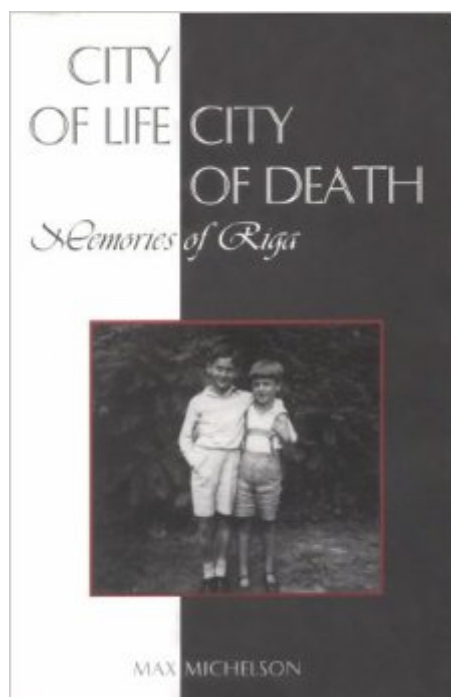


The book was found

City Of Life, City Of Death: Memories Of Riga



Synopsis

This is a stirring and haunting personal account of the Soviet and German occupations of Latvia and of the Holocaust. Michelson had a serene boyhood in an upper middle-class Jewish family in Riga, Latvia (Chr(45) at least until 1940, when the fifteen-year old Michelson witnessed the annexation of Latvia by the Soviet Union. Private properties were nationalised, and Stalin's terror spread to Soviet Latvia. Soon after, Michelson's family was torn apart by the 1941 Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union. He quickly lost his entire family, while witnessing the unspeakable brutalities of war and genocide. Michelson's memoir is an ode to his lost family.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Max Michelson's chronicle of his life in the ghetto in Riga, Latvia during the Nazi occupation is an incredible tale that can't be told by anybody else, because most people died. The story is told so simply that the miracle of his survival lives outside the pages in what we know of history and what we realize from the few statistics he gives. Everyone should read this book. It is the actual, human story that those of us who haven't faced death at the hands of an evil power have tried to create in our own heads to understand. Considering world events today the kind of education that Max Michelson provides is just the kind we need.

In addition to providing a detailed account of the Holocaust in Riga, Latvia, this book is an excellent description of pre-WWII Jewish life and culture in Latvia. Due to the lack of survivors, there are relatively few accounts of the Holocaust in Latvia. The author is an engineer, and he understands

the importance of detail. I found the description of his family life very interesting from a cultural standpoint. Overall, I think this an excellent account, especially interesting for someone who is interested in how the Holocaust affected people in different countries and the the kinds of people and cultures that disappeared.

I thought this memoir only average, and quite self-indulgent. Fully half of the book is about the author's genealogy and his life before the war began. He devoted a chapter to each of his relatives. This section should have been cut by two-thirds. Things got more exciting when he finally started talking about the Nazi invasion, but I wish he would have written more about his feelings during that time and how he was able to survive when so many died. Meh.

This is a very wordy description of one Jewish family and its various branches. The first 80 pages could have been done in 30. After the first part it becomes an interesting description of one person's view of survival. Good book if you are studying the Holocaust.

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