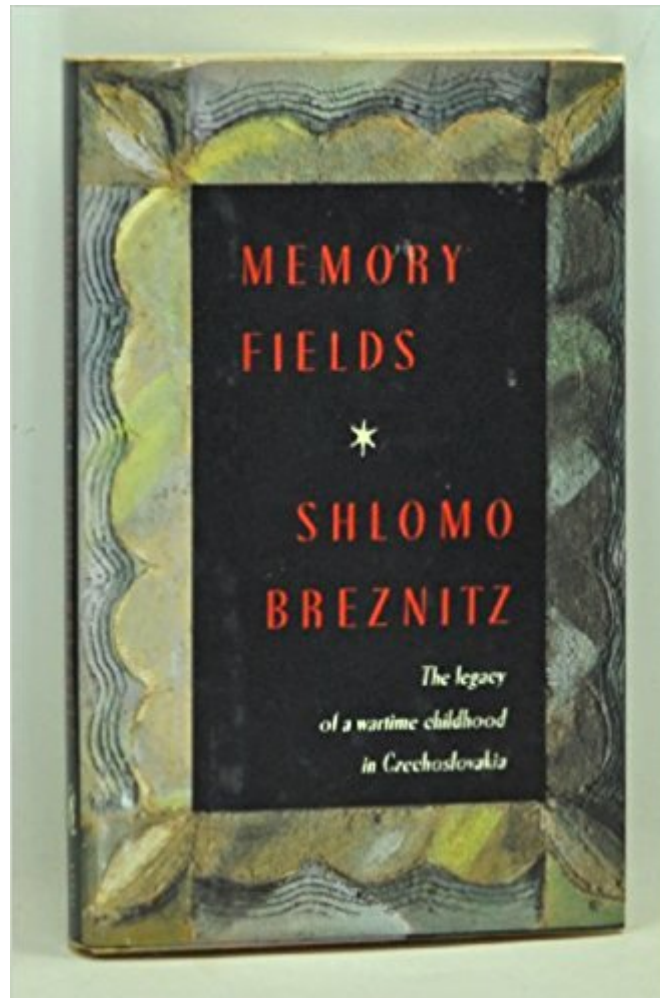




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Memory Fields



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Synopsis

Recounting his experiences during World War II, a Holocaust survivor describes his experiences hiding from the Nazis in a convent orphanage in Czechoslovakia, his feelings of isolation and loneliness, his dread of discovery, and more. 25,000 first printing. \$25,000 ad/promo.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

University of Haifa psychology professor Breznitz, who was caught up in the Holocaust as a child, has written a spare and eloquent memoir of his experiences. Born into a Jewish family in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, he narrowly avoided transport to a concentration camp, because his parents, who were soon shipped to Auschwitz, managed to place the six-year-old Shlomo and his 10-year-old sister, Judith, in a Catholic orphanage, where they remained until the end of the war. There Shlomo strove to become a good Christian, hiding his circumcision from the other boys, who frequently treated him cruelly, and memorizing the Catholic litany so well that he was chosen to recite for the prelate. The pain of his memories of the convent was reinforced by an anti-Semitic incident that took place in 1959 when the author was traveling through Hungary as a member of the Israeli student chess team. The book is a moving contribution to Holocaust literature. 25,000 first printing; first serial to Parade. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

YA-- As a Jewish child, Breznitz was hidden in a Roman Catholic orphanage during the last, and in many cases most brutal and incomprehensible, year of German domination. He has only recently begun to allow himself to remember the cruelty of the other boys, the fear of the Germans and of exposure, and his awe of, and later love for, the sisters in whose care he had been, seemingly

unceremoniously, dumped. His memories come slowly, and in fragments, and he knows much of what he is describing is a result of later experience and layers of truths. These self-described "fields of memory" result in a memoir interspersed with comments on various manifestations of human nature viewed from his present perspective as a professor of psychology. As such, it is less a description of the brutality of the Germans at the time and yet more haunting than many such works. The insights are thought-provoking and place this book firmly and gently in an area encompassing psychology as well as biography. This is a small book, but memories of it will linger long after it has been finished. It is easy to read, yet readers are continually given new views of old ideas.- Susan H. Woodcock, Potomac Library, Woodbridge, VACopyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I liked this book even though I didn't rate it highly. Breznitz did a good job detailing his life in wartime Slovakia and his placement in a Catholic orphanage. His troubles surviving the war are touching. No one should be made to feel this sense of tragedy. What got in the way was Shlomo's rationalizing in the book. Some of these thoughts confused me because they made it hard to follow the story. This book is a good read detailing the suffering of one person. However there are better books out there. If one wants to read about the Holocaust, there are some great books out there such as the Diary of Anne Frank.

A fine, well written memoir of one of the few Jewish survivors of the "Shoah" in Slovakia. A young boy and his sister are sent to a Catholic orphanage to survive WWII. Very human, often sadly humorous; a wonderfully touching Christmas scene where the author and his sister sing "Silent Night", in German, to one of the occupation officers -- since the Slovak orphans do not know German... The author intimates, but does not divulge many, harsh Nun disciplines; but dispensed fairly to all. There are interesting notes about playing chess, learnt from his father; the whispered myth that a Jew would convert into a Christian and become Pope -- with the author learning many Catholic prayers by heart, in Latin, fanning hopes for such a possibility; snippets of fervent Nazi anti-Jew, anti-Catholic actions ("Jesus was a Jewish child..." as the Nazis murder a priest). A sad, moving ending. Recently translated into Slovak.

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