

'Rue De Belville', A Book Written By Szlomo Kornblum, Wacek Kornblum's Father



This is a cover of my dad's book 'Rue de Belville', issued in Warsaw in 1935-36. This book is somehow autobiographic and ends with my mom's death in Paris.

I don't know much about my biological mother. In Father's first book, published in 1921, there is a dedication: "Dedicated to you Menuchele", so he knew her in 1921 already. My parents got married probably in 1921. Since I was born in 1926, I suspect they spent those few years in Warsaw and then went to Paris, where the family of my uncle, Father's brother, was living. They went there to work, because they had a place to stay there. I know that Mom died in Paris. I know she died of tuberculosis. I know that after Mom died Father gave me, a few-month-old baby, to the nuns, to

some convent in Strasburg, apparently there was no one to take care of me, and probably after about half a year Father took me back and brought to Warsaw. All these memories are based on unfinished allusions, by Mom's sister, Aunt Mania Zamosc from Mszczonow, who lived in Warsaw.

The last memory related to Mother comes from the times of the ghetto. When Borus was on the so-called Aryan side, and Dad was very emotional about it, and we knew that I would get out in a few days, Dad called me and took a folded envelope out of his wallet, and from that envelope he took out a folded see-through paper that held golden locks of hair. He gave it to me and asked if I knew what it was. I said I knew, because I figured that was Mom's hair. And Dad said: 'Do you want to take it?' I said: 'Yes'. He said: 'No! Give it back to me.' That was the only time when my mom's subject was touched. There was some pressure not to talk about it, so I didn't even ask.

I remember when Dad used to sit and write, I remember his handwriting. He wrote by hand, very specific handwriting, so that where there were long Nun, Chet [at the end of a word], there was a thick line. And he wrote on sheets of lined paper, but folded in half in such a way that there were thin stripes of paper. Dad wrote a few books. It's not big literature, but it's prose with a large poetic load, so descriptions, accounts of events. He also used to write to Jewish magazines. He belonged to a Union of Jewish Writers in Warsaw, on 13 Tlomackie Street, where he used to take me to as a child, where Itzik Manger also used to come. Some of Itzik Manger's poems I remember today, and when Father took me there, I used to sit in his lap and recite. I met Itzik Manger later in Israel on 'Di Megle' show, but he was quite old then already and didn't remember anything.