

SALVAGED PAGES: YOUNG WRITERS' DIARIES OF THE HOLOCAUST

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MOSHE FLINKER



Moshe Flinker was born in The Hague in 1926. His father was from Poland and came to Holland to become a successful businessman. After the Nazis invaded and occupied Holland, life became more difficult for the Flinker family. In July 1942, the family received a deportation notice. The family went into hiding in Brussels, Belgium, using false papers allowing them to pass as non-Jews. By the beginning of 1943, Moshe became aware of the mass deportations and murders of Europe's Jews.

January 7, 1943

Last night my parents and I were sitting around the table. It was almost midnight. Suddenly we heard the doorbell; we all shuddered. We thought that the moment had come for us to be deported. The fear arose mostly because a couple of days ago the inhabitants of Brussels were forbidden to go out after nine o'clock. The reason for this is that on December 31, three German soldiers were killed. Had it not been for this curfew, it could have been some man who was lost and was ringing at our door. My mother had already put her shoes on to go to the door, but my father said to wait until they ring once more. But the bell did not ring again. Thank heaven it all passed quietly. Only the fear remained. And all day long my parents have been very nervous. They can't stand the slightest noise, and the smallest thing bothers them.

January 13, 1943

Last Sunday my father went to the butcher's to buy a fowl and have him slaughter it. The butcher told him that people have again been deported in his neighborhood. And among those taken are acquaintances of ours, with whom we had spoken only a few days ago and to whom we had given our address. The family whom we know and who were taken is named Keller... I think that it was Thursday, and that Mrs. Keller was deported, together with her husband and three children... The Kellers were not deported along – more than sixty people were taken... Since the Kellers were taken, my parents feel themselves in danger at every moment. They think it impossible to hide from the Germans and that someday they will be deported.

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KLAUS LANGER



Klaus Langer was born in April 1924 in Gleiwitz, in Upper Silesia, which was then a part of Germany. By 1936, the Langer family had settled in Essen, Germany. Klaus began his diary in March 1937. By 1938, his writing became focused on Germany's political situation and its effects on his family. Although Klaus was a Zionist and wanted to move to Palestine, his family felt deep roots in Germany. November 9-10, 1938, Kristallnacht, became the turning point for many German Jews, including the Langers. Emigration became their only hope for safety.

December 19, 1938

Regarding the emigration of my parents, I have the following to report. First came two refusals from Argentina for lack of letters of credit. The rich uncle in America is unable to assume such a financial responsibility. We don't have an affidavit for the U.S. Indian requires firm employment there, or a contract. Father is now trying to make connections in India to obtain a contract. He also wrote to Peru and he was told to go to the Uruguayan consulate.

Allegedly the Dominican Republic would take ten thousand Jews and provide them with visas. However, nothing further is known about that. It probably makes no sense to turn to them. However, with a Dominican Republic visa, it is possible to get a half year visa for Palestine. Shanghai also accepts Jews, even without a visa, but it is questionable how one can live there. The mail also brought no news from Palestine. We had submitted a request for commercial certification.

December 23, 1938

I have to make some additional entries regarding my emigration. England no longer is a possibility for me. I was not accepted because I was registered in Holland. My acceptance at the Jawne school in Cologne is in question...

January 5, 1939

...My emigration situation is about the same as before. Holland offers my best chances since I am registered with the committee and also have a private offer. There still is a

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very small chance for my going to England, for which we submitted the required documentation. Then there is till the Youth Aliyah, which will take much time... My parents had to all but give up hope for South America. However,

India is still an open possibility. Their chances for emigrating to the U.S. also are very slim because they have a very high waiting number, 25,000.

All attempts at getting an affidavit have been to no avail.

Documentation required by the United States government for applicants seeking an entry visa during the 1930s and 1940s. (More specifically, the criteria represent those for German-Jewish applicants.)

- Visa Application (five copies)

- Birth Certificate (two copies; quotas were assigned by country of birth)

- The Quota Number must have been reached (This established the person's place on the waiting list to enter the United States.)

- A Certificate of Good Conduct from German police authorities, including two copies respectively of the following:

 - Police dossier

 - Prison record

 - Military record

 - Other government records about the individual

- Affidavits of Good Conduct (required after September 1940)

- Proof that the applicant passed a Physical Examination at the U.S. Consulate

- Proof of Permission to Leave Germany (imposed September 30, 1939)

- Proof that the prospective immigrant had Booked Passage to the Western Hemisphere (required after September 1939)

- Two Sponsors ("affiants"); close relatives of prospective immigrants were preferred. The sponsors must have been American citizens or have had permanent resident status, and they must have filled out an Affidavit of Support and Sponsorship (six copies notarized), as well as provided:

 - Certified copy of their most recent Federal tax return

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Affidavit from a bank regarding their accounts

Affidavit from any other responsible person regarding other assets (an affidavit from the sponsor's employer or a statement of commercial rating)

AFTER THE DIARIES...

MOSHE FLINKER

Moshe Flinker ended his diary in September 1943. In April 1944, on the first night of Passover, the family was caught in their apartment. The photo included here is from Moshe Flinker's "mug shot." The Flinkers were taken to Malines, a Belgian transit camp, and then to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Moshe and his parents were sent directly to the gas chambers. After the war, his surviving siblings found Moshe's diary when they returned to their hiding place.

KLAUS LANGER

World War II broke out on September 1, 1939. An aid group for Jewish youth got Klaus, one of almost 300 young people, out of Germany the next day. The group's first stop was Denmark. Klaus arrived with few possessions, separated from the rest of his family.

In January 1940 the group left Denmark for Amsterdam and then on to Marseilles, France and Klaus's parents and grandmother were not able to flee Germany. His mother died in September 1941. His father was deported to forced labor in Poland in April 1942. By the end of 1942, it is presumed that he was shot or murdered at one of the killing centers. His grandmother was deported in July 1942 and died a few months later. Klaus, who changed his name to Jacob, was the only one to survive from his family.

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