



The University of Vermont

CAROLYN & LEONARD MILLER
CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES

The 2017 Annual Raul Hilberg Memorial Lecture

**Getting it Right, Getting it Wrong:
Recent Holocaust Scholarship in Light of
the Work of Raul Hilberg**

Dan Michman

Yad Vashem and Bar-Ilan University

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

A Personal Introduction

Ladies and Gentleman, good evening.

Allow me to start by quoting the following exchange of letters:

August 24th, 1958

Dear Professor Hilberg,

Your manuscript on the extermination of the Jews has been read in the course of the last two months by several of our staff, each of whom is an expert in one of the aspects involved.

At a meeting of the editorial board which took place on the 15.8.1958, a joint readers' report was considered. In this report it was stated that while the manuscript possessed numerous merits, it has also certain deficiencies:

1. Your book rests almost entirely on the authority of German sources and does not utilize primary sources in the languages of the occupied states, or in Yiddish and Hebrew.
2. The Jewish historians here make reservations concerning the historical conclusions which you draw, both in respect of the comparison with former periods, and in respect of your appraisal of the Jewish resistance (active and passive) during the Nazi occupation.

On the basis of what has been said, our foundation cannot appear as one of the publishers without running the risk that expert critics who know the history of the Nazi catastrophe thoroughly and possess a command of the languages of the occupied states in question might express hostile criticism of the book.

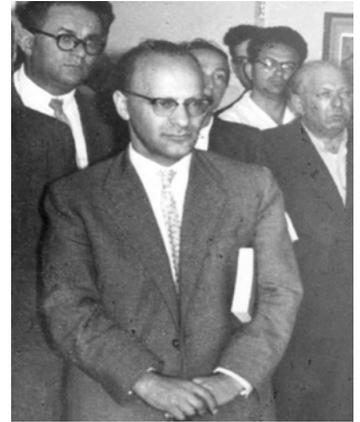
On the other hand we are prepared to act as mediators between the University of Columbia and the printer here, in order to make possible the book's appearance under the auspices of the Columbia University.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. J. Melkman

General Manager

[Yad Washem]



Joseph Melkman

On September 29, 1958 Raul Hilberg responded:

Dear Dr. Melkman:

Thank you for the bluntness of your letter. I understand why your staff has rejected my book. It does not exalt in Israel's glories. I am deeply sorry. But this was not martyrdom. It was not heroism. It was a pure disaster.

The specific objections which your readers have raised cannot be easily answered. Undoubtedly you realize yourself that one is irrelevant and the other is false.

Of course, I have not gathered masses of documents in the archives of France and Italy, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, Roumania and Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Greece. Neither has the YIVO and neither has Yad Washem. I am only one researcher, without assistants, without translators, and without any secretarial help. I set out to look at the German documents. I have done so to a greater extent than anyone and I stopped only at the point of diminishing returns.

Although my work is about the Germans and their deeds, I have had to deal with the Jewish reactions. I have had to accept compelling evidence that five million Jews were killed after they had failed to resist, actively or passively, in all the areas of Axis Europe. If one cannot absorb this fact, one will not admit of any explanations. But once the truth is recognized, there is no escape from the conclusion that centuries of historical conditioning had produced this catastrophic response.

So much for polemics. [...]

Sincerely yours,

Raul Hilberg



Raul Hilberg

On the same day, September 29, 1958, Hilberg wrote another letter; it was written on the University of Vermont letterhead and sent to his mentor, Dr. Philip Friedman, at his YIVO address:

Dear Dr. Friedman:

Please forgive me for taking so long in my reply to Dr. Melkman. I have at last brought myself to write to him, and I am sorry that a feeling of tiredness has not permitted me to express myself in more apologetic tones. If anything can still be done, I shall of course be happy.



Philip Friedman

Finally, Melkman responded in a letter dated February 12, 1959:

Dear Professor Hilberg,

[...] I understand very well that you are upset by our decision. But I would like to emphasize that this decision was not influenced by those motives you supposed in your letter. We are not such fervent chauvinists that we would discard a serious work on such grounds. By the way, I didn't see anything in your book that runs counter [to] accepted Zionist theories.

But the real reason was that our readers contended that various chapters were not based on the available material. In our institution some experts are now working on Rumania and Poland and they found the chapters on these countries interesting but in many respects in contradiction to their findings. And as many of our compatriots are conversant with the intimate history of the destruction of the Jews in those countries we are liable to severe criticism if we would publish the work in his [sic] present form.

Nevertheless your book makes interesting reading and I am sure that its publication in the United States would be welcomed as an important contribution to the history of the period.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. J. Melkman

Director General¹

The publication history of Hilberg's monumental study, *The Destruction of the European Jews*—and especially the Yad Vashem episode—has been quite accurately recounted in several studies,² most recently in a PhD thesis,³ and inaccurately in many more, especially in Israel during the so-called “Post-Zionist” debate of the 1990s.⁴ One mistake, which is repeated in most of the descriptions, is that the exchange with Yad Vashem related to a Hebrew version of the book, which is wrong. The idea was that Yad Vashem would co-publish the original English version with Columbia University Press. In any case, I will not retell the whole story, but will limit myself to one aspect—the personal one. Hilberg himself described the story from his perspective in his memoir, *The Politics of Memory*, published in 1996; of the correspondence with Melkman, only Melkman's first letter in which he conveys Yad Vashem's decision to decline co-publication was published.⁵ His grudge against Melkman was still apparent in his 1990s memoir: he stated that he had learned “later” that

before the war he [Melkman] had been a teacher

of Greek and Latin in a secondary school in the Netherlands, and during the German occupation his Zionist connections enabled him and his wife to hold on to a precarious privileged position, first in Amsterdam, then in the transit camp of Westerbork, and finally in Bergen-Belsen.⁶

Hilberg did not mention that after the war Melkman had written a PhD thesis in Jewish history and literature at the University of Amsterdam. He was also wrong about Melkman having “a precarious privileged position.” Melkman had no special, privileged position—not in Amsterdam, Westerbork, or Bergen-Belsen (at the time, a “privileged position” meant being part of the *Judenrat*, the Jewish Council⁷). However, as a Zionist who had applied for an immigration certificate for Palestine before the war, he succeeded in getting on the *Palästina-List* that was drawn up by the Germans; it included several hundreds of Jews who could potentially be exchanged for Germans in Palestine. Consequently, he was deported via Westerbork to Bergen-Belsen, and not to Auschwitz or Sobibor, as

was most of his family. Hilberg could, of course, have verified these details when he wrote his memoir in the beginning of the 1990s. But how do I know these details? Because I am the son of the late Dr. Jozeph Melkman, who Hebraized his name to Michman in 1965 (I did so two years later). Therefore, the fact that I am here today to deliver the prestigious Raul Hilberg Memorial Lecture on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Hilberg's passing away is in a certain sense the closing of a personal circle in the field of Holocaust historiography.

That this could occur—and I am most grateful and honored that it did happen—is due to the initiative of my friend and colleague, Prof. Alan Steinweis, the Miller Distinguished Professor of Holocaust Studies at this university and a fine scholar with whom I have cooperated now for quite a number of years. We first corresponded regarding a Nazi scholar, Peter-Heinz Seraphim, whose research has been described and analyzed by Prof. Steinweis in his important study on scholarly antisemitism in Nazi Germany;⁸ I too dealt with Seraphim in my study on the emergence of the Holocaust-era ghettos, a process in which Seraphim played a pivotal role in transforming the Nazi understanding of the “ghetto” into a dangerous phenomenon at the heart of the so-called Jewish peril.⁹ In recent years, we both were members of an ad-hoc advisory committee of the publication of the scholarly edition of *Mein Kampf* convened by the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich,¹⁰ and are currently members of the editorial board of the English version of the important 16-volume project of documents on the Holocaust, *Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by National-Socialist Germany*.¹¹ Indeed, I assume that more people were involved in the decision to invite me to deliver this lecture, which is supported by Jerold D. Jacobson, and I want to thank them all, as well as the Carolyn and Leonard Miller Center for Holocaust Studies of the University of Vermont. I also want to express my appreciation to you, the audience, for having made the effort to attend this event.

Before proceeding to the main issue of this lecture, I would like to add to this prologue some anecdotes of my personal relations with Raul Hilberg, which will bridge the Hilberg–Melkman chapter and today’s event. I want to begin by presenting an epilogue to the Hilberg–Melkman exchange. First, after leaving his position at Yad Vashem in 1960 for a job as head of the Department of Culture at the Ministry of Education and Culture, my father still wrote a damning review of *The Destruction* in the Dutch Jewish Weekly (*NIW*) in 1963, titled “A Dangerous Book.”¹²

Second, not only did Hilberg write a memoir, but my father also wrote one, in Hebrew, which was published a decade after Hilberg’s memoir. He dedicated a page to the affair in which he explained:



“A Dangerous Book”

The manuscript was comprehensive, based on serious research of German documents, and was actually an important step forward in the historiography of the Shoah. From that perspective, it was important for Yad Vashem to publish it. But I thought that it deserved serious critique, even though it was an important manuscript. The author dealt with the conduct of the Jewish leadership in the occupied countries, among other issues, and condemned them in harsh words. This attitude matched the views of the [Holocaust commemoration] institutions [Ghetto Fighters House and Yad Mordechai] that already existed in Israel and had sprung... from the resistance organizations, and thus would have been welcomed well in the country

[Israel]. But the author [Hilberg] went too far, because he explained the conduct of the Jewish Councils as having originated in the *shtadlanut* tradition that was common in the Middle Ages: to avert existential dangers by means of bribery and collaboration/cooperation [in Hebrew the term “*shituf-pe’ula*” can mean both] with the authorities.¹³ [...] I found, that [because of his lack of use of documentation in other languages than German and English, and especially Yiddish], he made mistakes or did not mention important facts that would refute his theory. My opinion was that Yad Vashem, an official institution of the State of Israel that also represents Diaspora Jewry, cannot disseminate throughout the world a book that contains a theory that is so extremely controversial among the Jews as its first important publication. The Yad Vashem directorate agreed with me, and thus I wrote a letter to Hilberg.¹⁴

This is the conclusion of that exchange.

As for myself, I first saw Hilberg in person at the Yad Vashem scholars’ conference on Jewish leadership during the Holocaust in April 1977.¹⁵ Hilberg was one of the speakers in the first session, together with Isaiah Trunk and Otto Dov Kulka. The session was so tense and he was surrounded by so many people during the break and later in the conference that I, a young scholar in his early career who had not yet finished his PhD thesis and had not yet published anything in the field, did not approach him. But when he visited Israel in 1985 and spoke at a meeting of the working group on the Holocaust, headed by Yehuda Bauer, at the Institute for Advanced Studies of The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, I had already accomplished more and as there was time for private discussions, the first thing he said, without adding anything else, was: “Ah, you are the son of Dr. Melkman!” We both understood what was looming behind that short sentence. And yet, I must say that he had no hard feelings toward me at any time. When we met again in a conference in Naples, Italy, in 1997, he immediately approached me, and simply said: “Tell me, what is wrong about the kosher food of El Al?” I wondered at the time why Hilberg cared about kosher food, although Gwendolyn, who passed away half a year ago, had brought him closer to Jewish tradition in those years – but not so much that a supreme level of kosher food concerned him much; it turned out that he apparently had bought his daughter, Deborah, a ticket to Israel, and she had requested a *glatt* kosher meal—not the regular kosher

meal provided by the standard El Al caterer.

Several years later, when I was already Yad Vashem’s chief historian and my friend and colleague, the late David Bankier, headed the Yad Vashem research institute that I am heading now, we were planning the next biannual Yad Vashem conference. The theme that we chose for that conference was: “Holocaust Historiography in Context.” Having decided on the theme, we both immediately agreed that we should invite Hilberg to deliver the keynote closing paper. Although he was already coping with cancer, he immediately responded to our request that he would come, if possible. And indeed, he did come. The crowd that showed up was enormous: the Yad Vashem auditorium was packed, which means that there were about 400 people. His lecture was phenomenal. He delivered his 45-minute discourse without any notes; it was extremely well-structured. I can truly vouch for this, because when I edited the volume with the proceedings of the conference, I hardly had to make any revisions to the text, which had been transcribed; I actually only had to add some subtitles and footnotes to the literature he had cited.¹⁶

More important was the fact that following his consent to lecture at the conference, we also asked his permission—before the conference took place—to translate his book into Hebrew. He immediately agreed. In a letter to Dr. Bella Gutterman, the then director of our institute, he wrote the following: “At the outset, let me state that I am very impressed by your earnestness in pursuing the publication of my work, and accordingly my answer is equally affirmative. Yes, we can go ahead after all these years.” This was a loaded sentence, of course. He

Raul Hilberg 250 Prospect Parkway Burlington, Vermont 05401 Tel 802 863 4633

November 28, 2004

Dr. Bella Gutterman
Director and Editor-in-Chief
Yad Vashem Publications
FAX 972 2 644 3443

Dear Dr. Gutterman,

The Destruction of the European Jews

At the outset, let me state that I am very impressed by your earnestness in pursuing the publication of my work, and accordingly my answer is equally affirmative. Yes, we can go ahead after all these years. For the sake of clarity, I only wish to spell out the following, mostly technical, provisions that I regard as essential.

On my part I grant you the right, as customary in standard publication contracts, to publish a Hebrew translation of the unabridged Yale University Press edition of *The Destruction of the European Jews*, with small corrections and additions not exceeding about 7,000 words. I will send you express a marked set of the three Yale volumes with the typed inserts before the end of December 2004.

On your part you agree to this publication in its entirety. The footnotes are to appear on the bottom of the pages and their numeration is to follow the Yale model. The index, as an integral part of the book, is to be as complete as that of the Yale edition. Original German or other foreign words or sentences cited in italics in the Yale edition are to be included in Latin script also in the Hebrew text and notes. No pictorial material is to be added. Upon publication, you will send me ten copies without charge.

If these stipulations are acceptable to you, please confirm your agreement. If you have any questions or objections, please let me know.

With all my best wishes, especially for the health of Dr. Bankier,

Raul Hilberg

spelled out a series of mostly technical provisions that he regarded as essential, and no less important, he did not say a word about royalties!¹⁷ In that particular letter, he also wrote that we should include “small corrections and additions not exceeding about 7,000 words,” which he had inserted in the copy of the Yale UP edition that he had sent us. He promised not to send any more corrections.

Nevertheless, in the following years, he constantly continued sending corrections, such as first names or titles of this or that obscure Nazi official that he had finally identified, and a book title to insert in a footnote. In his last letter, dated February 25, 2007, he wrote:

An additional sentence with a new footnote for page 500 in volume II [...] it would be good to include this item, which is not merely a detail of administrative procedure, but also an example of [the] awareness and mentality within the German population of those days. From the same source, I also obtained the first name of a bureaucrat who played a significant role in the confiscation of personal belongings. Please include his full name in the index: Patzer, Max.¹⁸

It took Yad Vashem another five years to publish Hilberg’s magnum opus, because it required a high level of expertise and precision. A rough estimate of the costs of this publication, both the documented payments and the undocumented costs of working hours invested in it by David Bankier, Bella Gutterman, myself, the team of the publications department, the librarians, and the archivists

Raul Hilberg 236 Prospect Parkway Burlington, Vermont 05401 Tel 802 863 4653

February 25, 2007

Dr. Bella Gutterman
Yad Vashem Publications
Yad Vashem, Har Hazikaron
POB 3477
91034 Jerusalem

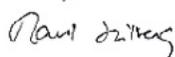
Dear Dr. Gutterman,

I have an additional sentence with a new footnote for Page 500 in Volume II. If you are still in the editing stage and have kept my footnote numerations starting anew with each section of the long chapter, it would be good to include this item, which is not merely a detail of administrative procedure, but also an example of awareness and mentality within the German population of those days.

From the same source, I also obtained the first name of a bureaucrat who played a significant role in the confiscation of personal belongings. Please include his full name in the index:

Patzer, Max 80, 701, 1025n

Sincerely,



at Yad Vashem is about \$150,000, which makes it one of the most expensive books published by Yad Vashem ever. It is the most complete version of *The Destruction of the European Jews*,¹⁹ so if you really want to know Hilberg’s final say, you must refer to the Yad Vashem edition, although you will first have to learn Hebrew.

The Status of *The Destruction of the European Jews* in Holocaust Historiography

The Destruction of the European Jews is undoubtedly Hilberg’s major study. He considered it as such, fostering and expanding the book with each edition and translation. In fact, most of his additional studies, which were written after the first publication of *The Destruction* in 1961, are satellites of that book; some of them, such as his excellent study on the *Reichsbahn* (the German railways), were integrated into its later editions.²⁰ It is interesting that all the later additions to his book did not cause Hilberg to change the basic conceptualization of the Holocaust that he had developed in the 1950s: they were inserted as additional enriching details into the existing structure. This is curious since scholars usually change their perceptions over time as they acquire more knowledge; they also move on to other topics. Hilberg, on the contrary, stuck to his conceptualization until his last day, confirming and reinforcing it time and again with the publication of each edition and translation—during the course of almost fifty years!

Many case studies in this or that place or institution have corrected certain details in his book (in some cases, he adopted the corrections and additions in later editions). And yet his clear-cut and easy-to-remember conceptualization of the event, which includes a set of terms that firmly established themselves in Holocaust research vocabulary, deeply influenced the modes of thinking in Holocaust scholarship; one can easily trace it in a plethora of studies. I believe that it is precisely this aspect of *The Destruction* that is so fascinating. This also explains why this book was a pathfinder at the time and why it maintains its power and influence as opposed to both earlier and later comprehensive studies, some of them huge bestsellers in their time, which eventually fell into oblivion or lost their fame.²¹

Despite the many analyses of Hilberg’s study, the conceptual model of the internal dynamics of the process that defines the Holocaust as an “event” which underlies Hilberg’s bureaucracy-oriented interpretation and in my eyes is the crux of the book, has hardly been critically examined in the light of the results of the enormous body

of research that is available today.²² I intend to tackle this aspect today.

Raul Hilberg: A Social Scientist

The first point that should be emphasized is that in spite of the fact that Hilberg is often called a Holocaust historian, he was trained as a social scientist in the department of political science. This is not said in a denigrating manner: some of my best friends are political scientists... Yet it is important to be aware of this fact in order to acquire an understanding of his methodology, the postulates and scope of his project, and thus the consequent limitations of his work.

Although political scientific or sociological studies might sometimes resemble historical studies, there is an essential difference in their purpose and therefore in their methodology. Political science is a social science. The goal of the social sciences is to distill from past events a recurring pattern in order to build a model that can then serve as a tool (for policy makers, planners of various kinds, or caregivers) to understand and analyze present and future situations in which certain features of that pattern are noticed or discerned, and thus enable coping with them. Therefore, the methodology requires that the particulars of each case are sifted out so that rather than focusing on the case itself, the model can be extracted from it. Moreover, the search for a pattern is based on certain assumptions, which will be validated or refuted in the course of the research. Historical research in certain academic institutions is also situated in the Faculty of Social Sciences, because it deals with society; yet from the methodological perspective it belongs to the humanities (*Geisteswissenschaften* in German). Unlike the social sciences, it has another goal, or rather two interrelated goals: to analyze the past—in all its complexities—in order to (1) understand how the world we live in has been shaped by past processes and events; and (2) learn more about the broad spectrum of possible human behavior, something that is relevant to the scope of our expectations as individuals in societies. As such, genuine historical research does not seek to identify a pattern or model, although political, scientific, and sociological models and concepts can and should be used as analytical tools too. The historian's task is to assemble as many data as possible (documents, material findings, testimonies, relevant research literature written by others, etc.) in order to be able to depict and clarify the chosen subject of research in the best way. Consequently, the historian does not sift out the data that do not fit into the pattern but includes them

in the overall picture. The final product will therefore always be nuanced and multi-faceted, as opposed to the clear-cut, modelled picture of the social sciences.

And indeed, as previously stated, probably what is most striking about Hilberg's book is the extremely clear-cut, organized picture of the Holocaust that it presents. In his memoir, Hilberg discloses how his approach was shaped:

Returning to Brooklyn College [after my demobilization], I jettisoned my chemistry. My remaining subjects of concentration were history and political science. In political science I found my intellectual Home. *I hungered for a structure*, and soon found two of them in the context of political science courses: government and law. Yet it was a historian at college who, more than any of his colleagues in the political science department, was to have a deep and lasting influence on me. His name was Hans Rosenberg. An expert in Prussian bureaucracy, he labeled his course "The Rise of the National State." [...]

In his presentations the bureaucracy became an organism. Its cells underwent amalgamation and interfusion as it took root in the territorial domain of the state, evolving and developing with a tenured meritocracy into an indispensable and *indestructible* system [my emphasis, DM]. [...] I began to identify "government" more and more with public administration, and I became aware of the concept of jurisdiction, that bedrock of the legal order, which appeared to be both the basis and the basic tool of the bureaucrats. *These potentates were an unstoppable force*. As administrators they would always follow precedent, but if need be they would break new ground, without calling attention to themselves or claiming a patent, trademark, or copyright. The bureaucracy was a hidden world, an overlooked world, and ***once I was conscious of it I would not be deterred from prying open its shuttered windows and bolted doors.***²³ [emphases are mine, DM]

Hilberg's fascination with bureaucracy, especially the German bureaucracy, was additionally influenced, first by Franz Neumann through his study, *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism* (1942) and later when Neumann was his PhD thesis supervisor. These were the overt influences, openly stated by Hilberg himself. But there is another interpretation of the modern

nation–state, and especially its bureaucracy, looming over this field, which undoubtedly had its impact on Hilberg’s interpretation, directly or indirectly: Max Weber’s political and organizational sociology.²⁴ Weber had concluded that in an administration governed by rules, decisions must be predictable if the rules are known. Moreover, with respect to the calculability of decision-making, he wrote:

The more fully realized, the more bureaucracy “depersonalizes” itself, i.e., the more completely it succeeds in achieving the exclusion of love, hatred, and every purely personal, especially irrational and incalculable, feeling from the execution of official tasks. In the place of the old-type ruler... modern culture requires for its sustaining external apparatus the emotionally detached and hence rigorously “professional” expert.²⁵

When Hilberg looked back at the process that made him decide to dedicate his research to the Holocaust, he emphasized, in his memoir:

The idea that the destruction of the Jews was complex became a fundamental hypothesis that guided my work. This complexity was to be uncovered, demonstrated, and explained. The killing, I became convinced, was no atrocity in the conventional sense. It was infinitely more, and that “more” was the work of a far-flung, sophisticated bureaucracy.²⁶

Hilberg’s Interpretation, Conceptualization, and Model

Against the background of his intellectual and disciplinary formation, it becomes clear why and how the basic interpretation of the Holocaust as a “bureaucratic” event, which was a product of the modern nation–state, crystallized in Hilberg’s mind. It was the “indestructible system” of the bureaucracy that carried out the destruction of the European Jews. Indeed, many Germans—tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands—were involved in the bureaucracy, but the act remained in Hilberg’s view limited to “the bureaucracy,” to the German bureaucracy, even though bureaucracy is interpreted here in the broadest sense. This interpretation was accompanied by another basic understanding of Hilberg, which is explained in the introductory chapters of his book, “Precedents” and “Antecedents.” Antisemitism and racism as ideas had existed before 1933, and antisemitic and racist policies had been carried out before the Nazi period in many countries; yet with all their severity, they had never had such unprecedented fatal consequences as they had in this

case. Therefore, it is less a question of “why”—i.e., what was the motivation behind the Nazi perpetration, although after the publication of *The Destruction* in 1961, Hilberg also addressed this question in an interesting article in 1965²⁷—than of “how”: how already existing ideas could turn into such a catastrophe.²⁸ This implies the lesson to be learned: that the victims in this case were the Jews, and their destruction was indeed “unprecedented,” as Hilberg explicitly emphasized, but that that is not the essence of the event. The essence is that the Holocaust is the most unmitigated and therefore the exemplary case that proves what can happen to any group in a modern society²⁹ due to the nature of the bureaucracy of the well-organized centralized nation–state and of the totalitarian state in particular. It was unprecedented because the bureaucratic process was consummated and not discontinued at some stage, as often happens.

The opening sentences and last sentence of the chapter titled “Reflections” in Hilberg’s book clearly present this comprehension:

The Germans killed five million Jews. A process of such magnitude does not come from the void; to be brought to a conclusion in such dimensions, an administrative undertaking must have meaning to its perpetrators. To Adolf Hitler and his followers the destruction of the Jews had meaning. To these men, the act was worthwhile in itself. It could not be questioned. It had to be done. When half of Europe lay conquered at Germany’s feet, the uniqueness of the opportunity became compelling. The chance could not be missed. At that moment the German bureaucrat [and here I complement what Hilberg meant: the German bureaucrat who was **not** a Nazi!] beckoned to his Faustian fate. The scope of human experience was to be widened. As never before. Inevitably, at this point the German machinery of destruction had to attempt the ultimate, for when a generation seeks to accomplish more than its scientific and artistic heritage has equipped it for, its path to fulfillment lies only in destruction. The process of creation is tedious and long; destruction alone is both swift and lasting.

Let us point out at once that the Germans have not been the only ones in history who have had a reason to embark upon a destructive course of action. [...But] The discriminatory systems

of many countries are the leftovers of such destruction processes.

The German destruction of the Jews was not **interrupted** [my emphasis, DM]. That is its crucial, decisive characteristic. [...] Technocratic and moral obstacles were overcome. An unprecedented killing operation was inaugurated, and with the beginning of this operation, the Germans demonstrated once and for all how quickly even large groups, numbering in the millions, could be annihilated. [...]

[And the last sentence of “Reflections” is:] When in the early days of 1933 the first civil servant wrote the first definition of a “non-Aryan” into a civil service ordinance, the fate of European Jewry was sealed.³⁰

The last sentence is striking: it implies that it was enough for Hitler and his entourage to ascend to power for the ideology of the new regime to become the mission of the bureaucracy; and from that moment on, the result was absolutely clear. This implies that:

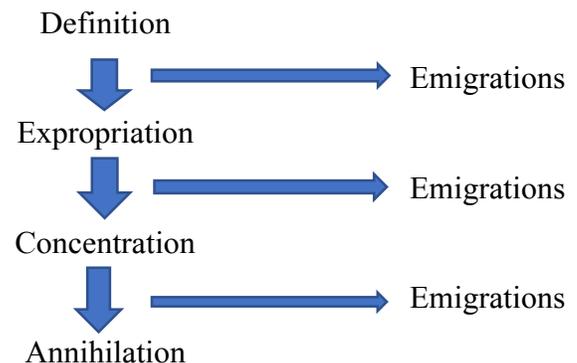
- (1) Hitler played a minor active role in the destruction process itself, an aspect which is clearly indicated by the fact that Hitler is mentioned less in the book than Himmler, and only a little more than Eichmann;
- (2) The whole bureaucracy apparatus by itself was not necessarily ideologically Nazified—it functioned in the mode characteristic of bureaucracies, as described by Weber, hence the by now deeply entrenched Hilbergian term, “machinery of destruction.” Antisemitism as a constantly ongoing, actively motivating factor was not more important than the inherent nature of that “machinery” and of its characteristic motivations, such as careerism, for instance. Nazi antisemitism was needed foremost to set the process in motion and to orient it accordingly, although at a later stage Hilberg admitted that “the Jews would have never been exterminated by means of orders only. What was needed was a will, a willingness, a train of thought and an agreement.”³¹
- (3) The path from the first civil ordinance to the Final Solution was linear and had an internal logic of bureaucratic functioning.
- (4) The path to the Final Solution was an entirely internal German process.³²

In his study of the German railways, Hilberg

found a concrete example of this, as he would explain to Claude Lanzmann when interviewed for the film, *Shoah*:

destruction of the Jews occurred in the process of technical problems being solved – this was not only the property of the railroads, everyone was approaching the destruction from the same vantage point: a problem had to be solved. [...] the substance of the result emerged out of the individual tiny solutions to individual tiny problems. So, there is no difference between the railroads in this respect and the most extreme SS units in action.³³

How did this linear development evolve or escalate? According to Hilberg, stepwise through four stages: definition, expropriation, concentration, and (finally) annihilation, which itself straddled two vehicles: killing units and killing centers. This conceptualization is repeated several times in the book, in its structure, and probably more importantly in a visual presentation:³⁴



The clarity and the visual simplicity of these basic elements leave a deep imprint on the mind of the reader.

Questioning the Underlying Principles of the Model

Certain questions arise, nevertheless, vis-à-vis this powerful analysis; some of them are methodological while others are a result of the findings that have been accumulated in the extremely active field of “perpetrator research.” Let us take a second look at the graphic presentation of the destruction process.

First, Hilberg describes all the elements as “steps,” yet this is not so simple. “Definition” was the bureaucratic act of formulating a legal tool that facilitated the identification of the target (the Jews as individuals) at a certain moment, thus providing the administrative means that unleashed the entire destruction process. This tool could be used

from then on to implement three consecutive long-term policies of “destruction”: “expropriation,” “concentration,” and “annihilation.” Although Hilberg used the term, “steps,” there is a difference in the nature of these steps: the first one is an act; the others are policies and processes. Moreover and interestingly, “emigration,” a very prominent dimension of the lives of German Jewry in the 1930s, is conceived in Hilberg’s model not as a “step” or “policy” in itself, but as a byproduct of other policies, and this is well-expressed by the fact that he uses the plural form, “Emigrations,” and not the singular form, “Emigration”! This raises two interrelated questions: first, is it really correct to define one element (expropriation) as a “policy” and the other (emigrations) as a “byproduct”? And second, even if so, why should “expropriation” be the first step to be taken after “definition,” and not something else?

Indeed, already several years after the publication of *The Destruction*, this conceptualization was challenged by the so-called “functionalist” historians whose interest and research also focused only on the Third Reich’s bureaucracy—like Hilberg—but from the historian’s perspective. One of the pioneers of this approach, Karl Schleunes, in his book, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz*, presented legal discrimination and exclusion, economic exclusion and emigration, as well as visual exclusion in the public sphere, as different, uncoordinated, and even colliding policies, carried out side by side by “competing power groups” during the same period—from the very first moment of Hitler’s ascendance to power on January 30, 1933. Thus, even though Schleunes agreed with Hilberg that Hitler’s active role in the shaping of policies had been limited, he interpreted the escalation “that ultimately led to their [the Jews’] deaths” not as being a linear, stepwise evolution, but as a “twisted” one in which the escalation resulted from the fierce rivalries within the Nazi regime and the questioning of each other’s competence.³⁵ And even though the definition of “non-Aryans” as established on April 11, 1933 was indeed an essential tool for many of the bureaucratic measures taken thereafter, some of these policies, such as violence and improvised boycotting on the local level, were carried out already before the enactment of that definition and also afterward without relating too much to it, because there were other means to identify “Jews”:³⁶ the circumcision of male Jews; Jewish names in telephone directories; Jewish names of enterprises; membership of synagogues, and more. The functionalist understanding was underscored by a broad series of studies in the 1970s and 1980s,³⁷ and although we have today

largely moved beyond the “intentionalist–functionalist” debate, and definitely beyond the extreme stances that were proclaimed at the time, these findings cannot be dismissed. One example are the rivalries and different interpretations within the Nazi regime regarding the exact goal of anti-Jewish policies to be pursued as indicated in the stenographic record of the extremely important meeting at Hermann Göring’s office on November 12, 1938. On that occasion, in compliance with Hitler’s instructions—(and I quote:) “the Jewish Question is to be summed up and coordinated once and for all and solved one way or another”—Göring, the plenipotentiary of the Four Years Plan, stated that (and I quote:) “the problem is in the main a large-scale economic matter.” Goebbels, the Reich Minister of Propaganda, argued that:

this is our chance to dissolve the synagogues. [...] We shall build parking lots in their places or new buildings. That ought to be the criterion for the whole country, the Jews shall have to remove the damaged or burned synagogues, and shall have to provide us with ready free space. [...] I deem it necessary to issue a decree forbidding the Jews to enter German theaters, movie houses, and circuses. [...] Furthermore, I advocate that the Jews be eliminated from all positions in public life in which they may prove to be provocative. It is still possible today that a Jew shares a compartment in a sleeping car with a German.

I.e.: For Goebbels, the main problem was the presence of Jews in the public sphere. Heydrich, the chief of the security police and SS security service (the SD, claimed that “In spite of the elimination of the Jew from the economic life, the main problem, namely to kick the Jew out of Germany, remains.”³⁸ These differing ideas about the conduct and goal of anti-Jewish policies were now finally to be coordinated; and indeed, one of the results of this meeting was that emigration, as a policy, got priority.

The following step in Hilberg’s model is “concentration,” which he equated and identified with “ghettoization”; the Jewish Councils phenomenon is interpreted as being an ingredient of the “ghettoization” or concentration process. He described this in the following manner:

The preliminary steps of the ghettoization process consisted of marking [with bands or badges], movement restrictions [confined in ghettos], and the creation of Jewish control

organs [Jewish Councils]. [...] The three preliminary steps—marking, movement restrictions, and the establishment of a Jewish control machinery—were taken in the very first months of civil rule [in Poland]. [...] In this book we shall be interested in the ghetto only as a control mechanism [for movement restrictions] in the hands of the German bureaucracy. To the Jews the ghetto was a way of life; to the Germans it was an administrative measure. [...]

The most important, and ultimately also the most troublesome, of the preliminary steps in the ghettoization process was the establishment of Jewish councils—*Judenräte*. [...] By the end of 1941 almost all Jews in the incorporated territories and the *Generalgouvernement* were living in ghettos.³⁹

This view has become generally accepted in Holocaust research literature.⁴⁰ Yet what was the source on which Hilberg based this comprehension? Relating only briefly to developments toward concentration in Germany proper in the 1930s, Reinhard Heydrich's well-known, *Schnellbrief*, dated September 21, 1939, which is considered—not only by him—to be a key document in the whole process of anti-Jewish policies, was Hilberg's buttress. It is indeed an important document, but it has to be read and analyzed meticulously and put in context.⁴¹ First, in that document, which was carefully phrased, there is no section whatsoever on ghettos! The word "ghetto" appears only in passing, in paragraph 5 in the extensive section on the *Ältestenräte*:

The Councils of Elders in the concentration cities (*Konzentrierungsstädten*) are to be made responsible for the appropriate housing of Jews arriving from the countryside.

For reasons of general police security, the concentration of the Jews in the cities will probably call for regulations in these cities, which will forbid their entry to certain quarters completely and that—but with due regard for economic requirements—they may, for instance, not leave the ghetto, nor leave their homes after a certain hour in the evening, etc. [my emphasis, DM].⁴²

Indeed, according to another document, the actual minutes of the meeting of September 21, Heydrich said:

Jewry in the cities should be contained in

the ghetto, to permit better control and, subsequently, their better removal. Along with this, it is urgent that the Jew as smallholder disappear from rural regions. This operation must be accomplished within the next three to four weeks.⁴³

At face value, this might support Hilberg's view. But that would be the case only if we limit ourselves to simply reading these two documents without examining the terminology and without accurately checking what happened on the ground. If we read both statements well, it becomes clear that the ghettos already existed: "they may, for instance, not leave the ghetto" is the phrasing. But what were "ghettos?" In my study on the emergence of the ghettos, which I referred to in the beginning of this lecture, I have shown the changing semantic history of the term ghetto from 16th century Venice to the Nazi period: in this context—in Poland in September 1939—the term indicated a densely populated, poor Jewish neighborhood. Therefore, this document does not talk about the establishment of ghettos as such. Indeed, as Christopher Browning has demonstrated in his detailed research, there was no systematic setting up of ghettos. And as I have shown, the number of officially established restricted areas for Jews in Poland that the Germans called "ghettos," which was the new transformation of that concept, was very limited—until the spring of 1941; thereafter, there was a wave of "ghettoization," i.e. of setting up ghettos. However, even then Hilberg's statement that "by the end of 1941 almost all Jews in the incorporated territories and the *Generalgouvernement* were living in ghettos" is an exaggeration; there was a considerable number of villages without ghettos where Jews lived until their roundup in 1942 or 1943. Moreover, and this is of the utmost importance, ghettos were established only in Poland, the Soviet Union, Theresienstadt, Salonika, and Hungary, i.e., in Eastern Europe. The term "ghetto" was not used by the Germans or by local authorities to refer to concentrations of Jews in other countries. Therefore, "concentration" and "ghettoization" were two different processes that originated from different impulses at different bureaucratic levels, and that only partially overlapped. Hilberg conflated them, using the term, "ghetto," for all concentrations of Jews, while the Nazis did not do so, which blurs reality.⁴⁴

This brings us to the *Judenräte*, the Jewish Councils—a phenomenon to which I have dedicated considerable research. In early Holocaust historiography

written by survivors, the establishment of the councils was vaguely and in general attributed to “the Germans.” In the wake of Hilberg’s book and his conceptualization, scholarship essentially accepted that notion as an axiom: it was supposedly inherent in the bureaucratic process of destruction. Hence no scholar, including Hilberg, asked the questions: Who initiated the idea? Why? When? I cannot go into the details today, but regarding this topic too, attention has to be paid to the different types of what I call “headships,” of which the Judenräte were one branch.

The headship idea itself had its own bureaucratic, linguistic, and conceptual origins. It developed before the invasion of Poland, originating in the Jewish Department of the SD (the SS Security Service) in 1937. The first prototypes were established in Vienna, Prague, Danzig, and Germany proper (none of them were called Judenräte). The first headships in Poland were established already in the two weeks preceding September 21, the date of Heydrich’s meeting with the commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen* and of the *Schnellbrief*. Therefore, the concept and the implementation of the headship were developed much earlier and separately from the emergence of the ghettos. This phenomenon was also much more widespread than ghettos: Judenräte and *Judenvereinigungen* (imposed associations of Jews) were established systematically all over Europe and even in North Africa, as well as in some concentration camps (such as Bergen-Belsen). If the number of real ghettos was altogether around 1140,⁴⁵ my estimate of the number of Jewish Councils is more than 1200. In many cases, probably the majority, the establishment of the Jewish Councils preceded that of the ghettos in places where ghettos were established. The driving force behind the establishment of the Judenräte and the *Judenvereinigungen* was the SS and police apparatus, which aimed at getting the upper hand in controlling the Jewish communities versus other German authorities.⁴⁶

Finally, both the establishment of Jewish Councils and the establishment of ghettos were not by themselves stages leading toward the Final Solution, intentionally or unintentionally: close examination of the decision-making process regarding the total extermination of the Jews reveals that it followed a conceptual path that did not include these phenomena as essential cogs. Indeed, both served to implement the Final Solution, but not always and not everywhere; the Final Solution was also executed in many places where Jewish Councils neither existed or could not be manipulated well enough.⁴⁷

Consequences of the Critique

If the major underlying principles of Hilberg’s model are deconstructed and proved as not matching historical reality, the model itself falls apart. The problem is not so much Hilberg and his book, *The Destruction*, as such, to which I will return in a few minutes, but the basic question: How then should the Holocaust and the anti-Jewish processes be conceptualized? Before proposing my alternative, I want to broaden the discussion.

An inherent ingredient of Hilberg’s concept—the idea of gradual escalation toward an ultimate fatal result: the comprehensive extermination campaign that essentially took place within the state administration—is a dominant mode of thinking in “perpetrator” research in general, whether functionalist or intentionalist. The intentionalist view comprehends a linear development that stretches from the *Weltanschauung* blueprint, as formulated in Hitler’s “first political writing” in September 1919 and *Mein Kampf*, according to the historian, Eberhard Jäckel (who passed away two months ago), via its escalating implementation by the state in the 1930s and peaking in 1933, 1935 (Nuremberg Laws), 1938 (*Kristallnacht*), and 1939 (the invasion of Poland), to the final stage, the Final Solution that was unleashed with Operation Barbarossa in June 1941.⁴⁸ The functionalist view insists on “cumulative radicalization”—a term coined by the German functionalist historian, Hans Mommsen (who passed away two years ago)⁴⁹—of the policies due to a situation of “totalitarian anarchy” in the bureaucracy, which led to struggles over the competence of rivals that caused the path to the murder campaign to be “twisted,” as mentioned above.

In spite of the differences between the approaches of the intentionalists, the functionalists, Hilberg, and the more recent reconciling views of Ian Kershaw,⁵⁰ Saul Friedländer, and others,⁵¹ they all view the comprehensive murder campaign of the Jews as the ultimate and highest goal of the Nazi anti-Jewish enterprise. This murder-focused view, which can be fully understood from the perspective of humanist, Christian, and Jewish morality, has intensified even more in the past decades due to the development of (comparative) genocide studies that concentrate on social and political structures of mass murder. Consequently, the bureaucratic decision-making process in general and its multi-faceted subtleties in particular have gained and preserved center stage status in the field of perpetrator research. Moreover, the eagerness to uncover the path that led to the Final Solution has led scholars to

forcefully integrate into the path phenomena that, if studied closely, did not really contribute to that path.

Conclusion: An Alternative Conceptualization of “the Holocaust”

In recent years, beginning around 1990, several historical methodologies—cultural, linguistic, and *mentalités*—have been given more attention in historical Holocaust research. The utilization of these methods has shed light on important yet neglected aspects of the Nazi anti-Jewish enterprise. The German historian, Ulrich Herbert, has emphasized the importance of the concept of *Weltanschauung* as a motivating factor, versus common simplistic models and images, and versus materialistic interpretations of Nazism. He emphatically stated that “racism was not a ‘mistaken belief’ (*Irrglaube*) behind which the ‘real,’ i.e., economic interests hid themselves, but the core [literally: fixed point] of the whole system.”⁵² *Weltanschauung*, a term derived from the sources, has a religious-like dimension. “It means...a convincing structure [of a set of ideas and views] that the individual finds as being correct and plausible, which organizes and provides answers to very diverse questions and problems.”⁵³

The French historian, Johann Chapoutot, has provided a masterful, comprehensive, cohesive, and systematic reconstruction of Nazi “normativity,” as he calls it; i.e., the “constituent norms, demands, and duties of the Nazi discourse.” He has convincingly demonstrated that the behavior of the broad palette and enormous numbers of people—not only bureaucrats—who were involved in the Nazi enterprise and who did not view their acts as running counter to morality, should be comprehended in the context of the atmosphere and mental mindset created by Nazism, which comprised what was considered “normal,” what was posed as desirable (*souhaitable*), and what was demanded (*impératif*). The mode of thinking that was shaped through discourse that penetrated every realm of life was a fundamental element that created the condition for killing in general and for killing Jews in particular, because the mode of thinking in turn shaped the modes of acting.⁵⁴

The Israeli cultural historian, Alon Confino, has described how Nazi conceptualization, which cultivated deeply embedded Christian imagery and memory, sought to create a new “genesis” for the world. In this context, the mythical image of *Der Jude* (“the Jew”)—that went far beyond the racial principle—was perceived

as the origin of despised “modernity” with its postulates of equality, of the moral past, and of “history,” which had to all be erased. Consequently, the new world could only come into being “without Jews.”⁵⁵

I myself have suggested⁵⁶ that the visionary goal of the Nazi anti-Jewish enterprise was the exorcism of the so-called *Jüdischen Geist*—the “anti-natural” idea and principle of human equality that had penetrated and thoroughly polluted the political, social, and cultural spheres—from the globe. The physical Jews were HIV-like carriers of that spirit, which had infected all the spheres of life beyond the physical presence of the Jews and that consequently had to be de-Judaized (“*entjudet*”). The perception that “Judaism” stood for (alternating) evil principles was not a Nazi innovation. David Nirenberg described this long-standing tradition.⁵⁷ Yet in the case of the Nazis, (1) the identification of Jews with the principle of equality, combined with (2) the social-Darwinist belief in the “constantly-recurring struggle for existence,”⁵⁸ (3) Hitler’s personality as a transformational leader who was given the reins of a modern centralized state, and (4) a political and economic crisis situation, created a uniquely explosive situation.

In a draft-concept paper for a law “to regulate the status of the Jews,” conceived by an inter-ministerial committee on 6 April 1933, only two months after Hitler’s rise to power, it is stated that the goal of anti-Jewish policies is “to use this unique moment to purify the German people and liberate it from the alien power that had been controlling it hitherto in its own home, in overt and covert ways, which posed an existential danger.”⁵⁹ Indeed, this formulation came from the bureaucracy, but many of the members of this committee were non-Nazis, officials who were appointed during the Weimar period. Therefore, it expressed a widespread feeling, which existed beyond the hard core of the Nazis. One of the striking things about the Third Reich is the outburst of grassroots antisemitism all over, from the very first weeks and months of the Nazi regime, i.e., even before Nazification put down its roots. Frank Bajohr, in his detailed study of the economic exclusion of Jews in Hamburg, emphasized that there was no need for a trigger from above: the outburst from below had already preceded policies from above.⁶⁰ It continued later on in every sphere, often beyond the initiatives of the bureaucracy. If Kershaw developed the idea of “working toward the Führer,” I would say instead that there was a popular “working toward the goal envisioned by Hitler and the Nazi *Weltanschauung*,” a drive from below, bottom-up.

When I say “antisemitism,” I mean the ousting of Jews, but also and no less so the purification of the German mind and soul by exorcizing the polluting and noxious “Jewish Spirit”; both ousting and purification were included in the term “*entjudung*.” This *entjudung* happened in the circles of the Lutheran⁶¹ and Catholic churches,⁶² of art (as has been described by Alan Steinweis) and music,⁶³ of language activists, such as the *Deutsche Sprachverein*,⁶⁴ of the legal profession,⁶⁵ of scientific scholarship,⁶⁶ of the humanities,⁶⁷ of the broad variety of medical professions,⁶⁸ of the economy,⁶⁹ and of more. This did not occur at the same pace in every field; in some fields it was almost not at all feasible; for example, the “Germanization of music.”⁷⁰ Nevertheless, it is important to point out that these outbreaks of antisemitism began immediately after (and some already before) Hitler’s rise to power. These outbursts of vigorous action resulted from the convictions of many, on the one hand, and from the unbelievably rapid accommodation by many others, on the other hand.

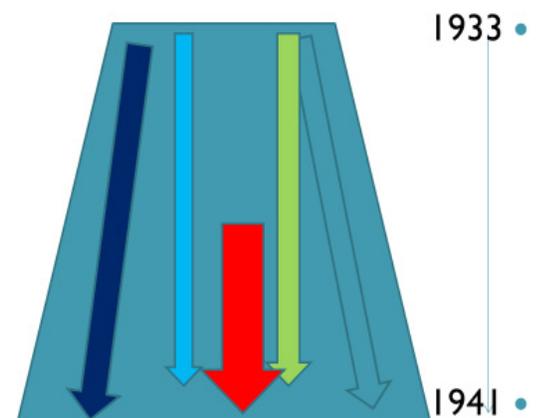
At this point, it is necessary to note a characteristic of mainstream perpetrator decision-making historiography: This historiography is so obsessed with command channels, orders, and acts, that the mindset of the actors, the activating power of antisemitism as a rationalized form of hatred deeply entrenched in cultural norms, is often overlooked (we recently got a reminder of such a phenomenon in Charlottesville). These scholars definitely mention antisemitism as a general motivation that they place in the background—without giving it enough attention in the analysis of daily behavior. One should internalize well what Dieter Wisliceny, Eichmann’s man in Slovakia, Salonika, and Hungary, wrote in a postwar testimony:

Antisemitism was one of the foundations of the platform of Nazism. It stemmed in practice from two outlooks: (1) the pseudo-scientific biological statements of Prof. Günther and (2) the mystical-religious view that the world is directed by forces of good and evil. According to this view, the principle of evil was embodied in the Jews, who were assisted by the Church (the Jesuits), the Freemasons, and Bolshevism. [...] Millions of people believed these things...something that can be compared only to similar phenomena from the Middle Ages, such as the mania of witchcraft (*Hexenmania*). To this world of evil, the racial

mystics opposed the world of the good, of light, personified in blond, blue-eyed people, the sole source of all the energy that creates civilization and builds states. These two worlds were, of course, in a perpetual battle and the war of 1939, which Hitler began, was the final confrontation between these two forces.⁷¹

This goal, which in fact was already established in 1933, as previously stated, was pursued in a variety of ways at the same time. The number of studies on Nazi antisemitic activities that had no impact on the developments leading to toward the genocide of the Jews is enormous. This indicates that the murder campaign was but one aspect, albeit important and even essential, of the larger project, which was: the envisioned total elimination of the Jewish Spirit and its evil influence on humankind in general, and on the “Aryans” in particular. Consequently, if this genocide was not the ultimate culmination of the Nazi anti-Jewish enterprise from the Nazi perspective, I suggest a different conceptualization of the event called “the Holocaust” (or the Shoah, or whatever name one chooses), which I visualize as follows:

“Total Removal of the Jews”



Instead of a kind of tunnel process—whether linear or twisted—leading to “the ultimate goal” - the genocidal campaign that began at some point in 1941 - my understanding is that the Nazis had an open-ended vision of the total elimination of the Jewish Spirit and its carriers. This vision went beyond the elimination of the carriers, the physical Jews; it was interpreted and implemented in a

broad variety of ways due to the differing emphases given by the activists from the very beginning of the Third Reich. It included acts of self-purification—of language, science, philosophy, law, music, and art. Such a conceptualization also allows for the integration of the extremely broad array of accomplices and enablers in German and Austrian society outside and beyond the circles of Nazi organizations and the bureaucracy; and even of many ideological opponents of Nazism, who were nevertheless antisemitic enough, or who claimed to be apolitical, to consent to this aspect of the regime's policies (as Götz Aly and David Bankier have pointed out);⁷² as well as so many people in the countries in Europe and North Africa that had been occupied by Germany or had allied themselves with Germany, which included not only ideological collaborators, but also many collaborators who were active beneficiaries, whether individuals, organizations, or governments, "Jew hunters," and denouncers. I would describe this by paraphrasing Hilberg's words as recorded by Lanzmann and previously cited:

The Hitler-set goal of the "total removal" of the Jews and of the "Jewish Spirit" occurred in the process of specifying and achieving that vague goal—this was not only the property of the railroads, everyone was approaching the "total removal" from the same vantage point: a goal had to be achieved by solving the problems along the way. [...] The substance of the result emerged out of individual and group solutions to "the Jewish peril" as each of them perceived it (some as physical annihilation, others as the eradication of anything "Jewish"). So, there is no difference in this respect between the railroads and the most extreme SS units in action, between the artists and the physicists, between the linguists and the priests, etc.

To conclude: In my eyes, Hilberg's conceptualization of the Holocaust (1) as a social scientific model that is based on a (2) linear (3) bureaucratic process that (4) reaches its ultimate climax with the implementation of the Final Solution can no longer be sustained in this simplistic mode in light of the available research. The Holocaust was a much more comprehensive "event" that cannot be restricted to the bureaucratic realm, and the unprecedented success of the anti-Jewish project (and other projects of the Third Reich) in an extremely short time in historical

terms—only twelve years and ninety-eight days—was the product of an extremely rapid dramatic change of social behavior in Nazi Germany and under the influence of Nazi Germany, a volcano-like eruption of antisemitic energy in many strands all over society which defied and undermined the inherent slow moving, inflexible, and inefficient nature of the bureaucratic tool. Hilberg himself pointed out many of the problems in the functioning of the bureaucracy, which in regular situations would have undermined the implementation of the process that led to the Final Solution. Michael Wildt has shown, for instance, the power of the "uncompromising generation," a generation that acted without being bound to rules and bureaucratic procedures.⁷³ Hilberg's model does not provide an answer to the questions raised by the behavior of German society at large and the role of the various societies in the occupied and satellite countries. Cultural and linguistic aspects, such as the history of concepts (*Begriffsgeschichte*), are also beyond the scope of this model.

And yet, as opposed to many of the other comprehensive presentations of the Holocaust that ceased to be relevant, *The Destruction of the European Jews* remains and is still—and I believe that it will continue to be—an essential study for any research on and any teaching of the Holocaust. This is due to its analytical structure and the treasure of data and phenomenal insights into the functioning of the bureaucracy of the Third Reich that it provides. These virtues offer important established truths (even if we cannot accept the overarching model), including (1) that the periodization of the event should be defined as 1933–1945, which is counter to a series of recent approaches that, under the influence of genocide studies, define the Holocaust as "the genocide of the Jews" that was carried out during the years, 1941–1945, and thus marginalize the 1930s;⁷⁴ and (2) that the process was not top-down, but rather a collective effort of many people (just think about the fact that the Final Solution was carried out without having a designated budget!⁷⁵). In other words, even if the peel cannot be sustained any more, the rest of the apple remains and is tasty and satisfying—and it will continue to nourish Holocaust research in the future as well.

NOTES

- 1 YIVO Archives, New York, Philip Friedman files, Personal correspondence, I-115. I wish to thank Dr. Roni Stauber for providing me with copies of these letters.
- 2 Roni Stauber, *The Holocaust in Israeli Public Debate in the 1950s* (London and Portland, Or.: Vallentine Mitchell, 2007), 138–148; Nathaniel Popper, “A Conscious Pariah,” *The Nation*, March 31, 2010, <https://www.thenation.com/article/conscious-pariah/>; Jonathan A. Bush, “Raul Hilberg (1926–2007) In Memoriam,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* 100, no. 4 (Fall 2010): 661–688; Magnus Brechtken, “‘It is my intention to make this the definitive analysis of the great Jewish catastrophe.’ Raul Hilberg und die Entwicklung der Holocaustforschung,” in *Einsicht – Bulletin des Fritz Bauer Instituts* 08 (Herbst 2012), 32–37; Dan Michman, “Hilberg, Hurban Yehudei Eropah veYad Vashem” [“Hilberg, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, and Yad Vashem”], in Raul Hilberg, *Hurban Yehudei Eropah* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2012), XIII–XXX [Hebrew]; Boaz Cohen, *Israeli Holocaust Research: Birth and Evolution* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 198–200, 240–241; René Schlott, “Der lange Weg zum Buch. Zur Publikationsgeschichte von Raul Hilbergs »The Destruction of the European Jews«,” in *Zeiträume. Potsdamer Almanach des Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung* 2015, eds. Frank Bösch and Martin Sabrow (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2015), 143–152; Arieh Dubnov, “MeHilberg ‘el Arendt (uvhazarah?) – He’arot ‘al Hurban Yahadut Eropa veHabanaliyut shel haRo’a” [“From Hilberg to Arendt (and back?) – Remarks on *The Destruction of the European Jews* and the Banality of Evil”], *Tabur* 7 (2016): 54–62 [Hebrew].
- 3 Olof Bortz, “*I wanted to know how this deed was done*: Raul Hilberg, the Holocaust and History (doctoral thesis, Stockholm University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of History) (Stockholm: Bokförlaget Faethon, 2017).
- 4 For instance, Yosef Grodzinsky, “Ani Davka Madgish Shoah” [“I am Actually Emphasizing the Shoah”], *Haaretz – Sefarim*, April 11, 2007 [Hebrew], <https://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/study/1.1401537>. The Wikipedia entry on Hilberg (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raul_Hilberg) makes the entirely erroneous claim that there was a “decision by Israeli authorities to deny him access to the Yad Vashem’s archives”, which is easily refuted by (a) the fact that there are no “Israeli authorities” above Yad Vashem that can order such a policy and that there was not even any intervention to do so by any other person or institution; and (b) the correspondences between Hilberg and Yad Vashem on several occasions (and see on this my introduction to the Hebrew edition).
- 5 Raul Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory: The Journey of a Holocaust Historian* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1996), 110–111.
- 6 *ibid.*, 111.
- 7 On the basis of this statement by Hilberg, Rony Brauman, and Eyal Sivan, the producers of the 1999 documentary, *The Specialist*, wrote in the companion to that film, *Éloge de la désobéissance. A propos d’Un Spécialiste* (Paris: Le Pommier, 1999), 73–74, that Melkman had been an “*ancien dirigeant du Conseil juif d’Amsterdam*”! On this issue see Dan Michman, *Pour une historiographie de la Shoah* (Paris: In Press, 2001), 159, note 5.
- 8 Alan Steinweis, *Studying the Jew: Scholarly Antisemitism in Nazi Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).
- 9 Dan Michman, *The Emergence of Jewish Ghettos during the Holocaust* (New York: Cambridge UP, 2011).
- 10 Hitler, *Mein Kampf. Eine kritische Edition*, eds. Christian Hartmann, Thomas Vordermayer, Othmar Plöckinger, and Roman Töppel (Munich and Berlin: Institut für Zeitgeschichte, 2016).
- 11 *Persecution and Murder of the European Jews by National-Socialist Germany*, vols. 1–16 (Munich and Jerusalem: Oldenbourg and Yad Vashem, forthcoming). The project was initiated by Prof. Ulrich Herbert of Freiburg University, jointly with the German Federal Archives and the Institute for Contemporary History in Munich. The German version, also published by Oldenbourg, is titled: *Die Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945*.
- 12 J[ozeph] M[elkman], “Een gevaarlijk boek,” *Nieuw Israelitisch Weekblad*, November 11, 1963.
- 13 A *shtadlan* was an intercessor figure, often a wealthy person (especially merchants) between the Jewish community and the authorities. *Shtadlanim* used many tactics: begging, rational appeals, and also gifts of money or other goods to gain favor. See for instance Scott Ury, “The *Shtadlan* of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: Noble Advocate or Unbridled Opportunist?” *Polin* 15 (2002): 267–299.
- 14 Jozeph Michman (Melkman), *Ma’ageley Hayim veZehut* [Cycles of Life and Identity] (Tel Aviv: Gevanim, 2004), 62–63.
- 15 Raul Hilberg, “The Judenrat: Conscious or Unconscious ‘Tool,’” *Patterns of Jewish Leadership in Nazi Europe (Proceedings of the Third Yad Vashem International Historical Conference – April 1977)*, ed. Israel Gutman (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1979), 31–44; and the subsequent debate, 59–64.
- 16 Raul Hilberg, “The Development of Holocaust Research – A Personal Overview,” in *Holocaust Historiography in Context: Emergence, Challenges, Polemics and Achievements*, ed. David Bankier and Dan Michman (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2008), 25–36; the article was previously published in *Yad Vashem Studies* 35, no. 2 (2007), 21–33, as a tribute to Hilberg upon his death on August 4, 2007.
- 17 Raul Hilberg to Bella Gutterman, November 28, 2004, Yad Vashem Administrative Archive.
- 18 Raul Hilberg to Bella Gutterman, February 25, 2007, Yad Vashem Administrative Archive.
- 19 Raul Hilberg, *Hurban Yehudei Eropah* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2012).
- 20 Raul Hilberg, “German Railways, Jewish Souls,” *Society* 14, no. 1 (December 1976): 60–74. The German expanded book-form version, *Sonderzüge nach Auschwitz* (Mainz: Dumjahn, 1981) also includes 70 photos, 66 documents (many of them in facsimile), and 7 maps. Hilberg wrote a fascinating article on the attitude of the German Railways archivists toward him when he came to do his research: “In Search of the Special Trains,” *Midstream* 25, no. 8 (October 1979): 32–38; a German translation is included as “Auf der Suche nach den Sonderzügen,” in *Anatomie des Holocaust. Essays und Erinnerungen*, eds. Walter H. Pehle and René Schlott (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 2016), 241–264.
- 21 Such as Leon Poliakov, *Harvest of Hate. The Nazi Program for the Destruction of the Jews of Europe* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1954); Lucy Davidowicz, *The War Against the Jews 1933–1945* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975); Arno Mayer, *Why Did the Heavens Not Darken* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988); Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler’s Willing Executioners. Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York: Albert A. Knopf, 1996).
- 22 For a survey of the current state of Holocaust historiography see my forthcoming article: “Characteristics of Holocaust Historiography Since 1990 and Their Contexts: Emphases, Perceptions, Developments, Debates,” in *The Wiley Companion to the Holocaust*, eds. Hilary Earl and Simone Gigliotti (Wiley, forthcoming 2018). For two evaluations of Hilberg’s oeuvre that relate to this aspect see Christopher R. Browning, “Raul Hilberg,” *Yad Vashem*

Studies 35, no. 2 (2007), 7–20; Michael Wildt, “In Praise of the Archive. Raul Hilberg and the Historiography of the Holocaust”; unpublished paper presented at the International Symposium Marking the Publication of *The Destruction of the European Jews* [in Hebrew], Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, October 22, 2012.

23 Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory*, 57–58.

24 On German sociology, Weber, and Hilberg, see also: Michael Wildt, “Der Holocaust, organisationssoziologisch betrachtet. Ein Lehrstück für Historiker,” *Mittelweg* 36, 24 no. 6 (December 2015/January 2016), 106–118.

25 *Max Weber on Law in Economy and Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 351; see also Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1962), 426–428. Weber discerned six major principles of the bureaucracy (I am using here Kenneth Johnston’s helpful summarizing description): 1. A formal hierarchical structure. 2. Management by rules, which allows decisions made at high levels to be executed consistently by all lower levels. 3. Organization by functional specialty, i.e., work is to be done by specialists, and people are organized into units based on the type of work they do or skills they have. 4. An “up-focused” or “in-focused” mission; in the “up-focused” mission the organization’s purpose is to serve the agency empowered it. 5. Purposely impersonal. 6. Employment based on technical qualifications. See Kenneth Johnston, *Busting Bureaucracy. How to Conquer Your Organization’s Worst Enemy* (n.p.: Donnelley & Sons, 1993), 12–13, <http://bustingbureaucracy.com/pdfbook/fullbook.pdf>.

26 Hilberg, *The Politics of Memory*, 57.

27 Raul Hilberg, German Motivations for the Destruction of the Jews, *Midstream – A Quarterly Jewish Review* 11, no. 2 (June 1965), 23–40; German translation: “Die Motive der Deutschen für die Vernichtung der Juden,” in Hilberg, *Anatomie des Holocaust. Essays und Erinnerungen*, 35–70.

28 Hilberg, *Destruction* (1961), v.

29 In this sense he, consciously or unconsciously, responded to the expression/joke, “Die Juden sind an allem Schuld, meinte einer. Und die Radfahrer... sagte ich. Wieso denn die Radfahrer?, antwortete er verduzt. Wieso die Juden?, fragte ich zurück,” which is attributed to Kurt Tucholsky, but can be found in an exchange in Erich Maria Remarque’s book, *Der schwarze Obelisk*: “Da sehen sie es’, sagt Heinrich bitter zu Riesenfeld. ‘Dadurch haben wir den Krieg verloren: Durch die Schlamperei der Intellektuellen und durch die Juden.’ ‘Und die Radfahrer.’ ergänzt Riesenfeld. ‘Wieso die Radfahrer?’ fragt Heinrich erstaunt. ‘Wieso die Juden?’ fragt Riesenfeld zurück.” http://img1.liveinternet.ru/images/attach/c/8/4037/4037815_remarque_erich_maria_der_schwarze_obelisk.pd.

30 Hilberg, *Destruction* (1961), 639, 668; this formulation was kept in later editions; see for instance *The Destruction of the European Jews* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1985), 1044.

31 Raul Hilberg, as cited in Gerhard Paul, “Von Psychopathen, Technokraten des Terrors und ‘ganz gewöhnlichen’ Deutschen. Die Täter der Shoah im Spiegel der Forschung,” in Gerhard Paul, ed., *Die Täter der Shoah. Fanatische Nationalsozialisten oder ganz normale Deutsche?* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2002), 37.

32 Critique of this last point was the theme of the 2014 Hilberg Memorial lecture delivered by the late David Cesarani: he emphasized the lack of the presence of the context of World War II in Hilberg’s work; David Cesarani, *The Second World War and the Fate of the Jews*, The Raul Hilberg Memorial Lecture, October 27, 2014, <https://www.uvm.edu/~uvmchs/documents/HilbergLectureCesarani.pdf>. See also his impressive book, David Cesarani, *Final Solution. The Fate of the Jews 1933–49* (London: Macmillan, 2016), especially xviii.

33 Transcript of interview by Lanzmann with Hilberg, USHMM Archive, Bobine 385A, 2–3. I thank Alan E. Steinweis for providing me with this source.

34 Hilberg, *Destruction* (1961), 31, 32, 39, as a graphic presentation; and in the division of the book into parts and chapters: “The Destruction Process I” includes the chapters, “IV: Definition,” “V: Expropriation,” and “VI: Concentration”; “The Destruction Process II” includes the chapters, “VII: Mobile Killing Operations,” “VIII: Deportations,” and “IX: Killing Center Operations.”

35 Karl A. Schleunes, *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz. Nazi Policy Toward German Jews, 1933–1939* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), vii; the book was first published in 1970.

36 Michael Wildt, *Hitler’s Volksgemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion. Violence against Jews in Provincial Germany, 1919–1939* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2012); David Bankier, ed., *Probing the Depths of German Antisemitism. German Society and the Persecution of the Jews, 1933–1941* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, Leo Baeck Institute and Berghahn, 2000).

37 See for instance Uwe Dietrich Adam, *Judenpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1972); and, of course, Hans Mommsen’s various publications.

38 “Stenographisches Niederschrift von einem Teil der Besprechung über die Judenfrage unter Vorsitz von Feldmarschall Göring in RLM am 12. November 1938, 11 Uhr,” 1816-PS, *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, vol. 4 (Washington, DC: USGPO, 1946), 425–454; the English translation can be found at several sites, see for instance <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/eng/English34.pdf> (quotes are from 1, 6–8, 22).

39 Hilberg, *Destruction* (1961), 144–148, 152–153.

40 We can learn about how Hilberg has been understood from the recent exposition of his view by the Israeli scholar Boaz Neumann: “[According to Hilberg], following the Nazi German invasion of Poland, and with greater intensity the invasion of the Soviet Union, there was a clear exacerbation of their Jewish policy. In the first stage, the Jews were locked up in ghettos. On Sept. 21, 1939, soon after the invasion of Poland, Reinhard Heydrich issued instructions to concentrate and intern the Jews in separate neighborhoods in the cities, for reasons associated with general police security, while taking economic needs into account. The first ghetto in Poland was established in October 1939” (Boaz Neumann, *Nazism* [Tel Aviv: MOD Publishing House, 2007] [Heb.], 154). The late Leni Yahil, who adopted a more cautious and complex approach, also wrote that following the invasion of Poland, the “planning [of] the measures against the Jews was comprehensive, far-reaching and guided by principle. Heydrich issued his orders on this subject to the commanders of the *Einsatzgruppen* at a meeting held on September 21, 1939, and went on to detail and assign them in an express letter dispatched to the commanders that same day. [...] It was one of the prime documents characterizing the process that was to develop into the Final Solution”; one of the orders was “the concentration operation [which] would require the establishment of ghettos.” “The wording of Heydrich’s express letter makes it clear that he regarded the ghetto not as a permanent institution, but as a temporary concentration until it proved possible to achieve the ultimate solution to the problem by disposing of the Jews.” See Leni Yahil, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry, 1932–1945*, trans. Ina Friedman and Haya Galai (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 146, 147, 164; see also the entire section in her book on “The Ghetto,” 164–171. Christopher Browning wrote the following: “The starting point of Nazi policy in eastern Europe had been Heydrich’s September 21 conference with the *Einsatzgruppen* leaders. On that occasion Heydrich had stipulated the immediate (within three to four weeks) concentration of Jews “in ghettos” in cities in order to facilitate “a better possibility of control and later deportation.” Heydrich’s subsequent *Schnellbrief* stipulated precisely the setting up of councils of “Jewish Elders.” [...] Aside from this, however, Heydrich was vague about the nature and organization of Jewish life in the cities. [...] The concentration of Jews in

cities was not accomplished within Heydrich's three-to-four-week time frame. [...] Jewish urban ghettos, intended as temporary way stations on the road to complete deportation, now became a factor with which local German authorities unexpectedly had to cope on a long-term basis. Little guidance came from Berlin. [...] Local authorities in the General Government and the incorporated territories were thus left to fend for themselves. In this light, ghettoization policy as practiced in Poland in 1940 and 1941 would be the direct result, not of Heydrich's *Schnellbrief* of September 21 ordering the concentration of Jews in cities, but rather of the Germans' failure to carry out the subsequent deportations envisioned therein. If an idea of ghettoization was present from the beginning, just how and when the idea was to be given concrete form varied greatly. [...] Whatever the particular reasons of the moment, ghettoization was fully consonant with the basic assumptions and long-term goals of Nazi Jewish policy, which aimed at a total removal of the Jews from the German sphere." Christopher R. Browning (with contributions by Jürgen Matthäus), *The Origins of the Final Solution. The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942* (Lincoln and Jerusalem: University of Nebraska Press and Yad Vashem, 2004), 111, 113, 123. And finally Saul Friedländer: "From the outset the ghettos were considered temporary means of segregating the Jewish population before its expulsion. Once they acquired a measure of permanence, however, one of their functions became the ruthless and systematic exploitation of part of the imprisoned Jewish population for the benefit of the Reich (mainly for the needs of the Wehrmacht) at as low a cost as possible. Moreover, by squeezing the food supply and, in Lodz, by replacing regular money with a special ghetto currency, the Germans put their hands on most of the cash and valuables the Jews had taken with them when driven into their miserable quarters. The ghettos also fulfilled a useful psychological and "educational" function in the Nazi order of things: they rapidly became the showplace of Jewish misery and destitution, offering viewers newsreel sequences that fed existing repulsion and hatred; a constant procession of German tourists (soldiers and some civilians) were presented with the same heady mix. [...] The Jewish Council (Judenrat) was the most effective instrument of German control of the Jewish population." Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews 1939–1945 [II]: The Years of Extermination* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 38–39.

41 On the importance of the document, see Dan Michman, "Why Did Heydrich Write the *Schnellbrief*? A Remark on the Reason and on its Significance," *Yad Vashem Studies* 32 (2004): pp. 433–447.

42 Documents of the International Tribunal at Nuremberg, PS-3363, in Arad, Gutman, and Margalio, *Documents on the Holocaust*, 175. The original German runs as follows: "Die Ältestenräte in den Konzentrierungsstädten sind verantwortlich zu machen für die geeignete Unterbringung der aus dem Lande zuziehenden Juden. [...] Die Konzentrierung der Juden in den Städten wird wahrscheinlich aus allgemein sicherheitspolizeilichen Gründen Anordnungen in diesen Städten bedingen, daß den Juden bestimmte Stadtviertel überhaupt verboten werden, daß sie stets jedoch unter Berücksichtigung der wirtschaftlichen Notwendigkeiten—z.B. das Ghetto nicht verlassen, zu einer bestimmten Abendstunde nicht mehr ausgehen dürfen usw."

43 "Das Judentum ist in den Städten im Getto zusammenzufassen, um eine bessere Kontrollmöglichkeit und später Abschubmöglichkeit zu haben. Hierbei vordringlich ist, daß der Jude als Kleinsiedler vom Land verschwindet. Diese Aktion muß innerhalb der nächsten 3 bis 4 Wochen durchgeführt sein. Sofern der Jude auf dem Land Händler ist, ist mit der Wehrmacht zu klären, wie weit diese jüdischen Händler zur Bedarfsdeckung der Truppe noch an Ort und Stelle verbleiben müssen." Minutes of the meeting of the heads of SS departments and Einsatzgruppen commanders, September 21, 1939, Yad Vashem Archives TR.3/983.

44 Michman, *The Emergence of Jewish Ghettos during the Holocaust*. See also Guy Miron and Shlomit Shulhani, eds., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust* (Yad Vashem: Jerusalem, 2009); Geoffrey P. Megargee, ed. *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945*, Volume II: *Ghettos in German-Occupied Eastern Europe* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press in cooperation with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 2012); Robert-Jan van Pelt, "Nazi Ghettos

and Concentration Camps: The Benefits and Pitfalls of an Encyclopedic Approach," *German Studies Review* 37, no.1 (February 2014): 149–159.

45 See *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos During the Holocaust*.

46 For some of my findings, see "The Uniqueness of the 'Joodse Raad' in Western European Context," *Dutch Jewish History* III, ed. Jozeph Michman, (Jerusalem: Institute for Research on Dutch Jewry, 1993), 371–380; "Judenrat," *The Holocaust Encyclopedia*, ed.-in-chief, Walter Laqueur (Yale University Press: New Haven and London 2001), 351–354; "Jewish 'Headships' under Nazi Rule: The Evolution and Implementation of an Administrative Concept," in Michman, *Holocaust Historiography: A Jewish Perspective*, 159–175; "La fondation de l'AJB dans une perspective internationale," in Jean-Philippe Schreiber et Rudi Van Doorslaer (eds.), *Les Curateurs du ghetto: L'Association des Juifs en Belgique sous l'occupation nazie* (Editions Labor: Bruxelles, 2004), 29–56, 469–474; "The Jewish Councils Phenomenon: New Insights and Their Implications for the Hungarian Case," in *The Holocaust in Hungary: A European Perspective*, ed. Judit Molnár (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2005), 254–264; "Re-evaluating the Emergence, Function and Form of the Jewish Councils Phenomenon," in *Ghettos 1939–1945. New Research and Perspectives on Definition, Daily Life, and Survival*, Symposium Presentations (Washington, D.C.: The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies, 2005), 67–84; "On the Historical Interpretation of the Judenräte Issue: Between Intentionalism, Functionalism, and the Integrationist Approach of the 1990s," *On Germans and Jews under the Nazi Regime: Essays by Three Generations of Historians* [in Honor of Otto Dov Kulka], ed. Moshe Zimmermann (Magnes Press: Jerusalem, 2006), 385–397; "Judenrat," *Enzyklopädie jüdischer Geschichte und Kultur*, vol. 3, ed. Dan Diner (Stuttgart and Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2012), 236–242.

47 "Judenräte, Ghettos, 'Endlösung'. Drei Komponenten einer antijüdischen Politik oder separate Faktoren?" in *Der Judenmord in den eingegliederten polnischen Gebieten 1939–1945*, ed. Jacek Andrzej Młynarczyk and Jochen Böhrer (Osnabrück: Fibre, 2010), 167–177.

48 Eberhard Jäckel, *Hitler's World View: A Blueprint for Power* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972); *Hitlers Herrschaft. Vollzug einer Weltanschauung* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1986).

49 Hans Mommsen, "The Realization of the Unthinkable. The 'Final Solution of the Jewish Question' in the Third Reich," in *The Policies of Genocide: Jews and Soviet Prisoners of War in Nazi Germany*, ed. Gerhard Hirschfeld (London: Unwin Hyman, 1986), 93–144.

50 Ian Kershaw, *Hitler. 1889–1936: Hubris* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1998); Ian Kershaw, *Hitler. 1936–1945: Nemesis* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2000).

51 Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1933–1939: The Years of Persecution* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1997); Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, 1939–1945: The Years of Extermination* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007).

52 Ulrich Herbert, "Arbeit und Vernichtung. Ökonomische Interesse und Primat der 'Weltanschauung' in Nationalsozialismus," ed. Dan Diner, *Ist der Nationalsozialismus Geschichte? Zur Historisierung und Historikerstreit* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1988), 236.

53 Ulrich Herbert, "Einleitung zur Neuauflage," *Best. Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft 1903–1989* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2016), 23.

54 Johann Chapoutot, *La loi du sang. Penser et agir en nazi* (Paris: NRF Gallimard, 2014); quote from p. 24. German edition: *Das Gesetz des Blutes. Von der NS-Weltanschauung zum Vernichtungskrieg* (Darmstadt: Philipp von Zabern, 2016), 21. For another perspective on this issue, see also Ulrich Herbert, *The Murder of the Jews and Popular Consent. Gwerman Society During the Nazi Dictatorship*, Search and Research Series 22 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2015).

- 55 Alon Confino, *A World Without Jews. The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014).
- 56 Dan Michman, "The Jewish Dimension of the Holocaust in Dire Straits? Current Challenges of Interpretation and Scope," in *Jewish Histories of the Holocaust. New Transnational Approaches*, ed. Norman Goda (New York: Beghahn, 2014), 17–38; "The Holocaust' – Do We Agree What We Are Talking About?" *Sine Era et Studio?* Special issue of *Holocaust Studies – A Journal of Culture and History* 20/1 (Summer/Autumn 2014), 105–114; reprinted in Noah Benninga and Katrin Stoll, eds., *Personal Engagement and the Study of the Holocaust* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 2015), 105–114.
- 57 David Nirenberg, *Anti-Judaism. The History of a Way of Thinking* (London: Head of Zeus Ltd, 2013).
- 58 Charles R. Darwin, *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection, or the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (London: John Murray, 1876; 6th and final edition, with additions and corrections), title of ch. 3.
- 59 "Der nicht realisierte Entwurf eines Gesetzes "zur Regelung der Stellung der Juden," vom 6. April 1933, *Verfolgung und Ermordung der europäischen Juden durch das nationalsozialistische Deutschland 1933–1945*, vol. 1: *Deutsches Reich 1933–1937*, ed. Wolf Gruner (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2008), 122.
- 60 Frank Bajohr, "Arisierung" in Hamburg. *Die Verdrängung der jüdischen Unternehmer 1933–1945* (Hamburg: Christians, 1998), 28.
- 61 See Andreas Nachama and Johannes Tuchel, "Überall Luthers Worte ..." – Martin Luther im Nationalsozialismus / "Luther's Words are everywhere ..." – Martin Luther in Nazi Germany. Exhibition catalogue (Berlin: Stiftung Topographie des Terrors and Gedenkstätte Deutscher Widerstand, 2017).
- 62 Suzanne Brown–Fleming, *Vatican Responses to Antisemitism: 1933*, Search and Research Series 28 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2017).
- 63 "Prior to 1933, artists joined the Nazi movement in lower frequencies than did other important professional groups. [...] After the seizure of power, the illusion of professional autonomy wooed many more artists into collaboration with the regime. [...] the vast majority of German artists managed to accommodate themselves to the new conditions." Alan E. Steinweis, *Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany. The Reich Chambers of Music, Theater, and the Visual Arts* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 176; and: "They believed that the underlying cause of artistic decay had to be addressed by removing Jews and other alien influences from German cultural life." Alan E. Steinweis, "Anti-Semitism and the Arts in Nazi Ideology and Policy," *The Arts in Nazi Germany. Continuity, Conformity, Change*, 20.
- 64 Thomas Pegelow-Kaplan, "Rethinking Nazi Violence Against Jews: Linguistic Injuries, Physical Brutalities, and Dictatorship Building." *Politische Gewalt in Deutschland: Ursprünge, Ausprägungen, Konsequenzen Tel Aviv Yearbook for German History 2014*, José Brunner, Doron Avraham, and Marianne Zepp, eds. (Wallstein: Göttingen, 2014), 111–131.
- 65 Raphael Gross, *Carl Schmitt and the Jews. The "Jewish Question," the Holocaust, and German Legal Theory* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2007).
- 66 In 1938, the prestigious weekly journal *Nature* published a translation of an article by German physicist Prof. Johannes Stark, President of the Physikalisch-Technischen Reichsanstalt, Berlin Charlottenburg, titled "The Pragmatic and the Dogmatic Spirit in Physics," in which he claimed that "if we examine the originators, representatives and propagandists of modern dogmatic theories, we find amongst them a preponderance of men of Jewish descent.... We must establish and recognize the fact that the natural inclination to dogmatic thought appears with especial frequency in people of Jewish origin"; *Nature* 141 (30 April 1938), 770–772. See Aharon Loewenstein, "Pragmatic and Dogmatic Physics: Antisemitism in Nature, 1938," *Jews and Sciences in German Contexts*, Ulrich Charta and Ute Deichmann, eds. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 231–244 – see online version: http://www.relativitycalculator.com/pdfs/critique_nature_magazine.pdf.
- 67 Steinweis, *Studying the Jew*; Dirk Rupnow, *Judenforschung im Dritten Reich. Wissenschaft zwischen Politik, Propaganda und Ideologie* (Baden Baden: Nomos, 2011); Frank-Rutger Hausmann, ed., *Die Rolle der Geisteswissenschaften im Dritten Reich* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2002); Wolfgang Bialas and Anson Rabinbach, eds., *Nazi Germany and the Humanities. How German Academics Embraced Nazism* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2014); Steven P. Remy, *The Heidelberg Myth. The Nazification and Denazification of a German University* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 2002), esp. 30–31.
- 68 See Dan Michman, "Resituating the Place of Medicine in the Grand Picture of the Holocaust: Critical Reflections on Mainstream Holocaust Historiography," Unpublished Keynote Lecture, The Second International Conference on Medicine in the Holocaust and Beyond, Holocaust Studies Program at Western Galilee College in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine, Bar-Ilan University, the International Institute for Holocaust Research, Yad Vashem, Beit Lohamei Hagetaot and the Galilee Medical Center, Western Galilee College, May 7–11, 2017; Sabine Hildebrandt, *The Anatomy of Murder. Ethical Transgressions and Anatomical Science during the Third Reich* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2016). For the scope of antisemitic energies in the various sub-disciplines of medicine see the program of the above mentioned Second International Conference on Medicine in the Holocaust and Beyond, <http://www.wgalil.ac.il/files/Conferences/2017/inenglish.pdf>.
- 69 Dan Michman, "Economic 'Entjudung' in Nazi Europe, 1933–1945: Its Place in the Overall Nazi Antisemitic Enterprise," *Geschichte erforschen – Geschichte vermitteln. Festschrift zum 75. Geburtstag von Peter Geiger und Rupert Quaderer*, Martina Sochin d'Elia and Fabian Frommelt, eds. (Bendren: Liechtenstein-Institut, Historischer Verein Liechtenstein, 2017), 207–234.
- 70 Pamela M. Potter, "Music in the Third Reich: The Complex Task of 'Germanization,'" *The Arts in Nazi Germany. Continuity, Conformity, Change*, Jonathan Huener and Francis R. Nicosia, eds. (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2006), 85–104, and the illustration on 105.
- 71 Dieter Wisliceny's affidavit (*Bericht*), Bratislava, November 18, 1946, YVA M.5/162, p. 8ff. On Wisliceny and the credibility of his statements, see Dan Michman, "Täteraussagen und Geschichtswissenschaft. Der Fall Dieter Wisliceny und der Entscheidungsprozess zur 'Endlösung,'" in *Deutsche, Juden, Völkermord. Der Holocaust als Geschichte und Gegenwart*, eds. Jürgen Matthäus and Klaus-Michael Mallmann (Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Darmstadt, 2006), 205–219.
- 72 Götz Aly, *Hitlers Volksstaat: Raub, Rassenkrieg und nationaler Sozialismus* (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 2005); English version: *Hitler's Beneficiaries: Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State* (New York, Metropolitan Books, 2007); David Bankier, *The Germans and the Final Solution: Public Opinion Under Nazism* (London: Wiley–Blackwell, 2006).
- 73 Michael Wildt, *Generation of the Unbound. The Leadership Corps of the Reich Security Main Office* Search and Research Series 3 (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem,); idem, *An Uncompromising Generation. The Nazi Leadership of the Reich Security Main Office* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010).
- 74 Clear such understandings are promoted by Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010); Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire. How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2008); Donald Bloxham, *The Final Solution: A Genocide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
- 75 This important fact, emphasized by me already for many years, was raised also by Hilberg: "You have to remember one basic principle: there was no budget for destruction"; see transcript of interview by Lanzmann with Hilberg, USHMM Archive, Bobine 385A, 8.



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