

Semyon Goldwar In The Architecture Workshop Of The Giprograd



This is me in the architecture shop of the Giprograd [State Institute of Town Planning]. On 17 August 2003 it will be 50th anniversary of my work at this organization. I got a job at the Giprograd in the summer of 1953. I was an architect and then chief project architect. I designed hydrolysis factories, a tyre repair plant and also residential buildings. I worked with nice intellectual people. There were a number of Jews among us but there was no 'Jewish question', we valued each other for their professional qualities. In 2000 the director of the Giprograd called me for a meeting with the representatives of the association of the former inmates of concentration camps and the ghettos of the Odessa region. He was not Jewish but he knew that I was and realized that the subject was a concern to me. They offered me to take part in a very interesting project: the development of the design for a memorial complex dedicated to the Jews who perished in Odessa in the course of its history: the victims of pogroms and the victims of the Holocaust. It was to be installed in the former place of the 2nd Jewish cemetery, which was removed back in the 1960s. I gave my consent and began to work. There already was a memorial to victims of 1905 pogroms at the cemetery when about 400 Jews perished: women, elderly people and children. 14 granite slabs were on this common grave. There were names of over thirty people on each slab. There are missing names as well. When the cemetery was to be removed the town architect inscribed numbers on these slabs and they were transported to Jewish cemetery in Slobodka. They are still there - many of them were stolen or decayed, but there are quite a few left. I did my land survey and did some additional work about granite. The memorial based on my projects shall be erected in its place. Minkus, a well-known architect from Odessa, developed a project for this memorial and I took part in the development. We followed the design of Minkus for two portals and the temple wall and my design was based on an old photograph. During the Great Patriotic War about two hundred thousand Jews perished in Odessa and Odessa region. The second memorial of the Memorial Complex shall be dedicated to the victims of Holocaust. There will be the monument called 'The Righteous Woman Among the Nations' holding a Jewish baby in the kippah. [The Righteous Among

the Nations were the non-Jews who rescued Jews during the Holocaust.] I spend all my time doing this very interesting work. Public Jewish organizations and mayor's office provide all necessary assistance to us. My work with the Jewish Memorial is very important for the Jewish community in Odessa.