1. **Why Janusz Korczak and Yitzhak Katzenelson**

The twentieth century left humanity with despairing memories. However, the heritages of people such as Janusz Korczak and Yitzhak Katzenelson can serve as anchors of hope, or beacons that guide us into a better world.

Global wars and genocides, unprecedented manslaughter in two world wars, the dark shadow of the Holocaust of the Jewish people, the presence of the atomic bomb and the constant threat of apocalyptic nuclear war, religious fanaticism and world terror fueled by religious radicalism, global waves of refugees pushed out of their homes by political violence, and economic crises all threaten the ongoing flourish of human civilization. These examples of despairing memories draw a problematic picture of our world and paint dark shadows above human horizons. Their presence in our consciousness endangers our belief in the basic goodness of human beings and their ability to work for a better world.

Auschwitz, the pick of human demonic creativity in the Twentieth century marks the loss of our moral orientation. Its scandalous reality—an industrial complex of death—shatters our basic trust of human morality. Civilized, educated men committed the worst crimes imaginable. They used the words "good" and "evil," spoke about human decency, and even led their family lives in the proximity of the camp, but these acts did not prevent their crimes. Unavoidably, the very legitimacy and effectiveness of any moral discourse must be questioned. Language was no longer a reliable representation of reality,[[1]](#footnote-1) and the world went out of its mind.

1. Steiner, 1986. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)