The Holocaust, the paradigmatic genocide, was a product of the convergence of a technically efficient, well-educated and cultured bureaucracy, and barbaric intentionality. The Holocaust was a paper-shuffling genocide in that those who planned the operations of extermination for the most part never saw the "final solution" as an accomplished fact. The bureaucratization of genocide profoundly desensitized the bureaucrats who carried it out. A necessary prelude to genocide was the Nazis' barbaric program to dehumanize the Jew, to transform him into the Other, into a parasite, into an object of derision.

Then the outbreak of war in 1939 foreclosed opportunities for expulsion of the Jews from Europe and set the stage for the Holocaust which was carried out primarily on the conquered lands of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

CHAPTER 2

THE HOLOCAUST

by Michael Dobkowski

The attempt by the Nazis and their collaborators to systematically exterminate the Jewish people and most of the Romanies, or Gypsies, during World War II, commonly termed the Holocaust or Shoah in Hebrew, has come to be viewed as the paradigmatic genocide. Adolf Hitler's Third Reich exploited all the advantages of modern technology and bureaucratic organization to transport Jews from the far reaches of Europe to various concentration and killing sites, including ghettos in Eastern Europe and specially constructed extermination camps in occupied Poland where the Jews were starved, subjected to inhumane living conditions, ravaged by disease, shot in mass numbers, and executed in gas chambers as quickly and efficiently as possible. By the time the war was over in 1945, almost six million Jews and several hundred thousand Gypsies had been annihilated. Although not every victim was Jewish, the principal goal of the Nazi plan was to rid Europe, if not the world, of Jews. Mass murder is nothing new, of course. We have seen many tragic examples in history. But genocide is a crime against humanity because it negates human value as such. When the administration of death becomes a bureaucratic procedure, when killing and efficiency are the only values left, then clearly we are faced with something more than the age-old disregard for life.

Bureaucracy and Barbarism

This combination of technological and bureaucratic mass murder and barbaric intentionality has raised
serious questions about the notion of progress; the capacity of human beings to engage in evil and goodness; and the nature of individual and group responsibility. The fact that many of the planners and perpetrators of the Nazi Holocaust were well-educated and cultured only adds to the centrality of the phenomenon. Three of the four Einsatzgruppen that were responsible for killing approximately one million Jews in the East by shooting were commanded by Ph.D.s. Twenty-three doctors at Auschwitz selected well over a million Jews to the gas chambers. The engineers, architects, jurists, bureaucrats, teachers, chemists, and others who were involved in designing the camps, furthering racist propaganda and segregation, expropriating Jewish property, subverting the rule of law, transporting the victims to the death camps, manufacturing the Zyklon B gas, and directing and profiting from slave labor were central, not incidental, parts of the killing process. And this all occurred in the twentieth century, in the middle of Europe, the font of modernism and culture. The Holocaust is, therefore, of utmost importance since it occurred in this century and was perpetrated by people who, at least ostensibly, were nurtured in Western civilization and values.

**Intentionalism Versus Functionalism**

In the last several years, debate has emerged among historians about how and why the Nazis came to pursue the Final Solution. Was it a premeditated policy or did the general circumstances of the war or other social and economic forces serve as a catalyst to propel it? The "intentionalists" see Hitler as the driving force of Nazi policy and find a high degree of consistency and order in Nazi anti-Semitic policy. "The War Against the Jews," as Lucy Dawidowicz called it, was from a very early point the goal of the Nazis. They discern a rather direct road from the anti-Semitic policies of the 1930's to genocide in the 1940s. The "functionalists," in contrast, view the Third Reich as a maze of competing groups, personalities, and rival bureaucracies. Hitler is portrayed as a leader who certainly despised the Jews, but who preferred to delegate authority and who intervened on the Jewish question only occasionally. Annihilation policies were improvised and emerged out of the chaotic system itself. The road to Auschwitz was "twisted."

**Was the Holocaust Unique?**

The debate between the "intentionalists" and the "functionalists" revolves essentially around another controversial question of whether the Holocaust should be viewed as a unique event or as merely the latest, possibly the most heinous, example of inhumanity in history. If the Holocaust should prove to be unique, the factors that make it so can be drawn upon for a better understanding of not only the Holocaust but also other examples of mass death. It has been argued that the Holocaust is unique because of its scope; the unprecedented involvement of the legal and administrative apparatus; the horrible treatment meted out to the individuals to be annihilated; the ideological passion of the killers; the concerted ideological and religious campaign directed against the victims; the degree of intentionality of the killers and the planners of the Final Solution; the varied physical and psychological techniques used to reify the intended victims; and the bureaucratic and technological aspects of the mass death.

**The Paper-Shuffling Genocide**

In order to understand how thousands of intellectuals, students, scientists, jurists, and bureaucrats were able to cross the moral barrier that made massacre in the millions possible, it is necessary to consider the dehumanizing capacities of bureaucracy in modern political and social organizations. In the Nazi state, or more specifically in the S.S. offices in Berlin, the Reich Security Main Office, an inconspicuous series of offices in an even more inconspicuous building, on the Prinz Albrechtstrasse, and the S.D. headquarters around the corner on the Wilhemstrasse, bureaucrats like Adolph Eichmann manipulated numbers on paper and shuffled those papers to other officials, and a few hundred miles away countless tens of thousands were condemned to a brutal death. They never had to, and often never did, see the results of their paper-shuffling genocide.

Bureaucratic murder was seen in clearest relief on 20 January 1942 at the Wannsee Conference which was called by Hermann Goring and presided over by Reinhard Heydrich, head of the S.D., to coordinate the process of annihilation within the S.S., to enlist the help of other state agencies, and most importantly to extend the process of annihilation throughout German-occupied Europe. The fifteen men who gathered around the table of the elegant villa in a posh Berlin suburb overlooking the Grosser Wannsee lake for their eighty-five minute meeting, interrupted occasionally for light refreshment and drink, included high level functionaries from the S.S., the S.D., and the Gestapo who were old hands at the process of extermination. The other participants came from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Foreign Office, the Party Chancellery, the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, the Office of the Four-Year Plan, and the Office of the Governor General of Poland. The government officials were senior civil servants beneath
the cabinet level, and eight of the fifteen held doctorates. Under the mask of geniality and old-boy friendships and a *gemütlich* atmosphere, the most chilling discussion took place sealing the fate of millions of Jews.

Heydrich reviewed the history of the campaign against the Jews. He then listed the numbers of Jews believed to be alive in each European country, from several hundred in Albania to over five million in the Soviet Union, totalling more than eleven million. All were to be included in the Final Solution.

The Banality of Evil

Everyone in attendance had long since stopped thinking of Jews as human beings. No one, therefore, raised objections to the fundamental policy of exterminating the Jewish people. The issues discussed were logistical and public relational; occasionally inter-agency rivalries surfaced. According to the official record of the meeting, more time was spent on the problem of the part-Jews—Mischlinge—than any other issue. What occurred at that meeting was a demonstration of the bureaucratization of the Nazi Holocaust, of the banality of evil at work, re-inforced by the collective legitimation of a group mentality.¹

Raul Hilberg, Hannah Arendt, Richard Rubenstein, Robert Jay Lifton, Zygmunt Bauman, Berel Lang, and others have noted that in order to make it possible to kill the Jews, mechanisms and institutions were created that blocked traditional concepts of individual morality and responsibility.² Psychologically, people must not be allowed to feel guilt when they destroy others. Here is where the concerted ideological anti-Semitism comes into play; here is the importance of the campaign that turned the Jew into the Other, into a parasite, an object of derision, that caused the Jew to be reduced to shaven heads and tattooed arms and then to refuse to be consumed by gas and fire.

The Milieu of Anti-Semitism

The campaign against the Jews came out of a milieu that nurtured anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism had been one of the cardinal elements of Hitler’s world view from the very outset. It also informed much of the political rhetoric of National Socialism during its formative stage. Nazi ideology saw in the Jews a universal devilish element threatening the integrity and mission of the German nation or Volk. In Hitler’s mind, the threat the Jews posed formed the matrix of his ideology. As "Semitic" they were a foreign race mongrelizing the Germanic stock of the nation; as democrats, they weakened the ability of the nation to express itself through a "national" leader and "idea"; as Marxists and Socialists, they were dedicated to the defeat of Germany; as Jews, they were interested in domination; and so on.³ The point is, by placing Jews at the center of what threatened Germany and Europe, Nazism was able to harness people’s energy and direct it in a particular direction. They dehumanized the Jews and stripped them of any human qualities. This was the necessary ideological prelude to a genocidal policy that turned idea into genocidal reality.

The transformation came soon after Hitler, shaped by the pseudo-messianic concept of saving humanity from the Jews, was invested with power. Anti-Semitism now became official state policy. German Jews were publicly reviled, beaten, boycotted, delegitimized, expelled from the professions, and expropriated. As Hannah Arendt, Richard Rubenstein and others have pointed out, when Jews lost their citizenship rights, when they became surplus populations with no rights and protected by no one, they became susceptible to genocide. Kristallnacht, on 9-10 November 1938, capped this first orgy of violence and discrimination with the destruction of nearly four hundred synagogues, thousands of Jewish businesses and institutions, and countless physical assaults and large-scale arrests. At least ninety-one Jews were killed and thirty thousand Jewish males were incarcerated in Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen concentration camps. This was the prelude to the Final Solution in Europe. The murder program went largely unopposed because of the pervasive, moderate anti-Semitism that was a part of European culture and that prepared the way and then prevented effective resistance.

War Made Genocide Possible

The outbreak of war in September 1939 foreclosed opportunities for expulsion of Jews at the same time that it brought millions of additional Jews in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union under German authority. It also provided the conditions that made genocide possible. The conquest of Poland was followed by the brutal ghettoization and relocation of Polish Jewry as part of the policy of extermination. As mobile death squads, Einsatzgruppen, fanned out along the eastern front, spreading havoc and death, attention behind the lines was given to ghettoization which would ultimately send hundreds of thousands of Jews to the slave labor and death camps in occupied Poland and the Greater Reich. Those who were capable of working were put to work in the ghettos, albeit under intolerable conditions calculated to kill as many as possible through starvation, cold, and disease. The Nazis set up *Judenräte*, or Jewish councils, responsible for overseeing the daily activities in the ghetto and providing some infrastructure of services. These councils were desper-
ate and beleaguered institutions that generally attempted to ameliorate the suffering of the victims but were the inevitable, if unwilling, pawns of the oppressors. In the end, the vast majority of Europe’s Jews perished, though not without resistance. The story of Jewish resistance is one of hope and unbelievable courage against overwhelming odds. The Jews were no match for the state power and well-oiled military machine of the Nazis. Resistance, in a pure military sense, was doomed to failure.

Many Jews died in the ghettos, but not quickly enough. The Nazis felt more radical solutions were needed. Before 1941, a network of concentration camps was established in areas occupied by the Nazis. These camps, like Dachau, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, and Sachsenhausen, were horrific places that held opponents of the regime and served as slave labor depots. Nevertheless, unlike the annihilation camps, the concentration camps were not necessarily part of the systematic program of annihilation. Many thousands died there, but many others managed to work and survive.

In contrast, the annihilation camps were built in Poland near the largest concentrations of Jews in Europe and the ghettos, in close proximity to railroads and near populations that might be considered indifferent to the fate of the Jews. The first to be put into operation was Chelmno or Kulmhof in December 1941. It was followed by Belzec in March 1942, Sobibor in May 1942, Treblinka in July 1942, and Maidanek in August 1942. Fewer than 100 Jews survived the camps at Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka. More than 1.5 million Jews and some 50,000 Gypsies were murdered in those places. 4

The methods of annihilation varied. At first, mobile gas vans were used to asphyxiate the victims. Technical people at Reich Security Main Office headquarters designed a tightly closed truck with the cab sealed off from the freight section. They converted Saurer truck chassis into vans with closed compartments that could hold about eighty people. The carbon monoxide exhaust was diverted into the compartment. Chelmno, about forty miles northeast of Lodz, experimented with them first on 8 December 1941. In the spring, the same method was used at Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka. Here, too, diesel engines were used but in fixed installations. The same was initially true of the largest killing center, Auschwitz in Eastern Upper Silesia, where between 1 1/2 and 2 1/2 million people died. At Auschwitz, as later in Maidanek near Lublin, a crystalline form of hydrogen cyanide that turned gaseous when exposed to the air was used for the killing. This chemical, marketed as a disinfectant and manufactured by a Frankfurt firm called Degesch, went by the trade name Zyklon B. The first experiments with Zyklon B were conducted on 3 September 1941 at Auschwitz on some six hundred Russian POWs and another 250 sick prisoners from the camp hospital. Systematic operations began in January 1942. Transports from all over Europe brought Jews to Auschwitz. Soon, gas chambers disguised as shower rooms were installed as were crematoria, with forty-six ovens in all. They had a capacity to burn from 12,000 to 20,000 bodies a day. Tens of thousands of other victims were burned in open air pits.

It is impossible to know precisely how many Jews died during the Holocaust. Somewhere between 5.1 and 5.9 million Jews perished—nearly two-thirds of European Jewry and one-third of the Jews in the world lost their lives. In addition to this human tragedy that grips our sensibilities and shocks our sense of values, there is also the cultural, intellectual, and religious tragedy of the destruction of European Jewry, a world, a way of life, that can never be replaced. In the end, millions participated in and assented to this policy: those who knew it was happening but let it continue, as well as those who contributed to it more directly. Even the Allies did not make rescue of the Jews a priority. They all carry a share of the responsibility for this genocidal event.

The Challenge We Face Today

We are at a crucial turning point with respect to the level of sensitivity and awareness of the importance of the Holocaust. There may have been a time not very long ago when one could assume a degree of common understanding of the Holocaust and common feeling for its victims, but no such consensus exists today. The problem is that the further events fade into the past, the more the construction of convenient truth grows and is perfected. Time is an enemy of the Holocaust. More and more shrill voices insist it never happened. Worse yet may be those who want to relativize the Holocaust or to universalize and trivialize it by theorizing that Hitler had good reason to fear the Jews or that Nazi atrocities were not unusual and must be seen in the light of Soviet atrocities and the political standards of the period. This tendency to deny or to minimize the veracity and uniqueness of the Holocaust is likely to increase with German unification. With the passage of time, the past loses its truth unless its most pointed lessons are continually reiterated and underscored. That is the challenge we face today.

NOTES


4. See Rubenstein, 22-35.


Chapter 2: Annotated Bibliography

General Works

* 2.1 *  

The Hungarian Jewish community remained relatively untouched until the Spring of 1944 when the Nazis began deportations to Auschwitz; Adolf Eichmann played a pivotal role in the process. Braham shows that many Hungarians assisted the Nazis. This is the definitive study of the Holocaust in Hungary.

* 2.2 *  

In what is probably the most widely read work on the Holocaust, Dawidowicz argues that World War II was a two-fold war. The Nazis had conventional objectives such as territory, power, and wealth. They also unleashed a "war against the Jews" motivated by ideology and anti-Semitism. Hitler intended the genocide and World War II provided an effective vehicle to accomplish it. A useful appendix indicates the fate of the Jews, country by country.

* 2.3 *  

Fleming bases his position on material from British, American, and Soviet archives. He makes a strong case for the thesis that Hitler was instrumental in planning and implementing the "Final Solution." He refutes revisionists like David Irving who argues for Hitler's limited knowledge of and participation in the genocide.

* 2.4 *  

A distinguished British historian, using documents and survivor accounts, describes the Holocaust from the perspective of the victims. He provides detailed accounts of the suffering as well as the valor of the Jews.

* 2.5 *  

In a scholarly sociological analysis of the social, political, and economic situation of Polish Jews between the world wars, Heller develops the context to explain why Polish Jews fared so badly during the Holocaust. Her discussion of Polish anti-Semitism is particularly informative.

* 2.6 *  
In one of the most important works written on the Holocaust, Hilberg provides a masterly analysis and synthesis of the mechanism of genocide, including the bureaucratic process. He proposes the notion of the "machinery of destruction" that developed in stages, the result of decisions taken by countless decision makers. The bureaucrats were not operating on a different moral plane. Hilberg is also unsparing in his critique of Jewish passivity. He claims that the Jews displayed an almost complete lack of resistance. They complied easily to most decrees. At times they even moved ahead of the Germans in what he calls "anticipatory compliance." Critics point out that Hilberg relied excessively on German sources and was remarkably thin in his discussion of the inner world of diverse Jewish communities.

* 2.7 *

Koonz examines the role of women in Nazi Germany and the effects that Nazism had on the family and women generally. She argues that Nazism's attitudes toward women and gender were second only to racism in structuring the new German society and defining its enemies. She also focuses on the women's movement in Germany, women resisters, and the fate of Jewish women.

* 2.8 *

This is the complete text of Lanzmann's 9 1/2 hour film, which consists of interviews with victims, perpetrators and bystanders as well as selected documents. The film is particularly insightful on the role and attitudes of the non-Jewish Poles, which he found to be quite hostile to Jews.

* 2.9 *

Marrus and Paxton argue that collaboration with the Nazis went particularly far in France. Vichy officials not only persecuted Jews as ordered by the Nazis, but initiated their own anti-Semitic policies and agendas. By 1942 Vichy had banned Jews from engaging in certain professions and expropriated Jewish property. For many Vichy officials, the roundup and deportation of about 75,000 Jews that began in 1942 were simply a continuation of a program deemed by many to be in the French national interest.

* 2.10 *

Mayer places what he terms "Judeocide" in the broad context of anti-Semitism and the specific setting of the Nazis' war against Bolshevism. He argues that the latter was more important than the former in Nazi plans to exterminate the Jews. Nazi Germany did not begin its "systematic" mass murder of the Jews, Mayer believes, until its crusade against Bolshevism ran aground in 1942. Mayer's book is a massive synthesis of scholarship.

* 2.11 *

Mendelsohn offers an ambitious study of the demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural condition of East Central European Jewry before World War II. He concludes that the Jews in this region faced a crisis by 1939. The economic base was severely eroded and democracy was under challenge. While there was little anti-Semitism in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and the Baltic states, the large Jewish populations of Poland, Rumania, and Hungary experienced great difficulty.

* 2.12 *

Reitlinger, a British historian, provides one of the earliest scholarly books on the Holocaust. He documents the evolution of the events and policies that led to the Final Solution.

* 2.13 *

Schleunes demonstrates how contradictory the Nazi policies and aims concerning the Jews occasionally were. He believes this confusing situation lasted until 1938, when a more coherent anti-Jewish policy was formulated. Until then, competing interests in the Nazi hierarchy led to confusion and lack of coordination. It was only after the outbreak of war, when Hitler felt secure in his power, that he helped formulate the "final solution."

* 2.14 *
Yahil provides a sweeping analysis of the Holocaust. Although she bases her work primarily on secondary sources, the author skillfully synthesizes this material to provide one of the most comprehensive and readable one-volume histories of the Holocaust.

Theoretical and Historical Works

* 2.15 *
Arendt originally wrote this assessment of the Eichmann trial for the New Yorker. Her conclusions prompted a debate on the nature of evil and on the role of the Jews, particularly the Jewish councils, in the destruction of the Jewish people. The book became a center of much controversy, chiefly due to her notion of the banality of evil and her criticism of Jewish leadership. The Nazis could not have been as effective without the cooperation of the victims. For Arendt there was no special Jewish predilection for passivity. Rather, Jewish reactions were part of the moral collapse the Nazis caused in European society. Her analysis is flawed by its lack of attention to the historicity of the events described.

* 2.16 *
Bauman provides an original set of reflections on racism, extermination, rationality, individual responsibility in criminal societies, and the sources of obedience and resistance. Bauman rejects the tendency to reduce the Holocaust to an episode in Jewish history or to see it as unique. Rather, he argues that it is rooted in the very nature of modern society. The Holocaust reveals the negative side of instrumental rationality and shows how this principle can generate moral indifference on a massive scale.

* 2.17 *
Imprisoned in Dachau and Buchenwald in the late 1930s, Bettelheim drew on that experience to develop a theory of survival. He stresses the notion of individual autonomy and sense of self. The Nazis set out to dehumanize their victims, to break down their autonomy. Bettelheim asserts that prisoners in the camp exhibited child-like behavior, identified with the SS, and fell into an "anonymous mass" without social organization. Critics have contended that his psychological models derive from his own experiences of camp life and may not apply to the even more brutal and genocidal regimes introduced a few years later.

* 2.18 *
Breiman argues that Himmler, the head of the S.S., was the true architect of the Holocaust. Although Hitler conceived the idea, set the tone of the regime and issued the decisive orders, it was Himmler who worked out the design and implementation. Breiman describes how military and diplomatic factors, economic restraints, the opportunities provided by war, and the pressures of "scientific" research affected the timing and scope of the Holocaust.

* 2.19 *
The authors present over two dozen cases of genocide from antiquity to the present, expanding the U.N. definition to include political and social groups. They classify genocides according to the motives of the perpetrators; to eliminate a real or potential threat; to spread terror among real or potential enemies; to acquire wealth; and to implement an ideology. In the twentieth century, the ideological genocides have become the most important type.

* 2.20 *
The author investigates the use of technology to control human behavior. He explores the evolution of the Eugenics movement; the origins of Nazi racist theories in late nineteenth century Europe and America; and the way these theories merged with social, political, and cultural conditions in Germany in the 1930s to make genocide possible.

* 2.21 *
Dwork bases her study on hundreds of oral histories conducted with survivors who were children in the Holocaust, as well as on wide documentation including diaries, letters and photos. She expands the definition of resistance by examining the activities of people—primarily women—who helped Jews. By
focusing on children, the most vulnerable members of the community, she demonstrates how European society functioned during the war years. This study clarifies the horror of the Nazi genocide and those who assisted it.

* 2.22 *

Using social science techniques, Fein attempted to determine why Jewish death rates were so high in some countries and relatively low in others. She examined such variables as the extent of SS control; the character of the local government; the level of anti-Semitism; the location of the country; the amount of warning time; and the size and influence of the Jewish community. She found that in those countries where Jews were viewed as inhabiting the same "universe of moral obligation," resistance to Nazism was greatest. In nine of the twenty-two states or regions occupied by or allied to Germany, fewer than fifty percent of the Jews were killed.

* 2.23 *

A psychiatrist survivor attributes his survival to the development of a philosophy which focuses on the meaning of life. That philosophy led Frankl to formulate an existential theory of psychiatric practice which he calls "logotherapy." According to logotherapy, we can discover the meaning of life in three different ways: by creating a work or doing a deed; by experiencing something or encountering someone; and by the attitude we take toward unavoidable suffering. In the Nazi concentration camp, the third way remained an option even in the worst situations because Frankl believes we retain control of our attitudes toward our own suffering. For this reason, he rejects the Bettelheim thesis that those who became more like their tormentors had the best chance of living.

* 2.24 *

One of the pioneers of Holocaust history, Friedman, a Polish-Jewish survivor and historian, devoted himself, until his death in 1960, to the study of the Holocaust. In this collection of his major essays, he examines the Holocaust from two points of view: that of German policy and that of Jewish reaction. One long essay is on the annihilation of Lvov's Jews, which he witnessed; another deals with Ukrainian-Jewish relations under the Nazis.

* 2.25 *

Hartman includes a comprehensive group of essays on the moral and political implications of the Bitburg affair. President Reagan's visit to the cemetery where Waffen SS lie buried and the general reaction to the controversy suggest that we may have reached a point of saturation with regard to Holocaust issues. The book includes Theodore W. Adorno's previously unpublished analysis of moral dilemmas generated by the Holocaust and Saul Friedlander's essay on the "new revisionism."

* 2.26 *

One of modern Germany's most distinguished philosophers, tackles the issue of German guilt. He develops four categories of guilt: criminal guilt, political guilt, moral guilt and metaphysical guilt. Criminal guilt is the result of crimes having been committed. Jurisdiction lies with the courts. Political guilt involves the actions of leaders and the citizenry. Jurisdiction lies with the victors. Moral guilt emerges from the responsibility of each person for all his or her deeds. Jurisdiction rests with the individual's conscience. Metaphysical guilt derives from the co-responsibility every human being shares for evil in the world. Jaspers' definitions may be too restrictive, thus absolving too many of the guilty.

* 2.27 *

The authors argue for the singular nature of the Holocaust by focusing on the Holocaust universe of the death camps—the systematic dehumanization of the victims; the technology of mass death; and the bureaucratic organization on a wide scale. From the perspective of the "ash-darkened prisms" of post-Holocaust sensibility, they analyze how and why the three pillars of Western civilization—law, religion, and science—failed to prevent the Holocaust.

30 GENOCIDE

In a series of philosophically sophisticated essays, Lang rigorously examines the relationship between act and idea. He argues that the events of the Nazi genocide compel reconsideration of such fundamental moral concepts as individual and group responsibility, the role of knowledge in ethical decisions, and the conditions governing the relation between guilt and forgiveness. He also analyzes the questions of how we write about the Nazi genocide; issues of memory and institutionalization; and the teaching of the Holocaust. Lang rejects Robert J. Lifton’s notion of doubling. The divided self is not divided at all, he says. It is constructed by the Nazis in order to avoid admitting what a unified self would have to admit—the knowledge of evil.


The authors draw parallels between the Nazi Holocaust and Lifton’s concept of nuclearism, focusing on the "disassociative process" which permits individuals to avoid knowing the meaning or consequences of their own actions.


Lifton argues that there was a special affinity between Nazism and a perverted medical outlook he calls the "Nazi biomedical vision." Drawing heavily on eugenic ideas, the Nazi doctor viewed the German nation as a biological organism which was threatened by a kind of collective illness, the source of which was the Jews. How could physicians trained as healers become killers? They did so through "doubling," forming a second, relatively autonomous self—a process enhanced by the Nazi vision of a racially pure German people. There is a dialectic between the two selves. The Nazi doctor needed the Auschwitz self in order to function in an environment so opposed to his previous ethical principles. At the same time he needed his prior self in order to continue to see himself as a humane individual. Chapters on Drs. Joseph Mengele and Eduard Wirths are quite revealing. See also 7.27.


Marrus skillfully integrates the historiography of the Holocaust into the general developments of historical scholarship. He examines the issues of uniqueness; the debate between intentionalists and functionalists; the role of the allies, the victims, Jewish resistance, and bystanders; and the issue of rescue. His is a comprehensive, useful assessment of the vast historical scholarship on the Holocaust.


Miller attempts to analyze and interpret how the Holocaust affects the peoples and governments of West Germany, Austria, France, the Netherlands, the USSR, and the United States. She argues that, although each country experienced the Holocaust differently, all use the same techniques to consciously and unconsciously shape their memories—denial, trivialization, rationalization, shifting of blame.


Rubenstein analyzes the socioeconomic and cultural forces of modernity that produce surplus populations and that lead to genocidal tendencies. The situation of Europe’s Jews became progressively more hopeless as the economies of Western and Eastern Europe were modernized. He believes that there is a direct relationship between the rationalization of agriculture, the creation of surplus populations, and the potential for genocide.


In this brief but highly suggestive book, Rubenstein argues that the Holocaust was the result of structural and institutional factors prevalent in Western civilization. He places the Holocaust on a continuum that begins in the Judeo-Christian tradition, continues in slavery, and ends in the faceless, mindless bureaucracy of the twentieth century. Genocide is most likely to occur when people refuse to extend the benefits and protection of their societies to strangers. Genocide is the ultimate expression of absolute rightlessness.
* 2.35 * 

Sereny provides one of the most revealing and insightful portraits of a Nazi. The book is based on interviews with Franz Stangl, the commandant of Treblinka, held while he was in prison in 1971. Stangl is morally blind to the crimes he committed.

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**THE GHETTO EXPERIENCE**

* 2.36 * 

Based on Lucjan Dobroszycki’s rich archive of ghetto materials, this book is an elaboration of his *Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto*. It is made up of diaries, photographs and other documents, including speeches by Judenrat head Mordecai Chaim Rumkowski. The section on Rumkowski supports the view that he acquiesced in the Nazi liquidation of the Lodz Ghetto.

* 2.37 * 

Arad, who was to become the chair of the board of directors of Yad Vashem, chronicles the destruction of the ghetto of Vilna. His account covers Vilna from 1941 to 1944.

* 2.38 * 

Baker examines the career of Rabbi Leo Baeck, the leading liberal Jewish theologian and Rabbi in Germany, who decided to stay with his people and was sent with them to Theresienstadt, where he was an inspiration. Baker also examines the umbrella organization for German Jews from mid-1939 on that was the counterpart of the East European Judenraternach—the Reichsvereinigung, or National Union of Jews in Germany. He suggests a complicated picture of complicity and resistance, of acquiescence and struggle.

* 2.39 * 

Raphael Schäcter was a young orchestra conductor, imprisoned in the Terezin concentration camp. Schäcter was determined to perform Verdi’s Requiem at the camp, feeling that it captured the fate and hope of his people. Despite overwhelming odds, he succeeded. It is an inspiring story of human dignity and determination.

* 2.40 * 

Lodz was the second largest ghetto. It originally contained 163,000 people with deportees continually being added from elsewhere. When the war ended, 877 Jews were left. The Department of Archives in the ghetto worked to record everything that went on. Dobroszycki, a survivor of the ghetto, provides the introduction and analysis of these excerpts from the archives.

* 2.41 * 

In order to understand the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, Gutman looks beyond the ghetto itself to consider the broader character of Jewish public life as it took shape during the occupation and ghettoization periods. A survivor of the uprising, he argues that the Poles could have done more, particularly the Armia Krajowa, the Home Army. Once the uprising began in the spring of 1943, the Jews were supported by the relatively weak and poorly armed Communist resistance, the Armia Ludowa, but were brutally opposed by the Polish Right.

* 2.42 * 

The diary begins in 1939 when Czerniakow became the head of the Warsaw Judenrat and ends abruptly on 23 July 1942, the day of his death. Czerniakow gives historical information and records the day-to-day problems of a Jewish bureaucrat trying to function under intolerable circumstances. His diary entries show him to have been a courageous man crushed by the terrible burdens he faced. He took his life in the summer of 1942 rather than give orders for deportations.

* 2.43 * 
In the fall of 1941, Romania exiled an estimated 150,000 Jews to Moghiliev-Podolski in the Occupied Soviet Ukraine. The 56-year-old Siegfried Jagendorf was among the deportees. He took control of the Jewish ghetto and established a hospital, a soup kitchen, and orphanages. With a hand-picked team of Jewish professionals and craftsmen, Jagendorf restored a foundry that became the center of an effort that would save over 10,000 lives. In this memoir, skillfully edited and commented on by Hirt-Manheimer, Jagendorf chronicles the daily struggles of the deportees and how they were saved.

• 2.44 *
Kaplan, a Hebrew school principal who lived in Warsaw and died not long after deportations began in 1942, chronicles daily activities in the Warsaw Ghetto from September 1939 to August 1942. It is a record of persecution, the Nazi conquest of Poland, the relationship of the Jews with their Polish neighbors, and the internal life of the ghetto.

• 2.45 *
In this diary, a courageous Warsaw pediatrician and head of a Jewish orphanage reveals his thoughts and feelings. What emerges is a picture of a man of compassion and dignity who stayed in the ghetto with his charges. He has become a symbol of selfless devotion.

• 2.46 *
Ringelbaum’s Journal is an invaluable source on the organization, religious life, and human side of the ghetto. The notes, which go up to the uprising in 1943, reveal, in powerful and poignant detail the impact of the war on the daily life and fate of the ghetto Jews. It is one of the classic works on the Holocaust, written by a perceptive social historian.

• 2.47 *
Tory’s diary is an account of life and death in the ghetto of Kovno, Lithuania, from June 1941 to January 1944. It incorporates his collection of official documents, Jewish council reports and original photographs and drawings made in the ghetto. He shows the determination of the Jews to sustain their community in the midst of terror.

• 2.48 *
Trunk attempts to deal with the perplexing problem of the Jewish councils under Nazi occupation. He focuses on the conditions, external and internal, under which they performed and their motivations and results. Unlike Arendt, who was quick to generalize, Trunk relies on detail and nuance. He emphasizes that the context was constant terror, death, and intimidation. Some Councils supported resistance and others opposed it. Some were run well and democratic; others were corrupt and class-ridden.

• 2.49 *
Tushnet studied the behavior of the leaders of the Judenrat of Warsaw, Lodz, and Vilna, using archival material and interviews with survivors. The conclusions concerning these men are still controversial. Tushnet believes Czerniakow, Rumkowski, and Gens were men who had good intentions with very limited options. Criticism of them should be tempered by the context.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS

• 2.50 *
Allied soldiers liberated concentration camps at Buchenwald, Dachau, Bergen Belsen, Mauthausen, Ohdruf, and Nordhausen, and other sites. Abzug attempts to assess their impact on the liberating soldiers. He captures their emotions—a combination of shock, anger, shame, guilt, disgust, and fear. He also attempts to understand the immediate and long-range consequences of their discoveries on the public mind.

• 2.51 *
Between 1942 and 1943, under the code name Operation Reinhard, more than 1 1/2 million Jews were gassed in the concentration camps of Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka, located in Nazi-occupied Poland. There
were less than 200 Jewish survivors. Arad describes these camps with meticulous detail—their physical layouts, the process of extermination, the revolts and escapes, the day-to-day lives of those spared immediate deaths.

* 2.52 *

Founded in 1925, I. G. Farben was a huge chemical conglomerate in Germany. During the Nazi era, Farben mobilized to support the war. Building and operating the slave-labor camp at Auschwitz, it was responsible for the deaths of thousands of prisoners. About 35,000 slaves were used at Auschwitz. Over 25,000 died. I. G. Farben derived huge profits from its subsidiary, DEGESH, which manufactured Zyklon B, the gas used to annihilate hundreds of thousands of people in Auschwitz’s gas chambers. Borkin chronicles this tragic tale and the relatively light punishment meted out to its chief executives. As the cold war intensified, it apparently was in American interests to have a strong Germany as a buffer to the Soviets. Hence the leniency of the courts.

* 2.53 *

In a landmark study and analysis of the phenomenon of the survivor, Des Pres interprets survivor memoirs, by such authors as Chaim Kaplan, Alexander Donat, Primo Levi, Gerda Klein, Elie Wiesel, and others. He chronicles both the inhuman suffering and the inspiring dignity of the survivor. He argues that there is a "system" to survival, the existence of a biological-ethical imperative to survive. The memoirs he cites provide an immediacy to the experience and immerse the reader in the emotional horror of the camps.

* 2.54 *

Hitler’s Death Camps is a well-documented history of the nineteen major collection and annihilation camps used by the Nazis against the Jews. Notwithstanding the horror of these places, they operated efficiently and all too effectively. This was their "sanity." Feig also examines the indifference of the Allies and the Polish government in exile.

* 2.55 *

Ferencz describes the complicity of major German firms in the Holocaust, particularly on the issue of slave labor and their refusal to accept either legal or moral responsibility for their crimes. Ferencz also analyzes the post-war trials of the major actors and why they received such light sentences.

* 2.56 *

The author, a Polish sociologist and survivor of Auschwitz, brings social science insights and techniques to an examination of the sociology of survival in Auschwitz. She discusses the effect of differences in social background on survival. She challenges Bettelheim’s theory that those who identified with their aggressors were best able to survive. She found, instead, that inmates who shared and who maintained their humanity defied camp conditions. She corroborates Viktor Frankl’s insight that individuals were not powerless to affect their fate. Survival for some purpose and having a vision of life after the camps were useful coping mechanisms.

**SURVIVOR ACCOUNTS**

* 2.57 *

Delbo, a non-Jewish survivor of Auschwitz and other concentration camps, provides a powerful, stark account of her experiences.

* 2.58 *

In one of the more powerful and insightful Holocaust memoirs, Donat, a Polish Jew, tells how he and his wife and son survived the Warsaw Ghetto and Maidanek. His memoir, though notable for its restraint, provides extensive details of his experiences. There is the anguish of self-doubt as Donat reflects on the meaning of life and death.
Justice, he pleads for his people. He is also consumed by guilt because he is not sharing in their suffering.


Like Anne Frank, Flinker kept a diary of his Holocaust experiences. The Flinkers were Orthodox Jews who lived in Holland. They fled to Belgium where they lived until they were betrayed by an informer. The family was sent to Auschwitz where the parents and their eighteen-year old son, Moshe, were killed. In this reflective diary, the gifted Moshe struggles with questions of Jewish suffering and God's justice. He engages in a theodicy which rivals some of the most probing examinations. While he questions divine justice, he pleads for his people. He is also consumed by guilt because he is not sharing in their suffering.


A young Jewish girl, with her parents and sister, hid in an attic in Amsterdam for more than two years during which time she kept a diary. The diary tells of her fears, frustrations, hopes, her growing into young womanhood. It is very perceptive and poignant, providing her responses to the wonder of growing up and to the terror of being a Jew in Nazi Europe. She has become the symbol of the Jewish tragedy for the non-Jewish world. This is perhaps the most widely known of all the Holocaust books.


Hillesum, a highly educated and assimilated Dutch Jew was a remarkable young woman who kept her journals from 1941-43. Her entries are intimate and frank. The Holocaust enters obliquely. She notes the appearance of a German soldier, the suicide of a professor, the relentless proliferation of restrictions. We see her transformation from a pleasure-seeking young woman into a person capable of confronting deep moral and religious questions. The diary ends in September 1943 on her deportation to Auschwitz where she died.


Gerda Klein was fifteen when the Nazis invaded her native Poland. In her powerful narrative, she speaks of friendship and cooperation among the victims, the struggle to survive, and the horrors of the camps. It ends on the positive note of liberation and the journey to rebuild a shattered life.


This is a brief, sometimes angry memoir of a Hungarian Jewish survivor who was in her teens when transported to Auschwitz with her five siblings and mother. She is slow to forgive the Germans.


Leitner continues her story with the liberation. She tells of her journey, with her two surviving sisters, to the United States where they are reunited with their father.


In one of the best-known of the Holocaust memoirs, Levi describes the absurd routines of the camp, how the black market worked, the struggle of survival. He has insightful comments about memory and falsification, friendship and human weakness, and the power of language. He is as interested in how human beings react to unspeakable torment as in what influences the tormentor. He argues forcefully against the simplification of the experience.


In one of the most disturbing of Holocaust memoirs, the author depicts the life of a Sonderkommando who witnessed first-hand the horrors inside the crematoria and gas chambers. He somehow managed to survive as a Sonderkommando for three years and tells about his experiences in unbelievable detail. It makes for horrifying reading.
* 2.68 *

This is a painful and powerful memoir of the author's experiences in Auschwitz. In this book, which she wrote twenty years after her liberation, she not only records unimaginable atrocities but also richly describes human dignity and courage. With understatement, she depicts a world where cruelty co-existed with nobility, indifference with compassion. As an attendant in Dr. Josef Mengele's hospital, Nomberg-Przytyk observed him closely and gives a detailed description of his activities.

* 2.69 *

Wells was a youth in Lvov, Poland, when the Germans put him on the Death Brigade whose task was to destroy any traces of mass executions at the Janowska concentration camp. Among the most moving accounts is the narration of the death of his entire family. He also describes the collaboration of the Ukranian peasants with the Germans. This is one of the most revealing Holocaust texts.

**RESCUE**

* 2.70 *

Raoul Wallenberg, the "righteous gentile," was the Swedish diplomat who helped rescue from 30,000 to 100,000 Hungarian Jews. The first part of the book chronicles Wallenberg's life, particularly his activities in Budapest from July 1944 to his disappearance in January 1945. The second half deals with what is believed to have happened to him in the Soviet Union. Bierman is critical of the Swedish, U.S., Hungarian, and Israeli governments for not adequately pursuing the search for him.

* 2.71 *

At great risk to themselves, the Danish people initially hid the Jews and helped them flee to Sweden. Flender suggests that the traditions of Danish democracy were the key here.

* 2.72 *

Friedman examines Christians who helped Jews, such as Archbishop Stepanic in Croatia, Jesuit Father Pierre Chaillot, Raoul Wallenberg, and Anna Simeait in Lithuania.

* 2.73 *

Geis was one of the people who helped hide the Frank Family. Her story fills in the gaps left by Anne's diary, not only by providing information on events outside the time frame of the diary, but on events outside the world of the Annex, thus putting the diary into historical perspective.

* 2.74 *

Hallie chronicles the remarkable story of how the entire village of Chambon-sur-Lignon, dominated by two charismatic Protestant pastors, saved several thousand Jews from the Nazis and the Vichy police. Hallie emphasizes the importance of moral action and leadership. People do have a choice.

* 2.75 *

Michaelis argues that anti-Semitism in Italy was muted because Jews were relatively well-integrated. The fascists and Mussolini were not really committed to the persecution of the Jews and that is primarily why so few died.

* 2.76 *

The Oliners undertook the massive Altruistic Personality Project to understand why thousands would risk their lives to save Jews. Drawing on the data from this study and over 700 interviews with rescuers and nonrescuers, they found that those who intervened shared several characteristics, including a deep-seated empathy developed in childhood. They also discovered that many rescuers were influenced by the examples set by others including friends, church, and community
groups. Rescuers felt a sense of responsibility for the oppressed and believed their actions could make a difference. It is carefully researched and wonderfully written and contains an engrossing collection of episodes of altruism.

* 2.77 *

Rosenfeld is editor of *Martyrdom and Resistance*, the longest running periodical devoted to the Holocaust. His is a balanced and scholarly treatment of Wallenberg’s career and postwar disappearance.

* 2.78 *

In a compelling account, the young Tec describes how she survived in Nazi-occupied Poland by living with Polish gentiles. She presents the ordeal from the perspective of an adult who is now a professor of sociology at the University of Connecticut.

* 2.79 *

Tec vividly recounts the story of Rufeisen, a Jew who passed as a Christian in Nazi-occupied Poland, and risked his life to save hundreds of other Jews. Eventually discovered, Rufeisen escaped and found shelter in a convent, where he converted to Catholicism.

* 2.80 *

With data taken from published accounts, archival records and personal interviews, Tec studies the Poles who rescued Jews. She found that the rescuers tended to be individualists, self-reliant and have a broad commitment to stand up for the helpless. They were unassuming and did not begin their rescue activities with much pre-meditation. The introduction provides an excellent overview of rescue activities.

* 2.81 *

Yahil recounts the position of the Jewish community in Denmark, the daring rescue operations, and the important contribution made by many Swedish people. She clarifies certain legends that developed around Denmark’s King Christian X. For instance, he indeed supported Jews but did not wear a yellow star. Yahil contends that the Danes were so forthright in rescue due to their deep-seated democratic tradition.

* 2.82 *

Zuccotti chronicles and analyzes the extent of Italian opposition to the deportation and murder of Italian Jews. She provides the historical, cultural, and political context for the relative tolerance enjoyed by Italian Jews. Because anti-Semitism was not a major factor in Italian society, there was little sympathy for the mass murder of the Jews. About eighty-five percent of the 45,000 Jews in Italy during the German occupation survived because non-Jewish Italians were willing to help them even if the Pope resolved not to be involved. Many of the 6,800 who were killed were betrayed by informers. This is the best study of the subject.

**THE INDIFFERENCE OF THE WORLD**

* 2.83 *

The authors tell the tragic story of Canada’s refusal to assist Jewish refugees because of pettiness, misunderstanding, and anti-Semitism. Only 4,000 Jews were admitted into Canada during this period.

* 2.84 *

Bauer traces the activities of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC). JDC acted as best it could, Bauer concludes, to assist Europe’s threatened Jews.

* 2.85 *

Bauer offers a well-documented account of the organized escape of Eastern European Jews from 1944-48. Almost 300,000 Jews who survived the Holocaust began to move out of Eastern Europe in the last months.
of the war. The movement was known as Brichah (flight, in Hebrew), the name of the organization formed in Palestine to co-ordinate the effort.

* 2.86 *

Baumel analyzes the role of the U.S. government, voluntary agencies, the general and Jewish communities, and public opinion in the rescue and resettlement of approximately one thousand unaccompanied Jewish children who came to the United States from 1934-45. She discusses their adjustment to American society as well as the anti-Semitism and apathy they encountered.

* 2.87 *

In a disturbing study, Dinnerstein reveals the callous attitude of America towards the victims of the Holocaust. He discusses anti-Semitism in Congress and in the military occupation forces. Jewish victims often fared worse than their German oppressors. The U.S. State Department also made it difficult for Jews to obtain visas.

* 2.88 *

Falconi, a Papal historian, defends Pius. He didn't speak out because he was more fearful of communism; he understood the Catholics were not ready to risk their lives for Jews; and most important, because of his concern for protecting the church in Europe. Falconi stresses that Pius XII's policy was not a break with his predecessor, Pius XI, who said nothing when anti-Semitic laws were passed in Germany in 1933-35. Personally, Pius XII helped save many Jewish lives.

* 2.89 *

In a pathbreaking study, Feingold investigates what Franklin Roosevelt, the Congress, the State Department, and other agencies did, and did not do, during the Holocaust to rescue Jews. He indicts a number of key people, perhaps none more than Assistant Secretary of State Breckenridge Long, who set up roadblocks to rescue attempts. This is a book about official indifference to the plight of the Jews.

* 2.90 *

Friedlander makes a strong case for Pius' attitude favoring Germany. What the Pope feared most was a communist takeover of Europe. That accounts for his relative silence and inactivity. Friedlander concurs with Falconi's evaluation that the Pope's response to Nazi Germany was conditioned by fear of communism, his Germanophilia and his desire to perpetuate the influence of the church. Pius believed that this was more possible in totalitarian states of the right than of the left.

* 2.91 *

Friedman argues that U.S. policy was basically indifferent to the plight of Jewish refugees. He describes the impact of the Depression, isolationism and F.D.R.'s unwillingness to challenge the Congress as the principal factors involved. He also characterizes the relationship between Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the President of the American Jewish Congress, and F.D.R. as a "partnership in silence."

* 2.92 *

Gilbert relates the tragic story of allied unwillingness to recognize or acknowledge the Nazi genocide. Most of this reluctance was deliberate, Gilbert found. He isolates individuals like Anthony Eden and B. Long, who failed to pass on vital information. Others who were part of this "conspiracy of silence" were John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War, and Sir A. W. G. Randall of England's Refugee Section.

* 2.93 *

Hochhuth is responsible for raising the disturbing question of the Vatican's complicity in the Holocaust. Produced in 1963, this play created an uproar in both Europe and America with its claims concerning the unwillingness of Pius XII to speak out against Roman Catholic atrocities after having been personally apprised of the existence of extermination camps. The hero is a Roman Catholic priest who tries to fight the Vatican's lack of involvement.

Gerhard Riegner, the representative of the World Jewish Congress in Switzerland, was one of the first to alert the West to the Nazi genocide. This book reveals that his source was Edward Schulte, a prominent German businessman in touch with Allied Intelligence.


Laqueur reviews the many paths by which information seeped out of Nazi-occupied Europe. The Polish underground played a pivotal role here, notwithstanding the presence of anti-Semitism among the Polish leadership. He discusses the distinction between "knowing" and "believing." Laqueur concludes that the neutral nations such as Switzerland, Sweden, and Turkey, as well as the Vatican and the International Red Cross were almost fully aware of the plight of the Jews.


Lewy largely corroborates Hochhuth's allegations. He points to the Church’s paranoical fear of Bolshevism and traditional anti-Semitism as factors that led the Vatican to silence criticism of the Nazis. On the positive side, Lewy acknowledges Catholics who saved Jews.


Lipstadt analyzes how the American press treated the Holocaust. She shows how the press persistently ignored the scope and significance of the developing tragedy. Editors remained skeptical and journalists often toned down their stories. She raises the distinction between knowledge and understanding.


In one of the first studies criticizing American complicity in the Holocaust, Morse accuses American officials and elements in the American-Jewish community of not taking the plight of European Jews seriously enough. Because he relies only on published sources, some of which are untrustworthy, Morse makes some errors in fact and interpretation. He finds a combination of political expediency, isolationism, indifference, and raw anti-Semitism behind American apathy.


In a well-researched study of international indifference to the plight of the Jews, Penkower contends that saving the Jews was not a priority since it did not directly contribute to victory. His chapters on the relative silence of the International Red Cross and the failure to rescue the Jews of Hungary are excellent.


Porat investigates how and when the Zionist leadership in Palestine fully understood that European Jewry was facing annihilation; what rescue plans were developed; and why they were so ineffective. She essentially exonerates the Zionists.


In a thoroughly documented study of fifty-two Protestant periodicals from 1933-45, Ross shows that hundreds of articles and editorials dealt with what was happening to the Jews. The Christian press provided all the details but was not forceful enough in protesting.


The British did very little to help European Jewry. Anti-Semitism in the Foreign Office was a considerable factor as was its sensitivity to Arab feelings in Palestine. Most importantly, within the context of a total war effort, aid to the Jews of Europe was seen as a low priority.

F.D.R. and Congress failed to act. F.D.R. felt that action on behalf of Jews meant trouble politically. Members of Congress were negligent, as were Christian churches, the media, the Zionists and some prominent Jews. Wyman's concluding suggestions regarding what might have been done to save Jews are very suggestive. His is the best book on the subject.


Wyman notes three principal reasons why the U.S. granted only 150,000 visas to Jews fleeing Europe from 1938-41: unemployment in the U.S., Nativism, and anti-Semitism.

**JEWISH RESISTANCE**


Ainsztein explodes the myth of Jewish passivity. There was significant Jewish resistance in the ghettos, in the forests of Poland and Russia, and even in the concentration camps. This occurred despite the overwhelming force and terror of the Nazis. He also strongly criticizes the Poles and Soviets for not doing more to help the Jews.


It took the Nazis longer to quell the Warsaw uprising than it had taken them to defeat entire countries. The revolt lasted from mid-April to May in 1943 and, although it failed, it did have important consequences. The Jewish struggle spurred renewed efforts by the Poles and it became a symbol of Jewish resistance. The author, a Polish historian, has twice revised this work.


Eckman and Lazar recount the history of the Jewish partisans in Lithuania and White Russia. They provide details of physical resistance against enormous odds. Thousands of Jews fought in mixed units, under Soviet control, and in Jewish partisan units. The authors document Ukranian anti-Semitism as well.


In this anthology of thirty-four essays and eyewitness accounts dealing with the issue of resistance, the editor develops the contention that there was significant resistance against the Nazis despite few weapons, a hostile native population, and little experience with armed conflict.

**SELECTED FICTION**


Appelfeld, a noted Israeli author, tells this story from the point of view of a ten-year-old boy named Bruno whose parents are assimilated Jewish intellectuals. Both of Bruno's parents despise the Jewish middle class. They also refuse to consider the possibility that the growing anti-Semitism in Austria could affect them. They are wrong.


In this short, sparse novel, Appelfeld has written an understated, but powerful, metaphorical piece on impending doom. The novel is set in a resort town near Vienna where a group of cultured Jews are brought in the spring of 1939. Something is wrong. Finally they all board the boxcars that will take them to their fate.


Tzili, a young Jewish girl, is the subject of neglect and ridicule because she is considered "simple-minded." With the onset of war, she is left to fend for herself while her family flees. Her wandering, suffering, and abandonment can serve as a metaphor for all Jews.


A non-Jewish survivor of Auschwitz describes the conditions in the death camps with remarkable understatement. This work is among the best short fiction
on the Holocaust because Borowski is able to penetrate into the minds of the participants and witnesses.

* 2.113 *

In 1959 a nine-year-old Israeli boy concludes, from the murmuring of his parents that the "Nazi beast" is living in their cellar. As a child he sets out to tame it; as an adult he attempts to come to terms with it by creating mythic tales. This extraordinary, mythic novel about the Holocaust by a gifted young Israeli novelist is rich in symbolism.

* 2.114 *

Heyen is the son of a German who emigrated to America in 1928 and the nephew of a Nazi flyer shot down in the Soviet Union. He tries in these poems to discover how deeply he is attached to his German heritage and how far he must repudiate it.

* 2.115 *

Heyen continues to develop the aforementioned themes and conflicts.

* 2.116 *

These lovely poems, sensitive yet powerful, were written during the Holocaust. The author, also known as Gertrud Kolmar, died at Auschwitz. Her poetry portends and laments the impending doom. Years before the Holocaust took place, she described the lonely, helpless position of the Jew in a world deaf to their cries for justice.

* 2.117 *

Sachs, the Nobel laureate of 1966, turns to the Bible, Jewish history, and Kabbalistic sources to provide a background for her Holocaust poetry. Born in Germany, she escaped to freedom in Sweden. Her poetry is consumed by sadness and loneliness.

* 2.118 *

Spiegelman, a cartoonist, uses this medium in a highly original fashion to tell the story of his father, Vladek, and his mother, Anja, both survivors of Auschwitz. The Jews are mice, the Nazis are cats, the Poles are pigs, the French are frogs, and the Americans are dogs. The animal characters create a distancing effect that allows the reader to follow the fable without being numbed by the inhuman horrors. In 1968 Anja committed suicide and the book ends with Artie calling his father a murderer for having destroyed Anja’s memoirs without even reading them. It is very perceptive on relationships between survivors and their children.

* 2.119 *

The first volume introduced readers to Valdek Spiegelman, a survivor of the Holocaust, and his son, a cartoonist trying to come to terms with his father, his father’s experiences, guilt, and other feelings. The sequel moves from the barracks of Auschwitz to the bungalows of the Catskills. Spiegelman describes perceptively the traumas of survival against the background of a son’s tortured relationships with his father. Spiegelman avoids sentimentalizing his tale. He writes with relentless honesty, sparing neither his father nor himself. He has found an original art form to add to what we know of the Holocaust experience. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1992.

* 2.120 *

Wiesel is the best-known of all writers on the Holocaust. In this sequel to Night, a young survivor, now living in occupied Palestine, shifts from victim to executioner as he is ordered to kill a British hostage. Wiesel received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1986.

* 2.121 *

Night is undoubtedly one of the most powerful and effective treatments of the Holocaust. As witness to the Holocaust, Wiesel remains firmly within the Judaic tradition of criticizing God for inaction. He emphasizes the centrality of memory.
• 2.122 •
The first part of the book is an autobiographical moral tale about the issue of forgiveness. A dying German officer asks a Jewish prisoner for forgiveness. The Jew remains silent. The second part is a symposium of responses to the Jew's silence and the issue of forgiveness, by prominent theologians and philosophers.

REPRESENTATIONS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE HOLOCAUST

• 2.123 •
Alexander analyzes the works of Sachs, Wiesel, Singer, Kovner, Bellow, and Kaplan. He explores the various themes that emerge in this literature including questions of memory and identity. What constraints are imposed on authors or readers of Holocaust literature? Is the Holocaust capable of literary representation?

• 2.124 •
Blatter and Milton reproduce more than 350 works of art created by artists in ghettos, in hiding, or in the concentration camps. The authors' comments help to place them in historical perspective. The works reproduced in this collection reflect the spiritual resistance and courage of the artists.

• 2.125 •
The contributors to this volume analyze the literary and artistic productions of people like Wiesel, Samuel Beckett, Samuel Pisar, and Aaron Zeitlin.

• 2.126 •
Costanza has searched out and analyzed some of the most impressive Holocaust art. The art she found gives evidence of courage, moral and cultural resistance, and the desire of artists to depict through their art the horrors that they had witnessed and experienced.

• 2.127 •
Dealing with works written after the Holocaust, Ezrahi discusses the language of the Holocaust, documentation as art and the literature of survival. She attempts to define a Jewish "lamentation tradition" and examines certain authors from that perspective.

• 2.128 •
Fine considers the themes and literary approach that dominate Wiesel's writings. She carefully describes and analyzes Wiesel's commitment to memory, witnessing, Jewish identity, and the faith-doubt dialectic. Hers is one of the most insightful of analyses of Wiesel's work.

• 2.129 •
The author of the television production "Holocaust" presents an account of the artists of Terezin with numerous reproductions of their work. He focuses on people like Otto Ungar, Bedrich Fritta, and Leo Haas.

• 2.130 •
Heinemann analyzes six works on the Holocaust by women writers including Charlotte Delbo. She addresses the difference in male and female "understandings" of the Holocaust.

• 2.131 •
After studying seventy-five films on the Holocaust, Insdorf asks whether this genre can be successful in treating a subject of such moral magnitude. She argues that there can be no unmediated testimony in film. Included are chapters on Hollywood and the new German guilt.

Knopp investigates Jewish writing after the Holocaust and concludes that Judaism is reaffirmed through the emergence of a moral code she calls "mentshlekhayt," which is central to the Jewish tradition.


Langer analyzes selective literary works around the theme of the aesthetic problem of reconciling normalcy with horror. He points out the inadequacies of language to cope with the problem of presenting the Holocaust to readers. Words like "suffering," "tragedy," and "dignity" are just inadequate.


Langer's is the first sustained analysis of the unique ways in which oral testimony of survivors has contributed to our understanding of the Holocaust. Drawing on the Fortunoff Video Archives for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University, Langer shows how oral testimonies complement historical material by providing the human dimension. He offers a critical analysis of the distinctions between written and oral testimony. Oral testimony is distinguished by the absence of literary mediation. See also 4.6.


Langer analyzes theories of survival developed by Bettelheim, Frankl, and Des Pres. He focuses on the writing of Wiesel, Kolmar, and Sachs and argues against the literary or moral unity in Holocaust literature. He also challenges the notion that there is a prototypical survivor, or simple theory of survival by focusing on the interpretation of Holocaust memoirs and the "versions of survival" they illuminate. See also 4.7.


The Holocaust is the central event in the history of language in the twentieth century, because one of its intended effects was the destruction of all memory of itself. This goal was partially achieved since survivors and others have had to use language that can never replicate the totality of the experience.


Rosenfeld argues that the literature of atrocity should be read on moral as well as artistic grounds. Using this perspective, he finds the literature of Wiesel, Levi, and Borowski, for example, to be effective while Styron's *Sophie's Choice* he finds inauthentic.


Young examines how historical memory and understanding are created in Holocaust diaries, memoirs, fiction, poetry, drama, films, video testimony, and memorials. He is one of the first to critique how Holocaust memory is constructed and performed in video testimonies and memorial sites.

**RELIGIOUS IMPLICATIONS**


An Orthodox Jewish theologian interprets the Holocaust using classical rabbinic categories. He concludes that Christianity and Western civilization, not God, are responsible for the Holocaust. He argues for the theological necessity of the State of Israel.


Berkovitz examines the behavior of religious Jews during the Holocaust and argues for the resiliency of the pious and the authentic and against complicity. He looks at the depths of their faith even in extremity.


Cargas, a major contemporary Christian thinker, reflects on what the Holocaust means for Christians...
and Christianity. He argues that it is the greatest tragedy for Christians since the Crucifixion. Will there be a resurrection for Christianity after the Holocaust? Only if it confronts its role in the tragedy in a forthright manner.

* 2.142 *

In a bold, theological reflection on the Holocaust, Cohen treats theological evil resulting from the Holocaust as a serious challenge, even a rift for theists.

* 2.143 *

The Eckhardts write of the singularity of the event, speaking of the Holocaust as uniquely unique. Christians have particular responsibilities to confront the Holocaust because it was perpetrated in Christendom by baptized Christians.

* 2.144 *

Eliach presents an extraordinary compilation of Hassidic tales of faith, hope, and miracles recounting the experiences of Hasidim during the Holocaust. These Hasidic and mystical Jews were devastated by the Nazis, but they maintained faith and displayed great spiritual courage.

* 2.145 *

A leading Jewish theologian analyzes why the Holocaust and the State of Israel are at the center of contemporary Jewish consciousness and thought. He sees Israel as a moral necessity after the Holocaust.

* 2.146 *

This is an invaluable collection of papers by leading Jewish and Christian scholars from a wide range of disciplines delivered at the historic international symposium on the Holocaust held at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. There are particularly impessive discussions of the theological implications of the Holocaust and Christian anti-Semitism.

* 2.147 *

In this seminal article, Greenberg outlines a neo-Orthodox theological perspective developing the notion of moment-faith and faith-doubt dialectic. He focuses on Job and Isaiah’s suffering servant and suggestive biblical models of arguing with God while still remaining within the tradition. He argues that no theological position can be credible if it does not take into account the challenge of one million burning babies.

* 2.148 *

Huberband was a historian who moved to Warsaw in 1940 and plunged into scholarly work, particularly Ringelblum’s Oneg Shabbat archives. His major contribution was his chronicling of specific acts of Kiddush Hashem or martyrdom. This is a major contribution to the historiography of Jewish spiritual resistance during the Holocaust.

* 2.149 *

The religious life of the Jews during the Holocaust is revealed in the fourteen responses contained in this volume. Both the questions and the answers reflect the struggle of religious Jews to preserve their integrity during the most extreme conditions.

* 2.150 *

One of the most influential and productive Christian Holocaust scholars, Littell here briefly traces the history of Christian anti-Semitism and discusses the German church struggle and the Jews (1933-45). He also examines the State of Israel and the crisis its existence causes Christianity. He argues that Christianity must take responsibility for the Holocaust. Some critics point out that Littell’s crisis of religious conscience is too simplistic. Nazism, after all, was an anti-Christian ideology, as much the product of modern
secularism as of the heritage of Christian anti-Judaism. Religion is only one ideology among many shaping human action.

* 2.151 *

In a wide-ranging discussion on the major theological questions arising out of the Holocaust, Neher takes up the question of God's silence. He interprets the problem in terms of the tradition of God's silence or concealment that is evident throughout the Biblical literature.

* 2.152 *

This is a powerful and poignant collection of rabbinic responsa during the Holocaust that reveals the depth of the religious spirit.

* 2.153 *

Most of the rabbinic responsa during the Holocaust were written in Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Lithuania; the topics covered included suicide, abortions, and the justifiability of murder. In this scholarly study, Rosenbaum examines how Jews attempted to conform to Halakhic requirements during the Holocaust.

* 2.154 *

Rubenstein, a leading Jewish theologian, first articulated his death-of-God position in this series of penetrating essays. He asserted the failure of traditional covenant Judaism to deal with the Holocaust. He concluded that, contrary to Jewish teaching, Auschwitz made it impossible to believe that God rules over history and that Jews are a Chosen People. He opted for a neopagan celebration of nature rather than a covenantal sanctification of time.

* 2.155 *

Ruether argues that anti-Semitism is endemic to Christology and lays the foundation for understanding the Christian role in the Holocaust. She urges a kind of relativization of the meaning of Christian scripture. From the perspective that Christian theology is responsible for much of anti-Semitism, she constructs a new foundation for Christian theology to eliminate the promises upon which Christian anti-Semitism have been based.

* 2.156 *

Zimmels focuses on responsa dealing with such topics as mixed marriages, reburial, adoption, unclaimed property, the sanctity of life, and the desecration of cemeteries and synagogues.