

THE ASSOCIATION FOR COMMEMORATION OF LITHUANIAN JEWRY'S HERITAGE

Ever since the beginning of the 12th century there existed in Lithuania, as well as some neighboring territories of Byelorussia and Latvia, a large Jewish community boasting a magnificent heritage. The community flourished, rallying different segments of Jewry and developing rich and diverse traditions. In the 18th and 19th centuries most of the world's biggest yeshivas were concentrated there, and the Jewish community played an important role in the development of modern Jewish movements. Vilna became the world's biggest Jewish spiritual center known by the name "The Jerusalem of Lithuania (Yerushalayim de Lita)".

The majority of Lithuanian Jewry perished during the Holocaust, yet several hundred thousands of its descendants reside in Israel nowadays, scions of the immigrants who arrived in Palestine before the Second World War, as well as Holocaust survivors. Among them are representatives of all currents and trends of Judaism, and they contribute largely to every sphere of society. Unfortunately, a big part of the Lithuanian Jewry's magnificent heritage perished and is no longer available.

As descendants of Lithuanian Jewry, their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, we have undertaken to promote a center, which will commemorate this glorious heritage, similar to other centers existing in Israel, such as those of Babylonian, Libyan, Moroccan and Yemenite Jewry. This center will commemorate, present and provide access to the vast information dispersed and stored currently throughout different archives, it will also serve as a base for managing the heritage. The center will provide the possibility to commemorate not only the activities of organizations and movements from the past, but also families and individuals who were part of the community.

With this aim in view we have founded a legal Association for Commemoration of Lithuanian Jewry's Heritage, as well as a web site <https://www.litvakslegacy.com>, where additional information can be found.

We have also approached Mr. Israel Gal, Mayor of Kiryat Ono, who expressed willingness to assist with the foundation of the center, even allocating for this purpose a plot within the boundaries of the municipality, and construction is already under way.

We have no doubt that this center will contribute a lot to the commemoration and acknowledgement of one of the most important Jewish diasporas, as well as to rapprochement between all sections of the nation and even between the diverse and divided factions, which include sometimes descendants of Lithuanian Jewry as well.

Moreover, a digital information center will be established there, which will include information currently held in the hands of Jewish Lithuanian descendants, thus contributing to the commemoration of the victims, the fighters and those who paved the way for the foundation of the State of Israel.

Any donation would be greatly appreciated.

Management of the Association