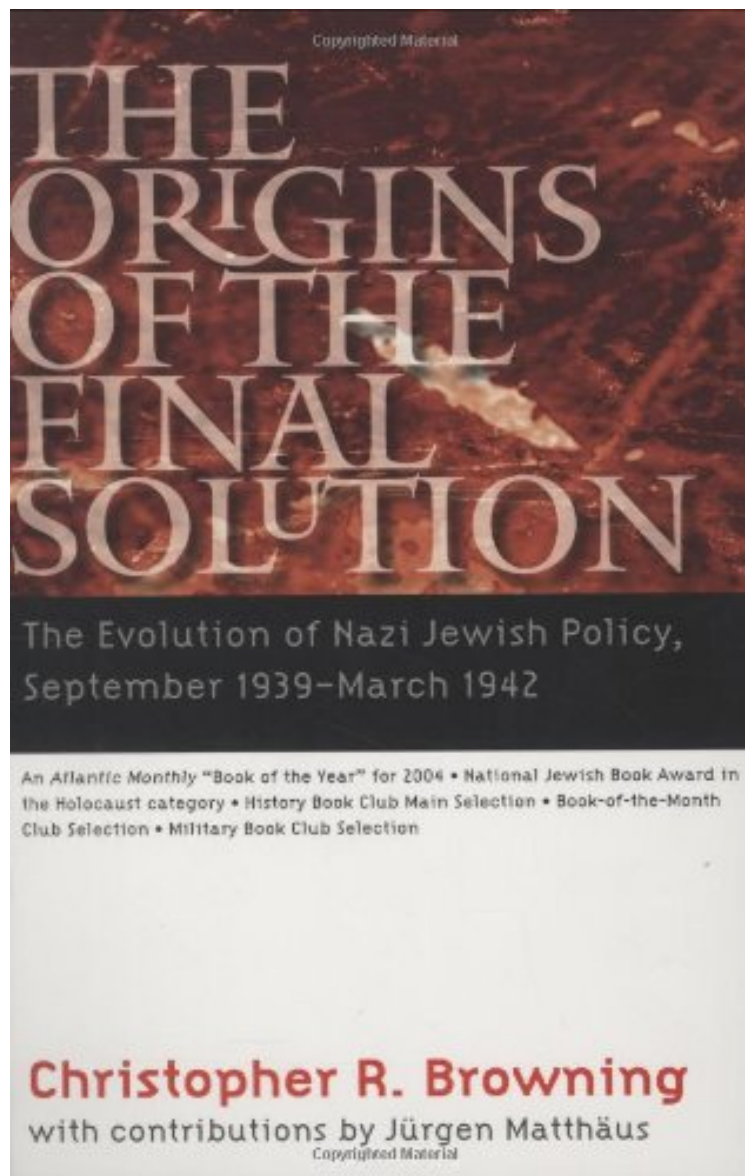


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The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942 (Comprehensive History of the Holocaust)

Christopher R. Browning

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Christopher R. Browning : The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942 (Comprehensive History of the Holocaust) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it

would be worth my time, and all praised *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939-March 1942* (Comprehensive History of the Holocaust):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy 312-255-0787--well written0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy A. NagProduct per advertisement.70 of 80 people found the following review helpful. Superb Investigation Of Holocaust Circumstances!By Barron LaycockWhile no serious Holocaust scholar would argue against the idea that the Third Reich meant in some fashion to dispose of its so-called "Jewish Problem" through some dispicable action or another, whether it by via forced emigration, deportation, resettlement in either Madagascar or the western reaches of the Ukraine, or through other means, there has been a long-ranging debate within the academic community regarding the intent of the Nazis from the beginning regarding the actual attempted extermination of the Jewish people as it later occurred, primarily in Poland and the occupied territories, during the later course of World War Two. One school of thought argues that from the very beginning Hitler intended to rid himself and Europe of the Jews through such nefarious means as starvation, forced labor, and later, in the death camps. Others, such as Professor Christopher Browning, posit that the policy of extermination evolved as a result of existential factors such as food and shelter as the Wehrmacht marched east into Poland and beyond to the Soviet escarpment. Thus, this brilliant work by Browning intends to offer proof of the more circumstantial theory, one in which various attempts were made to offer some relief to over-extended troops and resources to deal with the indigenous Jewish population within Poland and the other territories as they were conquered based both on logistics and the state of chaos that ensued in the war zone. This is not to suggest that the Nazis intended to spare the Jews; on the contrary, the issue was how to dispose of them, whether it be through forced emigration, slave labor, simple starvation, or finally, through implementation of an intentional murder machine by way of the death camps. From the beginning Hitler intended to use them to best advantage. As Browning argues, however, the course of events must be taken into consideration when viewing the evidence, for while Hitler's main aim in warring first with Poland and later with Russia was for what he referred to as "Liebenstraum", or living room, it was also his intent to brutally subjugate the native populations within the conquered areas and literally work them to death, so their labors could profit the Third Reich and prepare the areas for German immigrants. But given the chaotic and undisciplined nature of the Nazi hierarchy and its bureaucracy, several overlapping policies worked against each other and created a wilderland of competing efforts, many of which left the local authorities puzzled as to what policy to follow and how to reach the unrealistic goals given to it by higher headquarters. In the midst of the chaos, according to Browning, evil machinations gradually emerged and as they succeeded in reaching goals, became the modus operandi. Browning brilliantly focuses on the specific time frame in which the policies of the Third Reich solidified into what became the Final Solution. This is easily the best and most completely documented work on the subject I have yet read, and while I find it an impressive work of historical research (Browning's use of new archives and secondary materials is particularly impressive in this regard), I remain unconvinced that Professor Browning has successfully ended the debate (not that he claims to have done so), nor do I think he has explained some very deliberate and troubling evidentiary materials that seem to provide grist for the other camp regarding the instructions given to both the Wehrmacht and to special troops under the command of the Gestapo regarding the conduct of troops in the eastern zone. In this regard, German troops were encouraged from the very beginning of the so-called eastern campaigns against both the Poles and the Russians to consider all indigenous Jews as communists, and thus subject to summary execution whenever and wherever they might be discovered, whether in urban areas working as academics or as rural farmers tending to their humble fields, and to support and aid the special troop formations trained and organized to systematically round up and murder indigenous Jewish populations from village to village, from the very outset of military operations in September 1939. So, while I personally subscribe to Browning's interpretation of the gradual move toward more and more intentionally systematic and increasingly more murderous assaults against the Jewish population, I do not believe he has proven once and for all that it was not part of the original plan from the time the Nazis took power in 1933. Nonetheless, this is indeed a superb book, and one I can heartily recommend. Enjoy!

From Publishers WeeklyAn internationally renowned historian of the Holocaust, Browning explains the evolution of Nazi anti-Jewish policies from discrimination and expulsions to outright systematic murder. Once the Nazis had seized power in 1933, the exclusion of Jews from German and European society was inevitable, but there initially existed no premeditated plan for genocide. Based on a superb mastery of the archival sources and the secondary literature, Browning leads his readers through the step-by-step radicalization of Nazi policies in the critical months after the outbreak of WWII. Occupied Poland was the "laboratory of racial policy," where Nazi functionaries experimented with expulsions and shootings of Jews while regular army officers essentially caved in to the brutalities of the SS. But all the plans for expulsion ran aground, Browning shows, due to the exigencies of war. In the wake of the invasion of the Soviet Union, mass killings became the policy of choice to solve the Nazis' self-imposed "Jewish problem."

Browning argues that at every stage, the "euphoria of victory" in the war led to a radicalization of policies against Jews. Even though Hitler rarely issued explicit orders, Browning shows he was intimately involved each step of the way. Not every reader will want to wade through the immense detail that Browning (*Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*) so skillfully lays out, and some may find bewildering the array of individuals and agencies involved in the Final Solution. Still, this book is sure to become the standard work on the emergence of the Holocaust. 3 maps not seen by PW. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Browning is the author of numerous books on the Holocaust and Nazism; his most notable is *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (1992). In his new book, Browning recounts the sequence of events that led from "ethnic cleansing" to the mass murder of Europe's Jews. There are chapters on the search for a Final Solution through expulsion, the Polish ghettos, radical persecution inside Germany, the Nazi sphere of influence, Operation Barbarossa and the onset of the Holocaust, pogroms and collaboration, the Final Solution from conception to implementation, and the beginning of the gassings in the concentration camps. The book is the first in the University of Nebraska Press' new series, *The Comprehensive History of the Holocaust*, copublished with Yad Vashem. It is the most detailed (there are 113 pages of notes and a 29-page bibliography) examination of this aspect of the Holocaust yet published. George Cohen Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved "The definitive work on the road Germany took toward the Final Solution during the crucial first three years of the war." Istvn Dek, New York of Books