



Reverend Katz Library

New Book Reviews

July 2022

As the cold rainy weather continues, we invite you to come and make your selection from our wonderful collection of books to enjoy during the winter weather. These are some of the new books received in July.

Lyn Julius, Uprooted: how 300 years of Jewish civilisation in the Arab world vanished overnight HIS JUL

Who are the Jews from Arab countries? What were relations with Muslims like? What made Jews leave countries where they had been settled for thousands of years? What lessons can we learn from the mass exodus of minorities from the Middle East? Lyn Julius undertakes to answer all these questions and more in *Uprooted*, the culmination of 10 years of work studying these issues. Jews lived continuously in the Middle East and North Africa for almost 3,000 years. Yet, in just 50 years, their indigenous communities outside Palestine almost totally disappeared as more than 99 percent of the Jewish population fled. Those with foreign passports and connections generally left for Europe, Australia or the Americas. Some 650,000, including a minority of ideological Zionists, went to Israel. Before the Holocaust they constituted 10 percent of the world's Jewish population, and now over 50 percent of Israel's Jews are refugees from Arab and Muslim countries, or their descendants. This same process is now repeating in Christian and other minority communities across the Middle East. The book also assesses how well these Jews have integrated into Israel and how their struggles have been politicised. It charts the growing clamour for recognition, redress and memorialisation for these Jewish refugees, and looks at how their cause can contribute to peace and reconciliation between Israel and the Muslim world.

Jonathan Freedland, The escape artist; the man who broke out of Auschwitz to warn the world HOL FRE

An Auschwitz escape thriller, following the life mission of one man - whose survival will have implications for hundreds of thousands of lives. In April 1944 a teenager named Rudolf Vrba was planning a daring and unprecedented escape from Auschwitz. After hiding in a pile of timber planks for three days while 3,000 SS men and their bloodhounds searched for him, Vrba and his fellow escapee Fred Wetzler would eventually cross Nazi-occupied Poland on foot, as penniless fugitives. Their mission: to tell the world the truth of the Final Solution. Vrba would produce from memory a breathtaking report of more than thirty pages revealing the true nature and scale of Auschwitz - a report that would find its way to Roosevelt, Churchill and the Pope, eventually saving over 200,000 Jewish lives.

'An immediate classic of Holocaust literature. Superbly researched and written, it is both a gripping story and deeply moving, I literally could not put it down' Antony Beevor.

Karina Urbach, Alice's book: How the Nazis stole my grandmother's cookbook HOL URB

The story of a Jewish chef whose bestselling cookbook was expropriated under the Nazi regime. Alice Urbach had her own cooking school in Vienna, but in 1938 she was forced to flee to England, like so many others. Her younger son was imprisoned in Dachau, and her older son, having emigrated to the United States, became an intelligence officer in the struggle against the Nazis. Returning to the ruins of Vienna in the late 1940s, she discovers that her bestselling cookbook has been published under someone else's name. Now, eighty years later, the historian Karina Urbach, Alice's granddaughter - sets out to uncover the truth behind the stolen cookbook, and tells the story of a family torn apart by the Nazi regime, of a woman who, with her unwavering passion for cooking, survived the horror and losses of the Holocaust to begin a new life in America. Impeccably researched and incredibly moving, Alice's Book sheds light on an untold chapter in the history of Nazi crimes against Jewish authors.

Michael Zapata, the lost book of Adana Moreau F ZAP

The mesmerizing story of a Latin American science fiction writer and the lives her lost manuscript unites decades later in post-Katrina New Orleans

In 1929 in New Orleans, a Dominican immigrant named Adana Moreau writes a science fiction novel titled *Lost City*. It earns a modest but enthusiastic readership, and Adana begins a sequel. Then she falls gravely ill. Just before Adana dies, leaving behind her husband and son, she destroys the only copy of the manuscript. Decades later in Chicago, Saul Drower's dying grandfather asks him to send a mysterious package to Adana Moreau's son, Maxwell, a theoretical physicist at the University of Chile. When the package is unexpectedly returned, Saul discovers that it contains a manuscript titled *A Model Earth*, written by none other than Adana Moreau.

Who was Adana Moreau? How did Saul's grandfather, a Jewish immigrant born on a steamship, come across this lost manuscript? With the help of his friend Javier, Saul tracks down an address for Maxwell in New Orleans, and, just as Hurricane Katrina strikes, the two head south to that storm-ravaged city in search of answers.

Atul Gawande, Being Mortal: illness, medicine, and what matters in the end. BIO GAW

Medicine has triumphed in modern times, transforming the dangers of childbirth, injury, and disease from harrowing to manageable. But when it comes to the inescapable realities of aging and death, what medicine can do often runs counter to what it should. Through eye-opening research and gripping stories of his own patients and family, Gawande reveals the suffering this dynamic has produced. Nursing homes, devoted above all to safety, battle with residents over the food they are allowed to eat and the choices they are allowed to make. Doctors, uncomfortable discussing patients' anxieties about death, fall back on false hopes and treatments that are actually shortening lives instead of improving them. And families go along with all of it. In his bestselling books, Atul Gawande, a practicing surgeon, has fearlessly revealed the struggles of his profession. Now he examines its ultimate limitations and failures – in his own practices as well as others' – as life draws to a close. And he discovers how we can do better. He follows a hospice nurse on her rounds, a geriatrician in his clinic, and reformers turning nursing homes upside down. He finds people who show us how to have the hard conversations and how to ensure we never sacrifice what people really care about.

Bill Browder, Freezing order: a true story of money laundering, murder, and surviving Vladimir Putin's wrath HIS BRU

When Bill Browder's young Russian lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, was beaten to death in a Moscow jail, Browder made it his life's mission to go after his killers and make sure they faced justice. The first step of that mission was to uncover who was behind the \$230 million tax refund scheme that Magnitsky was killed over. As Browder and his team tracked the money as it flowed out of Russia through the Baltics and Cyprus and on to Western Europe and the Americas, they were shocked to discover that Vladimir Putin himself was a beneficiary of the crime.

As law enforcement agencies began freezing the money, Putin retaliated. He and his cronies set up honey traps, hired process servers to chase Browder through cities, murdered more of his Russian allies, and enlisted some of the top lawyers and politicians in America to bring him down. Putin will stop at nothing to protect his money. As *Freezing Order* reveals, it was Browder's campaign to expose Putin's corruption that prompted Russia's intervention in the 2016 US presidential election.

At once a financial caper, an international adventure, and a passionate plea for justice, *Freezing Order* is a stirring morality tale about how one man can take on one of the most ruthless villains in the world—and win.

Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein, The chosen few: how education shaped Jewish History

70-1492 HIS BOT

In 70 CE, the Jews were an agrarian and illiterate people living mostly in the Land of Israel and Mesopotamia. By 1492, the Jewish people had become a small group of literate urbanites specializing in crafts, trade, moneylending, and medicine in hundreds of places across the Old World, from Seville to Mangalore. What caused this radical change? This book presents a new answer to this question by applying the lens of economic analysis to the key facts of fifteen formative centuries of Jewish history. The book offers a powerful new explanation of one of the most significant transformations in Jewish history while also providing fresh insights into the growing debate about the social and economic impact of religion.

Jewish Book Council, Paper Brigade: Jewish Book Council's Annual Literary Journal LIT PAP

Paper Brigade is named in honour of the group of writers and intellectuals in the Vilna Ghetto who rescued thousands of Jewish books and documents from destruction by the Nazis. The publication reflects today's diverse Jewish literary landscape in America and abroad. Volumes 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021-22 available in the Rev Katz Library