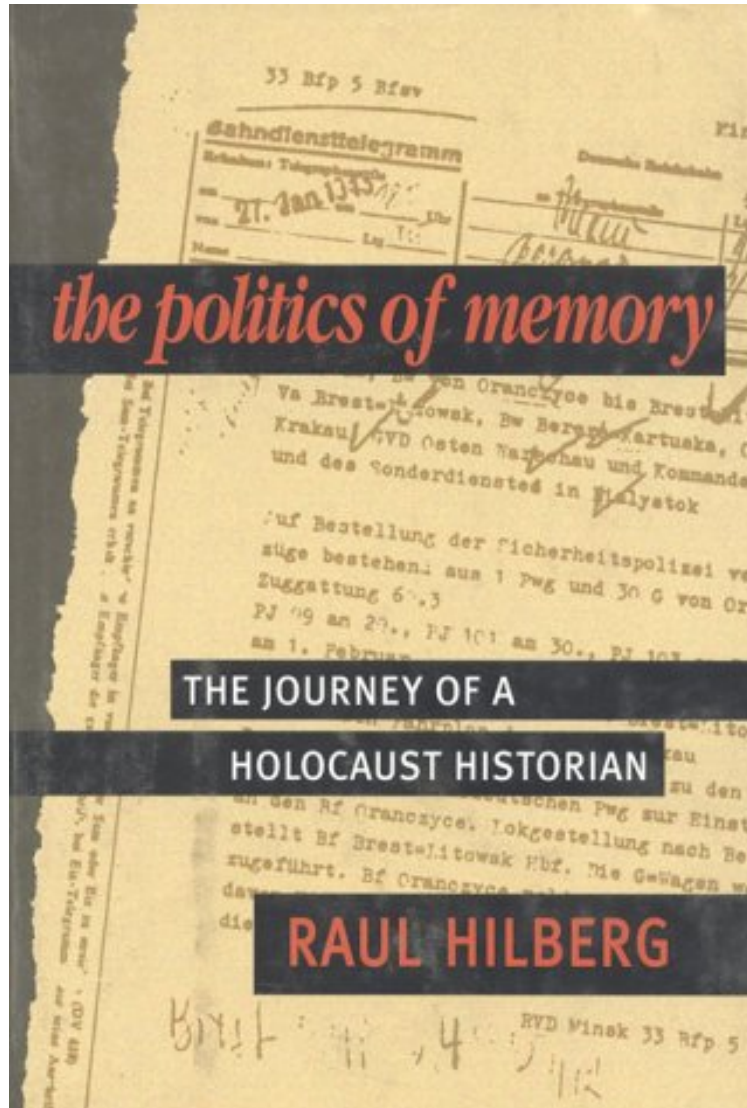


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The Politics of Memory : The Journey of a Holocaust Historian

Raul Hilberg

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Raul Hilberg : The Politics of Memory : The Journey of a Holocaust Historian before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Politics of Memory : The Journey of a Holocaust Historian:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I recommend this is anyone interested in WWII history By RGK It was a good read, not a happy one, but informative. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. My assessment of the book. Months after I read it. By James R. Gilbert I don't remember. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Mirror of a Holocaust historian. By JLZ Extraordinary autobiography with the lights and shadows of the run of the most

important historian of the Holocaust.

This is the poignant memoir of a man who has spent most of his lifetime immersed in the evidence of one of the great horrors in human history. It is both a record of how it affected him and a revelation of the surprising ways in which his monumental work was received by his contemporaries. Even after thirty-five years, Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jews* remains the most distinguished and comprehensive analysis of the Nazi destruction process. Yet at the time it was written, as Mr. Hilberg recounts in *The Politics of Memory*, both the manuscript and its subject matter were rejected by major publishers and university presses; and in the wake of publication the author faced a hostile reception from those who refused to believe that the Jews were less than heroic in their journey to the gas chambers. How his study was used and abused especially by Hannah Arendt, Lucy Dawidowicz, and Nora Levin draws Mr. Hilberg's attention, as does the more admiring reception for *Destruction in Europe* than in America. *The Politics of Memory* brings full circle a scholarly enterprise that in many ways has been a terrible calling. A courageous, powerful portrait of one scholar's self-directed search for truth. *Toronto Globe and Mail*

From *Publishers Weekly* In his writings, eminent Holocaust historian Hilberg (*The Destruction of the European Jews*) has argued that the Nazi genocide was a bureaucratic, decentralized process, and that the "Final Solution," the plan for total annihilation of European Jewry, was not formulated until 1941. By highlighting the role of the Jewish councils, which he views as agents of accommodation with the German apparatus, and by investigating what he perceives as Jewish victims' lack of resistance, Hilberg has drawn the wrath of scholarly critics. In this defensive, dryly written, sometimes acrimonious memoir, he settles scores with his opponents, notably Holocaust historian Lucy Dawidowicz, and sharply distances himself from Hannah Arendt and her notion of the "banality of evil." Professor emeritus of political science at the University of Vermont, Hilberg relives personal moments of intense drama, as when he escaped Austria with his family in 1939 at the age of 13 or when he arrived in Munich as an American soldier at war's end. There, in the former Nazi party headquarters, he discovered Hitler's private library packed in crates. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* In an erudite, witty, and sometimes sarcastic narrative, Hilberg (*Perspective, Victims, Bystanders: The Jewish Catastrophe 1933-1945*, HarperCollins, 1992) takes the reader on a tour of his life and work as an Austrian Jewish refugee who grew up to be one of the most controversial Holocaust historians of the day. Whether or not one agrees with Hilberg's interpretation of the Holocaust, or of his observations about his contemporaries?e.g., Lucy Dawidowicz?his life suggests the social, political, and intellectual forces that shape Holocaust historiography. Of particular interest are the people and events that influenced Hilberg's development as a scholar. His book should be read especially by graduate students and younger scholars because he gives important insights on research, writing, publishing, and job hunting. Recommended for libraries with an interest in the Holocaust and Judaica.?Frederic Krome, Northern Kentucky Univ., Highland Heights Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Booklist* Hilberg, the preeminent scholar of the Holocaust, is best known for *The Destruction of the European Jews*, published in 1961. His second insightful study of the Holocaust, *Perpetrators Victims Bystanders*, was published in 1992. Hilberg begins his new book by recounting his formative years growing up in Vienna and fleeing the Nazi regime with his family in 1939 when he was 13. He continues by relating his return to Europe with the U.S. Army, his education, the beginning of a teaching career, and his growing interest in researching and documenting the Holocaust. But the crux of the book is what Hilberg terms the "Thirty-Year War," a defense of his belief that the behavior of the European Jewish community during the Holocaust "dictated accommodation and precluded resistance." Hilberg rebukes three rival historians: Nora Levin, Lucy Dawidowicz, and Hannah Arendt. "Each complicated my life in her own special way," he insists. He remains candid and controversial in his continued search for the truth in the destruction of six million Jews. George Cohen