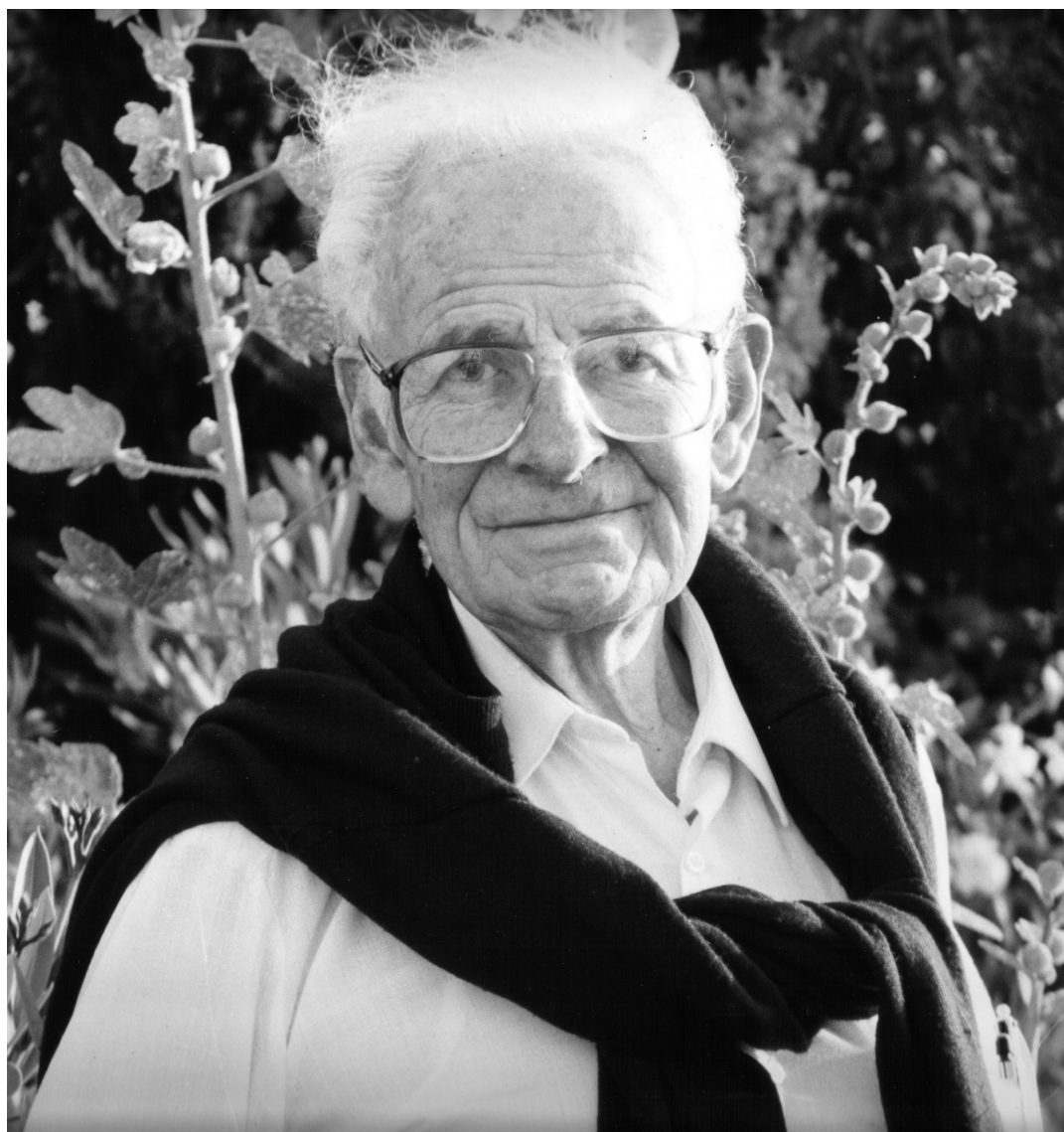


Our Brother Bruno



According to a very beautiful
Hebrew expression,
"Halach Bruno leolamo"
(Bruno went to his world)
on February 8, 1996.

Bruno, our brother, our friend.
Bruno, our guide in this great ad-
venture of Neve Shalom ~ Wahat
al-Salam, which crowned not on-
ly his life but also the full realiza-
tion of his personality.

As an agnostic Jew, who was
educated without any religious
knowledge, he encountered, at
age 22, the figure of Jesus, son of
the Jewish people, so that the
faith of the God of Abraham be-
came his. This encounter allowed
him, some years later, to discover
his own Jewish identity. It is thus
that Bruno came to Israel in
1953.

As a founder – a visionary, a
pioneer – he dreamed. Nothing
and nobody caused him to depart
from the road that he took, until
he judged that he had arrived at
his destination. "I have walked
along each of the many varied
paths where the cloud has led
me, and lived for the end towards
which it was guiding me."

However, he lived events of his
life in an existentialist fashion, as
he loved to say, and engaged with
them with his whole person. He
remained humble before reality,
changing or correcting according
to the needs of his personal way,
but always with faith in the core
vision of his whole life, which he
summarizes at the end of his
book, *When the Cloud Lifted* : "Not
destroying anything that has life
in it. Loving, because loving is li-
ving and creates life. Hoping..."

And it is thus that could be
born, exist and develop, Neve
Shalom – Wahat al-Salam, this
village of the impossible, it
seems, this village of hope.

Beyond the separation that
leaves us as "orphans," to us, the
children of his dream, remains
the tough and exciting task to
continue the unfoldment.

This booklet does not wish to
be other than a souvenir and a
testimony to the memory of one
who has given us so much, and
who, we wish to believe, remains
with us.

Anne

"Wisdom consists of attempting to see the signs of the times, of discerning the Spirit in certainties that are in the process of evolving; of clinging to certain solid rocks that remain in the midst of this nebula. The most solid rock is brotherly love. There, we are sure not to be mistaken."

Bruno Hussar
Accepting the A.J.C.F. award, October 1994.

Bruno has left us, silently, after quite a short illness. Hospitalized from the beginning of January, the final week was a time of grace, spent in the French Hospital of Jerusalem, to which he had been moved, and where he received the best and the most devoted care.

There he was looked after also with the tender and loving care of his friends and companions from Neve Shalom. His old friends, especially, came many times to watch over him at night. Anne was able to accompany him throughout and until the end of his journey.

According to his wish, Bruno was interred at Neve Shalom – Wahat al-Salam, in the cemetery where we also wish to remain together.

After a religious ceremony at Isaiah House in Jerusalem on February 11, Bruno's casket was driven to the village, and at first we welcomed him at the school hall: such a moving and significant station! Under the direction of Ety, the children prepared the ceremony. The walls were covered with drawings and affectionate, even poignant, statements in Arabic and Hebrew. "Bruno, don't be afraid, you are not alone," "Bruno, pray for us from there below," "Bruno, we are with you," "Bruno, we love you."...

Ahmad, as the elected head of the village, made a short speech: "Bruno, our father, you supported us all, with the good and the bad that is in each of us. Your soul will continue to live among us, to watch over us."

Jews, Christians, Muslims, we prayed one after another, in Hebrew and Arabic. Shai

read a prophetic passage from the Bible - "and from my flesh I shall see God..." (Job 19: 23-27). Brother Daniel read from St. Paul: "I have fought the good fight, ... (Timothy II, 7-8)". Abdessalam cited words of Muhammad.

Dafna moved us greatly with the poem that she had written.

A great number of overseas friends, from Germany, Italy, Holland and the United States, came to accompany Bruno one last time, speaking of their memories and mentioning the profound respect and affection that he had evoked in each.

The children, accompanying Ety on her guitar, sang a song that Bruno had loved very much, "Me and you will change the world." (Arik Einstein / Miki Gabrielov).

The casket was then driven to the Doumia. There, at the House of Silence, we stood for a long moment, before continuing towards the cemetery. It had been raining all morning. Umbrellas of many colors provided a half-picturesque note. Bruno would have smiled....

Spontaneously a friend chanted a pilgrim's song with a Hassidic melody. Anne addressed Bruno in Hebrew and Eitan, in place of a son of the family,

said Kaddish, the Jewish prayer for the departed.

The casket was placed in the ground by Ilan, Abdessalam, Kobi, Eitan, Boaz and Zakariya - a friend from the Palestinian territories.

Eyas awaited us with a basket full of roses and each placed a flower on the tomb of our brother Bruno.

He remains with us.

Bruno, it suits you so poorly to be confined to a box.
That is why I want to believe that your being, your neshama, is always with us, and here lies only that which remains of your body.
We are, you loved to say, enclosed in a gradually changing chrysalis while we move towards the fullness of being.
There were days when I would ask you, "Bruno, will you become a butterfly," and you'd smile back at me.
We worked a long time together, for 25 years, day after day, always heading towards the future.
We worked for so many years with our companions, day after day, always heading towards the future.
Bruno, we accompany you still, you remain with us.
We continue.

Anne

Our Bruno

Our Bruno was a man of faith - in many ways. Not only was he a deeply religious man and served as a priest but he had the great belief that it is possible to put into action every positive inspiration that suited his ideals, if only he wanted it sincerely and seriously.

I never knew a man who loved to repeat as he did the sentence, "If you will it, it is no dream" and thus, Herzl and the founding of the state of Israel were for him a proof and a model that all is possible and given to fulfillment, if we only truly want it.

This is the way he thought and believed, in every project he undertook, from the beginning of his way to the end. From his involvement in the Nostra Aetate document up to Neve Shalom / Wahat al-Salam. He believed with such conviction that everything is given to attainment that he did not pay attention to the formalities required when he began. He started with nothing and, with sustained and continuous effort, created something. The nothing did not bother him, and the something, when created, did not invoke pride or cause him any diversion from the way he had chosen.

Our Bruno taught us that even in our material secular world it is possible to attain things with the power of faith. He showed that, even in our time, there is still a power in faith, and precisely in the simple, naïve and unsophisticated faith that was his.

His simple faith, his ability to find small sparks of light and goodness everywhere and all the time, conquered hearts, endeared him to people, made them partners to his dreams and their realization; partners who adhered to his faith and the warmth of his heart.

Those who followed in his path and were loyal to him did so on account of his love, his caring and his every word. They wanted to help him, and they followed him.

Regarding the strength of his faith, he was not a formalist. He saw mainly the essence of things; their internal side. Neither affiliation to frameworks nor acceptance of doctrines interested him. His faith was open, broad... so he could accept both "Neve Shalom" and its members as people of faith, as brothers from the spiritual and interior perspective. Even if they did not behave or speak in the language of tradition or what is accepted by it, he saw beyond the framework and knew its importance.

Besides his being a man of faith, he was also a man of dialogue. Bruno loved to converse with people, to listen to what they had to say. Even if he did not agree with everything, they saw that he cared very much about what they were saying, and that he attempted to relate to it seriously and help as much as he could.

But above and beyond everything, our Bruno was a loving person. He loved the people around him, those with whom he spoke, and those with whom he lived. And everyone felt his love.

And like all great lovers, his love was accompanied by another trait: an enormous modesty. He was not important in his own eyes. For himself, he asked nothing, and he was ready to manage with less than nothing.

Deep faith and great love – these are the characteristics of "our" Bruno. We will remember him always as one who was a great believer and a great lover.

Yosef Emanuel (from Hebrew)

God wants to enter the world, but he wants to enter it through man. This is the secret of our existence, the superhuman chance of humankind. Yet the only entry we can offer him is the place where we are, there where we really live, where we live life authentically... thus we prepare for God a place to live in our own house, and bid him to enter.

M. Buber – *The Way of Man*

Bruno's "Will"

*From the "Will" of Bruno Hussar **

To my companions in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam:

I ask that everything concerning my burial in N.S. will take place under the direction of Anne and Yohanon Elihai, with the active participation of all the companions.

I turn towards the companions to say the following.

I am glad to live permanently among you. I believe that death is not the end of life, but a kind of metamorphosis, as it were, a complete change of the same life, passing from a known to an unknown phase. I believe that in some mysterious way I will continue to be connected to you.

If I have hurt any one of you, out of disregard or for any other reason, I sincerely ask for your pardon.

Here in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, we have one aim: peaceful reconciliation between our two peoples. In order to work fruitfully towards this aim, we need to have mutual understanding and consideration of each other. This means love.

I really want that what we do together will be done as an act of love, reconciliation and peace between all the members of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.

I ask that you will not forget that Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam was founded thanks to a group of very dedicated friends, among them Rina, Yosef Emanuel, Mike Levy and others. And I particularly ask that you do not forget that Anne was the person who worked

with me during all these pioneering years. Without her, Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam would not have existed today.

My thanks to all the wonderful members who came and are still coming to live and work here, for their sharing in building this place.

I would like very much that you will organize this funeral so that it will really be an act of reconciliation, love and peace among all the companions, in an atmosphere of joy. Yes, joy, because I am staying in your midst, though in another form.

My brothers, start your prayers already in Jerusalem, in the House of Isaiah.

Now I want my fellows and friends, over and above all divisions between religions, opinions and philosophies, to be united in love and faith. Faith in the ultimate victory of love over hate - this is the real and deepest aim of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam.

A righteous man once said: "In a place where there is no love, sow love and you shall reap love". It may happen that the one who sowed the love will not reap it himself, but only someone who follows after him. But, no doubt, every seed of true love will give - today, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow - the fruit of love. This is the real aim of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam - to keep the hope alive and to sow a lot of love in this dry earth of our country. The fruit will come in its time, on the day of harvest.

** Bruno recorded this in Hebrew on a cassette tape found by Anne, a week after his death.*

Not Like a Cypress

Yehuda Amichai

Not like a cypress,
not at once, not all of me,
but like the grass, in thousands of
cautious green exits,
to be hiding like many children
while one of them seeks.

And not like the single man,
like Saul, whom the multitude found
and made king.
But like the rain in many places
from many clouds, to be absorbed, to be
drunk
by many mouths, to be breathed in
like the air all year long
and scattered like blossoming in
springtime.

(trans. Chana Block & Stephen Mitchell)

Curriculum Vitae

1911 Birth in Cairo, Egypt. "I have been a Hungarian citizen, then an Italian. My father and mother were non-practicing Jews, and my mother tongue was English, then French. I made my high school studies at the Italian High School in Cairo."

1929 Bruno went to live in France. He entered the Central School of the Arts and Industries, where he received a diploma in 1936.

It is then that through the figure of Jesus he encountered God. He was baptized at a Catholic Church.

1936-1942 Bruno worked as an engineer. He received his French nationality in 1937.

"Under German occupation I became much more deeply aware of my Jewishness."

He was obliged to flee from Paris and enter the "Free Zone". When looking for work, he encountered "the bitter experience of antisemitism."

1941 Bruno fell ill. "Those three years, two of them spent in complete immobility, gave me time to think things over."

1945 Entered the Dominican Order, in the province of Paris. Pursued studies in philosophy and theology at Le Saulchoir theological school.

1950 Bruno was ordained as a priest.

"Fr. Avril made me part of his desire to found a center for Jewish studies in the Jewish half of Jerusalem, along the lines of the Dominican center for Islamic studies in Cairo. He had thought that I, as a Jew by birth, might undertake this foundation and asked me to think it over."

1953 Bruno came to live in Israel.

"With my arrival in Israel came a growing conviction: I was a son of Israel! This people I was living among were my people. This country I was living in was my country."

1953 - 1959 Bruno prepared the future institution. He lived in Jaffa and served as a pastoral minister, for French, English and Italian speakers.

"In 1954, on the initiative of a group of priests of whom I was one, the St. James' Foundation was established" [for setting in

order relations between Jews and Christians].

"At the beginning of 1959, Brother James Fontaine, a Bible enthusiast, asked to join the Jerusalem foundation... At the beginning of winter, Brother James and I took up residence in the House of Isaiah. Or, rather, we camped there..."

1964 - 1965 Bruno was the co-founder of many ecumenical and Jewish-Christian associations in Israel: the Rainbow group, the Ecumenical and Theological Brotherhood, and the Association for Understanding Between Religions".

1964 - 1965 Bruno participated in the Vatican II Ecumenical Council. He was named as an expert consultant to the Secretariat for Unity Among Christians, in the editing and presentation of the *Nostra Aetate* document, in matters concerning the relations of the Church with the Jewish people. The text was adopted and promulgated.

1966 Bruno received Israeli citizenship.

1967 Immediately following the "Six Day War", Bruno took part in the General Assembly of the United Nations as a counselor for the Israeli delegation.

1968 - 1970 The Israeli Minister of Tourism sent him on a mission to the United States, Canada and several European countries, where he attended conferences on the Bible and Jewish-Christian relations.

1970 While continuing to take part in the work of the House of Isaiah, Bruno founded Neve Shalom with a group of lay persons.

"We had in mind a small village composed of inhabitants from different communities in the country..."

"It was impossible to imagine a communal life shared by Jews and Christians in Israel without taking account those other sons of Abraham, the Arabs, both Muslim and Christian, who live in this country."

"The purpose would be to prove that living together is possible... and, at the same time, to found a 'School for Peace', for peace is also an art. It doesn't appear spontaneously, it has to be learnt."

1970 – 1976 The pioneer years of Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom. With a few others, Bruno lived on the hilltop in very difficult material conditions.

1977 The beginning of a new phase of development of WAS-NS with the arrival of the first Israeli (Jewish and Palestinian) families.

1980 Received the New Outlook prize for peace.

1983 Appearance of his book, *When the Cloud Lifted* (French edition) as part of the collection “That for which I live”, Cerf Editions, Paris, 1983. Second edition, 1988.

The book was translated into English, Italian and German.

1988 Received a personal recommendation for receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize.

1994 Received the French Judeo-Christian Friendship award.

Towards the end of December 1995, Bruno remained active in Wahat al-Salam – Neve Shalom, particularly in the branch of activities known as “Doumia”, in the reception of visiting groups, in many overseas delegations, and in welcoming many visitors. He also participated in ecumenical and theological meetings such as symposiums.

In 1988, at age 77, Bruno wrote:

“Tongues of fire rest over stages of the Journey already accomplished and seem to call for my attention... Over all this hovers the Spirit, inviting me to explore the pathways that I thought I knew, where I still make unsuspected and wonderful discoveries.”

The time of parting has come,
The cocoon has turned into a butterfly
Flying to look for other regions.

But just a minute, Bruno,
I want to tell you just a few more words.
Words of love
For a man that for whom love was the call of life,
Love was the gate
Through which many people passed -
Jews, Christians and Muslims.
You had a place for them all,
Because you were seeking, and finding, the beautiful in each person.
You had the power to hold and accept,
You had the endless patience
To dream about Neve Shalom.
You wanted a center for three religions
And received a dialogue between two people.
Through all our disagreements, differences and contradictions
You stood fast by the idea of "The Doumiah"
That would bridge all gaps.
After all,
Sometimes we remember
We are all equal before God.

And we who were left behind,
Thanks to you, your power of faith and hope
We live on this hill

And raise our children.
We part today only from your body.
The power of your dream and vision stays with us
The belief in love between people,
The belief in dialogue and giving,
The belief in search and acceptance.
Your dream stays with us as a legacy,
And continues to the generations of your children and grandchildren,
Sons of three religions and two peoples,
For us and all the friends and supporters.
I hope we will learn and know
How to keep this legacy
Because sometimes we forget, ponder,
Make mistakes, and close our hearts.
I hope we can be wise enough to learn to accept from you
This wisdom,
The wisdom of love.

Your dream will still grow and spread its roots
Because more and more people believe and join us
And we will follow your path,
The path of a modest, wise and innocent man.
Good-bye Bruno,
Fly in peace with all the other butterflies.

Dafna.

Bruno

Words spoken before a delegation from the Japanese organization Rissho Kosei Kai, who had come to condole the members of WAS-NS after Bruno's death.

Rev. Niwano and distinguished guests,

There are communities and religious groups with spiritual leaders - leaders who guide their followers with words of wisdom and who are turned to for advice in times of trouble. Often we meet people who believe that Father Bruno Hussar was such a leader for us. But the truth is, that for us in NS/WAS, he was never "Father" Bruno Hussar. He was always Bruno, a friend, and the founder of our village. His death was a personal loss for each and every one of us.

One evening, several weeks ago, many of us gathered to share our memories of Bruno. Nobody spoke of Bruno's teaching, and few of us actually quoted things that Bruno said. For we saw that it was not what he said, but who he was, that provided us with inspiration. During times that many of us lost our energy to deal with NS/WAS and the Jewish - Palestinian conflict, Bruno always maintained his optimism and his patience. There was no distance between Bruno's words and his actions. And it was the way in which he put his beliefs into practice that enabled him to find a common language with people from such different backgrounds and generations.

Once a journalist asked Bruno how he, a man of religion, can continue to invest so much energy in a community that is fundamentally secular. Bruno simply answered that, in his eyes, those of us who consider ourselves secular are also doing the work of God, even if we do not know it. As I think again about Bruno's response to this journalist I come to a different understanding of how he perceived NS/WAS. We often speak of Bruno's original intention to bring together people of different faiths who will find a common language by stressing the common spiritual values between them. Then we go on to say that the Jews and Palestinians who arrived were more interested in addressing their problems as two peoples, rather than as three religions. We present this as a turning point, or a change in direction.

But now it strikes me that for him there never was a change of direction, but rather a realization of his original dream. The struggle for peace is in itself the spiritual value shared by people of all religions and by people without religion. His dream was to create a village in which we could learn how to put these values into practice. And I now think, that perhaps we have not yet begun to recognize how much of a spiritual leader - or a "Father" - Bruno really was to us. May he rest in peace.

Bob Mark, August 5, 1996.

According to the words of Prophet Muhammad, the memory of a man remains alive if:

1. He discovers something new, or writes a book that people derive benefit from after his death.
 2. He makes a contribution, or creates something that continues to serve humankind.
 3. He has children that remember him well.
- Bruno fulfilled these three conditions.

Abdessalam Najjar, at the funeral.

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