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SEGEV, Tom (2014). *Sedmý milion: Izraelci a holokaust*. Praha – Litomyšl: Nakladatelství Paseka, 542 s. ISBN 978-80-7432-445-1.

RECENZE HANY KUBÁTOVÉ

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Tom Segev, a historian and journalist, bid farewell to the readers of his weekly column for the liberal newspaper *Haaretz* in May 2013. Being true to his association with the Israel's *New Historians*, challenging many of the country's official narratives, Segev revisits in his last column a cabinet meeting of September 1948 and what is maybe more interesting, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion's account of the events. What seemed to catch Segev's interest is that parts of the minutes remained classified, replacing censored lines with rows of dots. As Segev shows, the eight deleted lines of what Ben-Gurion said in that meeting are in contrary with the account of the Israel's very first prime minister. What he proposed – and what was rejected by a majority of one – was not only to capture the southern portion of the West Bank but also to end the truce, renew fighting and deport 100,000 Arab residents. Segev's intent is neither to defame nor to excuse, what he wants is to know the past. Or to borrow Segev's own words, "[i]n order to preserve democracy in their country, its citizens must know their history." [Segev: 2013]

This seems to be the core of a book that made many of his already articulated ideas and notions heard; a book that has been finally – more than ten years after the publication of its Hebrew original and its English-language translation – published in Czech as well. Segev's book *Sedmý milion: Izraelci a holokaust* (The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust) is a passionately argued and well-documented book that revisits the relationship of the Yishuv, the Jewish leadership of Palestine, and the Diaspora vis-à-vis the both Jewish and human tragedy known as the Holocaust or the Shoah. In the last ten years, Segev's book and arguments have been reviewed, criticized and/or praised to such an extent that what remains is a questi-

on how relevant the delayed Czech-language translation still is. As I believe it is becoming increasingly relevant with time. Segev's book, an academic work that captures one's attention as a well written novel, shows both the chasm and ties between historical reality and ideology, the past of the Holocaust and its official narrative created to fit the needs of the state. Narrating the Holocaust as a crime against the State of Israel does not hold up especially as Segev gives numerous arguments showing that the Jewish leaders had other things on mind than the endangered European Jewish communities of the 1930s and 1940s. And while some of his statements – e.g. when he repeatedly speaks how the complicated relation of the Yishuv and the Diaspora led to the great silence of the 1950s – have been refuted by new research, this does not make his book less relevant. On the contrary. The seventh million in the title of his book represents the Israeli society. And while it might be a book about *them*, meaning how *they*, the Israelis, remember the Holocaust and what it became to mean for them, it is no less a book for *us* all, raising the never-ending question: What have we really learned from the Holocaust?

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SOURCE:

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