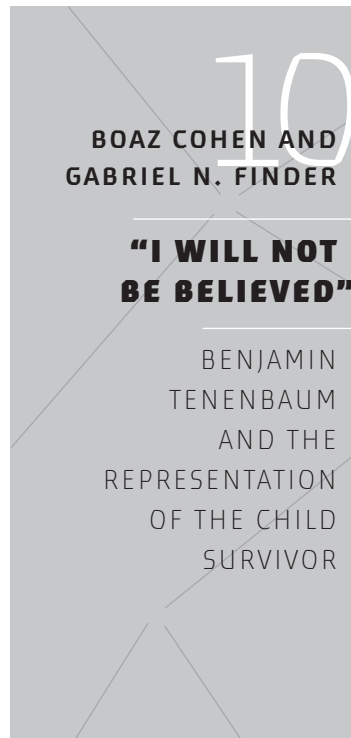


In 1946 Benjamin Tenenbaum (who later changed his surname to the Hebrew-sounding Tene) returned to his native Poland from Palestine. Born in Warsaw in 1914, Tenenbaum (d. 1999) had received his education in Zionist-oriented schools and belonged to the socialist Zionist youth group *Hashomer Hatzair* (Young Guard). He had immigrated to Palestine in 1937 and, with his friends from the youth movement, helped establish a kibbutz, Eilon, in Western Galilee in 1938. Although he was preoccupied with the development and security of the kibbutz and his own personal responsibilities — he was a newlywed with two young children — the destruction of Polish Jewry in World War II, news of which trickled piecemeal into Palestine, tormented him, and the fate of his father and two sisters preyed on his mind. When the war ended, he resolved to travel to Poland to see the devastation for himself and to search for his family. He had an additional mission in mind: to assume the role of *shaliach* (emissary) to Polish chapters of *Hashomer Hatzair* reemerging from the ruins. But travel to Poland from Palestine immediately after the war was rather complicated. By this time a widely recognized writer of children's books, poet, and translator, Tenenbaum, with the help of Władysław Broniewski (1897–1962), managed to obtain a visa to visit Poland ostensibly to collect new fiction and poetry in Poland for an anthology of Polish literature to be translated into Hebrew. Tenenbaum befriended Broniewski, a leading Polish poet who was considered the poet of the proletariat, while the latter was stationed in Palestine with Polish forces during the war, and he became his Hebrew translator. Tenenbaum's self-appointed mandate, however, was clear: "The movement first, the muses later."¹ After an arduous journey by ship, he arrived in Poland in 1946.

Certain officials of *Hashomer Hatzair*, however, tried to persuade Tenenbaum to place his considerable literary talents in the service of the movement during his trip to Poland. The movement's publishing house, *Sifriyat Ha-Poalim* (The Workers' Library), urged him to write a book on the *Hashomer*



Hatzair's leading role—or so its members believed and argued—in the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Moreover, since fighters from the movement who had not died in the insurgency were now leaving Poland, time was of the essence, especially since other movements were threatening to lay claim to the mantle of leadership in the revolt and—from the perspective of its members—distort *Hashomer Hatzair's* primary role in it. In this vein, David Hanegbi, an editor at *Sifriyat Ha-Poalim*, wrote Tenenbaum to convince him of the urgency of dedicating himself to the task of writing a book on the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising: “You should see this as the major task of your mission—maybe the sole task.”² In the end, however, the movement's leadership decided to shelve the book temporarily because Tenenbaum was needed for political and educational work during his visit to Poland.

His purpose in traveling to Poland notwithstanding, Tenenbaum continued to pursue his literary projects after his arrival in the country. He translated poems by Jewish poets who survived the Holocaust and worked on the anthology of Polish writers. But he paid an emotional price for this pursuit. “I've hardly started working,” he wrote to Hanegbi. “I'm having psychological difficulties working on their world, even the best of them. You have to live here in this country that is our people's graveyard, to breathe this air among people who, as a rule, were glad when ‘Jewish meatballs’ were frying in the [Warsaw] Ghetto (that's what they called our loved ones during their struggle), in order to understand how hard it is for me.”³

After an emotional visit to the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto, Tenenbaum traveled to Lodz, which evolved into the center of Jewish life in Poland in the immediate postwar years.⁴ He quite naturally made his way to the headquarters of *Hashomer Hatzair* in Lodz and discovered there a small children's home (or, in the Zionist idiom of the times, a “kibbutz”) for Jewish child survivors of the Holocaust run by the movement. The young woman in charge of the orphanage, Nesia Orlovich (later Reznik), who spent the war years in the Soviet Union working with orphaned Lithuanian children, persuaded Tenenbaum to join forces with her and her friends from *Hashomer Hatzair* in Poland and dedicate himself to one overriding task: the physical and emotional recovery of the children. The distinctive contribution of Tenenbaum, the *shaliach* from *Eretz Israel*, to this task, which he and Orlovich conceived of in therapeutic terms, was to teach Hebrew to the children, who ranged in age from six to fifteen, and then teach them the geography of *Eretz Israel* and Jewish history. He also taught them Israeli songs, dances, and games. However, according to Tenenbaum's memoir of his trip to Poland, published in Israel in 1979 under the title *'El 'ir ne'urai* (To the City of My Youth), the children especially liked unstructured lessons, when “with their eyes wide open” they listened enraptured to his tales of heroism and bravery in the *yishuv* (the Jewish settler

community in Palestine), especially “the daring and astounding military exploits of the *Palmach* [the Jewish underground in Palestine]” against the British. He did this all with an eye, in line with the mission of *Hashomer Hatzair*, to instilling Zionist ideals in his charges, or as he himself put it, “I sowed the seed that sprouted in the hearts of these children!”⁵ The most important of these ideals was to see Israel as their future homeland.

Although Tenenbaum journeyed to Poland with the intention of spending two weeks there, he eventually stayed for almost a year, devoting himself to child survivors in children’s homes run by *Hashomer Hatzair*, both in Lodz and in other parts of the country. It was not easy to develop a rapport with the children in the beginning because of their distrust of adults, ingrained in them by necessity in the course of their struggles to survive during the war years. According to Tenenbaum, “I tried to get close to them, to find a path to their hearts, but for the most part I despaired, for all of my efforts were for naught. Whenever I thought I was succeeding in getting close to them, I suddenly noticed that they would get stiff and thrust their thorns, as if to warn, ‘Don’t touch!’” Over time, however, a strong bond developed between Tenenbaum and the children. He saw how, thanks to the efforts of Orlovich and other educators, “the layer of ice in which the children permitted themselves to be enveloped gradually melted, how they opened like flowers to the sun.”⁶

While teaching them, he came to stand in awe of many of them, deeply moved by their accounts of survival during the Holocaust. He was also impressed by the accounts of surviving adults, and he became convinced of the importance of preserving in writing their accounts as well. As Tenenbaum wrote in his memoir, from the moment of his initial encounters with survivors, he was driven to help disseminate knowledge of their ordeal: “Why don’t I ask them to put their recollections in writing? Such life stories cannot be allowed to be forgotten. We must take testimonies, write everything down, what happened and how—the whole story of the Holocaust from beginning to end.”⁷ Yet, in the final analysis, he discerned more enduring value in the accounts of children.

An episode from his memoir is telling. During periodic visits to Warsaw, he had become friendly with Ber Mark, editor of the Yiddish newspaper *Dos naje lebn*, who would later become director of the Jewish Historical Institute. In the immediate postwar period, the Central Jewish Historical Commission, the predecessor of the Jewish Historical Institute, collected testimonies from some seven thousand Polish Jewish survivors, mostly adults, although roughly 430 came from children.⁸ On several occasions Mark gave Tenenbaum a large number of testimonies to read, hoping to spark the latter’s interest in translating the commission’s collection of testimonies into Hebrew. Tenenbaum returned the testimonies to Mark, however, declining to translate them be-

cause, in his words, they were “unsuitable for translation,” since he was under the erroneous impression that most were written by members of Jewish councils who took pains to deny their collaboration with the Germans, and hence, “[T]hey [did] not convey a reliable picture of what happened.” Ber Mark was exasperated.

“You’re rejecting all of them in wholesale fashion,” cried Professor Mark. “If that’s the case, who will write the history of the Shoah? Who is capable of writing only the truth?”

And then — then the words burst from my lips, and I heard them without paying them heed and only afterwards did I grasp their importance.

“Children have written it, we have a truthful record [created by children].”

“Children?” Ber raised his eyebrows in astonishment. “In the first place, what is the number of children who remained alive? Most of them [who are still alive] have already been taken across the border [to Displaced Persons] camps in Germany and Austria. And second, are children actually capable of writing?”

I was silent, for I didn’t have an answer. However, while taking leave of my host, descending the stairs, I suddenly stopped in my tracks, and it seemed to me that the thought split my brain in two like a bolt of lightning. What had I said — children? Why shouldn’t I try? Why shouldn’t I have asked Jewish children to take a seat and each one of them write down his life story?

Thus it began.⁹

Although he hoped to discover unembroidered veracity in the testimony of children of which, he believed, adults were incapable, Tenenbaum was captivated by child survivors no less because after all of the ordeals to which they had been subjected, after the war — Tenenbaum wrote in deep admiration of them — they “came back to life with no less force than a tree whose roots split rocks.”¹⁰

Tenenbaum already knew by August 1946, shortly after his arrival in Poland, that he wanted to produce a book of children’s testimonies. “The war in the eyes of children with no embellishment” is how he described his vision of the book to Hanegbi. This book would be a “[Hans Christian] Andersen written by children, each of whom went through the seven chambers of hell of the Jewish fate and another one of death, gas, and fire, [and] remained alive in spite of everything, found his way to us, and is writing his life story.”¹¹ The book would appeal to a broad readership. “For adults — an enlightening book, for psychologists and educators — research material, for teenagers and children — a kind of twentieth-century Jewish Andersen.”¹²

Tenenbaum began collecting children's testimonies in the winter of 1946. It quickly consumed him. In his own words, "a *dybbuk* entered me."¹³ He himself traveled the length and breadth of Poland in pursuit of surviving children's testimony. He gathered the first set of testimonies from the children's home of *Hashomer Hatzair* in Lodz. Orlovich brought him essays written by children from the movement's children's home in Ludwikowo. Usually traveling overnight by train, he then visited the movement's other children's homes in other parts of the country. (Train travel in immediate postwar Poland was fraught with danger to Jews, and Tenenbaum himself had a few close calls with Poles on trains.) He further received permission from the Central Committee of Polish Jews, the principal representative body of Polish Jewry in the immediate postwar period, to visit its children's homes for the same purpose.

Two significant obstacles stood in his way, however. First, soliciting the cooperation of child survivors would be no small matter. His method—to be the bearer of gifts. "In each and every place," he writes in his memoir, "upon my arrival, I distributed notebooks to the children—a notebook for each child, and after giving out presents, such as colored crayons, I asked them to write how they spent the war years. The children agreed and wrote."¹⁴ Second, the majority of Jewish children remaining in Poland after 1946 had been repatriated usually with their family members from the Soviet Union, where they had spent the war years, while a large number of children who had survived the Holocaust in Poland now found themselves in Displaced Persons camps in occupied Germany and Austria, en route ultimately—so Zionist leaders hoped—to *Eretz Israel*. To this end Tenenbaum recruited a friend, Marian Kalinowski, a veteran of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, who traveled to seventeen Displaced Persons camps in Germany and gathered hundreds of accounts of child survivors attending schools there. All in all, with the help of others, Tenenbaum collected one thousand testimonies—he himself used the term "autobiographies"—from Polish Jewish child survivors. When he returned to Palestine after spending a year in Poland, Tenenbaum translated and published a fraction of the testimonies—seventy in all—which were written primarily in Yiddish and Polish, in a Hebrew-language anthology entitled *'Ehad me-ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah* (*One from a City and Two from a Family*), which was published by Sifriat Poalim in Merhavia in 1947.

The seventy testimonies in *'Ehad me-ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah* are generally printed intact in their entirety, although a couple of them are printed in full but are divided thematically into two parts, while several appear in the form of fragments. The anthology is organized on both a geographical and thematic basis. Survival in Warsaw and Wilno merit one chapter each, while the remaining chapters are devoted to life in ghettos, in villages and the forest, and in camps and among partisans. The largest chapter, comprising

twenty-four testimonies and four fragments, deals with ghettos, the smallest, consisting of three testimonies and three fragments, with life among partisans. The book concludes with a testimonial poem and drawings by a thirteen-year-old girl. Photographs taken of children during the Holocaust are interspersed through the book. Finally, several testimonies are accompanied by photocopies of segments from the originals. In his introduction to the anthology, Tenenbaum calls the testimonies or “autobiographies” in it “typical,” since altogether they present a “complete picture” of “the life stories and struggles of a generation of children who grew up and matured and came to know the world in its darkest days.”¹⁵

Tenenbaum took pains to give this collection of testimonies, which was intended to bring the ordeals of child survivors of the Holocaust home to the population of the *yishuv*, a Zionist slant. In his introduction to the volume, Tenenbaum stresses the expressed articulation of Zionist yearnings in the child survivors’ testimonies, particularly the wish to immigrate to Palestine and build a Jewish national home there. In this spirit, more than one-third of the testimonies (twenty-eight in all) conclude with the expression of a categorical desire to leave Poland and immigrate to *Eretz Israel*. “I want to leave this land soaked with the blood of our loved ones and come to *Eretz Israel*,” writes fifteen-year-old Hadassa Rozen. “Here in the kibbutz we wait impatiently for the day when the word would come: *aliyah* [Hebrew for “ascent,” the Zionist term for immigration to *Eretz Israel*].” “And there is no power in this world,” she adds, “that can stop us. Our will is stronger than life and death.”¹⁶

The emphasis on *Eretz Israel* is not surprising and can be explained in large part by the centrality of Zionist education in the children’s homes. Indeed, a large number of the children whose testimonies appear in the volume resided in children’s homes run by *Hashomer Hatzair*.¹⁷ But there was another reason for the strong appeal of Zionism to the children. Their daily encounter with anti-Jewish hostility and even violence made them feel unwelcome in Poland. Following the lead of their Jewish educators and youth leaders, most of whom also had undergone the ordeals of the Holocaust, they envisioned their future in *Eretz Israel*. For this reason, many of the testimonies were actually prepared by children outside Poland, in Displaced Persons camps in Germany, where they had been conveyed by the *Brihah*. The clandestine Zionist organization was responsible for planning and implementing the postwar exodus of Jews from Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe to Displaced Persons camps after the massacre in Kielce in 1946, in which Poles, incited by rumors of a ritual murder of a Christian boy, killed forty-two Jews. In the minds of many Jews, including child survivors, the Kielce pogrom provided additional proof, if any was still needed, that Jewish life in Poland was untenable and that the only practical option was *Eretz Israel*.

A Zionist angle makes itself felt in Tenenbaum's anthology in yet another way. The testimonies selected by Tenenbaum convey, in harmony with the image promoted in Jewish Palestine of the new Jew, the children's resilience and fortitude. These children, who had endured so much, represented the promise of a better future in a sovereign Jewish state. A portrayal of children's ordeals during the Holocaust, Tenenbaum's anthology constitutes an argument for Zionism on the eve of the *yishuv's* armed struggle for statehood. This is the context for the emotional appeal that concludes his introduction to the book:

Here sit the children on the ruins of Poland, learning Hebrew and preparing for *aliyah*. Their voices, chanting a Hebrew song, burst forth on the soil of Germany and the beaches of France and Italy. They board and sail on illegal immigrant ships, knock with their small fists on the gates of our houses but they are locked. They are dragged and thrown onto the ships of the great empire [Britain, the mandatory authority in Palestine], and taken to camps in Cyprus. Several of the autobiographies that appear here were written by children who set sail on the ship *Exodus* and were cruelly expelled from the shores of Israel back to Germany. The great empire dealt an additional fatal blow to these little enemies.

But our hearts beat together with the hearts of the tormented. Our sun will rise [and shine] over a long distance [to heal] their wounds. Our home will become a refuge for the orphans and the abandoned. And in the hours that we offer the public and our children the life stories of the little immigrants, we extend our hands once more over barbed-wire fences and the length of the ocean and take the distant wanderers to our sons and brothers.¹⁸

Like *'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah*, *Dzieci oskarżają* (*The Children Accuse*), the other major early anthology of children's testimonies, which was based on a selection collected by the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland and published in Poland in 1946, stresses their competency and strength of character. By contrast, however, of the fifty-five testimonies in *Dzieci oskarżają*, only one includes the wish to settle in Palestine. Instead, many of these testimonies end with expressions of gratitude to the Red Army for liberating the Jews and hope for the rebirth of Jewish life in Poland, which is not surprising given the political climate in which the volume was published, that is to say, the onset of the communist consolidation of power in the country.

From the beginning of his undertaking, Tenenbaum put great stock in one overriding fact: that the testimonies which would appear in his book were authored by the children themselves, unmediated by the intervention of an adult interviewer. Aware of the contemporaneous endeavor of the

Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland to publish *Dzieci oskarżają*, Tenenbaum underlined this difference between the two volumes in a letter to Hanegbi prior to the publication of his own anthology: “Its book, while interesting, is not written by the children, and testimonies taken by adults are not original testimonies like ours, which were written down directly by the children.”¹⁹ Tenenbaum emphasized the significance of this fact, likewise, in the introduction to his book:

Apart from the historical reality imparted in them, [the autobiographies] are distinguished by the very same truth and directness typical of the perspective and emotions of a child. They lack the self-criticism, to a lesser or greater extent, of an adult author. But their disadvantage is also their advantage. The simplicity evident in their story and the equanimity evident in its unfolding remind one of an old saga or the pages from the Bible, which likewise are factual stories, descriptions of unadorned plots, without superfluous facts and nuances.²⁰

“I believe,” he wrote in the same vein to Hanegbi, “that an adult, even the best psychologist, when coming to write the children’s stories, will never write it down in the same truthful, direct way as the children did in my project.”²¹

Ironically, it was Tenenbaum’s single-minded objective of preserving the children’s tales of survival in their own words that almost led Hanegbi to withdraw the book from publication, because in spite of Tenenbaum’s assurance, he was not persuaded that the children themselves were the actual authors of the accounts to appear in the anthology. This concern is understandable because the “autobiographies” evince remarkable acuity for children, the youngest of whom was two when the war started and nine when they wrote their accounts and the oldest of whom were twelve when the war started and nineteen when they wrote their accounts. In other words, all of the child survivors whose testimonies appear in Tenenbaum’s book were very young during the Holocaust, the oldest among them barely on the threshold of adolescence.

Yet the children’s testimonies taken together reflect an expanded consciousness, a remarkably accelerated rate of maturation. As one child survivor, Masha Kaplan, who was eight years old when the war began, confides in her testimony while recounting the events of a German roundup in her ghetto, “Although I was then a little girl, I understood everything. My eyes darkened and I felt myself sinking under my own weight.”²² Adults who had witnessed and shared their misery during the dark years of the Holocaust were acutely aware of this fact. After speaking to a group of children who were street beggars in June 1942, Adam Czerniaków, the chairman of the Jewish Council in the Warsaw Ghetto, confided to his diary, “They talk with me

like grown-ups — those eight-year-old citizens. I am ashamed to admit it, but I wept as I have not wept in a long time.”²³ In the words of Sarah Munk, a surviving teacher who had worked with children in the Warsaw Ghetto whose testimony was recorded in *Dzieci oskarżają*, “The dreadful conditions caused the children to age prematurely.”²⁴ In his memoir, Tenenbaum, coming from Palestine, describes how he too was struck by how the children whom he had encountered had “aged prematurely.”²⁵ It should not surprise that many adults shared this impression. These were, after all, children who, confronted with the Nazis’ genocidal ambitions and the malicious designs of a significant number of local Poles, had by necessity become masters of their own survival in a morally inverted and brutal universe, when there was literally open season on their young lives, in a world in which parental authority and succor had all but vanished when they needed it most. In the process, they had developed razor-edged astuteness and survival skills, set in motion largely by primitive instincts and an almost preternatural will to live while often helping other, frequently even younger, children survive. To take but one of numerous examples from Tenenbaum’s book, born in 1930, Mania Bot was nine years old when the war began. From 1942 she hid in a bunker concealed in the forest with her mother and younger sister. After her mother died in June 1943, she roamed the Polish countryside with her younger sister on her back, begging for food from peasants or gathering stalks of wheat growing in the fields. Mania cared for her sister through the winter until the spring of 1944, when after teaching her to recite Polish prayers, she separated from her. Both sisters, claiming to be Christians, eventually found shelter in Polish homes and survived to the end of the war, when Mania found her younger sibling.²⁶ Mania Bot’s account beggars the imagination, yet it is typical of the accounts that appear in Tenenbaum’s anthology.

Thus it was that already in the early stages of preparing his book, Tenenbaum anticipated that the authenticity of the children’s accounts would be open to challenge. His solution to this potential stumbling block was to include photocopies of examples of the actual testimonies in the children’s own handwriting, to which we have referred earlier. As Tenenbaum wrote to Hanegbi in November 1946, “In this book I want to put many photos, not of the children but of photocopies of their handwriting, the childish handwriting, because I think that I will not be believed, that people will suspect me of exaggeration or embellishment. Let the photocopies prove my point.”²⁷ Nevertheless, on the eve of the anticipated date of the book’s publication, Hanegbi, anticipating potential challenges to the authenticity of the testimonies, was apparently on the verge of scrapping the whole project unless Tenenbaum made substantial changes to the book. He even suggested that Tenenbaum adapt the style found in the testimonies to sound more childlike.

Tenenbaum stood his ground. In a long letter, Tenenbaum admonished Hanegbi. “Don’t jump to conclusions,” he wrote, “before you read the entire manuscript. . . . When you read all of it, you’ll see the obvious differences in style . . . only then will you see the full picture.” His editorial approach, he explained, was dictated by restraint and solicitude for authenticity. “I translated the children’s language, and where they waxed eloquent, I took no pains to simplify it.” “The photographed pages [of the children’s handwritten testimonies] were incorporated for authenticity,” he insisted. “Please read them and you’ll see that it was not I who gave [the testimonies] this eloquent style.” Thus there was no reason to redo their style: “The reader can always see the original style in the [photographed] excerpts we will incorporate, and there he will see the accuracy of the translation.” In the final analysis, he argued, the integrity of the testimonies in the book should not be sought in trivial childish “mistakes, unorganized sentences or biographies where every sentence begins with ‘because’ or ‘when.’” The integrity of the book would be reflected rather in its documentary quality: “I believe we gave here the whole story: the attached poems, the photographed excerpts, the demographic details I inserted at the head of each testimony, ([the child’s] name, [his] age, the name of [his] parents, and [his] date of birth) — all of these give the book the character of a document.”²⁸

In the end, Tenenbaum prevailed. He made some slight editorial changes to the testimonies, correcting spelling and grammatical mistakes and adding punctuation marks. But that is about all he did. He explained his editorial approach to his readers in the introduction to the book: “I did not add one embellishment, I did not improve the language. By contrast, the spare style, as it were, in the writings of the children, has a special melody that cannot be replicated [in spite of the fact that] it is largely fraught with errors and impediments.”²⁹

As Tenenbaum correctly pointed out to Hanegbi, the major distinction between *'Ehad me-ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah* and *Dzieci oskarżają*, prepared by the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland, was that the accounts in his book were authored by the children themselves, while those in the Polish Jewish volume reflected interviews of surviving children mediated by adult interviewers. Unlike *'Ehad me-ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah*, *Dzieci oskarżają* is divided into thematic sections (including sections on life in the ghettos, in camps, on the Aryan side, in hiding, in resistance groups, and even in prison), but otherwise the two anthologies outwardly resemble one another.³⁰

It is important to keep in mind that Tenenbaum’s book and *Dzieci oskarżają* are two examples of a wider contemporary phenomenon — the collection of testimonies from child survivors in the immediate postwar years. A great deal of time and effort was invested in listening to child survivors, recording

their stories, and then publishing them. Some of these initiatives represented official undertakings, such as the testimonies collected by the Central Jewish Historical Commission in Poland that resulted in the publication of *Dzieci oskarżają*. Correspondingly, the Central Historical Commission of the Liberated Jews in the American Zone in Germany conducted a campaign in Displaced Persons camps and schools to gather testimonies from surviving children. Israel Kaplan, the commission's academic secretary, was the leading force in this project and published the testimony of a child survivor in each of the eleven volumes of *Fun letstn khurbn (From the Last Catastrophe)*, the commission's scholarly journal devoted to the Holocaust — the first of its kind. But there were also several private initiatives to gather surviving children's testimonies. Tenenbaum's was one, Helena Wrobel-Kagan's was another. Wrobel-Kagan, a survivor of Bergen-Belsen, opened a Hebrew high school in the camp after its liberation in 1945 and asked each of the students to write an essay entitled, "My Way from Home to Bergen-Belsen." It should be noted that the adults who collected the testimonies of child survivors, Tenenbaum included, regarded the exercise as a therapeutic tool to help the children recover from their psychic wounds.³¹

However, for all that Tenenbaum sought to distinguish his book from *Dzieci oskarżają*, he shared the concern with the editors of the Polish Jewish anthology of children's testimonies that the children's accounts would be deemed inauthentic. In her introduction to that volume, one of its editors, Maria Hochberg-Mariańska goes to great lengths to describe the children's awe-inspiring resolve and fortitude, all in an effort to convince the reader of the genuineness of the testimonies that appear in the book. Apparently unsure herself whether her encomium to the children will suffice, she nonetheless feels compelled to make this point explicit: "The children give their testimonies simply and frankly," she writes. "In their recollections, mostly gathered as early as 1945, there is a tone of freshly experienced pain or hope. In preparing these testimonies, we took pains to preserve those impressions — the authenticity of the children's experiences."³² Moreover, unlike *'Ehad me-ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah*, *Dzieci oskarżają* includes, in its final section, testimonies by Jewish adult survivors who labored to rescue Jewish children during the Holocaust in Poland. Several of them stress the resilience, sheer grit, and equanimity of many Jewish children under Nazi occupation.

It seems clear from both of these two earliest anthologies of child survivors' testimonies — *'Ehad me-ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah* on the one hand and *Dzieci oskarżają* on the other — that in spite of their different intended readerships, both Jewish but one in the *yishuv*, the other in Poland, their respective editors anticipated and sought ways to deflect potential challenges to their authenticity. It is not difficult to understand why. Normal kids just do not write

like that. Of course, that is the point: child survivors of the Holocaust were not like regular children their age, even if, as they often expressed in their testimonies in both anthologies, they wished they could be.

NOTES

1. Benjamin Tenenbaum to David Hanegbi, August 22, 1946, Hashomer Hatzair Archive, Givat Haviva, Israel (hereafter STA), 24.4 (1).
2. Hanegbi to Tenenbaum, June 25, 1946, STA 24.6 (5).
3. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, August 22, 1946, STA 24.4 (1).
4. On the development of Lodz into the center of Jewish life in immediate postwar Poland, see Shimon Redlich, *Life in Transit: Jews in Postwar Lodz, 1945–1950* (Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2010).
5. Benjamin Tene, 'El 'ir ne'urai' (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1979), 123–24.
6. *Ibid.*, 124–25.
7. *Ibid.*, 148.
8. On this undertaking by the Central Jewish Historical Commission, see Feliks Tych, Alfons Kenkmann, Elisabeth Kohlhaas, and Andreas Eberhardt, eds., *Kinder über den Holocaust: Frühe Zeugnisse 1944–1948* (Berlin: Metropol Verlag, 2008). See also Joanna B. Michlic, "The Children Accuse (Poland, 1946): Between Exclusion and Inclusion into the Holocaust Canon," *Newsletter, Society for the History of Children and Youth*, no. 9 (winter 2007), accessed on April 10, 2016, www.history.vt.edu/Jones/SHCY/Newsletter9/michlic/html.
9. Tene, 'El 'ir ne'urai, 148.
10. *Ibid.*, 187.
11. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, August 13, 1946, STA 24.6 (5).
12. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, August 22, 1946, STA 24.4 (1).
13. Tene, 'El 'ir ne'urai, 150.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Benjamin Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah (Merhavia: Sifriyat Poalim, 1947), 6. It is interesting to note that the collection of children's testimonies Tenenbaum gathered (which are available in the original at the archives of Beit Lohamei Ha-Getaot [Ghetto Fighters House] in Israel and on microfilm at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Ghetto Fighters House Archive [GFH], reels 76–80, call numbers 4193–5212), includes many testimonies by children who spent the war in the far reaches of the Soviet Union. Yet Tenenbaum did not include any of these testimonies in his book. Why did he omit them? One possible answer is that the pro-Soviet leanings of *Ha-Shomer Ha-Tsa'ir*, the movement to which he was so devoted, influenced his editorial choice. Another possible answer is that Tenenbaum, like other Jewish authors of his day, was wary of antagonizing the USSR just when its support was required in the struggle for a Jewish state. On the experiences of Polish Jews who had spent the war in the deepest recesses of the Soviet Union, see Laura Jockusch and Tamar Lewinsky, "Paradise Lost? Postwar Memory of Polish Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 24, no. 3 (2010): 373–99.
16. Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah, 58.
17. On the Zionist education of youthful survivors in postwar Poland, see Avinoam J.

Patt, *Finding Home and Homeland: Jewish Youth and Zionism in the Aftermath of the Holocaust* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2009), chap. 2.

18. Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah, 11-12.

19. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, August 22, 1946, STA 24.4 (1).

20. Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah, 6.

21. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, November 23, 1946, STA 24.6 (5).

22. Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah, 150.

23. Raul Hilberg, Stanislaw Staron, and Josef Kermisz, eds., *The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow*, trans. Stanislaw Staron and the Staff of Yad Vashem (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, published in association with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 1999), 366.

24. Maria Hochberg-Mariańska and Noe Grüss, eds., *The Children Accuse*, trans. Bill Johnston (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1996), 235. For the original, see Maria Hochberg-Mariańska and Noe Grüss, eds., *Dzieci oskarżają* (Kraków: Centralna Żydowska Komisja Historyczna w Polsce, 1947), 234 ("Okropne warunki życia przyczyniły się do przedwczesnego rozwoju umysłowego").

25. Tene, 'El 'ir ne'urai, 187 ("yeladim 'eyleh shehizkinu belo' 'eyt").

26. Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah, 208-10.

27. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, November 23, 1946, STA 24.6 (5).

28. Tenenbaum to Hanegbi, September 17, 1947, STA 24.4 (3).

29. Tenenbaum, 'Ehad me-'ir u-shenayim mi-mishpahah, 10-11.

30. On the structure of *Dzieci oskarżają*, see Michlic, "The Children Accuse (Poland, 1946)."

31. For a thorough description and analysis of the extensive postwar Jewish effort to collect the testimonies of child survivors, see Boaz Cohen, "The Children's Voice: Postwar Collection of Testimonies from Child Survivors of the Holocaust," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 21, no. 1 (2007): 73-95. See also Cohen, "Representing the Experience of Children in the Holocaust: Children's Survivor Testimonies in *Fun Letsten Hurbn*, Munich 1946-49," in *We Are Here: New Approaches to Jewish Displaced Persons in Postwar Germany*, ed. Avinoam J. Patt and Michael Berkowitz (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 74-97; and Cohen, "And I Was Only a Child: Children's Testimonies, Bergen-Belsen 1945," *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* 12, nos. 1-2 (2006): 153-69.

32. Hochberg-Mariańska and Grüss, eds., *The Children Accuse*, xxix. For the original, see Hochberg-Mariańska and Grüss, eds., *Dzieci oskarżają*, xxv.