

Benefitting from deep research, essays in this collection introduce students and researchers alike to stakes surrounding national indifference in a key borderland. In conversation with each other, they will hopefully encourage continued scholarly discussion that transcends nationally partisan polemics and facilitates historical understanding about how human beings have adopted identities that transcend national categories.

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Jewish Families in Europe, 1939-Present: History, Representation, and Memory.

Ed. Joanna Beata Michlic. Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2017. xxxiv, 272 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$40.00, paper.

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The question of researching the daily life of the Jews in Nazi occupied territories, and in particular, the basic framework of existence—the family unit and its characteristics—has become, in recent years, one of the prominent topics in the study of the Holocaust. Indeed, this trend reinforces the view that sees the victim as a subject worthy of his own frame of reference in order to raise his own voice. The book *Jewish Families in Europe 1939–present: History-Representation and Memory*, edited by Joanna Beata Michlic, is one of its expressions. It is a significant attempt to contain a wide range of studies that have a connection, at one level or another, to the subject of the Jewish family in Nazi-occupied territory and its reincarnation after the war until now. According to the range of subjects and research questions presented in each of the articles appearing in this book, however, it seems that these studies focused on engaging with certain members of the family—the children and youth. Thus, from the articles and topics discussed thoroughly, there is not a multifaceted picture of one of the fundamental elements of existence that suffered a fatal blow during the war.

At the same time, the question of relations within the Jewish family during the occupation, the nature of the connections between the various generations, between the couples, the difficulties of parenting, and the changes that took place as a result of the creation of a new situation were discussed in only two articles by Dalia Ofer and Lenor Weitzman, who have already dealt extensively with questions of gender and family relations.

By far, children and teenagers are the main characters of the book. Joanna Sliwa's article focuses on child survival strategies during the Holocaust in occupied Kraków, referencing the special character of the Kraków Ghetto specifically. The author states that she presents an example of a medium size ghetto (unlike the large Warsaw or Łódź Ghettos), thus pointing out its uniqueness. She systematically reviews the various means of survival and their accompanying difficulties, admitting that it is difficult to estimate the number of survivors and that the vast majority of children in the Kraków ghetto did not manage to survive.

In her article, Jennifer Marlow analyzes the complex relationships between the children and their rescuers/caregivers. Marlow discusses the fragile relationship between the children and their rescuers, as well as the rescuers and the Jewish families before the war, who were often their former employers. The children's sense of security, despite the great danger the rescuers took, remained precarious, and the fear that they would be betrayed did not abate despite the rescuers' devotion.

Kenneth Waltzer follows in his article the fate of Jewish boys who were deported to Auschwitz from Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Poland and held in Block 66. Upon

the evacuation of the camp in January 1945, they were transferred to Buchenwald. Walzer presents a nightmarish picture of Jewish youths on the brink of destruction throughout their struggle for survival, as well as of the relations that developed between them and their families. Yet, in the author's opinion, the story of the boys embodies macro-historical themes, such as the stubborn and irrational persistence of the Nazi regime during the last year of its rule.

The second part of the book deals mainly with the narrative created after the war's end, according to the testimonies of children and youth about their fate during the war. Avinoam Patt's article is different from the others herein. Patt describes the formation of the kibbutzim in the Sosnowiec and Bytom regions and the reasons for the joining of young people from *She'erith Hapleitah* to these ideological frameworks. The author examines the various considerations facing young survivors and the leaders of the youth movements. The latter wanted to rehabilitate the organizational frameworks that had been liquidated, while many among the surviving youth joined the kibbutzim, even though they were foreign to them from all perspectives, mainly because for them the kibbutzim served as the most appropriate alternative to the family that was lost.

A number of articles in the book are devoted to describing the circumstances regarding the collection of testimonies from children and adolescents immediately after the war, and analyzing the difficulties that accompanied them. How was the world of children during the Holocaust presented? What did they remember and what was repressed? How did the adults treat their testimony and how did they interpret it? Questions of this type raised in the context of the nature of the testimonies of Holocaust survivors in general are reinforced when they relate to children and adolescents.

Joanna Michilc, who specializes in research on children in the Holocaust (see her *Jewish Children in Nazi Occupied Poland*, Yad Vashem, 2008), has thoroughly analyzed the difficulties that historians and other researchers have in analyzing these testimonies. Boaz Cohen and Gabriel Finder describe the work of Benjamin Tene, one of the first to show interest in the experiences of Jewish children during the Second World War. In her article, Rita Hurvath analyzes the testimonies of children, especially teenagers, given immediately after the end of the war to the members of Jewish committees who interviewed them. Drawing on various theories about the means of coping immediately with trauma, the author attempts to derive historical meanings from the testimonies as well.

The book offers interesting discussions about early and late coping with the traumatic experiences of children and adolescents during and after the Holocaust, both by the survivors themselves and by their caretakers. A comprehensive book that includes a variety of studies on Jewish families and the interrelations that developed within them during the war and after it, however, is still awaiting publication.

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Dropping Out of Socialism: The Creation of Alternative Spheres in the Soviet Bloc.

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The countercultures of the former socialist societies have barely lost their glamour for researchers of central and eastern Europe and Russia over the nearly three decades