued by the East German government in recognition of the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht - that may be a collector's item some day.

Then came the recap and evaluation, in the context of an open forum, in which we were asked to express our individual reactions to the trip and to evaluate what, if anything, we thought had been accomplished by our being in Germany. Uppermost in the minds of some was how we would publicize the trip when we got home, with many believing that an article in Reform Judaism would be the most effective way to get the message to the largest audience, although there was evident disagreement as to whether that article could be anything more than a travelogue, depending on the orientation of the author.

The reactions of the participants varied greatly, running the gamut from great satisfaction to great disappointment. For example,

1. Some thought that the trip had been very positive, that they understood the events of the era preceding World War II much better, and that the East Germans had made a real effort to make amends, even if only in a small way.

2. A number of people thought that we had been "used" by the East German government for propaganda purposes, and that the seemingly cordial treatment we had received was a smokescreen for an effort to secure "most favored nation" treatment for the GDR, to secure an invitation for Mr. Honecker to visit Washington, and to lay a favorable foundation for the East Germans' belated attempt to pay reparations to Jews and Jewish organizations.

3. Some thought that the East German Jewish community had put itself out to welcome us and to make us feel at home, despite our very different political and religious orientations.

4. Others thought that the East German Jewish community had been cold and unfriendly to us, even rude.

5. Some expressed great disappointment that virtually all of the programs we had attended were in the German language, and that no real effort had been made to provide us with English translations, either simultaneous or subsequent.

6. One member of the group told us that he had not felt really comfortable at any point during the trip, and that he felt like "dropping a bomb" on every building.

7. All agreed that the unfortunate absence of Alex Schindler had taken a very important element out of the trip, and that his insights and commentaries on a daily basis would have added depth and meaning to the experience.

For myself, I am very glad that I went to East Germany, because I had lived through the events leading up to Kristallnacht and had served my country during World War II, and had, frankly, forgotten some of the details. I went because I wanted to refresh my recollection, and because I wanted to avoid the trap of George Santayana's famous dictum that "those who fail to learn from the past are destined to relive it." In that respect, my goals were reasonably well met, because the recollections were sobering, unsettling and meaningful. Did I find the Germans (East or West) repentant and seeking forgiveness? No, but it would have been naive for me to have expected that - as Rabbi Stein had told us in West Berlin, there is little difference in the humanism of East and West Germans, and attitudes about anti-Semitism don't really change - but I choose to believe that the outward manifestations of the East Germans, as evidenced by the high-quality programs offered in commemoration of Kristallnacht, were genuine and well meant. Was I disturbed by the emphasis which the East Germans are placing on the role of the "fascists" in the terrible events of the pre-War and War years, and the distancing of themselves from

involvement in and responsibility for those events? A little, but I reminded myself that East Germany is a Communist country, and that the Soviet influence is so strong that a rewriting of history, in what George Orwell would have called "newspeak" should not be totally unexpected. I was very much encouraged, moreover, by the apparent interest of the general population in the events of the week, because many ordinary citizens appeared at all the programs we attended, and I choose to believe that their participation in them was voluntary, and furthered by a curiosity to learn more about the past and the lessons it has to teach. My feelings in that regard were bolstered by the considerable number of students of all ages who were among the participants, and the very great interest which had been shown in the Jewish exhibition to which I referred earlier. The Germans could easily have stayed away from that, for its components were grim, but they did not; in fact, their interest was so great that the life of the exhibition had been extended well beyond its original closing date, and there was talk of extending it even further.

Did I feel, as some of the group did, that we were being "used" by the East German government (and people)? Well, it would be naive for me to pretend that the East Germans did not derive some public relations benefit from our being there that week, or that they had not foreseen that this would be so, because visitors from the West, especially Jewish ones, are a rarity in the GDR, and it was clearly important for the country to have groups like ours there during the commemoration of Kristallnacht. If that meant that we were "used," then perhaps we were, but I don't regard that as a negative. And I

emphatically reject the thesis expressed by some that our visit had anything realistically to do with the GDR's desire for "most favored nation" status with the United States, or Mr. Honecker's hoped-for invitation to visit our country. Forty Reform Jews from various parts of the U. S., with no perceivable political clout or influence, were hardly the vehicle for the GDR to achieve those objectives.

Did I feel that the East Berlin Jewish community had been cold, indifferent or rude to us? Not at all. Some of them were reserved and not particularly communicative, but I am convinced that this was so because they, too, are unaccustomed to having Jews from the Western world visit them, and they were probably somewhat uncomfortable about the situation in which they found themselves with us, and were not quite sure how to interact with us. Many of them were quite open and friendly, however, and I believe that they reflected the feelings of the entire community. I think that they were very pleased that we had been there with them.

Will I ever go back to Germany? That is a question I must leave open for now. I am, however, pleased that I was able to be part of this historical mission.

HORACE A. STERN

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JAN-28-89

*New exhibition at Art Museum
shows the relationship between
the Jewish and Christian worlds.*

Judaic manuscripts from the Vatican

By Leonard W. Boasberg
Inquirer Staff Writer

02

Ulrich Fugger, who lived in Augsburg, Germany, in the 16th century, was something of a black sheep. For one thing, he was a Protestant, the only Protestant in his Catholic family. For another, he loved books far more than banking, the family business, and spent much of his time and money in collecting them.

Too much, apparently. In 1564, he went broke and moved to Heidelberg. He managed to hold on to his library, though. Twenty years later, when he died, he bequeathed it — including the 175 Hebrew manuscripts he had purchased — to the Palatine library in Heidelberg, already a celebrated repository of books and manuscripts.

In 1622, the troops of the Catholic Maximilian of Bavaria captured Protestant Heidelberg,

and a year later, the contents of the Palatine library were packed onto 60 wagons and sent to the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana — the Vatican Library.

The Vatican has been collecting Hebrew manuscripts since at least the 14th century, Hebrew being one of the three holy languages of the Bible. (The others are Latin and Greek.) Now, for the first time, the general public can see rare works previously available only to scholars who traveled to Rome, in a two-year traveling exhibition that opened yesterday at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Called "A Visual Testimony: Judaica from the Vatican Library," the exhibition displays 56 manuscripts, selected from the 801 Hebrew manuscripts in the Vatican's collection. Many of the works are embellished — in rich golds, blues, greens and reds — (See MANUSCRIPTS on 4-D)



This illustration from an 18th-century Hebrew translation of the homilies of Pope Clement XI is part of "A Visual Testimony," at the Art Museum through April 2.

Judaic manuscripts from the Vatican

MANUSCRIPTS, from 1-D
with hunters, knights, worshipers, mermaids, fanciful birds, strange beasts and grotesqueries.

Dedicated by Pope John Paul II, in September 1987 in Miami, the exhibition includes Bibles, biblical commentaries, prayer books, legal treatises, a 14th-century Hebrew translation of a 13th-century Latin medical textbook, a 15th-century Italian version of the 12th-century Spanish-Jewish philosopher Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, a 17th-century Italian riddle book, an 18th-century Hebrew translation of the homilies of Pope Clement XI and other manuscripts.

"They're tremendously exciting in terms of the visual beauty of some, the decorative calligraphy of others, the vellum bindings and the sheer age," said Innis Shoemaker, the museum's curator of prints, drawings and photographs, who for the last two weeks has supervised the setting up of the exhibition in the ground-floor Berman/Stieglitz Gallery.

The idea of bringing the Vatican's Hebrew treasures to the United States originated with Rabbi Philip Hiat of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Rabbi Hiat said that the Rev. Leonard E. Boyle, prefect of the Vatican Library, gave it his enthusiastic support. The exhibition, Rabbi Hiat noted, is in the spirit of *Nostra Aetate*, the 1962-1965 Second Vatican Council's declaration that Christians and Jews shared "a great spiritual patrimony" and that Jews bore no collective responsibility for the Crucifixion of Jesus.

"The exhibition recognizes that relations in the past between the [Roman Catholic] Church and Judaism were not always pristine," said Rabbi Hiat. Its purpose, he added, was not to ignore the past but to "improve on the improved relations that have existed these past 25 years."

The oldest manuscript on display is a *Sifra*, also known as *Torat Kohanim* — a rabbinic commentary on the

Book of Leviticus — from the Palatine collection. It is the oldest complete manuscript of rabbinic literature in existence, according to Philip E. Miller, librarian of Hebrew Union College in New York City, who selected most of the works on display. The catalogue accompanying the exhibition dates the *Sifra* from the eighth century, although Miller said it might date from a century or two later.

Another manuscript, which also may have been owned by Fugger, is called *Bereshit Rabba*, a collection of *midrashim* — rabbinical commentaries — in this case, on the Book of Genesis. Dating back to the 11th century, it is considered one of the Vatican Library's most important Hebrew texts because it is not only complete but in quite good shape.

The largest manuscript, 21½ by 15½ inches, is a Bible by the scribe Isaac ben Simon ha-Levi, dated 1294. It features birds, animals and geometric patterns made by the technique of micrography — miniature writing — which is unique to Jewish illumination (colorful illustration). It came to the Vatican library from the collection of the dukes of Urbino in 1657. The smallest manuscript is an exquisitely illuminated *Festival Liturgy*, 3¼ by 2½ inches, dating from the third quarter of the 15th century.

One of the more curious manuscripts is the 15th-century *Mishneh Torah* (*The Repetition of the Torah*), in which Maimonides reflects on how man, through study and prayer, can attain the love of God. The artist, presumably non-Jewish, illuminated the book's opening with jousting knights, who symbolized a courtly love quite different from what Maimonides had in mind and one of the many professions from which Jews in those days were barred.

The Vatican Library dates to the time of Pope Nicholas V (1447-55), although Hebrew works appear nearly a century before in papal inventories. But how do all those illus-

trations of birds and beasts and humans square with the Second Commandment's proscription on the making of graven images?

"It depends when and where you are living," explained Miller, the Hebrew Union College librarian. "Some societies that we might call strict constructionist took the commandment very literally. Later on, with the renewal of classical learning, especially in Italy in the Renaissance, you had a more liberal attitude which looked at the second half of the verse — 'you shall not make these things lest you worship them.' Since there was no intention of worshipping them, there was theoretically no objection to them."

The exhibition will be at the Art Museum until April 2, when it goes to the Harvard Semitic Museum before returning to the Vatican. On Feb. 20, the museum is sponsoring a symposium, "The Art of the Manuscript," with lectures by Miller; Elizabeth Beatson of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton; Evelyn Cohen, curator of Jewish art at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York, and Michael Signer, professor of Jewish history at the Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles. The fee is \$15 for members and seniors, \$20 for nonmembers; preregistration is required. On March 12, a family day will include Jewish folk tales told by Syd Lieberman, concerts, workshops, films and discussions. The program is free with admission to the museum. For further information on museum events, call 787-5455.

On March 5, Rabbi Marc J. Rosenstein, principal of Akiba Hebrew Academy, will discuss what the existence of the Vatican Judaica collection tells about the relationship between the Jewish and Christian worlds. The free lecture will take place at the Kaiserman branch of the Jewish Community Centers, City Avenue and Haverford Road. For information, call 896-7770.

Leisure

At Art Museum

Rare Manuscripts Link Christian and Jewish Faiths

By ERIN C. WALSH

What is micrography?
What is a Babylonian Sifra?
And just who was Moses
Maimonides? Not the usual
dinner table conversation.
Sounds like the queries of


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scholars. And it is.

On a recent visit to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, I browsed through the fascinating exhibition, "A Visual Testimony: Judaica from the Vatican Library," with the helpful guidance of Innis Shoemaker, senior curator of prints, drawings and photographs. After stops in Miami, Houston, Los Angeles, Memphis, and New York, the exhibit is here through April 2 and then goes to Harvard.

Prepared for tour by the Center for Fine Arts in Miami, the exhibition consists of 56 rare illuminated (decorated) and non-

Dating as far back as the eighth century through the 18th century, the manuscripts from the Vatican Library have until now only been available to scholars who traveled to Rome.

illuminated Hebrew and Latin manuscripts chosen from more than 800 such manuscripts in the Vatican Library. Dating as far back as the eighth century through the 18th century, they have until now only been available to scholars who traveled to Rome.

I am not a scholar. I do not know Hebrew. And I never heard of a Babylonian Sifra. But the interesting thing about this exhibit is, although at first I was not overly excited at the sight of 56 books opened onto cradles enclosed in glass cases, I was somehow drawn into the wonder of it all — the wonder of actually seeing the work of learned scholars who studied *hundreds* of years ago, and the wonder of how intertwined the Christian and Jewish traditions really are.

The word "manuscript," as do most of our words, comes

works were done on vellum, or animal skin, which has helped the preservation of the pages over time. Unique to the Hebrew writings is the decoration of the first word of a section of text (rather than the first letter as in Latin text) due to the absence of capital letters in Hebrew scripts — something I didn't know about Hebrew, but was glad to learn.

A few of my favorites, which perhaps can only be appreciated if seen with the naked eye, are illuminated with beautiful art and rich in theological tradition.

One favorite is a tiny little book by a Jewish mystic from the 14th century with one full-page illustration of a man standing in prayer in a temple. The page is small but the man's devotion in prayer seems larger than life.

Or there's a book of sermons of Pope Clement XI,

book written in 14th century Italy that was translated into Hebrew, writings of ancient Greek philosophers also translated into Hebrew, beautiful bibles, prayer books — so many brilliant pages.

One suggestion I have is to buy the fully illustrated catalogue that accompanies the exhibit. Selling for \$25 in the Museum Shop, it is worth every penny and explains the history of the manuscripts in depth. Actually, after studying the catalogue, I may be making a second trip. There is much to learn and enjoy — scholar or not.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia is sponsoring various programs in conjunction with "A Visual Testimony: Judaica from the Vatican Library." Among the programs are:

Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese, Senior Adult Services, archdiocesan office center, is sponsoring a film, lecture and project, "The Art of Illumination," Tuesday, Feb. 7. All materials provided; no experience necessary. Call 587-3581/3582.

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Overbrook, is sponsoring a lecture, "Images of Letter Forms," Sunday, March 5, at 3 p.m.

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enclosed in glass cases, I was somehow drawn into the wonder of it all — the wonder of actually seeing the work of learned scholars who studied *hundreds* of years ago, and the wonder of how intertwined the Christian and Jewish traditions really are.

The word "manuscript," as do most of our words, comes from the Latin word *manus* (hand) and *scriptus* (written). Perhaps the most fascinating realization is that the beautiful calligraphy, the rich reds, blues, greens and golds that decorate the pages in the shape of flowers, birds and butterflies, were all carefully crafted by hand. In our fast-paced, laser-printer computer age, certainly we can stand in awe.

After centuries and centuries, the colors are still as brilliant as ever. Many of the

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theological tradition.

One favorite is a tiny little book by a Jewish mystic from the 14th century with one full-page illustration of a man standing in prayer in a temple. The page is small but the man's devotion in prayer seems larger than life.

Or there's a book of sermons of Pope Clement XI, elected pope on 1700, with one page in Latin and the other in Hebrew, with intricate 18th century Roman drawings on facing pages.

A biblical commentary, done by two brothers in 14th century Paris, shows the interchange between the Christian and Jewish faiths. Richard and Andrew, canons of the Abbey of St. Victor, specialized in writing commentaries on the Old Testament scriptures and consulted constantly with Hebrew scholars in Paris.

I could go on describing a riddle book written by a 17th century student, a medical

center, is sponsoring a film, lecture and project, "The Art of Illumination," Tuesday, Feb. 7. All materials provided; no experience necessary. Call 587-3581/3582.

St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Overbrook, is sponsoring a lecture, "Images of Letter Forms," Sunday, March 5, at 3 p.m. Renowned calligrapher Fritz Eberhardt will discuss calligraphy, printing and bookbinding. Call 667-3394, ext. 280.

The Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs will conduct its annual archdiocesan PER workshop for all parish ecumenical representatives at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Feb. 12, from 3:15 to 8 p.m. Featured will be a video introduction and tour of the exhibit. Call 587-3624.

Chestnut Hill College will sponsor an academic lecture in March. For more information, call 248-7000.

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