

Recent Books from Israel – October 2008
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History

Pepiczek: He Didn't Know His Name / Yossi Sarid
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2006
Miskal-Yedioth Ahronot Books &
Chemed Books

63p,; 21cm
ISBN: 0976442507
\$ 22.75

Yossi Sarid erects a monument here, without empty rhetoric, without worn clichés. The monument arises through the story of one man, who immigrated to Israel at the end of the 1970s where he lives today. This book is commemoration of Jewish suffering, a memorial monument to the "Mengele twins."

This is the story of Petr Grunfeld, who is also Kleinman, who is also Grunberger, who is Pepiczek. It could not have been written without the existence of a deep bond between Papicz and Yossi, who is today Sarid and previously was Schneider, and whose name – Sarid, meaning remnant – is also in fact a memorial. The deep bond between them moved me, as I, too, like Pepiczek, was born in Prague, and not far from Vrakova Street in the city's Seventh District. My birthplace was close to the birthplace of the book's protagonist.

With the hand of the master, as in a detective story, Yossi Sarid describes the long search by Jozef-Petr-Pepiczek for his identity. But this is more than a personal quest; it s the quest of many Jews for their private and national identity. Yossi Sarid is a faithful mouthpiece for Pepiczek and for the family he lost and for the tortured Mengele twins and for the dwarfs who were tortured with them.

So many memoirs have already been published and many will yet be published. All of them are important; some are related with consummate skill, others with less. Most of the personal stories are narrated by the survivors themselves, whereas in this cade the story is retold by the narrator who achieves supreme level of identification with the survivor.

Yossi Sarid, politician and poet, sees himself as the emissary of Petr-Pepiczek; precisely because Petr Grunfeld "was silent and kept his memories hidden," Sarid felt that it was his mission to take him out of hiding and commit his life story to Yad Vashem.

A Man of Courage in an Inhuman Time: Berthold Beitz in the Third Reich / Bernd Schmalhausen
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2006
128p,; 21cm
ISBN: 9653082752
\$ 29.50

In July 1941, a young German man, Berthold Beitz, only twenty-seven years old, came to the city of Boryslaw in eastern Galicia to take up the position of business manager in an oil refinery. There Beitz witnesses at close-hand the ongoing destruction of the Jews. Unhesitating, he opposed the program of extermination and succeeded – often, literally, at the last minute – in rescuing several hundred Jews from the depth trains bound for the Belzec extermination camp. He did this by requesting from the SS that the Jews be handed over to him as (supposedly) indispensable skilled workers; thus, he saved the lives of many Jews by issuing false work certificates. At the greatest personal risk, Berthold Beitz and his wife, Else, provided the Jews secretly with food and hid others in their own home.

In 1973, in recognition of his humane and courages stance on behalf of the persecuted, Berthold Beitz was honored as a Righteous among the Nations at Yad Vashem.

My Life as an "Aryan": From Velyki Mostly through Zhovkva to Stralsund / Jerzy Czarnecki
Germany: Hartung-Gorre Verlag Konstanz, 2007
192p,; 21cm
ISBN: 389649998X
\$ 22.50

Guarded by Angels: How my father and uncle survived Hitler and cheated Stalin / Alan Elsner
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005
New York: The Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project
Xii. 256p,; 23cm
ISBN: 0976073919
1. Olesiuk, Eugene
2. Olesiuk, Mark, 1923-
3. Jews-Poland-Nowy Sacz-Biography
4. World War, 1939-1945-Biography
5. World War, 1939-1945-Prisoners and prisons, Soviet
6. Nowy Sacz (Poland)-Biography. 1. Title
\$ 22.50

This is the dramatic story of two young Jews, Gene and Mark Elsner, who were forced to flee their home on southern Poland in 1939, only to be arrested by Soviet authorities in Lwow the following year and transported to labor camps north of the Arctic Circle. Near death from starvation, they were released after 18 months and traveled thousands of miles across the Soviet Union, passing through Central Asia, before finding refuge in a Cossack village in the Caucasus. They survived six months of Nazi occupation and were later drafted by a Polish brigade attached to the Red Army and participated in the Soviet advance through Poland and into Germany, where Gene was seriously wounded and counted for dead.

Yesterday: My Story / Hadassah Rosensaft

Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005

2nd Edition

207p,; 23cm

ISBN: 0976073935

1. Rosensaft, Hadassah, 1912-1997
2. Jews-Poland-Sosnowiec (Katowice)-Biography
3. Jewish women physicians-Biography
4. Women concentration camp inmates-Biography
5. Bergen-Belsen (Concentration camp)
6. Concentration camp inmates-Medical care
7. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)-Poland-Personal narratives
8. Holocaust survivors-Germany 1. Title

\$ 27.50

Widely regarded as one of their matriarchs by Holocaust survivors, Dr Hadassah Rosensaft (1912-1997) was imprisoned in Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen-belsen. She kept 149 Jewish children alive in Bergen-Belsen from December 1944 until their liberation on April 15, 1945, and she served as administrator of the camp's hospital. She was one of the leaders of the Jewish Displaced Persons in the British Zone of Germany, was one of the principal witnesses for the prosecution at the first trial of Nazi war criminals in 1945, and played a pivotal role in the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Flora: I was but a Child / Flora M. Singer

Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007

New York: The Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project

xix. 180p,; 23cm

ISBN: 0976073986

1. Singer, Flora M 1930-
2. Jews—Belgium—Antwerp—Biography—Juvenile literature
3. Hidden children(Holocaust)—Belgium—Biography—Juvenile literature
4. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Belgium—Personal narratives—Juvenile literature
5. Holocaust survivors—New York(state)—New York—Biography—Juvenile literature
6. Righteous Gentiles in the Holocaust—Belgium—Biography—Juvenile literature
7. Antwerp (Belgium)—Biography—Juvenile literature 1. Title

\$ 27.50

This is a gripping story of a young girl and her two little sisters hidden in convents in Belgium during the Holocaust. Their mother's remarkable intuition and initiative, together with the selfless assistance and vigilance of two Righteous Among the Nations, George Ranson and Pere(Father) Bruno, helped save them. Flora's story is one of the uncommon cases where good triumphed over absolute evil in the Holocaust; it is a tribute to those who took great risks to thwart the Nazis. The entire family survived, and Flora reflects on her parents: "I am at peace. No one killed them. They did not vanish without a trace like the millions of victims in the Holocaust. I know where they are buried and they rest in peace."

By the Grace of Strangers: Two Boys' Rescue during the Holocaust / Gabriel Mermall & Norbert J. Yasharoff

Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2006

New York: The Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project

xvi. 173p,; 23cm

ISBN: 0976073943

1. Yasharoff, Norbet J., 1930-
2. Mermal, Gabriel
3. Jews-Hungary-Biography
4. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Hungary—Personal narratives
5. Jews—Bulgaria—Sofia—Biography
6. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Bulgaria—Sofia—Personal narratives
7. Holocaust survivors—Biography
8. Hungary—Ethnic relations
9. Bulgaria—Ethnic relations 1. Title

\$ 27.50

Gabriel Mermall, *Seeds of Grace: The Diary of Gabriel Mermall, with an Afterword by his son Thomas*. The diary relates the story of Gabor Mermelstein (Gabriel Mermall) as a slave laborer in the Hungarian military's Labor service, and his rescue in 1944 together with his young son. Unable to rescue his wife, who was deported to Auschwitz, Gabor hid with his son in the Ruthenian forests, aided by a poor Hungarian lumberjack, Ivan Gartner, who generously supplied them with food for more than six months and ultimately hid them in his hayloft.

On the Fields of Loneliness / Hersch Altman

Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2006

New York: The Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project

xiii. 184p,; 23cm

ISBN: 0976073978

1. Altman, Hersch
2. Jews—Ukraine—Berezhany—Biography
3. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)—Ukraine—Personal narratives
4. Jewish children in the Holocaust—Ukraine—Berezhany—Biography
5. Berezhany (Ukraine)—Biography 1. Title

\$ 27.50

This is a remarkable memoir of a young boy, who survived the murders of his father, mother, and three sisters and the destruction of his home and town, while evading his pursuers throughout the Holocaust. The youngest of four children and only son of an affluent merchant and Jewish community leader, Hersch Altman vividly despicts his early years in Brzezany, and recounts in vibrant detail the hardships his family endured during the Soviet occupation. He goes on to relate the brutality of the Nazi occupation, the intolerable life in the ghetto, the horrors of the Aktionen, and the ingeniously constructed bunker that eluded the Nazi soldiers and their dogs. Altman describes how each member of his family was killed and the many near-death encounters he faced and miraculously escaped. The reader cannot help but share the author's fears, sadness and loneliness in hiding—often completely alone—in barns, forests, fields and attics. The unanswerable question, "Why me, my God?" echoes throughout this gripping tale.

Stolen Youth: Five Women's Survival in the Holocaust / Isabelle Choko, Frances Irwin et al

Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2005
New York: The Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project
x. 335p,; 23cm
ISBN: 0976073927
\$ 27.50

Fighting for Survival / E. H. (Dan) Kampelmacher
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2006
New York: The Holocaust Survivors' Memoirs Project
vii. 164p,; 23cm
ISBN-10: 097607396X
ISBN-13: 9780976073963

1. Kampelmacher, E H—Childhood and youth
2. Jews—Austria—Vienna—Biography
3. Refugees, Jewish—Netherlands—Biography
4. Holocaust, Jewish(1939-1945)—Netherlands—Personal narratives
5. Netherlands—Biography 1. Title

\$ 27.50

This is the story of an eighteen-year-old boy who left his family and fled his native Vienna to Holland. There, as an illegal refugee, he was imprisoned in the state prison at Veenhuizen, where he wrote a diary relating his experiences in 1938 in Vienna and Holland. The book goes on to tell of his survival during the war working on Dutch farms, acquiring forged documents from the underground, and hiding in Charlotte van Dijk's home in Ureht from late 1942 onward. He even worked for the Dutch Psychotecnin Foundation in Utrecht in 1943. His employers knew that he was a Jew and did not turn him in. The diary ends on December 31, 1938 with the question: "Where will I be next New Year Eve?" The memoir completes this dramatic story.

Czech Mate: A Life in Progress as told to Joe King / Thomas O. Hecht
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007
192p,; 24cm
ISBN: 9780976442592
\$ 29.50

This book speaks of life as it once was in Bratislava and its Jewish community. It describes the trials and tribulations to escape the horrors of the Nazis by the Hecht family. The family's struggles in finding a new home in the New World are examined. Their life in Canada ultimately led to a flourishing pharmaceutical business and successful integration into the Canadian Jewish community.

The story moves from Bratislava, to Paris, to Nice, to Lisbon, where the Hecht family finally boarded the Serpa Pinto, which set sail with 900 other refugees. The journey ended on 31 December 1941, when the family of Eugene Hecht - wife, Sidonie, - daughter, Madeleine - and 12 year old Thomas Otto arrived by train at the Bonaventure Station in Montreal after a harrowing three year odyssey in war-stricken Europe.

In 1993, blending his academic background with his deep interest in the security of Israel, Thomas Hecht founded the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies (BESA) at Bar-Ilan University. After retiring from business in 1995, Hecht was able to devote more of his time to BESA, effectively launching a third career.

"Upon reflection", states Hecht, "I consider it to be unique honour and privilege to have had the opportunity to be involved in the struggle for Jewish renaissance after the Shoah and to be able to contribute in some measure to the preservation of Jewish identity and survival with the love of Israel as my deep inspiration."

"As I Burned with Shame": The Testimony of Ona Simaite, Righteous Among the Nations - A Letter to Isaac Nachman Steinbreg / Julija Sukys
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007
76p,; 24cm
Search and Research Lectures and Papers 10
ISBN: 9653082825
\$ 10.00

The Encyclopedia of the Righteous Among the Nations: Rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust : Europe (Part 1) & Other Countries
/ Israel Gutman (Ed)
Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2007
cxx. 560p,; 28cm
ISBN: 0976442582
\$ 55.00
