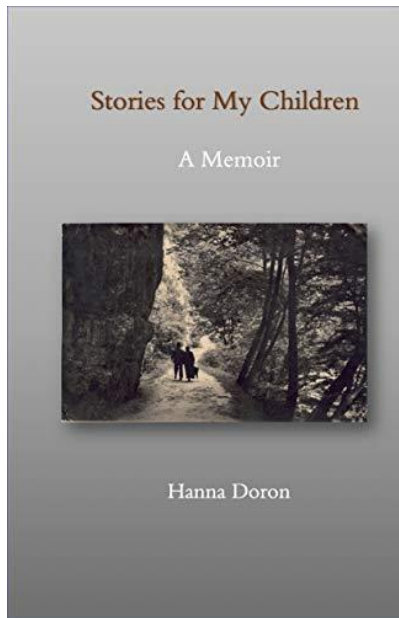


Stories for My Children: A Memoir, by Hanna Doron

A review by Eva Liebermann



In *Stories for My Children: A Memoir*, the author Hanna Doron (her original name was Aniko Schwartz) shares with great sensitivity, in an elegant, matter-of-fact style, the history of her family.

Her impressive memory recall allows the author not to limit herself only to strict facts but to impart also the feelings that they had generated in her at the time.

Hanna takes the reader from her childhood in post-war communist Romania through the trials and hardship that she, together with her parents and brother, lived through before and when they emigrated to Israel, leaving the “known” for the uncertainty of the “hoped-for better”. The book ends with Hanna’s move and subsequent marriage in the US.

When I heard about the book, I downloaded it and then couldn't put it down.

We share the same background, we grew up in the same city - Timisoara, just a few years apart, although we did not know each other.

The chapters about her childhood in Timisoara brought back so many memories, there are so many parallels, including attending German schools, having the same private English, ballet, gymnastics tutors.

Memories of Vago neni (Dr. Vago Margit), fond of the Eckersley manuals that she used to teach English. Tunner Iren taught a version of Pilates (it is believed that she had studied it before the war in Germany). Ballet with Fleischmann Kato up in the attic. The German school, where we addressed the teacher as Genosse Lehrerin. The lines in stores for things when it wasn't even clear what will be available. The birthday parties with Kakao, Whipped Cream and Kuglof. Could go on and on...

One of the highlights is the remarkable quest of all our parents, who had lived through the horrors of World War II, to shelter us children as much as possible from the realities of post-war Communism, while making every effort for us to have a well-rounded education because “knowledge is the only thing that cannot be taken away from you”.

Poignant are also the chapters about the challenges of the family in Israel when her parents, no longer in their prime, tried to cope. The two teenagers, Hanna and her brother had to fit in an environment so different in every aspect from what they were familiar with.

The beginnings of their life in the States. The immense tragedy of loss of Hanna's beloved brother.

While it is the stated love for her children, grandchildren and future generations that prompted Hanna Doron to write the book, it is also a gift to all of us. And by us meaning the post-war Jewish children of Timisoara who grew up during the fifties, for our children, grandchildren and future generations interested in their ancestry.

But not only!

It is a gift to all with an interest to learn about the story of one family, like many others, as they were faced with the aftermath of the Second World War, Communism, emigration, coping with and settling in a new and very different world.

Congratulations, Hanna, for an impressive book. It is a beautiful legacy!



Aniko and Jancsi, 1950, Timisoara