

The basis for all of this is the concept of a single god who rules the world justly. This god created humans with free will, enabling them to control their actions and giving them responsibility for their destiny.

Although written in a scholarly tone, this book will appeal to general readers interested in serious Bible study. It is an excellent choice for academic, synagogue, and public libraries.

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**Walke, Anika. *Pioneers and Partisans: An Oral History of Nazi Genocide in Belorussia*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 317 pp. \$74.00. (9780199335534).**

Over 800,000 Belorussian Jews were murdered during the Holocaust. Drawing on research, interviews, and testimonies the author examines through an intersectional lens the impact on survivors and overlapping national, religious, and ideological identities. They recall idyllic childhoods as model Soviet citizens during the 1930s, when they embraced the egalitarian ideal and assimilated, enjoying new opportunities. The Nazi invasion in June 1941, and the targeting of Jews and Communists by both the SS and local populace, tested their self-perception as real Russians. Bewildered by the round-ups and killing fields, some children hid, relied on help or rescue from former neighbors, or joined the resistance.

The author discusses the injustices and conflicted loyalties that occurred on many levels. The number of Jewish victims was publicly glossed over as general Soviet casualties. She also brings up gender dynamics, as heroines, and Jewish background, were until recently omitted from the history books and victory celebrations, which glorified instead the Soviet army and its masculine virtues of physical prowess. Along with anti-Semitism was sexual exploitation, a subject painful to some female interviewees. Mothers who before the war actively engaged in public and professional life reverted to traditional cooking, cleaning, and child care, both in the ghettos and the "family camps" – Jewish partisan detachments. Nevertheless, these camps offered shelter and the chance to acquire weapons, fight the "fascist enemy," and bond with other Jews. Some of these survivors even reconnected, later in life, to their Jewish roots.

This book offers a rich, multilayered look at that region and era, also bringing to light the part played by women and children. Recommended for academic Holocaust collections.

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**Warburg, A. Yehudah. *Rabbinic Authority: The Vision and the Reality; Halakhic Divorce and the Agunah; Beit Din Decisions in English*. Volume 3. Jerusalem; New York: Urim Publications, 2017. 368 pp. \$26.95. (9789655242515).**

Rabbi Warburg continues his series on Jewish law in this third volume of *Rabbinic Authority*. The ramifications of divorce and resolving end of marriage issues while deeply personal are also important for the Jewish community. When the husband withholds the *get* (Jewish legal divorce document) or the wife refuses to accept the *get*, the parties end up fighting in both civil and religious courts. Since outside of Israel, the *Bet Din* (religious court) had no authority to force the giving of a *get*, Warburg discusses from several points of view the definition of marriage and ways of ending a marriage with a coerced *get* or without a *get*.

As with the other volumes in this series, Warburg discusses the vision of rabbinic reality in the first part and actual cases in the second part. His discussions and listing of sources help us understand the issues and how halakha interacts with civil law and the decisions of the Jewish court. This scholarly book uses many Hebrew and sometimes Latin terms which are not always explained. Warburg has a deep understanding of Jewish law and has personal experience dealing with couples as the director of a *beit din*. He read hundreds of *beit din* cases in the research for this volume. The number of footnotes is impressive: some pages have more space for the footnotes than the main text. But a major shortcoming of the volume is the lack of a comprehensive bibliography and lack of subject or topical index. Nevertheless, this book is highly recommended for academic libraries and other libraries with patrons interested in understanding modern Jewish law.

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