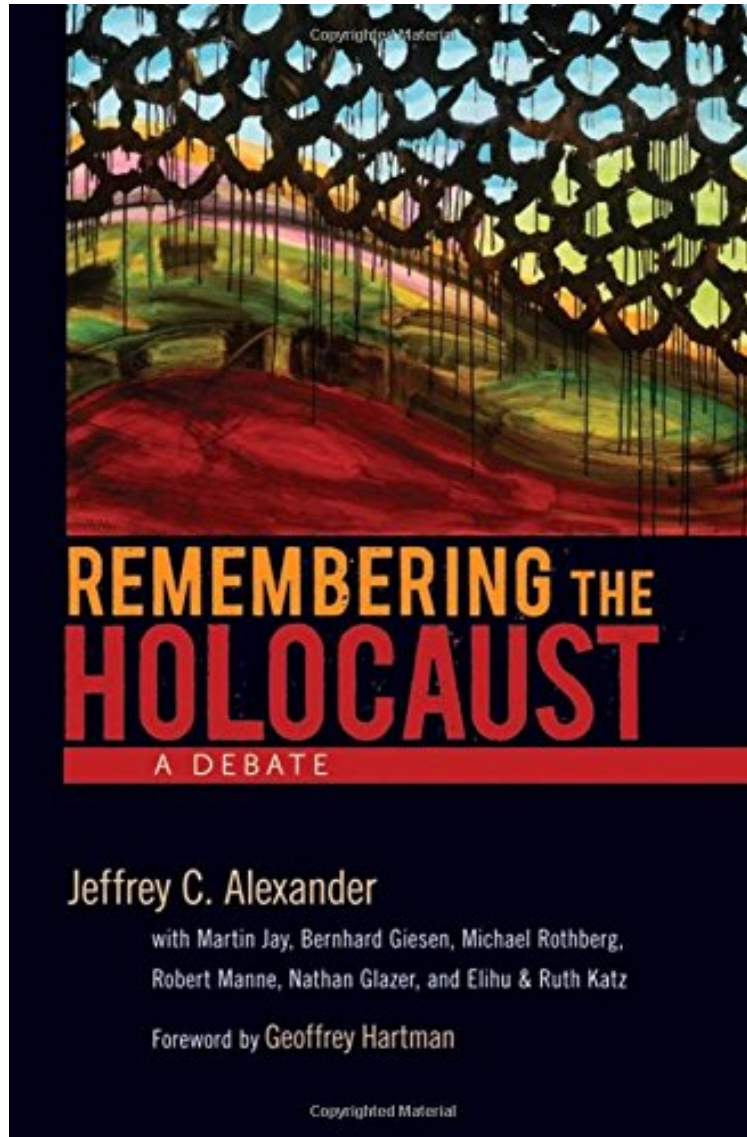


[Free pdf] Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate

## Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate

*Jeffrey C. Alexander*

*DOC | \*audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF | ePub*



DOWNLOAD



READ ONLINE

#1375289 in Books 2009-07-27 Original language: English PDF # 1 6.20 x .90 x 9.30l, 1.15 #File Name: 0195326229224 pages | File size: 38.Mb

**Jeffrey C. Alexander : Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Remembering the Holocaust: A Debate:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Pre-Eminence of the Holocaust Arose From Combined Leftist Ideation and Jewish Influence By Jan Peczkis This book is of very limited value, as it is rather obtuse and laden with Holocaust speak. It is little more than a thinly-veiled promotion of Holocaust supremacism. INTRODUCTION: TYPES OF HOLOCAUST SUPREMACISM For purpose of my reviews, and in the interests of clarity, I categorize Holocaust

supremacism into three types: 1). Formal; 2) Mystified; and 3) Practical. The three commonly overlap. In Formal Holocaust supremacism, various seemingly-factual rationalizations are advanced to justify the pre-eminence of the Holocaust over the genocides of all other peoples. An example, in this book, is the essay of Nathan Glazer. He repeats the standard line about Jews being the center of Nazi hatred, and of the Nazi extermination of Jews reducing all other Nazi genocides to, in his words, sideshows. (pp. 154-155). This is egregious. In fact, all the arguments upon which Formal Holocaust supremacism rests are demonstrably incorrect. [See comments]. In Mystified Holocaust supremacism, quasi-magical and transcendental properties are attributed to the Holocaust and to the Holocaust alone. This mystification of the Holocaust is then used to justify the preeminence of the Holocaust over all other genocides. My review focuses on this. In Practical Holocaust supremacism, the Holocaust simply gets the lions share of attention--in academia, media, and the entertainment industry--usually without any supportive justification. The outcome is the same. Common sense alone dictates that what is more important gets more attention than that which is unimportant. So Practical Holocaust supremacism sends the unavoidable message that the genocides of non-Jews are unimportant in comparison with that of the Jews. Practical Holocaust supremacism persists largely because of cultural inertia. It is beyond the scope of this book, and is not discussed any further.

**THE MYSTIFICATION OF THE HOLOCAUST IN ACTION**

A clear example of Mystified Holocaust supremacism is provided by author Jeffrey C. Alexander. He writes, As the tragic narrative crystallized, the Holocaust drama became, for an increasing number of Americans, and for significant proportions of Europeans as well, the most widely understood and emotionally compelling trauma of the twentieth century. [WOW!]. These bathetic events, once experienced as traumatic only by Jewish victims, became generalized and universalized. (p. 37). Clearly, Mystified Holocaust supremacism is based, to a large extent, on a play on emotions.

**THE MYSTIFICATION OF THE HOLOCAUST: ALL OTHER GENOCIDES MARGINALIZED**

Needless to say, no other genocide gets the privilege of this kind of drama. Author Alexander admits as much, I should add by the Jewish AND NON-JEWISH victims as well, for millions of persons were victims of Nazi mass murder in addition to the Jews Poles, gypsies, homosexuals, handicapped persons, and political opponents of all types. That virtually all of these non-Jewish victims were filtered out of the emerging collective representation of the Holocaust underlines the arbitrary quality of trauma representations. (pp. 76-77; Emphasis in original). Of course, Mystified Holocaust supremacism need not be overt. It can also be disguised as something quite noble. This includes the pretense that the Holocaust is now a universal symbol for mans inhumanity to man. [SAYS WHO?] For instance, the author, in dead seriousness, quips, Engorged with evil and universalized in its meaning, the Holocaust could not possibly be owned by any one particular social group or by any particular nation. (p. 87). What a perfect example of doublespeak!

**NOT JUST JEWISH INFLUENCE: COMBINED LEFTIST IDEATION AND JEWISH INFLUENCE**

Any notion that the Holocaust is not owned by any particular people vanishes once it is understood how Holocaust supremacism came to be. Alexander comments, As I have shown, it was not the actual power of Jews in the United States but the centrality of Jews in the progressive American imagination that defined the crimes of Nazis in a manner that focused on anti-Semitism. (pp. 85-86). Let us look closely at this statement. Clearly, it is part of left-wing victim identity politics. However, it begs the question why Jews became central to the progressive imagination while Poles did not, and why anti-Semitism became such a big deal while anti-Polonism (not least of which is frequently practiced by Jews to this day) did not.

**ALL GENOCIDES ARE ADMITTEDLY EQUAL, BUT ONE OF THEM IS MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS**

Author Jeffery C. Alexander ties-in his discussion, of the progressive imagination, with the slighting of the non-Jewish victims of the Nazis, as follows: In fact, I believe that it is because of the symbolic centrality of Jews in the progressive narrative that so relatively little attention has been paid to the Nazis EQUALLY IMMORAL AND UNCONSCIONABLE extermination policies directed against other groups for example, Poles, homosexuals, gypsies, and the disabled. (p. 85; Emphasis added). Genocide-Recognition Equality Now!

Remembering the Holocaust explains why the Holocaust has come to be considered the central event of the 20th century, and what this means. Presenting Jeffrey Alexander's controversial essay that, in the words of Geoffrey Hartman, has already become a classic in the Holocaust literature, and following up with challenging and equally provocative responses to it, this book offers a sweeping historical reconstruction of the Jewish mass murder as it evolved in the popular imagination of Western peoples, as well as an examination of its consequences. Alexander's inquiry points to a broad cultural transition that took place in Western societies after World War II: from confidence in moving past the most terrible of Nazi wartime atrocities to pessimism about the possibility for overcoming violence, ethnic conflict, and war. The Holocaust has become the central tragedy of modern times, an event which can no longer be overcome, but one that offers possibilities to extend its moral lessons beyond Jews to victims of other types of secular and religious strife. Following Alexander's controversial thesis is a series of responses by distinguished scholars in the humanities and social sciences--Martin Jay, Bernhard Giesen, Michael Rothberg, Robert Manne, Nathan Glazer, and Elihu Ruth Katz--considering the implications of the universal moral relevance of the Holocaust. A final response from Alexander in a postscript focusing on the repercussions of the Holocaust in Israel concludes this forthright and engaging discussion. Remembering the Holocaust is an all-too-rare debate on our conception of the

Holocaust, how it has evolved over the years, and the profound effects it will have on the way we envision the future.

"This volume brings together a classical and controversial essay on the Holocaust by the sociologist Jeffrey Alexander with a spectrum of new commentaries by distinguished scholars in the humanities and social sciences...The Holocaust remains the generalized symbol of evil, but it is clear from these essays, Alexander's rejoinder, and ongoing global secular and religious strife that its moral lessons have not been universally absorbed."--Journal of the American Academy of Religion

About the Author Jeffrey C. Alexander is the Lillian Chavenson Saden Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Center for Cultural Sociology at Yale University. Contributors: Martin Jay is the Sidney Hellman Ehrman Professor of History at the University of California, Berkeley. Bernhard Giesen is Professor of Sociology and Chair of the Department of Macrosociology at Universitt Konstanz, Germany. Michael Rothberg is Associate Professor of English at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Robert Manne is Professor of Politics at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. Nathan Glazer is Professor of Education Emeritus at Harvard University. Elihu Katz is Trustee Professor at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Communication at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Scientific Director of the Guttman Institute of Applied Social Research. Ruth Katz is the Emanuel Alexander Professor Emerita of Musicology at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.