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There Once Was a World: A Nine Hundred Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok

Yaffa Eliach

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Yaffa Eliach : There Once Was a World: A Nine Hundred Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised There Once Was a World: A Nine Hundred Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok:

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. A book that is richly-detailed and gives compelling insights into a lost world. By Z Hayes Yaffa Eliach's "There Once Was a World: A 900-Year Chronicle of the Shtetl of Eishyshok" is a compelling book of a lost world - the Jews of Eishyshok who were mostly murdered in massacres carried out by the Nazis and their collaborators between Sep 25-26th, 1941. In this book, Eliach documents the richness of Jewish life in Eishyshok, Lithuania - the day-to-day lives of ordinary people, their unique way of life, providing intimate glimpses into a vanished world that no longer exists after the Holocaust. The book reads a lot like a novel, and I was so absorbed that I finished the book in less than three days. There are numerous photographs throughout this book, and it is amazing that a lot of them depict people who had either perished during the Holocaust or survived. It shows the great amount of effort that must have gone into compiling all the information to trace the fates of most of the people pictured in this book. It is heartrending to read the stories in here, and yet it made me realize how very important this work is - it stands as a testament to the rich Jewish culture that flourished for 900 years in Eishyshok, and of the decimation of that very culture at the hands of monsters. This is a must-read for anyone interested in the Holocaust. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A major historical effort by an author who was both ... By Herbert Belkin A major historical effort by an author who was both personally and professionally committed to its writing. Well

researched, well written. 15 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Dr. Eliach's proof that history can defy the destroyers. By Customer
In a world where holocaust studies often dwell upon the profundity of loss, Dr. Eliach brings a brilliant historical perspective, rich personal attachment, and splendid prose style to the task of making the village of Eishyshok come alive. In so doing, she reveals 900 years of history ...social, economic, religious and national history with a luminosity that captures the reader, and preserves the flame of the lives that the Nazi's sought to, but failed to destroy. Dr. Eliach thus asserts the Jewish tradition of "Yiskor Books," where death is rescued from its chasm, by assembling the documents, papers material remains that lend evidence of a life once lived. This wonderful book, in 900 pages of text and photographs, is not some cobwebbed memory of the past....but is a lovely flowering of life. Its story is a tale of survival through nearly a thousand years of hardship and pogroms; a tale of people sustaining one another, as in Zborowski and Herzog's "Life is with People," a voyage of self-discovery and family roots, as in Theo Richmmond's "Konin," and a rapture that can only be shared by those of us who lack such roots, through the artistry of Izzy Singer or Chaim Grade, or the photographs of Roman Vishniac. I recall the moment when my 9 year-old son, having plodded through the Holocaust Museum, entered into the cavernous room filled with the simple photographs of the people of Eishyshok, at work and play, in portraits and celebration...from the personal collection of Dr. Eliach. He turned to me and said....."All of these people used to be alive?" In telling who they were and how they lived, Dr. Eliach gives meaning to the unfathomable loss of a world and its people. It is fitting that the book is designed with the same love and attention as its author has given to its text. This will hopefully be a popular Bar\Bat Mitzvah present, and a coffee table book that will gather no dust, and set the highest standard for holocaust studies and future works of history and passion. I thank the author for her unique use of intellect and sensitivity, and for rescuing the literature of the holocaust from academicism and mourning, creating a universal work of affirmation and elegance.

When asked to work on a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, Yaffa Eliach decided that the best way to remember the dead was to honor the lives they lived. So in 1979, she set about a 17-year project to reconstruct the 900-year.