

Dachau July 2010 The Sixty-fifth Anniversary of the Liberation

by marci stillerman

Bubbling from the hairline cracks in the glossy pavement of the new Einkaufszentrum in the town of Dachau oozes a mysterious thick red substance. Not blood, the mayor insists despite chemical analyses. And keep it quiet. Just the suggestion will be bad for business. The vast grassy surface of the Kinderspielplatz with its new steel swings and brightly-painted jungle-gym heaves, as with deep sighs, toppling toddlers off their feet and astonishing their mothers with its ever-changing slopes and hills. The perfume of flowers planted in the clearings of the forest, carnations, roses, lilies of the valley, jasmine, chosen for their scent, and flowering trees and bushes, pouring sweet perfume of apple blossom, lilac, gardenia, and camellia into the sparkling air of Summer, strive in vain to hide the ancient stink of burning flesh, sickness, and death that pervades the atmosphere like an incurable disease. On the mudbanks of the Amper River, the children of Dachau with cast-off spoons and wooden spades dig tidewater holes and capture little fishes, tadpoles, and clean white human bones.

