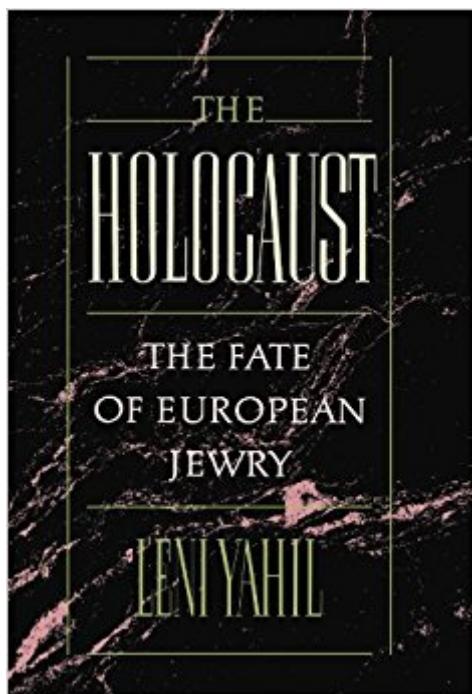


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The Holocaust: The Fate Of European Jewry, 1932-1945 (Studies In Jewish History)



Synopsis

When *The Holocaust* first appeared in Israel in 1987, it was hailed as the finest, most authoritative history of Hitler's war on the Jews ever published. Representing twenty years of research and reflection, Leni Yahil's book won the Shazar Prize, one of Israel's highest awards for historical work. Now available in English, *The Holocaust* offers a sweeping look at the Final Solution, covering not only Nazi policies, but also how Jews and foreign governments perceived and responded to the unfolding nightmare. The Holocaust is astonishingly comprehensive. Yahil weaves a gripping chronological narrative that stretches from the Norwegian fjords to the Greek islands, from Amsterdam to Tehran--and even Shanghai. Her writing is balanced, objective, and compelling, as she systematically explores the evolution of the Holocaust in German-occupied Europe, probing its politics, planning, goals, and key figures. Yahil uses her command of the many relevant languages to marshal an impressive array of documentary and statistical evidence, driving her narrative forward with telling details and personal accounts--such as a survivor's description of her perseverance during a death march, or the story of the *Struma*, a boat that sank with over 700 Jewish refugees when the British refused to receive it in Palestine. Along the way, she destroys persistent myths about the Holocaust: that Hitler had no plan for exterminating the Jews, that the Jews themselves went peacefully to the slaughter. Though Yahil finds that Nazi policies were often inconsistent, particularly during the years before the war, she conclusively demonstrates that Hitler was always working toward a final reckoning with world Jewry, envisioning his war as a war against the Jews. The book also recounts numerous uprisings and acts of resistance in ghettos and concentration camps, as well as the activities of Jewish partisan units. Yahil describes the work of Jews in America, Palestine, and world organizations on behalf of Hitler's victims--often in the face of resistance by the Allied governments and neutral states--and explores the factors that affected the success of rescue efforts. The Holocaust is a monumental work of history, unsurpassed in scope and insightful detail. Objective yet compassionate, Leni Yahil brings together the countless diverse strands of this epic event in a single gripping account.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Winner of the Shazar Prize for Jewish history, Israel's equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize, this monumental, engrossing narrative is arguably the most comprehensive account of the Holocaust to date. Tracing the Nazis' rise through their combination of tight control and improvisation, Yahil shows why Europe's Jews were sorely unprepared for Hitler's persecution and absolute tyranny. In the Jewish councils (the Judenrat), which nurtured the illusion that intercession with Germans could save at least a remnant of Jewry, this professor emeritus of Hebrew University sees one of the principal reasons for the Jews' helplessness. A masterful prose stylist, Yahil makes the unbearable readable. Proceeding country by country, he describes the deportations and liquidations, the inhuman slavery in the death camps, as well as ghetto uprisings, rescue attempts and the world's inadequate responses to impending tragedy. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Translated from the Hebrew original, which won Israel's Shazar Prize for Jewish History in 1987, this massively detailed history of the Holocaust is now the most comprehensive one-volume treatment available on the subject. Yahil, professor emeritus at Hebrew University, has written a masterful, meticulous book integrating the best of world scholarship with her own research of the last two decades to create a first-rate synthesis showing the gradual evolution of the "Final Solution." She is particularly adept in portraying discrete Jewish experiences in different European locations as they evolved over time in response to complex, continuously changing sociopolitical circumstances. Her narrative framework is frequently punctuated by conceptual discussions in which the reader sees a deliberate historian at work weighing evidence. With at least as much detail as Martin Gilbert's *The Holocaust* (LJ 2/1/86), but more analytical, this takes its place alongside such one-volume works as Lucy Dawidowicz's *War Against the Jews* (LJ 4/1/75) and Yehuda Bauer's *History of the Holocaust* (LJ 5/1/82). An outstanding book, at once a sweeping history and, for some themes, an encyclopedic resource.- Benny Kraut, Univ. of CincinnatiCopyright 1990

Satisfied considering Cheap price

Arrived in good condition

Needed it for a class, it came in time and was in great condition. This is usually required for classes because it is a pretty large book, but if you're looking for extensive information on the Holocaust, specifically the Jewish experience, this is the book for you!

Too hard to read.

I just started this book. Everyone should know something about the horrors of WWII history. The book was priced right and it was sent in a timely fashion.

Leni Yahil's book "The Holocaust" is a breakthrough in both description and explanation of Holocaust history. Her knowledge of primary sources in the many languages of European Jewry and of the broad research that has been carried out in Israel, in the United States, and in Europe have enabled her to produce a book that will serve students and researchers alike. She has compiled the important research that has been conducted in this field, and has incorporated it into her book without losing the main core of the narrative. She draws attention to the diverse and sometimes conflicting interpretations of the events, and focuses on the issues which are still being debated by scholars, such as the decision-making process of the Nazis in relation to Jewish policy and in particular to the Final Solution (pp. 60-73; 146-171; 253-260; 543-546). Yahil does not follow one major thesis about the destructive process and the role of the bureaucracy or a perspective that views the ideological writings of Hitler since the early 1920s as the basis for understanding Nazi policy. Rather, Yahil synthesizes several concepts, and in a careful historical analysis she sums up the role of ideology, antisemitism, and the direct political interests of the Nazi regime in shaping its Jewish policy: "Hitler and those implementing his design regarded the Jewish question as a political problem and its so called solution as a political necessity, a sine qua non, that had to be addressed in the framework of Germany's foreign and domestic policy....Even during the prewar period, but especially after the war broke out, the Jewish problem became an integral part of the Nazis' struggle for predominance; hence the means of dealing with it were determined according to what the Nazis

regarded as political and military exigencies" (p. 653). This demonstrates how Yahil conceptualizes and examines the relation between ideology, policy, and the operative level. Thus, the issues concerning the responsibility of different groups that were part of the mechanism of death and the decision-making process of the Jewish policy were extended to those who were indirectly involved and shared the knowledge and the preparatory actions involved in the persecution and murder of the Jews. By employing different views, perspectives, and explanations through which the history of the Holocaust may be understood, Yahil presents the reader with a wide range of views to help understand the events of the Holocaust and see it in its entirety. Yahil also presents an historical narrative guided by both chronology and geography. The unifying conceptualization is in the ideology of antisemitism, racism, and the nature of a totalitarian state. These, together with the Nazi political goal to dominate Europe and expand the German Lebensraum and the strong feeling of anti-Bolshevism were amalgamated in the war against the Jews. The narrative moves through the nations of Europe, correlating and contrasting them in the various stages of the war. This method places events within the broad context of military developments and wartime politics. It also demonstrates the evolution of the Nazi anti-Jewish policy, stage after stage, and the reaction of European Jewry. The SS and the mechanisms of murder and destruction and the Nazi bureaucracy in Germany and in the occupied territories are depicted as part of the killing process in a comprehensive description. Yahil's "The Holocaust" reveals the roles and motivations of the governments in occupied Europe, and in particular of Nazi allies and satellites, in collaborating or obstructing Nazi policy toward the Jews. They are portrayed as part of the political war aims and are linked to both the particular historical background and to the general events and developments of Nazi rule in Europe. In this respect the scope of Yahil's narrative is very broad and the political military context is revealing.

Sometimes it seems that the obvious should be stated. There is no such thing as "racial superiority", "racial inferiority", or "racial purity". "Superior" and "inferior" are relative terms not absolutes. All humans are of equal worth to God. Jews are as human as everybody else; they are not responsible for the world's problems. They have never caused the world's problems; Jews do not have a "secret agenda" for dominating the world. In case you're wondering, I'm not Jewish. Nazism is the ultimate evil; Hitler was the ultimate sicko. Why did the Germans allow a madman to run their country? This book is well written and well researched. Ms. Yahil's matter-of-fact prose makes the horror of the Holocaust come through very strongly and clearly. Even though the book is long (over 660 pages), I recommend it to anyone who wants to know the truth about the Holocaust. My only quibble is that

there are no pictures.

This is one of the best accounts of the Holocaust that I have read. It is completely objective, just leading the reader through the facts. Instead of taking the stance of "Hitler is evil and to blame for it all," the book shows the reader who all the players were, and how they were created. I strongly recommend this book to anyone who wants the facts.

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