Review Article

Aviel Roshwald

Accounting for Complicity: Recent Works on the Holocaust

Omer Bartov, ed., *The Holocaust: Origins, Implementation, Aftermath*, London and New York, Routledge, 2000; x + 300 pp.; ISBN 0415150361
Christopher R. Browning, *Nazi Policy, Jewish Workers, German Killers*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; xi + 185 pp.; ISBN 052177490X
Barbara Engelking, *Holocaust and Memory: The Experience of the Holocaust and Its Consequences: An Investigation Based on Personal Narratives*, ed. Gunnar S. Paulsson, trans. Emma Harris, London, Leceister University Press and The European Jewish Publication Society, 2001; xx + 348 pp.; ISBN 0718501594
Jean Claude Favez, *The Red Cross and the Holocaust*, ed. and trans. John and Beryl Fletcher, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999; xxxii + 353 pp.; ISBN 052141607X
William Laird Kleine-Ahlbrandt, *Bitter Prerequisites: A Faculty for Survival from Nazi Terror*, West Lafayette, IN, Purdue University Press, 2001; xiii + 479 pp.; ISBN 1557532141
Arieh J. Kochavi, *Post-Holocaust Politics: Britain, the United States, and Jewish Refugees, 1945–1948*, Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 2001; xiii + 377 pp.; ISBN 0807826200
Harold Marcuse, *Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933–2001*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001; xxii + 590 pp.; ISBN 0521552044
Naomi Samson, *Hide: A Child's View of the Holocaust*, Lincoln, NE, University of Nebraska Press, 2000; xii + 194 pp.; ISBN 0803 292724
Marion Yorck von Wartenburg, *The Power of Solitude: My Life in the German Resistance*, ed. and trans. Julie M. Winter, Lincoln, NE,

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University of Nebraska Press, 2000; xxxi + 96 pp.; ISBN 08032 9915X
Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe*, Oxford, Berg, 1999; vii + 204 pp.; ISBN 1859732941

The books surveyed in this review include a broad array of approaches to the history and legacy of the Holocaust, ranging from archivally-based historical research on the genocidal campaign itself, to analyses of collective memory of the Holocaust, to episodic personal memoirs written by survivors a half-century or more after the events in question. Yet a comparison of these diverse materials reveals some interesting overlaps in theme and perspective. Chief among them is the implication of an ever-expanding circle of collaborators in the implementation of the Nazi-orchestrated genocide against the Jews, and the growing impact of that realization on public modes of commemorating the Holocaust.

Perhaps one of the most important intellectual contributions of Holocaust historiography has been its exposure of how artificial and ultimately meaningless the traditional attempt has been to distinguish between scholarly analysis and ethical judgement. To discuss the etiology, implementation and historical impact of mass murder is to discuss its moral implications, as the main lines of historical debate have illustrated. The fuel that fired debates between functionalists and intentionalists was the implication by the former that the Nazi exterminationist program could best be understood as a by-product of a modern bureaucratic–industrial culture in which the administrative machine essentially took on a life of its own, shaping events in accordance with structural determinants (including racist, Social Darwinist ideology) that lay beyond the ability of individual human cogs to control. The intentionalists responded by focusing attention once again on the specific decisions made by key players in the Nazi party and bureaucratic apparatus, with a view to highlighting the centrality of human agency — and, by extension, the moral accountability of the countless individuals complicit in the Final Solution — to the horrible events that unfolded during the Second World War in Europe.

As Omer Bartov's very useful and enlightening edited collection demonstrates, many aspects of this debate have given way to a broad area of consensus among the mainstream of Holocaust scholars. Most intentionalists now recognize that a large measure of trial and error was central to the evolution of the plan to exterminate the Jews, while the majority of functionalists have acknowledged the vital importance of very specific and cold-blooded decisions made by key

figures in the Nazi leadership, including, of course, Hitler himself. In effect, what is emerging is a new synthesis of the two approaches, which is providing a much richer understanding of the way in which a systematic approach evolved to the industrialized slaughter of Jews, alongside Gypsies, the mentally-ill and other designated human categories. The most substantive debates now revolve around nuanced questions of timing and coordination. It is now widely accepted that, as one of the chapters in Christopher Browning's compelling book outlines, Nazi plans against the Jews evolved from ideas about murderous projects for mass expulsion, be it to the Lublin region of occupied Poland, to Madagascar, or to Siberia (once the Soviet Union had been demolished), into the fully-fledged killing program that reached its apogee in 1942 and 1943. As Browning and Henry Friedlander (writing in Bartov's book) also emphasize, the radicalizing progression from plans for mass murder through brutal ethnic cleansing and slave labor to wholesale extermination by killing squads and gas chambers, took place through a dialectical process of mutually reinforcing decisions made at the top of the Nazi hierarchy and initiatives undertaken from below.

Moreover, both the Browning and Bartov books highlight the importance of Hitler's January 1939 vow that the outbreak of another world war would spell the destruction of European Jewry. This public statement is not just significant for historians enjoying the benefit of hindsight; it was repeatedly mentioned during the war by Hitler himself in conversations with his underlings, and served as an important point of reference to those responsible for planning the Final Solution. Indeed, a broad consensus seems to have emerged to the effect that 1941 was the year in which the Nazis perceived the war as having been transformed into a global conflict, and hence the year in which they moved to upgrade their anti-Semitic program into an accelerated and intensified campaign of complete annihilation. The most informed debates now revolve around more precise questions of timing, with Christian Gerlach (whose work is excerpted in Bartov's collection) contending that the United States' formal entry into the war in December 1941 was the critical watershed, while Christopher Browning argues for the invasion of the Soviet Union as the decisive turning-point. It is significant that both these interpretations of newly-discovered archival materials effectively demolish earlier functionalist claims that military setbacks on the Eastern Front during 1942 constituted the framework for the decision to kill all the Jews in territories under German control. It was not frustration and redirected anger over the failure of Operation Barbarossa, but the prospect of capturing all the major European Jewish popula-

tion centers, the ideological radicalization associated with the success of German arms and the expansion of the conflict into one of world-historical dimensions that led Hitler and his minions to embrace a war of extermination against the Jews. The practical problems inhibiting implementation of earlier plans for mass deportations, along with the technical insights gleaned from the mass murder of mentally-ill and physically handicapped Germans, contributed to the planning and implementation of the genocide program.

One notable dissenting voice is that of German historian Götz Aly, whose perspective is included in Bartov's volume. Aly argues for what might be termed an economically functionalist program of anti-Semitism playing out within the framework of the Nazi regime's Social Darwinist rationale. Even if the early destruction of the Jewish labor pool had an adverse impact on the short-term requirements of the German military administration in occupied Eastern Europe, the elimination of excess population, and hence excess consumption, 'made sense' in light of the overall wartime food shortage in German-annexed or occupied regions of Poland and the Soviet Union. Standing as they did on the lowest rung of the Nazi racial ladder, the Jews were the obvious first targets for eradication according to this cold-blooded calculation of material interest.

Aly's argument is representative of a flawed approach to the study of the more bizarre features of totalitarian regimes. It struggles to find a kernel of rational thinking at the heart of the most irrational policies, either in order to make sense of insanity or to connect the most reprehensible practices of such governments to broader aspects of modern state structure, political culture, and economic development. While useful in demonstrating how various aspects common to the mentality and machinery of all modern states have contributed to the elaboration of mass-destruction policies, such theories ultimately fail to explain why some have embraced genocide or other forms of mass murder and terror, while others have not. In this particular case, Aly's neo-functionalist arguments are readily dealt with by Browning and others, who document how the Nazi planning of genocide preceded the alleged food crisis of 1942 and continued after it had abated. Browning suggests only that materialist arguments may have served Himmler as a useful tool in winning over less zealous officials to his single-minded effort to eliminate European Jewry — including those most capable of productive labor — as quickly as possible.[1] As Bartov points out, Aly's thesis does not even address the question of why the German authorities devoted valuable logistical resources to the deportation and extermination of West European Jewry. In the final analysis Browning emphasizes that acting on Hitler's verbal orders, Himmler was committed to transforming the

policy of destroying Jews *through* hard labor into an outright destruction *of* Jewish labor.[2] Where ideological zeal and economic interest clashed, it was zeal that prevailed.

Eager and enthusiastic participation in the brutalization and murder of Jews on the part of people at every level of the German administrative, military, and party structures was crucial to the success of the program. Research conducted by functionalist historians has contributed to a much fuller understanding of the breadth and depth of complicity and collaboration in the Final Solution, even as the interpretive paradigm that these scholars championed has been steadily eroded by the new synthesis. To the extent that local initiatives and improvizations in carrying out massacres of Jews proved successful or inefficient and problematic, the lessons learned were applied in the elaboration of the grand genocidal strategy. The systematization of murder did not arise blindly from the uncoordinated activities of officials responding to local conditions and contingent circumstances; it was guided by an ideological vision at the highest levels of German government. Meetings such as the notorious January 1942 Wannsee conference did play a critical role in communicating policy goals to key personnel, Browning contends. The implementation of those goals then proceeded through a process of give-and-take between policy-makers and people at the lower levels of the party, military, and administrative command structures. Thus, murderous initiatives undertaken by local commanders and officials during the early phases of Operation Barbarossa in light of the regime's sanction of anti-Semitic violence were, in turn, eagerly seized upon and institutionalized by the upper echelons of the German government in their search for ever more effective methodologies of genocide.

In brief, the new historiographical synthesis tends to debunk the broader interpretative claims of the functionalist school, while building on its research findings to highlight just how extensive complicity in the Holocaust was. A prime example of this broadening of the circle of guilt is the work done in recent years on the German military's involvement, reviewed by Bartov in one of the chapters of his volume. Bartov's own publications have served to expose dramatically the *Wehrmacht's* deep involvement in atrocities against civilians on the Eastern Front.[3] His review essay surveys further research documenting the vital role that the German army played in many aspects of the Holocaust's implementation throughout Eastern Europe. This is complemented by Browning's case study on the role of the Order Police in anti-Jewish 'actions' in occupied Poland.[4] The Bartov collection reviewed here contains articles by Michael Burleigh and Henry Friedlander delineating the involvement of

members of the German medical community in the systematic murder of the mentally-ill and handicapped which, as mentioned above, provided critical technical insights as well as experienced personnel that could later be used in the development of the far more ambitious mass murder of Jews. Gordon Horowitz's article encapsulates the results of his pathbreaking study of the Mauthausen concentration camp, which shocked its readers by exposing how deeply intertwined the camp's administration was with the local civilian economy and how hard it was for ordinary townsfolk *not* to have some idea of the brutality of conditions inside the camp. In his impressively researched book, Harold Marcuse makes a similar point about the relationship between Dachau the camp and Dachau the town.

In other words, rather than diffusing responsibility for the Holocaust, recent scholarship has exposed how the seemingly impersonal workings of the modern German state bureaucracy depended on the active, well-informed, deliberate participation of countless willing individuals and the semi-informed, indirect collusion of myriad others. We are also repeatedly reminded in these studies that those who felt uncomfortable carrying out assaults on civilians suffered no penalty for their qualms and were allowed to avoid participation (unless they occupied significant positions of command over entire districts and actively blocked deportation orders). The old line about 'just following orders' really has no historical or ethical validity.

Other books under review here remind us of the broader European context of Nazi genocide. Most notably, Jean Claude Favez's meticulously documented monograph casts a largely negative light on the timid and ineffective involvement of the Swiss-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in efforts to alleviate conditions for Jews in German-occupied Europe. Given that its formal jurisdiction under international law was narrowly circumscribed to protecting the rights of prisoners of war, and that its effectiveness as an organization was (then as now[5]) dependent on its being perceived as strictly neutral between the warring parties, the ICRC was extremely reluctant to intervene on behalf of Jews. Although an unratified convention had extended its responsibility to interned enemy aliens, this still did not cover the anomalous status of Jews who were residents of conquered territories or of countries allied with Germany. The ICRC leadership's reluctance to endanger its relationship with the German government and thus undermine its ability to carry out its limited formal responsibilities was reinforced by a sort of gentlemanly anti-Semitism on the part of a few key Red Cross officials, who resented what they perceived as the shrill and intrusive efforts on the part of organizations such as the World

Jewish Congress to prod the ICRC into overstepping its legal boundaries. The Swiss government's concern about preserving the country's neutral status also contributed to this mentality, and the attitudes of the Allied countries were not particularly encouraging. Although the ICRC's activities gave it intimate knowledge of what was happening to Europe's Jews, its neutralist stance and status inhibited it from acting decisively or even speaking out on the subject. While ICRC representatives did make sporadic efforts to extend humanitarian aid to persecuted Jewish communities, Favez argues that it would have been more honorable, if not effective, to issue a public condemnation of the genocide whose broad contours had become all too clear to informed officials long before the war's end. But the bottom line, he concludes, was that the organization as it was then constituted was not equipped — legally, politically, or psychologically — to confront the realities of a total war in which the distinction between combatants and civilians had become largely meaningless.

Collaboration and resistance, complicity and innocence, concern and indifference are dichotomies that have dominated the collective memories and public commemorations of the Holocaust in the nearly six decades that have elapsed since VE Day. The ways in which the Holocaust is understood and remembered and the lessons drawn from it have always had profoundly political meanings, as was evident from the very immediate aftermath of the war. Arieh Kochavi's well-researched volume reminds us what a direct impact the postwar Jewish refugee and displaced-persons crisis had on the playing out of British colonial politics in the Middle East. His central thesis, to the effect that the policy of British occupation forces in Europe towards Jewish refugees was shaped by its Middle Eastern interests, will hardly leave any jaws dropping. But his book does a fine job of detailing how reluctant the British were, not only to allow passage to Palestine for Jewish Holocaust survivors, but even to grant distinct status or separate accommodation to Jews in displaced persons (DP) camps; this despite the renewed persecution that many survivors were facing from non-Jews in those camps as well as among the general civilian population and civil authorities in Allied-occupied Germany and Austria. Violent incidents against Jewish survivors in Poland, such as the 1946 Kielce massacre, also did nothing to convince the British that the plight of Jews in Europe had characteristics distinguishing it from the general refugee problem (to which the general British attitude was simply that people should be encouraged to return to the countries of their origin). Their only concern was to avoid antagonizing public opinion in the Arab countries that were still — just barely — within British imperial influence.

But active campaigning on the part of an American Jewish community galvanized by the impact of the Holocaust, led to persistent American interventions on behalf of Jewish survivors as a distinct community that needed to be dealt with on its own terms and with regard to its specific needs. President Truman's call for 100,000 Jewish refugees to be admitted for immigration to Palestine contributed to the chain of events culminating in Britain's withdrawal from its mandate there. And in the propaganda war with the Zionists, Britain shot itself in the foot by attempting to block illegal Jewish immigration to Palestine by any means, including the deportation of the refugee ship *Exodus*'s survivors back to camps in Germany and the internment of thousands of other would-be immigrants in camps on Cyprus. These efforts were to little avail, as Britain's vociferous objections were disregarded by American authorities in Germany and Austria, who refused to interfere with the flow of Jewish refugees across the frontiers of their occupation zones en route to Palestine. The French could not fail to be amused by the discomfiture of their erstwhile British imperial rivals, who had so recently pushed them out of Syria and Lebanon while the Soviets and their Eastern European puppets actively supported the Jewish underground railroad sending thousands of people to Palestine, where they could join in a political struggle which was accelerating the erosion of Britain's grip on the Middle East.

But if an unlikely convergence of geopolitical conditions led to an intense politicization of the plight of Holocaust survivors during 1945–8, the broader postwar trend was towards burying the memory of the Judeocide, or at least minimizing the scope of German and European complicity with it. In the Soviet zone, recognition of Jews as a distinct category of victim was practically unheard of. Only in the decade since the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe has there been any notable change in this attitude. It is this peculiar historical context that gives Barbara Engelking's book its significance. Based on interviews with 22 survivors, this lengthy tome is not particularly well written or cohesively organized, but in its original Polish edition it served to bring first-hand Jewish perspectives on the events of the war to a Polish reading public largely unfamiliar with this through-the-looking-glass version of German occupation. As the author points out, the very fact that the interviewees are survivors, and the fact that they are all assimilated Jews who chose to remain in Poland after the war, skews the sample. But by the same token, it brings to the reader's attention a category of the persecuted that is often overlooked. If the fact that these individuals were highly acculturated to the Polish milieu helped them to survive (by better enabling them to 'pass', and providing them with a range

of potentially useful contacts outside the ghettoes), it may also have made their sudden wartime isolation and vulnerability all the more of a bewildering shock. Indeed, while Engelking takes pains to explore those cases in which non-Jewish Poles helped these Jews escape their persecutors, she is also forthright in depicting the attitudes ranging from indifference to eager collaboration and glee with which Nazi deportations and murders of Jews were received by many Poles. For those Jews who were passing themselves off as gentiles, direct encounters with brutal expressions of satisfaction over such incidents as the suppression of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising were particularly painful reminders of their existential plight and psychological isolation. Postwar anti-Semitism, which reared its head yet again in the Communist Party-promoted campaign of 1968, was a recurrent reminder to those few Jews who remained in the country that they were there on sufferance and that their wartime fate at the hands of the Germans could not be neatly separated from the culture and mentality of the national community in whose midst they dwelt.

In Germany itself, Harold Marcuse argues, commemoration of the Holocaust can be divided into phases correlated with the social, cultural, and political ascendancy of successive generations of Germans, ranging from the cohort many of whose members had themselves participated in war crimes, to those Germans who had just come of age during the war, to their children, and on to the second postwar generation. If Marcuse's preoccupation with neat generational categorization appears excessive at times, his overarching analysis of German modes of amnesia, denial, and commemoration is engaging and informative. Using the wartime and postwar history of the Dachau concentration camp as a case study, Marcuse tells a much larger story about the history of Holocaust memory; he argues that victimization, ignorance, and resistance were the three pillars of the postwar German response to the Holocaust. By victimization, he refers to an assortment of claims, ranging from assertions that German society was itself a victim of Nazi policies to recollections of the *Wehrmacht*'s tribulations on the Eastern Front, the population's suffering at the hands of Allied bombers and Soviet occupiers, and the partition of the country by the victorious powers. These claims to the status of victimhood were reinforced by assertions of mass ignorance about the nature of the crimes being committed against the Jews, and by exaggerated portrayals of the extent of direct and indirect resistance to the Nazis by ordinary Germans.

Marcuse suggests that all three claims, so vital to the reconstitution of a workable German identity after the war, have been eroded — if not completely debunked — over the course of time. But the mode of debunking has itself evolved, just as modes of commemora-

tion at Dachau have done. If, in the 1950s, camp survivors had to organize themselves, lobby, and agitate just to preserve the camp as a memorial to its victims and to secure funding and permission for the construction of some commemorative structures on the campsite, in the following decade and beyond, the German government and even local authorities from the town of Dachau proved much more cooperative in working towards the preservation or reconstruction of camp buildings. The most recent improvement project has been designed to add educational features to camp exhibits, making it something of a museum about Nazi persecution as well as a memorial to its victims. Similarly, the German generation of the 1960s was much more vocal than its elders had been in its denunciation of Nazi crimes and of ex-Nazis in positions of economic and political authority in the Federal Republic of Germany. But, Marcuse points out, the protestors of 1968 responded to the Nazi legacy in an ideologically simplistic manner, one that served to differentiate themselves neatly from the culture and mores of their parents' generation without leading them to develop a sense of empathy for the victims or to think critically about the cultural continuities between the German wartime and postwar generations. Indeed, part of the German New Left veered towards a stridently anti-Israeli polemical style that glibly equated Israeli policies with Nazi conduct and this in some cases slipped over the edge into outright anti-Semitism. Marcuse feels that the latest generation to come of age is proving able to develop a sophisticated historical understanding of the Holocaust in its human as well as political dimensions. Educational programs, including field trips to a redesigned Dachau concentration camp, can contribute to shattering the old myths and replacing them with a new self-understanding, serving as the foundation for a more nuanced politics of ethical engagement.

Historical scholarship has an important role to play in this process. Works such as those discussed at the beginning of this article have contributed significantly to dismantling the German myths of victimhood, ignorance, and resistance. (The Austrian public's attachment to corresponding myths has proven much more unshakable.) But the impact is often indirect. As Nancy Wood points out, the mass media play a powerful role in shaping popular images of the past, and this has manifestly been the case with the Holocaust. The broadcast of the American television mini-series *Holocaust* in the 1970s did more than any book to raise public awareness in Germany of this episode in the nation's past. The *Historikerstreit* of the 1980s, in which liberal philosopher Jürgen Habermas responded with outrage to the effort by a number of eminent German historians to relativize the Holocaust, was largely played out in the press. And the exhibit on the

German military's complicity in war crimes that toured Germany a few years ago raised a storm of controversy, precisely because it was so effective in debunking the myth that the common German soldier (i.e. the ordinary German) had merely been doing his honorable wartime duty, while the SS dirtied its hands with atrocities. This exhibit was itself built on the research of scholars such as Bartov, of course, but it was the exhibit and the attendant press coverage that focused the attention of the German public, not the scholarship itself.

The one scholarly account that did successfully play to a mass audience was Daniel Goldhagen's *Hitler's Willing Executioners*.[6] As Wood points out, it was precisely one of the aspects of the book that earned it the opprobrium of the scholarly community — its allegedly voyeuristic efforts at conveying a first-hand impression of war crimes from the perpetrator's own sensory perspective — that made it so gripping a read for the general public. The moral implications are ambiguous, but in so far as it contributed to the dismantling of Marcuse's mythical triptych, which its enthusiastic reception by the German general public would suggest that it did, the book may have served a laudable purpose. In any case, Wood observes, less controversial scholarly interpretations of historical events themselves depend partly on undocumentable assumptions and scenarios, and in some ways, Browning's well-known assessment of Reserve Police Battalion 101 rested no less on inference and conjecture than did Goldhagen's.[7] Interestingly, in the book reviewed here Browning concedes that — although in contrast to Goldhagen — he still holds to the view that only a minority of the men in this battalion were eager to participate in their initial massacres of Polish Jews, he is now more strongly inclined than before to believe that this critical minority's main motivation was anti-Semitic ideology.

Alongside all these various media of representation and modes of analysis, memoir literature and oral history retain an important function. The memoir-style, interview-based narrative by Marion Yorck von Wartenburg, widow of Kreisau Circle member and von Stauffenberg cousin and associate Peter Yorck, reminds us that a few Germans did in fact resist the Nazis, although the intellectual refinement and socially privileged status of the circles in which the author grew up and lived underlines how exceptional her perspective in fact was. Naomi Samson's gripping recollections of a childhood spent in hiding in German-occupied Poland gives the reader an inkling of the horror of the Nazi war against the Jews in a way that only a first-hand testimonial can do. The memoir also paints an intimate portrait of the ambiguity of relations between Jews and those Poles who helped to save them. The woman who gave refuge to the author's family did so reluctantly, despite her fears for herself and her family,

and despite her own deeply-held and freely expressed anti-Semitic beliefs. A little financial assistance from a more selflessly committed friend of the Jewish family was ultimately the critical element in the woman's decision to let them stay in her barn. Here is yet another example of the moral 'grey zone', of which Primo Levi writes in the excerpt included in the Bartov volume. Yet to speak of a grey zone is not to conflate perpetrators with victims, as Levi himself was at pains to emphasize. The image is intended only to alert the reader to the importance of nuance and empathic understanding — and the limits of such understanding — in making moral distinctions among different types of collaborators within the targeted populations. One has only to read *Einsatzgruppe* officer Felix Landau's war diary, excerpted in Bartov's book, to recognize the face of evil in a man whose journal pages are dominated by self-absorbed, melodramatic musings about his faithless girlfriend, punctuated by occasional off-hand references to his direction of mass executions of Jewish civilians.

Finally, while reading William Laird Kleine-Ahlbrandt's engaging compendium of interviews with Holocaust survivors among the Purdue University faculty, the elusiveness of the boundary between personal memory and historical memory was brought home with unexpected force. The name and place of birth of one of the interviewees raised a sneaking suspicion in me that he might be a distant relative. My father confirmed that the man in question is my grandmother's cousin. In re-reading the segments about him, I experienced a heightened sense of interest and engagement in his escape from Nazi-occupied Europe, but at the same time an awareness of how huge were the lacunae in his account and how telling was his observation that he had not talked much about his experiences because he did not think anyone would really be able to grasp what he had been through. To be suddenly presented with a personal connection to a historical event forces one to recognize the limitations of any interpretive paradigm, any generalizing scheme, in explaining the behavior and the experiences of millions of people, each one of whose lives could serve as the plotline for a distinctive novel. In its very recentness and its very horror, the Holocaust confronts us with the limits of historical understanding and at the same time, with the vital importance of individual choices in the shaping of history.

Notes

1. Browning, *Nazi Policy*, 76.
2. Ibid., 59.
3. See, for example, Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (New York 1991).
4. Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (New York 1992).
5. Michael Ignatieff, *The Warrior's Honor: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience* (New York 1998).
6. Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust* (New York 1996).
7. Browning, *Ordinary Men*.

Aviel Roshwald is Professor of History at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. His most recent book is *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia and the Middle East, 1914–1923* (London 2001). His previous publications include *Estranged Bedfellows: Britain and France in the Middle East during the Second World War* (New York 1990) and a volume co-edited with Richard Stites, *European Culture during the Great War: The Arts, Entertainment, and Propaganda, 1914–1918* (Cambridge 1999).