

Book deals with Holocaust pain

MONTREAL — Few books can boast critical praise from both Elie Wiesel and the Dalai Lama, two Nobel Peace prize winners.

Former Dachau concentration camp inmate Henry Lilienheim's memoir *The Aftermath: A Survivor's Odyssey Through War-Torn Europe* has been called an important contribution to the literature of Holocaust testimony by Wiesel, while the Dalai Lama says "the spirited determination of the Jewish people to survive and succeed has been a great source of inspiration to us Tibetans."

The Aftermath, published by Montreal's DC Books, was actually written in 1947 and is a first-hand account of Lilienheim's search for his wife Lydia through postwar Europe after his liberation.

He discovers a chaotic world in which Germans claim never to have supported Hitler, former camp inmates have become "displaced persons," and his native Warsaw had become a "graveyard."

Ultimately, the couple find each other and begin a new life in the

United States, with their baby daughter and hope for a better future.

The couple had been married before the war and separated during the liquidation of the Vilna ghetto. Both survived the camps.

The manuscript inspired his daughter, Montrealer Irene Lilienheim Angelico's documentary film *Dark Lullabies*, completed a few years ago, which explores the effect of the Holocaust on Jewish survivors' children and on Germans born after the war.

Dark Lullabies won first prize at the International Film Festival in Mannheim, Germany, among other awards.

The Aftermath will be launched Dec. 1 at the McGill University Faculty Club, 3450 McTavish St., from 6-9 p.m.

"I wrote the book primarily because of an intense desire for expression, as a way to ease my pain...Also, I was thinking of my child, thinking that she should know what had happened," said Lilienheim, 86, of Chicago.

The family was living in Munich, where Lilienheim worked

for the American military government as an investigator and was involved with the "de-Nazification" program.

Lilienheim wrote in English because he had the intention of going to American and having it published. But that plan was delayed until this year because Lydia did not want her children to know about their suffering in the camps and be burdened by it.

At first, he dissuaded Irene from making *Dark Lullabies* because he feared she would suffer emotionally.

"Yet when I saw the film, I realized that it was all necessary for her. I am very proud that my manuscript inspired her to make such a great documentary."

Then, Irene persuaded her father to finally publish the manuscript.

Lilienheim hopes the book will have universal appeal. "I see that people are the same everywhere...When the Holocaust becomes exclusively associated with Jewish suffering, it has the potential of denying the suffering of others. I want to speak of evil and violence as a general problem."