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Fact not Fiction by Mohammed A. Hegazi

A collection of articles and material related to social and political problems of the Arab World, especially Egypt. Please note that in order to comment, you must left-click on the heading of the specific article. If you can read Arabic, go to: <http://www.egyptianblogspot.blogspot.com>. If you play the game of Scrabble, go to: <http://www.scrabledetective.blogspot.com>.

WILL AMERICANS WAKE UP? Monday, March 08, 2010

The 911 lie lingered on since 11 September 2001. Zionist Jews planned and executed the crime, but made it look as if it were committed by "Moslem terrorists". It was claimed that a handful of young Arabs received instruction on how to fly jumbo passenger planes. They also were claimed to have left behind some "do it yourself" manuals. All was done under the supervision of the mythical maverick Osama Bin Laden.

Enlightened scholars were shocked by the obvious fallacies and blatant scientific lies dressed as indisputable facts. They echoed their opposition to the flawed official whitewash. They continue to demand a fresh investigation.

Fallacies like the Jewish Holofoax (Holocaust) continued against all historical investigation. The six million lies story still has its adherents because of the lack of tangible evidence after so many years. But in the case of 911, the evidence is there. It will continue to present itself because the crime has been recorded on video tape. It has since been digitised and thoroughly analysed. No one can destroy the evidence that the WTC buildings were pulled down by controlled demolition, and the pentagon hit by a rocket. What is being sought now is to admit and declare the confirmation of specialists in the fields of chemistry, physics, engineering, aviation, defence, fire fighting and all related areas of human knowledge.

Various patriotic bodies in the USA are reaching out to the millions of deluded Americans. The following message by Ted Walter is an example of this snowballing trend:

March 7, 2010

Dear Vote For Answers Supporter,

On behalf of our friends in the Monadnock 9/11 Truth Alliance, we thank you for donating generously to the Vote For Answers New Hampshire campaign.

Together we raised \$2,753 to help the dedicated activists in New Hampshire publicize their campaign effectively. A perfect combination of endorsements from local leaders, mainstream local media coverage, and ads in local newspapers have made 9/11 a major topic of discussion throughout New Hampshire. For the first time ever, the New Hampshire media have covered the pursuit of truth in a truly unbiased and positive manner.

On Tuesday, March 9, eight of the twelve towns where the Vote For Answers resolution is being considered will cast their votes, and on Saturday, March 13, a ninth town will

vote. The last three towns will cast their votes in early May.

These are two of several ads we were able to put in local newspapers thanks to your support.

http://3.bp.blogspot.com/WAp4e02H65g/S5O_ITfDoOI/AAAAAAAAA1c/i33_ATpuqao/s1600-h/vote+for+answers.jpg

<http://1.bp.blogspot.com/WAp4e02H65g/S5O8ivPsu0I/AAAAAAAAA1U/Q7IYA9dbt6M/s1600-h/answers2.jpg>

In authentically democratic fashion, most of these votes will take place by a show of hands from the dozens or hundreds in attendance at the town meeting. This will give the Vote For Answers activists in each town the opportunity to speak to those in attendance about the need for a new 9/11 investigation. Together with NYC CAN they have developed a uniform approach for presenting in the town meetings, which will be 1) to read the statement in the above ad signed by eight military veterans and former Arizona State Senator Karen Johnson, 2) to read the statement signed by former Keene Mayor Michael Blastos and six current and former State Representatives, and 3) to convey a concise set of talking points related to the 9/11 Commission's admissions of failure.

We have also undertaken a coordinated effort to get all of the petition signers to attend the town meetings and vote in favor of the resolution. That coupled with all of the publicity and the apparent lack of any opposition makes us confident the resolution will pass in most towns.

Success at the town meetings will lead to many things. Former Keene Mayor Michael Blastos and the Monadnock 9/11 Truth Alliance will work on getting the Keene City Council and other City Councils to pass their own resolutions; NYC CAN will use the momentum to launch campaigns in several other states and to apprise elected officials in New York City of the mounting support for reinvestigating 9/11.

We will inform you of the results once they come in, so please stay tuned!

Thank you for donating and thank you for believing in our style of advocacy. By creating public dialogue through the ballot box we are opening the eyes of tens of thousands of New Hampshire citizens who would have otherwise

thought it crazy to question 9/11. Together we are taking one more important step in the march toward truth.

Sincerely,
Ted Walter
Executive Director

Thinkers think and talkers talk. Patriots ACT.

NYCCAN.org VoteForAnswersNH.com

<http://hegazi.blogspot.com/2010/03/willamericans-wake-up.html>

THE BIG ISSUE:

Net censorship as noted on 12 March 2010

1. How long will Adelaide Institute's website last this new onslaught against free expression on the Internet?
2. How long will Adam Internet continue to host Adelaide Institute's website, which it has done for 14 years?
3. Please view: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGw3_U91utU

From: Fredrick Töben

Sent: Sunday, 14 March 2010 11:58 AM

To: birgittaj@althingi.is

Subject: Hello from Dr Fredrick Toben

Dear Birgitta Jonsdottir

I have read the informative item, below, and noted your comments.

I am now wondering if you could enlighten me on whether Iceland will also offer a safe haven for so-called Holocaust deniers.

The Germans want me for 5 years – and I have just served a 3-month prison term in Australia, and on 1 October 2008 served 7 weeks in London, but the European Arrest Warrant failed in court and I was freed again, thereby annoying the Germans who activated the EU arrest warrant against me.

Please advise.

Fredrick Töben

----- To date no response!



[Iceland Sets New Path Toward Press Freedom](#)

By Stephen Soldz, March 12th, 2010

If all goes well, Iceland may be about to make history. No, I don't mean the refusal of the populace to get saddled with Iceland's \$5 billion bad "Icesave" bank debt. Rather, I'm referring to the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative [IMMI], which combines the world's best legislation to protect press and information freedom into one path-breaking information freedom bill for Iceland.

IMMI attempts to tip the world balance toward press freedom by setting up Iceland as a Mecca of press and information freedom. Key provisions of the IMMI include: whistleblower protections; strong protections for anonymous sources and the journalists and media organizations who deal with them; a strengthening of protections against prior restraint by governments or through use of the courts; and protection for Internet Service Providers [ISPs], preventing them from being held responsible for information passing through their networks.

IMMI also includes provisions against the use of lawsuits to suppress information. Thus, under IMMI, Iceland would not enforce foreign judgments against ISPs and media organizations based in Iceland. Further, Icelandic-based organizations would have the right to file counter-suits in Iceland against attempts to suppress their free speech in other countries.

Additionally contained in IMMI are protections against misuses of court processes to suppress speech, allowing judges to decide that an issue before the court involves

freedom of speech and thus trigger protections before those being sued are coerced into settling cases or submitting to abusive subpoenas due to inadequate resources to defend themselves.

If IMMI passes, Iceland's actions could affect press freedoms elsewhere. Iceland's internet servers would become available to reporters and bloggers around the world. These servers could hold documents and reports that governments or corporations are attempting to suppress and would come under Icelandic protections. The right to countersue against attempts at suppressing free speech elsewhere will provide some protection for journalists and media organizations in other countries used Icelandic servers.. While there is no guarantee that the right to countersue will deter all abuses, in many cases the threat of litigation, or even criminal penalties, in Iceland will constrain those who might otherwise move to suppress information.

In other cases, attempts to suppress free expression, such as a subpoena seeking the identity of a confidential source in other countries would be in violation of Icelandic laws, providing reporters and other information providers with leverage in their own countries. Thus, a reporter under pressure to reveal a source could argue that these demands would place that reporter afoul of Icelandic law. Some courts may respect this claim, since they would be unable to guarantee immunity for the reporter.

The IMMI arose out of last summer's outrage at efforts by a Icelandic bank to suppress television reporting on a document leaked to Wikileaks – the internet haven for leaked documents – regarding the bank's questionable financial dealings. Icelanders were outraged that their television station was enjoined from reporting on a document that was freely available on the web.

Wikileaks editors Julian Assange and Daniel Schmitt originally spearheaded the creation of IMMI and have moved to Iceland to help secure its passage. Wikileaks is well aware of the dangers of censorship as banks and several countries, including Australia and South Africa, have attempted to censor materials posted on Wikileaks. If IMMI passes, Iceland would become the perfect environment for Wikileaks to base its servers. Other media and information providers will likely follow suit and base their servers in Iceland to take advantage of its new protections.

IMMI thus could be a boon to Iceland's economy, making it a center of the new information economy. But IMMI, because of its strong assist to transparency efforts like Wikileaks, also is seen by many Icelanders as a critical tool in preventing the next economic collapse through shedding light on murky questionable financial and other corporate dealings.

As parliamentarian Birgitta Jónsdóttir stated:

"The collapse woke up the nation and by rallying together we pushed through historical changes. The government was forced to resign, the central bank manager was forced to resign, the head of the financial supervisory authority was forced to resign. The people of Iceland realized that by joining forces real change could and would take place.

"People woke up to the fact that the infrastructure they had put their trust in, had failed. Our academics, the government, the parliament, the central bank, and the media had all failed. It made us understand that the media was weak, that there was a lack of transparency and that in order to live in a healthy society, we had take part in shaping it.

We have come to understand that fundamental changes need to take place to strengthen our democracy and that a new legislative package is needed to that promotes transparency and political accountability.

Because the world is connected by financial and information flows, suppression of the truth is not only

our problem, but everyone's problem. The right of the people to understand what is happening to their societies needs to be strengthened. I believe in supporting the world's most courageous journalists and writers with the best legislation possible. That is why I am proud to be a part of the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative."

IMMI was introduced into parliament February 17 by 19 parliamentary representatives from all parties in parliament, almost a third of the 63 MPs. It will be voted on in April or May of this year. Passage will constitute one of the most important blows for democracy and transparency anywhere in years. It will also be a rare rebuke to the growing power of corporations and governments to restrict information flow world-wide.

Stephen Soldz, Ph.D. Cert. Psya., is the Director, Center for Research, Evaluation, and Program Development, Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis & Coalition for an Ethical Psychology. He can be reached at: ssoldz@bgsp.edu.

Gilad Atzmon: Judea declares War on Obama

Thursday, March 25, 2010

Last week we read about AIPAC's assault against President Obama. It was reported that the Jewish Lobby in America took its gloves off. In the open, AIPAC decided to mount pressure on the American leadership and President Obama in particular.



Gilad Atzmon

"The Obama administration's recent statements regarding the U.S. relationship with Israel is a matter of serious concern," AIPAC said in its [statement](#). AIPAC's reaction came after a weekend of U.S. recriminations and demands, following Israel's provocative announcement that it had given preliminary approval for the construction of 1,600 more apartments for Jewish settlers in a Palestinian neighborhood of eastern occupied Jerusalem. Unlike President Obama, who seems to be prioritizing issues like the health care reform bill and United States economic recovery, AIPAC claims to know what America's 'real' interests are and how to achieve them. "The administration should make a conscious effort to move away from public demands and unilateral deadlines directed at Israel, with whom the United States shares basic, fundamental, and strategic interests". AIPAC also suggested that the American leadership should concentrate on a confrontation with Iran. "The escalated rhetoric of recent days only serves as a distraction from the substantive work that needs to be done with regard to the urgent issue of Iran's rapid pursuit of nuclear weapons".

Jewish lobbies certainly do not hold back when it comes to pressuring states, world leaders and even super powers. AIPAC's behavior last week reminded me of the Jewish declaration of war against Nazi Germany in 1933.

Not many people are aware that in March 1933, long before Hitler became the undisputed leader of Germany and began restricting the rights of German Jews, the American Jewish Congress announced a massive protest at Madison Square Gardens and called for an American boycott of German goods.

I obviously do not think that Obama has anything in common with Hitler. There is not much the two leaders share in terms of their philosophy, their attitude to humanism or their view of world peace.

(1) However, it is hard to turn a blind eye to the similarity between AIPAC's behaviour last week and the Jewish American Congress' conduct in 1933.

On March 24, 1933, *The Daily Express* (London) published an article announcing that the Jews had already launched their boycott against Germany and threatened a forthcoming "holy war". The *Express* urged Jews everywhere to boycott German goods and demonstrate actively against German economic interests.

The *Express* said that Germany was "now confronted with an international boycott of its trade, its finances, and its industry...in London, New York, Paris and Warsaw, Jewish businessmen are united to go on an economic crusade."

Jewish texts tend to glaze over the fact that Hitler's March 28 1933, ordering a boycott against Jewish stores and goods, was an escalation in direct response to the declaration of war on Germany by the worldwide Jewish leadership. In fact the only Jewish enclave that is willing to admit the historical order of events that led to the destruction of European Jewry, is the anti Zionist Jewish Orthodox sect known as the [Torah Jews](#). I assume that, similarly, once things turn sour between America and its Jewish lobbies, Jewish tribal ideologists will be the

first to forget that it was the Jewish American establishment that worked so hard to nourish the inevitable animosity.



If you wonder why Jewish politicians repeat exactly the same mistakes time after time, the answer is easy. Jews do not know their Jewish history for there is no Jewish history.

<http://www.gilad.co.uk/writings/truth-history-and-integrity-by-gilad-atzmon.html>

As it happens, Jewish history is a set of fables tied clumsily together to portray a false image of a victorious narrative. Jewish history is a set of blind spots bundled together by myth, fantasies and lies, in order to present the illusion of a coherent past narrative and a vague semblance of chronology. Israeli professor [Shlomo Sand](#) taught us that the Zionists, and to a certain extent their [Bundist](#) rivals, were far from being shy of "inventing" the history of their Jewish nationhood. But it goes further, even the holocaust, which could be a major illuminating corner in Jewish reflection, was transformed into a rigid chapter that perpetuated blindness. As a vision of the past, it is there to hide and to disguise, rather than to reveal and inform. In a Jewish history book, you won't read about 'Judea's declaration of war against Nazi Germany'. In Jewish history texts chronology always launches when Jewish suffering begins. Jewish history transcends itself beyond the notion of causality. It persuades us that persecution of Jews occurs out of nowhere. The Jewish historical text avoids the necessary questions as to why hostility evolves time after time, why do Jews buy so many enemies and so easily?

AIPAC leaders are clearly repeating the grave mistakes of their forbearers: the American Jewish Congress. They do not learn from their history, for there is not a single Jewish history text to learn from. Instead of a history text, Jews have the Holocaust, an event that matured into a religion.

The holocaust religion is obviously Judeo-centric to the bone. It defines the Jewish *Raison d'être*. For the Jews it signifies a total fatigue of the Diaspora, it regards the Goy as a potential 'irrational' murderer. The new Jewish religion preaches revenge. It even establishes a new Jewish God. Instead of old *Yehova*, the new Jewish God is 'the Jew' himself: the brave and witty being, the one who survived the ultimate and most sinister genocide, the one who came out of the ashes and stepped forward into a new beginning. To a certain extent the Holocaust religion signals the Jewish departure from monotheism, for every Jew is a potential little God or Goddess. Gilad Shalit is the God 'innocence', Abe Foxman is the God anti Semitism, Maddof is the God of swindling, Greenspan is the God of 'good economy', Lord Goldsmith is the God of the 'green light', Lord Levy is the God of fundraising, Wolfowitz is the God of new American expansionism and AIPAC is the American Olympus where American elected human beings come to ask for mercy and forgiveness for being Goyim and for daring to occasionally tell the truth about Israel.

The holocaust religion is the conclusive stage in the Jewish dialectic; it is the end of Jewish history for it is the deepest and most sincere form of 'self love'. Rather than inventing an abstract God who prefers the Jews to be the chosen people, in the holocaust religion the Jews cut out the divine middle substance. The Jew just chooses oneself. This is why Jewish identity politics transcends itself beyond the notion of history. God is the master of ceremony. And the new Jewish God cannot be subject to humanly contingent occurrences. The new Jewish God, i.e. 'the Jew', just re-writes fables that serve the tribe at any given time. This may explain why the Holocaust religion is protected by laws, while every other historical chapter and narrative is debated openly by historians, intellectuals and ordinary people. As one may guess, with such a self-centered intensive world-view, not much room is left for humanity, grace or universalism. It is far from being clear whether Jews can collectively recover from their new religion. However, it is crucial that every humanist stands up against the holocaust religion that can only spread misery, death and carnage.

(1) Unlike President Obama who postponed his Far East trip just to meet Israeli PM and sent his Secretary of State to appease his [Jewish opponents](#) promising more confrontation with Iran, Hitler actually reacted furiously to Jewish pressure.

<http://www.gilad.co.uk/writings/judea-declares-war-on-obama-by-gilad-atzmon.html>

Documents of Auschwitz death camp doctors found

By MONIKA SCISLOWSKA, AP – 23.03.2010

WARSAW, Poland — Food coupons for some of the notorious Nazi doctors at the Auschwitz death camp — including perhaps the sadistic Dr. Joseph Mengele — have been found in the attic of a nearby house, where they had lain unseen for decades.

Also found in the attic were other documents relating to the lives of Nazi officials, including death certificates and a map. Some sugar coupons bear the names of Horst Fischer and Fritz Klein, doctors who were executed for their crimes after the war, Adam Cyra, a historian at the Auschwitz memorial

museum who is looking through the documents, said Monday.

"The sensational value of this discovery is in the fact that these original documents, bearing the names of main murderers from Auschwitz, were found so many years after the war," Cyra said.

"The sensational value of this discovery is in the fact that these original documents, bearing the names of main murderers from Auschwitz, were found so many years after the war," Cyra said.



Cyra said he believes a June 1943 coupon for a small amount of sugar probably was assigned to Dr. Joseph Mengele, who was infamous for his sadistic experiments, but the writing is unclear.

A February 1944 coupon for 0.28 kilograms of butter is made out for a Dr. Mergerle. There was no SS doctor by that name at camp, so Cyra believes a clerk misspelled Mengele's name.

Doctors and pharmacists at the camp conducted pseudo-medical experiments on the inmates and helped select Jews

arriving at the camp for either labor or death. Mengele escaped after World War II and evaded capture for the rest of his life.

The documents — almost 300 in total — were found in the attic of a house being renovated in the town of Oswiecim, where the Nazis built the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp.

The homeowner, who has requested anonymity, made them available to historians at the Auschwitz museum on Friday, museum officials said. They believe the house was used by an SS officer during the war, but it is not clear which one. Historians have checked through some of the documents but have more to pore over, museum spokesman Pawel Sawicki said.

The material does not document crimes committed at the camp.

The documents include a German-language map of the area around Oswiecim and a death certificate for Adolf Kroemer, a pharmacist at Auschwitz, saying he died of a heart attack in February 1944.

About 150 blank food coupons and death certificates were also found, Cyra said.

Between 1940 and 1945 more than 1 million people, mostly Jews, were killed in the gas chambers at Auschwitz or died of starvation or disease while forced to perform hard labor at the camp.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALe gM5gfa-jsoh1ImSkO4Bif7SZQHx3cKQD9EJVRP01>

Hello ADOLF!

Are you listening there in Walhalla?

Do you hear their desperate agonizing cries against you?

Here on Earth the Prime-Uglies cannot forget you and continue to defame you.

1. As German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer reminds us: Truth emerges in three stages – first it is ridiculed, then it is violently opposed, finally it is accepted as self-evident.

2. So, too, it will be with the Holocaust lies – and to be a part of this truth-finding process is a rewarding experience that cannot be bought with money, though some have tried to take a short-cut and cash in others' thoughts and goods.

3. There are already moves afoot to forget the pioneer Revisionists who dared to state: THIS FAR AND NO FURTHER WITH THE HOLOCAUST LIES!

4. That's life because the fence-sitters are always about when historical processes settle down and the dissenting opinion becomes common-place.

Fredrick Töben

From: Josef Schwanzer donauschwob@optusnet.com.au

Sent: Wednesday, 7 April 2010 11:08 AM

Subject: Hitler 'wanted to steal' Turin Shroud - *What a fantasy!!*

*

Hitler 'wanted to steal' Turin Shroud

The Turin Shroud, said to be the burial cloth of Christ, was secretly hidden in a Benedictine abbey during the Second World War because the Vatican feared that Adolf Hitler wanted to steal it.

Nick Squires in Rome, 10:28PMBST 06 Apr 2010

The shroud was transferred for its safety to the Benedictine sanctuary of Montevergine in Avellino, in the southern Campania region of Italy in 1939 and was only transferred to Turin in 1946.

The current director of the library at the abbey, Father Andrea Cardin, said the reason behind the move was because Hitler was "obsessed" with the sacred relic.

Both the Vatican and the Italian royal family, the Savoy, who were the guardians and owners of the shroud, feared

that the German leader, who had an interest in the esoteric, might try to steal the linen cloth.



The Turin Shroud is due to go on display for six weeks after Easter at Turin Cathedral, where it has been kept for more than 500 years Photo: AP

In an interview with an Italian magazine, Diva e Donna, Father Cardin said: "The Holy Shroud was moved in secret to the sanctuary in the Campania region on the precise orders of the House of Savoy and the Vatican.

"Officially this was to protect it from possible bombing (in Turin). In reality, it was moved to hide it from Hitler who was apparently obsessed by it. When he visited Italy in 1938, top-ranking Nazi aides asked unusual and insistent questions about the Shroud."

Father Cardin, a Benedictine monk, said that after Italy entered the war in alliance with Hitler, and German forces were sent to Italy, the shroud was very nearly discovered in its secret hiding place.

"In 1943 when German troops searched the Montevergine church, the monks there pretended to be in deep prayer before the altar, inside which the relic was hidden. This was the only reason it wasn't discovered."

The shroud, which is supposed to have wrapped Christ's body after he was crucified, was returned to Turin in 1946 on the orders of Italy's last king, Umberto II.

The monarchy was abolished in 1946 when Italy voted in a referendum to become a republic, and ownership of the shroud eventually passed to the Holy See.

While millions of people believe the shroud to be authentic, sceptics believe it is a medieval fake.

Tests conducted 20 years ago dated the fabric of the relic to between 1260 and 1390, although the results have been vigorously disputed.

The linen cloth, which measures 14.4ft by 3.6ft, is imprinted with the image of a man bearing all the signs of crucifixion, including blood stains. It will go on display in Turin Cathedral this weekend for six weeks and is expected to be seen by up to two million visitors, including Pope Benedict XVI during an official visit in May.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/italy/7560669/Hitler-wanted-to-steal-Turin-Shroud.html>

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[*Holocaust row bishop Richard Williamson contacts David Irving](#)

Holocaust survivor's family wins legal battle with German museum to keep 13th century gold tablet

**BY Thomas Zambito tzambito@nydailynews.com
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER, Tuesday, April 6th 2010, 4:00 AM**

Theodorakis/NewsJudge ruled 13th century gold tablet will stay with family of Holocaust survivor.

A Holocaust survivor's family has won a legal battle with a German museum to keep a precious 13th century gold tablet obtained on the black market after World War II.

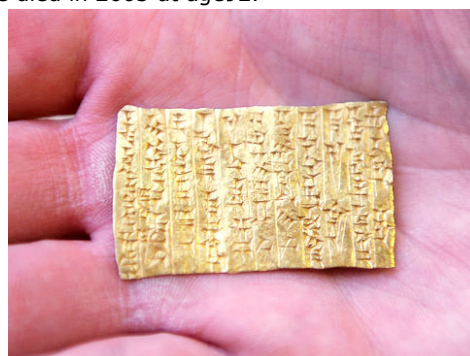
The ruling, by Nassau County Surrogate's Court Judge John Riordan, means Riven Flamenbaum's children don't have to hand over the stamp-sized relic he got from a Russian soldier soon after being freed from Auschwitz.

Valued at \$250,000 in the 1950s, it could be worth as much as \$10 million today, according to the family's lawyer Steven Schlesinger. "This was a Passover prayer answered," Schlesinger said.

The inscribed tablet - a construction document - was unearthed during a 1913 dig led by a team of German archeologists at the Ishtar Temple in modern-day Iraq.

It wound up at Berlin's Vorderasiatisches Museum, which claims it was plundered by Russian troops at the end of World War II.

After Flamenbaum traded for the artifact - and some gold coins - he brought it to the U.S., where he ran a Manhattan liquor store. For decades, it was locked in a safe-deposit box in Great Neck, L.I. It was left to Flamenbaum's children when he died in 2003 at age 92.



Riordan noted the museum made no effort to recover the tablet after it was discovered missing, even after a tip in 1954. The museum had no comment. The family has not decided whether to sell the tablet.

http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/2010/04/06/2010-04-06_li_family_gets_gold_relic_judge.html

THE Nation. A Conscious Pariah: On Raul Hilberg

By [Nathaniel Popper](#), April 19, 2010 edition of *The Nation*.

Raul Hilberg was known for cultivating enemies. During faculty meetings at the University of Vermont, where he was a professor of political science from 1956 to 1991, the renowned historian of the Holocaust would unfailingly denounce the consensus position, whether it concerned faculty appointments or vacation policy. "He was an intensely stubborn and contrary person," one of his old colleagues told me. In *The Politics of Memory*, an autobiography published in 1996, Hilberg dedicated a chapter to attacking fellow historians whose work he considered derivative or misguided. Among those admonished was Lucy Dawidowicz, a popular Holocaust scholar and author of the emotional bestseller *The War Against the Jews* (1975); Dawidowicz provided "vaguely consoling words" that "could easily be clutched by all those who did not wish to look deeper," Hilberg complained.

But no one who wrote about the Holocaust nettled Hilberg more than Hannah Arendt. Hilberg's anger toward the German refugee and New York intellectual erupted with the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, in which Arendt told the tale of Adolf Eichmann, the man responsible for implementing the Final Solution, against the backdrop of his trial for war crimes and crimes against humanity. (Eichmann was captured by Mossad agents in Argentina in May 1960. His trial in Jerusalem began in April 1961, and

he was executed in May 1962.) Arendt's study was serialized in five installments in *The New Yorker* in the spring of 1963 and then quickly published in book form in May of that year by Viking Press with its now infamous subtitle, "A Report on the Banality of Evil." The work has attained a mythic status. Penguin publishes it in two inexpensive paperback editions--one a "Penguin Classics" and the other a "Great Ideas" version that, with its matte blue-and-white cover, is attractively designed for display next to cash registers as an impulse buy.

Hilberg died in 2007, and among the private papers he left to the University of Vermont library is a box stuffed with materials about his scholarly antagonists. Folders filled with Arendt clippings occupy half of the tightly jammed container. There is also a brown accordion folder holding two crisp copies of each of the five issues of *The New Yorker* in which Arendt's study of Eichmann was serialized.

Hilberg was obsessed with Arendt's dispatches because two years before their appearance, with the Eichmann trial under way, he had published his own magnum opus, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, a multivolume work that is still widely considered in scholarly circles to be the first great history of the Holocaust and the cornerstone of Holocaust studies. "No other book will ever be, by my hand,

annotated to such a degree," Claude Lanzmann remarked in 1993, eight years after the release of his epic film *Shoah*.



PRIVATE COLLECTION Raul Hilberg, 1961

"A beacon of a book, a breakwater of a book, a ship of history anchored in time and in a sense beyond time, undying, unforgettable, to which nothing in the course of ordinary historical production can be compared." (Hilberg is the only historian to appear in *Shoah*, which documents victims' and perpetrators' direct experiences of the Holocaust.)

As Hilberg read Arendt's articles about Eichmann, he noticed a number of striking similarities to his own research. He tallied them on an accounting spreadsheet stored in the accordion folder with the *New Yorker* issues. At the bottom of the spreadsheet he divided the instances into "cert." and "prob." and penciled hash marks next to each category. Among the flagged passages is Arendt's account of the plight of Bernard Lichtenberg, a Catholic priest in Berlin who was condemned to a concentration camp after speaking out against the deportation of the Jews. Hilberg noted the page on which Arendt's version appeared and next to it wrote, in red ink, "verbatim."

Hilberg had discovered Lichtenberg's story in Nazi foreign office files, and he recounted it in his book in what were, for him, unusually emotional terms: "Dompropst Bernard Lichtenberg of St. Hedwig's Cathedral in Berlin, dared to pray openly for the Jews, including those who were baptized and those who were unbaptized." Arendt told Lichtenberg's tale in the third *New Yorker* installment as a parenthetical aside in the story of a deported minister: "A similar fate befell the Catholic *Dompropst* Bernard Lichtenberg, of St. Hedwig's Cathedral, in Berlin." Lichtenberg, Arendt wrote, "had dared to pray publicly for all Jews, baptized or not." In his book Hilberg footnoted the document from which he drew the anecdote; in *The New Yorker* Arendt gave no indication of her source--one of many similar instances.

In *Eichmann in Jerusalem* Arendt was a little more forthcoming about her debt to Hilberg. The book includes a note on sources in which she describes *The Destruction of the European Jews* as "the most exhaustive and the most soundly documented account of the Third Reich's Jewish policies." There are five quotes in the book followed by a discreet "(Hilberg)," including a few she had not sourced to him in the *New Yorker* series. Still, many facts reported by Hilberg that appeared without attribution in Arendt's magazine pieces remained uncredited to him in *Eichmann*.

Hilberg stopped documenting Arendt's borrowings on his spreadsheet after he read the third installment, but "verbatim" was not his last word about the series. Years later, in a letter also found among his papers, he explained to one of Arendt's biographers, Elzbieta Ettinger, that he had "noticed what she had done as soon as I read the installments in the *New Yorker*." He continued, "A lawyer of my publisher at the time asked me to draw up a list of items she had lifted. I found about eighty, but he also said that I would have to prove that she could not have obtained the information anywhere else. That proof I could not

supply, except in such instances as an error of spelling that she had copied." In *The Politics of Memory*, Hilberg dedicated a few pages to Arendt and obliquely mentioned that others had commented on her mostly invisible reliance on his research; he also averred that her work "consisted only of unoriginal essays on anti-Semitism, imperialism, and general topics associated with totalitarianism." Despite his derision, Hilberg declined to publicly air his grievances. As a result, the scale of Arendt's debt to him has remained largely unknown.

Hilberg's indignation, as well as his decision to hold his fire, testify to the complex psychology of a Jewish man whose life had been threatened by the rise of Nazi terror but who managed to escape Europe and the Holocaust and lived thereafter with the resulting burden of guilt and luck. Arendt took a similar path out of Europe and carried much of the same emotional shrapnel. Hilberg and Arendt never met, in part because of his lingering bitterness toward her, but the strands of his research that she wove into her writing are only the most telling instances of the profound ways in which the two thinkers' lives and ideas were intertwined. Both studied the problem of political evil in the twentieth century--Hilberg its social machinery in Nazi Germany, Arendt its origins in political systems like totalitarianism--and wrestled with the dilemma of the Jew in the twentieth century. Perhaps most important, at the core of their books about the Holocaust is a deep disappointment over the lack of Jewish resistance to the Nazis. After the war, both Hilberg and Arendt fashioned themselves as defiantly strong Jews, in contrast with their vision of the weak Jews they had left behind, and yet both remained fascinated by the story of those who were killed.

Raul Hilberg was born in Vienna in 1926, the only child of a cold, stolid mother and a quiet, proud father, whom Hilberg pitied and revered. In his youth Raul was a loner who took up solitary pursuits like geography, music and train spotting. His parents occasionally attended synagogue, but Hilberg was repelled by the irrationality of religion: "Already I was contrary-minded, turning away from religion, which at first became irrelevant to me and then an allergy," he recalled in his autobiography.

After Hitler marched into Vienna during the Anschluss, the Hilbergs were forced out of their apartment at gunpoint. Hilberg's father's spirit was broken after he was jailed; he told his son, "Hitler will put us to the wall." The family set off on a mad dash out of Europe, which ended a year later when they settled in Brooklyn after stopovers in France and Cuba. In 1944 Hilberg enlisted in the Army and ended up serving in a unit that swept through Germany as it was liberated; at one point Hilberg was in the Nazi headquarters in Munich and stumbled across portions of Hitler's private library. Even before he was stationed in Europe, Hilberg had followed the scattered reports telling of the incipient genocide; in 1942 he made contact with an organization that asked him to call Stephen Wise, a leading rabbi in New York City. "What are you going to do about the complete annihilation of European Jewry?" Hilberg asked. Wise, Hilberg later remembered, hung up.

After the war, as a student first at Brooklyn College and then at Columbia, Hilberg was quickly drawn to the academic study of the fate he had escaped in Europe but that many of his relatives had not. "Briefly I weighed the possibility of writing a dissertation about an aspect of war crimes, and then I woke up," he explained in his autobiography. "It was the evidence that I wanted. My

subject would be the destruction of the European Jews." He was soon spending long hours in a torpedo factory in Virginia that had been transformed into a repository for countless boxes of captured Nazi archives. Hilberg's decision to study this material was not considered a professionally prudent one at the time, which may seem odd in the current era of Holocaust movies and proliferating Holocaust studies departments. But in the late 1940s and '50s, the genocide of the Jews was a subject ignored in academic circles. History books of the era focused on the cult of Hitler and the Nazi terror but generally did not identify the slaughter of the Jews as a central part of the story of World War II. In the United States, the first college-level course dedicated to the subject of the Holocaust was taught in 1974--by Raul Hilberg. More than twenty years earlier, when Franz Neumann, Hilberg's adviser at Columbia, learned of his dissertation topic, he quipped, "It's your funeral."

Hilberg's study opens with a bold statement: "Lest one be misled by the word 'Jews' in the title, let it be pointed out that this is not a book about the Jews. It is a book about the people who destroyed the Jews." Hilberg toiled for nearly a decade in the archives of the Nuremberg trials and other collections of recovered German documents. During his last lecture, which he delivered in Vermont just a few months before his death, he recalled the void that engulfed him at the outset of his research. "I was transported into a world for which I was totally unprepared," he explained in his dry, austere manner. "I would read a document, but I would not understand what it meant. The context had to be built record by record."

In Hilberg's telling, the murder of the Jews was not a product simply of Hitler's anti-Semitic rage (as Dawidowicz would later argue), nor was it preordained the moment the Nazi Party coalesced or even by the terror of Kristallnacht. "The destruction of the Jews was an administrative process, and the annihilation of Jewry required the implementation of systematic administrative measures in successive steps." Hilberg presented a staggering picture of the bureaucratic machinery of extermination, which developed slowly over time and inundated every sector of German society--not just the Einsatzgruppen and the SS but also the finance ministry, foreign office and railways; everyone knew what was happening, and everyone cooperated.

Hilberg defended his dissertation in 1955 and submitted it to prominent publishing houses. It was roundly rejected until 1961, when a young press in Chicago, Quadrangle Books, decided to publish the work, printing it in double columns on cheap paper. From there, the massive tome began quietly and slowly to win over admirers. In a glowing review in *Commentary*, the British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper wrote that Hilberg's book was "not yet another chronicle of horrors. It is a careful, analytic, three-dimensional study of a social and political experience unique in history: an experience which no one could believe possible till it happened and whose real significance still bewilders us." Michael Marrus, the foremost historiographer of the Holocaust, says that it is now generally agreed that before Hilberg "there was not a subject. No panoramic, European-wide sense of what had happened. That's what Hilberg provided."

In Vermont, Hilberg embraced the role of the lordly European intellectual: he was a distant and often haughty scholar who favored somber, elegant suits and gave few indications of his personal entanglement with his research.

On campus, he was revered for his courses and books (altogether he wrote and edited seven volumes concerning the Holocaust). I was told by Richard Sugarman, a philosophy professor at the University of Vermont who grew close to Hilberg, that "The phrase 'spellbinding lecturer' doesn't do justice to him. Was it a little intimidating talking to him? Sure. He was not a recycled soul--he was an original."

Beyond the mountains of Vermont, however, Hilberg's achievements were generally unknown outside the scholarly community. *The Destruction of the European Jews* is scarcely mentioned in Peter Novick's acclaimed *The Holocaust in American Life* (1999), which chronicles the rise of Holocaust consciousness. For Novick it was not Hilberg but the Eichmann trial and Arendt's reporting on it that "effectively broke fifteen years of near silence." After the trial, Novick writes, "there emerged in American culture a distinct *thing* called 'the Holocaust'--an event in its own right, not simply a subdivision of general Nazi barbarism."

Hannah Arendt was born twenty years before Raul Hilberg, in 1906, the only child of a middle-class European Jewish family. She grew up mostly in Königsberg, and Judaism was not an integral part of her daily life; religious observance was minimal, and anti-Semitic incidents were only an occasional irritant. According to Elisabeth Young-Bruehl's sensitive biography, *Hannah Arendt: For the Love of the World*, Arendt was a moody young woman, particularly after her father died in 1913. She was drawn to books early on, and Goethe was the touchstone of her education. This led her eventually to the universities in Marburg and Heidelberg, where she studied philosophy with Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger.

Arendt is now popularly thought of as a nondenominational political theorist. But during the Nazi rise to power, she dedicated herself to Zionist relief organizations trying to help Jews flee Europe. Like Hilberg, an arrest awakened her to the severity of the Nazi regime: in 1933 she was apprehended for collecting documents for a Zionist organization. Also like Hilberg, Arendt directed her fear and anger at the quiescence of those around her. In 1936, when she attended the founding conference of the World Jewish Congress in Geneva, she wrote to her future husband, Heinrich Blücher, that "the Polish Jews will stop our mouths just as the German Jews did three years ago. And in the end we'll all go to hell." She worked with relief groups while planning her own escape from Germany; she reached New York City in 1941 and was soon writing for a number of Jewish publications. In an essay published in the New York German-Jewish newspaper *Aufbau*, she urged, "We can do battle against antisemitism only if we battle Hitler with weapons in our hands."

After the war, Arendt's activism waned as she grew intellectually fascinated with how the Nazis had managed to carry out the Final Solution. An early indication of her interest was a review she wrote for *Commentary* in 1952 of Léon Poliakov's *Bréviaire de la Haine: Le IIIe Reich et les Juifs* (Breviary of Hate: The Third Reich and the Jews), which is generally recognized as one of two minor volumes on the Holocaust published before Hilberg's landmark work. Arendt concluded the piece by underscoring the paucity of writing on the subject: "Research into Nazism, therefore, so frequently minimized today as 'mere' history, is indispensable for our understanding of the problems of the present and the immediate future." For Arendt, covering the Eichmann trial was the perfect opportunity to explore those

problems by delving into the psyche of the perpetrators, who intrigued her much more than the victims. As Arendt later told Samuel Grafton, a journalist commissioned by *Look* in the fall of 1963 to write an article about her account of Eichmann's trial and the controversy it sparked, "I wanted to see one of the chief culprits with my own eyes as he appeared in the flesh. When, many years ago, I described the totalitarian system and analyzed the totalitarian mentality [in her study of Nazism and Stalinism, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*], it was always a 'type,' rather than individuals."

Arendt spent weeks in Jerusalem observing the trial, and she left convinced that Eichmann was not a figure of great evil but rather an oddly cheerful, pathetic man whose desire for personal advancement meshed tightly with the gears of the totalitarian machine. In *The New Yorker*, she was critical of the Israeli prosecution and faulted the lead prosecutor for wanting "to try the most abnormal monster the world had ever seen." Unlike the prosecutor, Arendt saw Eichmann not as a monster but a bureaucrat. "The trouble with Eichmann," she said, "was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal."

It is often forgotten that Arendt folded Eichmann's story into a more general account of the Holocaust--the table of contents of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* resembles a timeline of the event--and that this broader context introduced innumerable readers to the idea of the Holocaust. Arendt does not appear to have done research in archives with German documents, and given how little had been written on the subject she had few options when she looked for published sources of background material. There was, of course, one source that contained it all: *The Destruction of the European Jews*.

Arendt's papers show that she had a complicated relationship with Hilberg's work even before she began writing about Eichmann. When she returned to New York from Jerusalem, in August 1961, there was a letter from Quadrangle Books offering a special discount on *The Destruction of the European Jews*. In the copy of the letter in Arendt's files, Quadrangle's president, Melvin Brisk, promised that Hilberg's book would provide a very different picture of Eichmann than the Israeli prosecution had in Jerusalem. "Hilberg shows that Eichmann was a bureaucrat worrying about a thousand details rather than a master planner." Brisk explained, "We make this offer (good only until September 30th) because the Eichmann trial--which is still under way as I write this letter--makes the book doubly important in explaining what happened and why." Arendt replied on August 7, enclosing a check for \$14.95.

Brisk's sales pitch was not Arendt's first exposure to Hilberg's book. Two years earlier, Arendt had been asked by Princeton University Press to review the manuscript of *The Destruction of the European Jews*; she advised Princeton not to publish it. In a letter in her archives dated April 1959, which Hilberg himself discovered, Princeton editor Gordon Hubel thanked Arendt for her "invaluable assistance" and tried to assuage any guilt she might have felt about her decision: "after we had rejected this manuscript," Hubel confided, "we learned from Hilberg that he has \$10,000 in financial backing toward the publication of this study, so I do not feel that our declining was in any way fatal to its eventual publication." (In the end, a \$15,000 donation financed the book's publication by Quadrangle.)

Arendt's evaluation of Hilberg's manuscript is not among her papers. A plausible explanation of why she advised against its publication appears in a 1963 letter she wrote to the German publisher of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. In it, she says that Hilberg "worked for 15 years only with the sources and if he had not written a very terrible first chapter, in which he did not understand much about German history, the book would be, so to speak, perfect. No one will be able to write about the topic without using it." Arendt reiterated the point the following year in a letter to Karl Jaspers, offering that Hilberg's book "is really excellent, but only because it is a simple report." In his first chapter, Hilberg provides a brief timeline of anti-Semitism in Europe that begins with the Roman Empire under Constantine and ends with the Holocaust. Hilberg's long view of history clashed with Arendt's strong belief that the Holocaust was something entirely new--a product of modern society and the totalitarian system.

But while Arendt belittled some of its conclusions, she clearly recognized what a gold mine the book contained. Her reliance on Hilberg was apparent to Hugh Trevor-Roper, who reviewed *Eichmann in Jerusalem* in the *Sunday Times* two years after reviewing *The Destruction of the European Jews* in *Commentary*. Trevor-Roper postulated that, except for the trial, Hilberg's "masterly study" was Arendt's main source. "She acknowledges her debt," Trevor-Roper wrote, "but the full extent of that debt can be appreciated only by those who have read both. Again and again the arguments, the very phrases, are unconsciously repeated." Trevor-Roper's review was largely forgotten, as was his conclusion that "indeed, behind the whole of Miss Arendt's book stands the overshadowing bulk of Mr. Hilberg's."

Despite her opinion that Hilberg's study was a "simple report," Arendt does acknowledge its quotidian perfection at one point in her book--though, tellingly, in a parenthetical--when describing the arduous task faced by Eichmann's Israeli prosecutors. "The prosecution, it must be admitted, was in a most difficult position in finding its way through this labyrinth of parallel institutions, which it had to do each time it wanted to pin some specific responsibility on Eichmann," she explained, before discreetly adding: "(If the trial were to take place today, this task would be much easier, since Raul Hilberg in his *The Destruction of the European Jews* has succeeded in presenting the first clear description of this incredibly complicated machinery of destruction.)"

Like *The Destruction of the European Jews*, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* is mostly about the perpetrators. When Arendt does focus on the Jews, her concern is not isolated episodes of heroic resistance or the immense scale of human suffering but rather the Judenräte, the Jewish councils in Nazi-controlled Europe. It was an important matter to investigate. The councils were Jewish municipal administrations that provided basic services to ghettoized Jews and enforced Nazi orders and regulations, including compiling names of Jews for deportation. For Arendt the councils were a big moral question mark. She describes them as frequently willing and self-serving collaborators in helping the Nazis execute the Final Solution. In lines that have been repeated countless times since, she writes, "To a Jew this role of the Jewish leaders in the destruction of their own people is undoubtedly the darkest chapter of the whole dark story." The cooperation of Jewish leaders, she continues, "had been known about before, but it has now

been exposed for the first time in all its pathetic and sordid detail by Raul Hilberg."

After this broad acknowledgment, Arendt peppers her account of the Judenräte with mostly unattributed quotations from German documents quoted in Hilberg's book. Her most infamous act of blind borrowing is her provocative, offhand reference to "Dr. Leo Baeck, Chief Rabbi of Berlin, who in the eyes of both Jews and Gentiles was the 'Jewish Führer.'" Jacob Robinson, who was an assistant to the chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials, wrote a book attacking Arendt's portrayal of Eichmann in which he zeroed in on the Baeck statement and identified its likely source. Robinson hypothesized that the source "is probably Hilberg, who was careful to note that the expression 'Jewish Führer' applied to Baeck was a casual remark by Eichmann's assistant, Dieter Wisliceny; it was left to Miss Arendt to ascribe the use of the epithet to 'Jews and Gentiles' in general."

Certainly Arendt's ideas about Eichmann and his "banality" were kindling for a fire. But it was the material she drew from

Hilberg on the Jewish councils--less than twenty of the nearly 300 pages of her book--that ignited the furor. The implication of her account was that whereas Nazis like Eichmann were merely banal bureaucrats, Jews had experienced a moral collapse during the war by failing to resist totalitarianism. The Anti-Defamation League distributed a letter urging local offices to denounce her, the World Jewish Congress released a pamphlet about the book and multiple Jewish organizations hired researchers to find errors in it. Nearly every Jewish publication in America ran articles attacking her views. Arendt's old friend Gershom Scholem broke with her and wrote a public letter in which he questioned her portrayal of the Jews: "In your treatment of the problem of how the Jews reacted to these extreme circumstances--to which neither of us was exposed--I detect, often enough, in place of balanced judgment, a kind of demagogic will-to-overstatement." Scholem could have been describing Hilberg's account of the Jewish councils--which is not surprising, given that Hilberg was Arendt's source. In fact, Hilberg's fastidiousness regarding the Baeck incident was an exception: he was generally indifferent, sometimes archly so, to the dilemmas faced by Jews in the ghettos. At one point he concludes that "Jews tried to avert disaster: by judicious compliance with orders, and sometimes by anticipatory compliance with orders not yet issued," such as the forced labor program that the Jewish council in the Warsaw ghetto had set up. Where Arendt surpassed Hilberg was in the words of moral opprobrium she flung at several Jewish leaders.

As the negative reviews of *Eichmann in Jerusalem* poured in, Arendt wrote to Mary McCarthy: "One can say that the mob--intellectual or otherwise--has been successfully mobilized." Arendt alleged in another letter, to a reader, that she was an innocent bystander who had been made a scapegoat. But she also recognized that the cause of the furor was her use of Hilberg's Judenräte material. "That I am now in the center of this campaign is almost an accident. Ever since the publication of Hilberg's book, those organizations have been worrying about what to do," she wrote in response to a particularly vicious review of her work by Lionel Abel in the Summer 1963 issue of *Partisan Review*.

Arendt was not happy. She felt her ideas were being trampled by the uproar over *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. She

was not without justification. Samuel Grafton noted in the draft of his *Look* article that "according to Viking Press, the book has sold only about 10,000 copies, an extremely small number for a work about which so much has been said. Many who are discussing it have not read it; in a sense the controversy has floated loose from the book, and become a phenomenon in its own right." As Grafton's son, the historian Anthony Grafton, explains in his essay "Arendt and Eichmann at the Dinner Table," *Look* ended up killing his father's article because as the contretemps heated up, Arendt grew irritable and stopped cooperating.

Hilberg was not happy either. After toiling for thirteen years on his book, he was being eclipsed by someone who had worked for little more than two years on hers. "Who was I, after all?" Hilberg asked bitterly in his autobiography. "She, the thinker, and I, the laborer who wrote only a simple report, albeit one which was indispensable once she had exploited it." The situation was made clear in a letter that Siegfried Moses, the head of the Council of Jews from Germany, wrote to Arendt that spring. "I came to New York with the draft of a statement which was to be published by the Council of Jews from Germany. It was to attack the presentation given in Hilberg's book." But, Moses added, "Now, the defense of the council must oppose primarily your articles." In his autobiography, Hilberg was emphatic in pointing out the differences between his and Arendt's arguments. He noted that whereas Arendt's analysis of Jewish leadership was restricted to the Judenräte, in *The Destruction of the European Jews* he had written that the Jews had a centuries-old tradition of saving themselves by complying with violent, anti-Semitic rulers--a precedent that collided with the unprecedented brutality of the Nazis.

But just as Arendt did not give Hilberg the full credit he was due, Hilberg did not properly acknowledge her insights. In writing about Eichmann, she had proposed a bold new way of describing how ordinary Germans had been drawn into the machinery of destruction--a discussion that Hilberg had avoided. On a more immediate level, Arendt, despite having taken liberties with some of Hilberg's facts, had nevertheless acted as a popular interpreter of his research--providing visibility for a book that could easily have fallen down an academic mine shaft. In the process, this kick-started the rise of the study of the Holocaust.

There is no better testament to the cross-pollination of their ideas than the career of Christopher Browning, author of *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* and one of the world's most respected Holocaust scholars. Browning became interested in the Holocaust in the late '60s when he was an activist against the Vietnam War. Like so many students at the time, he turned to *Eichmann in Jerusalem* in the hopes of understanding how governments are drawn into planning death and destruction. After noticing Arendt's few references to Hilberg, Browning bought a copy of *The Destruction of the European Jews*. He read it during a long convalescence from mononucleosis, and it changed his life. "Some people have religious conversion experiences," Browning said at a memorial service for Hilberg; "upon reading Hilberg I had a life-changing academic conversion experience." Browning had been working toward a master's in French history but then decided to write a dissertation on an aspect of Hilberg's research. "Hilberg became visible to me by virtue of Arendt," Browning told me. "For most people it was an entirely negative connection--but for me, it turned out to be entirely positive."

Another kink in the story is that the claim on which Hilberg and Arendt had staked so much--Jewish compliance during the war--is considered, even by their admirers, to be the blind spot of their *oeuvres*. Young-Bruehl writes in her biography that Arendt's knowledge of the Holocaust-era ghettos "was not always extensive enough to support her generalizations." Amos Elon, in the introduction to the Penguin Classics edition of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, says Arendt "was inexcusably flippant." Hilberg, of course, was a meticulous researcher, yet the passages about the Jewish councils in *The Destruction of the European Jews* have a very different feel from the rest of the book. Whereas the book is generally heavily footnoted, these pages have long runs of clean or lightly footnoted discursive prose. Had Hilberg strayed from the facts? Michael Marrus, who has written critically about Arendt's and Hilberg's accounts of the Judenräte, says that while many Jewish historians have erred "too much on the side of heroism and resistance," Hilberg "was way off on the other side of the spectrum. His views about the Jews are sometimes almost caricatural." Browning agrees, and adds that Hilberg had an ornery attachment to these passages: "That's the one chapter he would never change. He had a stubborn streak."

Hilberg and Arendt may have clung to these heretical positions because their exodus from Europe left them with similarly tortured perspectives on the Jews they had left behind. Both writers were steeped in German-Jewish culture, which had long disdained the less cultured Jews in Eastern Europe. Complicating matters was that it was Eastern Jews who had been overwhelmingly slaughtered. Arendt's criticism of the Israeli prosecution in Eichmann's trial was spiced by her distaste for what she saw as the Israeli muddle of Middle Eastern and Eastern European Jews. Her most famous relationship was with Heidegger, the philosopher and Nazi Party member, and her husband, Blücher, was a German gentile. In a similar pattern, Hilberg endlessly criticized Jewish scholars while heaping praise on German scholars who were studying the same material.

More personally and concretely, though, the works of Hilberg and Arendt were colored by their experiences as young secular Jews influenced by Zionism. Arendt's Zionist work--before and immediately after the war--is well-known. Hilberg's Zionist background, on the other hand, has generally gone unrecognized. In his autobiography, he says little about his engagement with the Jewish community in Vienna. But his best friend from his youth, Eric Marder, recalls that both boys had gone to a Zionist school in Vienna, which taught them the need for Jews to build a home of their own and to defend themselves. The lessons stuck, says Marder, who left Vienna shortly after Hilberg's family. Marder also ended up in Brooklyn, and he recalls that when he and Hilberg were in high school, they would walk home and talk about what was happening in Europe. "We both felt that politically the Jewish community in Europe had behaved badly. Instead of fighting the Nazis, they had surrendered to them."

At the time that Hilberg and Marder were having those conversations, Arendt was expressing similar disappointment about the apparent unwillingness of the Jews to stand up for themselves. During the war, Arendt wrote a series of articles for Jewish newspapers in the United States calling for Jews to form an army to fight back. In time, though, her writing reflected a growing, almost shamefaced recognition that the Jews would go down meekly. In 1944, in the article "From Army to Brigade," she

spoke of the "unbearable humiliation of the Jewish people, who felt that the whole world had damned them to the degrading role of victimhood."

Later on, both thinkers wanted to be seen as clear-eyed observers, unsullied by any attachment to the material they were studying--hence Hilberg's stance as a disinterested scholar. "He wasn't going to let somebody else define him--as a victim or a persecuted Jew," Browning told me. "He just didn't want to go there." After the publication of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Gershom Scholem wrote to Arendt that she showed "little trace" of "*Ahabath Israel*: 'Love of the Jewish people.'" She eagerly accepted his assessment: "I do not 'love' the Jews, nor do I 'believe' in them; I merely belong to them as a matter of course, beyond dispute or argument." She had criticized Hilberg's work by labeling it a "simple report," but when she was attacked for being a self-hating Jew she used the label as a shield. "My position is that I wrote a report and that I am not in politics, either Jewish or otherwise," she explained to Mary McCarthy in September 1963. "In other words my point would be that what the whole furor is about are *facts* and neither theories nor ideas." She argued that she did not view the Jews any differently from any of the other people of Europe.

But it is hard not to see the youthful anger of both Hilberg and Arendt--the expression of an inchoate Zionist zeal--occasionally ruffling their more sober later writing. Scholem perceptively pointed to something very personal in Arendt's work. In his letter, he told her, "Your book speaks only of the *weakness* of the Jewish stance in the world. I am ready enough to admit that weakness; but you put such emphasis upon it that, in my view, your account ceases to be objective and acquires overtones of malice." With Hilberg, such overtones are evident when he describes innocent Jewish families going to their death: "During ghetto-clearing operations many Jewish families were unable to fight, unable to petition, unable to flee, and also unable to move to the concentration point to get it over with. They waited for the raiding parties in their homes, frozen and helpless." The writing in the works of both thinkers rings with an almost visceral desire to distance themselves from the weak Jews that they imagined they had left behind, and from whom they had hoped for so much more during the war. Young-Bruehl says that in her life as well as her thinking, Arendt "took the position that I am not a victim here--I am a resistant." But the outwardly sober and unemotional Hilberg was occasionally agitated by a resistant nerve. Yehuda Bauer, the eminent Israeli Holocaust scholar, recalls a moment when he was giving a lecture with Hilberg before a college class in Boston during the '70s. Bauer spoke about Jewish resistance to the Nazis; Hilberg began his rejoinder on a characteristically dry note before suddenly losing his temper. "He yelled at those students and he said, 'How many of you have guns in your home?'" Bauer remembers. "I said to him, 'You think there will be Nazis in Boston?' But he wasn't talking to the students--he was talking to the Jews in Europe. For a moment he forgot himself."

Discouraged by the response to *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Arendt mostly stopped writing about Jewish issues. But she did not refrain from criticizing the Jewish world, particularly when it came to the justice of the State of Israel, which she had lost faith in, and American Jews' stalwart defense of it. This political quarrel, though, obscured Arendt's complicated understanding of her Jewish identity. It's worth remembering that her first book was not a political treatise but a sympathetic biography of Rahel Varnhagen, the

secular German-Jewish salon hostess who died believing that the great shame of her life, being born a Jew, was also her greatest gift. Similarly, Arendt never stopped feeling connected to her own Jewish heritage, but always on her own terms. Young-Bruehl tells of Arendt's later years, when "everyone was very interested to observe that she put a great deal of energy into attending Seder with her friends--and the marking of Jewish holidays--in a way that she hadn't really before."

Professionally, Hilberg followed a different path after writing his great work. He maintained a single-minded commitment to *The Destruction of the European Jews*, advising translators on new editions right up to his death. He also worked more broadly on spreading a historical understanding of the Holocaust. He was an integral member of the council that oversaw the creation of the US Holocaust Memorial and Museum in Washington, and in letters to fellow council members he regularly warned against allowing the museum to become a community memorial for Jews, one dedicated to the image of the Jewish victim, instead of being a museum that would shed light on the entirety of the Holocaust.

Hilberg, like Arendt, remained largely estranged from collective Jewish life. He continued to live in Vermont, far from Jewish havens like New York City, and was twice married to non-Jews. He avoided synagogue and relished taking positions that antagonized many Jews. For instance, he rallied to the defense of Norman Finkelstein, who was lambasted for his book *The Holocaust Industry*, which argued that American Jewish institutions have exploited the memory of the Holocaust, turning it into schmaltz for financial and political gain. Peter Novick called Finkelstein's work "a charge into darkness that sheds no light." Hilberg not only praised Finkelstein's "analytical abilities" but also noted his strength in defying the establishment. In letters and interviews, Hilberg attacked both the community of Holocaust scholars in the United States and the Jewish organizations that had sprung up to memorialize the Holocaust. What he had warned the Holocaust Memorial council against had come to pass. After drawing such a stark picture of the Jewish collapse in *The Destruction of the European Jews*, Hilberg was horrified that many American Jews would willingly and eagerly link themselves with the history of victimhood. "Where is our dignity?" he asked an editor at Knopf in 1988.

At the lecture he delivered a few months before he died, a question was put to Hilberg: "Why do you not feel part of your community?" Without missing a beat, he responded, in an even voice, "I don't feel part of anything. I don't feel part of the university I've been a part of for decades. I don't feel part of Burlington, where I've spent all my years since 1956. I think some of us are just destined to be alone." But Hilberg's sense of being a man apart concealed the intense tug of war he had with his past. In his later years Hilberg returned to the subject of the Judenräte when he decided to edit the meticulous diaries of Adam Czerniakow, the head of the Jewish council in the Warsaw ghetto. Hilberg's work on the volume is distinguished by a nuanced sympathy for the impossible situation in which the Jews had found themselves, but most of all for Czerniakow's strong, silent decision to kill himself in the end rather than betray his principles.

Hilberg's second wife, Gwendolyn Montgomery, who was born an Episcopalian, converted to Judaism in 1992, twelve

years into their marriage. She did so for reasons of her own, without Hilberg's prodding. She admits to having been surprised when Hilberg began quietly attending synagogue with her soon after her conversion. Hilberg's friends, too, were surprised to learn that his postmortem arrangements included a request for a memorial service at the Burlington synagogue.

Hilberg had not become religious in any traditional sense. Like Arendt, his relationship with Judaism was very much on his terms. The legacy of Jewish victimhood galled him as much as it did Arendt, but it didn't stifle his respect for the Jewish conscience. Here it was his turn to borrow from Arendt. Shortly before the end of the war, Arendt wrote an intriguing set of essays about the notion of "the Jew as pariah," in which she identified Sholom Aleichem, Franz Kafka and Henrich Heine as heirs to the greatest Jewish tradition. "It is the tradition of a minority of Jews who have not wanted to become upstarts, who preferred the status of 'conscious pariah,'" she claimed. "All vaunted Jewish qualities--the 'Jewish heart,' humanity, humor, disinterested intelligence--are pariah qualities." In 1965, two years after the appearance of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Hilberg published a little-noticed essay in *Midstream* magazine in which he described the conditions that had motivated Germans to perpetrate the Holocaust. He then expressed his admiration for the pariahs of his people. "Jews are iconoclasts. They will not worship idols," he wrote. "The Jews are the conscience of the world. They are the father figures, stern, critical, and forbidding." He returned to the subject in his last lecture, in which he explained that despite his expressions of derision, his commitment had been "to my people, whether they want it or not, or like it. You know, I could have written my dissertation on multipartite treaties. I could have been a big shot. No, I wrote the dissertation that everyone without exception who was an adult told me not to write."

This was not a description of the many Jews Hilberg was constantly criticizing but rather an idealized description of the community of Jews he imagined being part of, and people close to him understood as much. In his final months, as he was dying of lung cancer, one of the few people Hilberg wanted to see was Richard Sugarman. Many years earlier, Sugarman, who is an Orthodox Jew, had been walking around campus with a rabbi distributing Passover matzo. Sugarman remembers how the rabbi respectfully left Hilberg alone. "It seems to me that Professor Hilberg has his own *avodah*," Sugarman recalls the rabbi saying, "his own way of service."

<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20100419/popper>

Fredrick Töben comments

Remember how the 1984/5 Toronto Zündel trial knocked out Hilberg's claim there were two written Hitler Orders that stated the systematic extermination of European Jews. In the witness stand Hilberg had to admit there were NO written Hitler orders and subsequent editions of his book did acknowledge this. Imagine the German bureaucracy, any bureaucracy, acting without an order? It just does not happen – and a nudge and a wink will not start it either! It hurts academics to know the Holocaust is built on a false premise, which is protected by legal means only. In effect, Hilberg's work is worthless because the premise on which it rests is a fiction.