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## Hitler, the Allies, and the Jews

This book offers a new analysis of the Holocaust as a multiple trap, its origins, and its final stages, in which rescue seemed to be possible. With the Holocaust developing like a sort of doomsday machine set in motion from all sides, the Jews found themselves between the hammer and various anvils, each of which worked according to the logic created by the Nazis that dictated the behavior of other parties and the relations between them before and during the Holocaust. The interplay between the various parties contributed to the victims' doom first by preventing help and later by preventing rescue. These help and rescue efforts proved mainly self-defeating, and various legacies about them emerged during the Holocaust and are heatedly debated even today. Their real nature is uncovered here on the basis of newly opened archives worldwide.

Shlomo Aronson is a professor of Political Science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He has written and edited numerous books on the Holocaust and Middle Eastern politics, including *David Ben-Gurion: The Renaissance Leader and the Waning of an Age* (1999) and *New Records – New Perspectives* (2002). Dr. Aronson has also been the organizer of conferences in the field, including the International Conference on Intelligence and the Holocaust, held at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, in June 2003, and “New Records – New Horizons,” held in Israeli universities in December 1998, pertaining to new records opened worldwide on World War II, the Holocaust, and the birth of Israel.

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SHLOMO ARONSON

*The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*



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*This book is dedicated to the memory of my mother's family, the  
Kleniecxs, all of whom perished in Poland during 1942–1943,  
and to the memory of Shlomo Hacoheh Aharonson, Rabbi of Kiev and  
Tel Aviv.*

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## Preface

The purpose of this book is to explain the Holocaust in terms of a multiple “trap”: a multiple “Catch-22” into which a whole group or groups of people had been maneuvered in stages. Hence, this term is an analytical organizing framework that combines the forces that worked separately but together to trap the Jews of Europe and prevent their escape during the Holocaust.

The process that explains the final trap, however, was much longer and could be traced back to World War I and its outcome, which transformed the “Jewish Question” in various Western, central European, and Middle Eastern countries into a major politically imbued issue, but the purpose of this book is not to draw such a broad picture to explain the behavior of Germany, the West, and other parties before 1933.

My intention is to discuss the Holocaust itself and the stages in which the trap was closing on its victims in a kaleidoscopic fashion by describing it not only as it was committed by the perpetrators, as suffered by the victims, or as a subject for inaction and action by third parties, or as a threat to fourth parties alone, but as developing like a sort of doomsday machine set in motion from all sides. Each party worked the way they did because of the logic created by the Nazis and by their own reasons, which dictated the behavior of third and fourth parties and the relations between them before and during the Holocaust, when the interplay between the various parties contributed to the victims’ doom first by preventing help and later by preventing rescue. Previous outcries for help and rescue efforts undertaken were working in most cases as a self-defeating mechanism, and various legacies emerged during the Holocaust that are heatedly debated to this day, namely, whether rescue was possible but opportunities were missed due to Allied and Zionist neglect. Hence, in the text I shall move to and fro between the various parties, stressing the decisive role of Hitler and the Nazis.

My contribution to the existing vast literature on the Holocaust offered here will therefore be interpretive, when based on the scholarly work done by others, which is known to most interested readers and therefore will hardly



be quoted at any length, and factual, when new records – and new faces – will be introduced to prove the multitrap theorem emerging from both known and new records and narratives. Thus, I shall try to approach the early stages of the Nazi “Jewish Policy” and the Holocaust itself by offering a rather broad historical picture based on others’ work and my own research, but later I shall narrow the picture down to a number of specific cases thanks to newly opened sources, especially intelligence records.

The trap situation refers to three categories of “actors.” An enemy and third and fourth parties were at work, with the victims being trapped among them. Being trapped means that the victims were maneuvered into death in stages, and the final outcome was neither within their grasp nor open to their influence or action. On the contrary, it was dictated by a mixture of the enemy’s hatred, ideology, politics, and strategy, as well as third parties’ behavior in response to the enemy’s aggression against them, ascribed by the enemy to the victims’ traits or imagined behavior among other reasons. Yet for the third parties this conflict also assumed ideological and political coloring, actual strategic considerations, and arguments anchored in the past and in interests related to visions of the future.

Thus, for some among the third parties, the enemy and the victims possessed similar traits: Both were racists, separated themselves from the rest of humanity, generated trouble for others and themselves, and a group among them – the Zionists – were accused of having adopted something like National Socialism as their ideology, implemented on the account of others.

Moreover, the murdered Jews seemed in various ways to be weapons used by the perpetrators against the third parties, in some collusion with those who were crying for rescue within the third parties’ own camp and those who actually tried to work for rescue. The enemy, for their part, would react to rescue ideas, actual plans, and operations by preventing or exploiting them for their own purposes – thus supplying ammunition to those among the third parties who adopted various antirescue or at least nonrescue approaches.

Thus, in given situations, everything that may have seemed to help the victims – the cries for help, rescue endeavors undertaken, and even the establishment of a special American agency to deal with rescue – worked against them like a perfect machine functioning in a perfect order. Nothing that was being done to stop the wheels worked, or rather worked adversely, except in some cases to be discussed.

The actors in this trap situation were divided into several categories. First was the enemy – Hitler and his regime. To this we should add the allies of Nazi Germany, such as Slovakia, Rumania, Italy, and Hungary. (Although it was not occupied by Germany until most of Italy was, Hungary followed it later on.)

The victims were the European Jews under the enemy’s direct and indirect control. The Jews abroad (in Britain and in America) were involved in various ways and degrees to try and alleviate the suffering and work for the

rescue of the victims, as we will discuss. They were victimized in the sense that for Hitler they were responsible for their governments' response to his aggression against their people and their allies, while the same governments refused to be responsible for or be actively involved in things Jewish until a very late stage in the war. When they did become involved, it was with many limitations, known to us over decades of debate, accusations, and actual research but requiring explanations and facts less known before or less explained within the relevant historical context. The Zionists, working to implement their vision in the sensitive Middle East, were candidates to doom themselves until the defeat of the Axis in North Africa, and later they tried to assume responsibility for rescue in a way that opened them then and later to accusations within their own camp that they did too little and too late. They were accused of collaborating not only with the hostile British but even with the Gestapo, while British and American officials suspected them of collaboration with the Gestapo as well. Thus, the Zionist leaders and the domestic politics and dilemmas of the Jewish community in Palestine, known as the Yishuv in Hebrew, will be given a central role in this study not only because of their central role at the time with regard to the largely failed rescue efforts during the Holocaust but because today the Holocaust and the enduring rescue debate have become a part of the Holocaust-related politics of Israel and of Jews everywhere – justifying current political stances or condemning them, mostly without the necessary study of the actual historical realities.

The third parties were the Western Allies and the Soviets. The latter carried the main burden of the land war while the Western powers had to maintain the unnatural coalition with them at all costs. The fourth parties were Arabs and Muslims, both as perceived by the Western Allies and as they actually were with regard to the Axis threat in the Middle East, to Japan's threat to India and its Muslim population, and even to the war effort in China and Burma.<sup>1</sup>

Although mostly ignored by the third parties, Jews seemed to be important in the eyes of some Nazi-allied rulers because of their alleged influence among the third parties. Yet the very cases of survival in such countries may be perceived by the few who remained alive as if large-scale rescue was indeed possible, but the third parties should be blamed for having offered little if any help. At the same time, some among the victims' own communities who tried to stop the machinery of destruction in various ways were perceived to have collaborated with the perpetrators while trying to negotiate rescue with them or were seen as having fallen victim to the machinations of third parties whose main concern was to avoid the victims and their pleas for

<sup>1</sup> The "global" and regional dimensions of this study were taken from Gerhard L. Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of WWII* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). I shall refer to them in most specific cases, but any other mentioning of such dimensions should be credited to this work.

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rescue. Thus, the Holocaust caused an ongoing agony that started during World War II among survivors and denial among the killers, some of whom deliberately denied it altogether near the end of the war and thus set in motion the Holocaust denial efforts of today. This book may help to expose these denials while dealing with various problems related to the role of the Holocaust at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials and to the fate of a major figure in the “Rescue Controversy,” Dr. Rezső Israel Kasztner.

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## Abbreviations

Abwehr	German Military Intelligence
AFHQ	Allied Forces Headquarters
AJC	American Jewish Committee
AJDC	American Joint Distribution Committee
ASCI	Assistant Chief of Staff, U.S.
Ast	Abwehrstelle, German Army Intelligence station
AUS	U.S. Army
BA	Bundesarchiv, German Federal Archive
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BDC	Berlin Document Center, copies at NARA
BdS	Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei – regional head of the Nazi Security Police
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency, U.S.
CIC	Counter Intelligence Corps, U.S. Army
C in C	Commander-in-Chief
CID	Criminal Investigation Department, British
CIG	Counter Intelligence, “C” Group (Foreign Propaganda), CIC, U.S.
COI	Coordinator of Information – predecessor of OSS
CSDIC	Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Center(s), British
CZA	Central Zionist Archive
DSO	Defense Security Office, British MI5 (regional)
DDMI	Deputy Director of Military Intelligence, British
DMI	Director of Military Intelligence, British
<i>EH</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Hebraica</i>
FDR	Franklin Delano Roosevelt
FDR Library	Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial Library
FEA	Foreign Economic Administration, U.S.
FIS	Foreign Information Service – section of COI – U.S.

FO	Foreign Office, British
G-2	U.S. Army Intelligence
GC & CS	Government Code and Cypher School, British
Gestapo	Geheime Staatspolizei, Nazi Germany's Secret Police
GHQ	General Headquarters
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GOC in C	General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
Gruf.	SS Gruppenführer – SS Lieutenant General
GSA	German Studies Association
HCC	Historic Cryptographic Collection, U.S.
HGS	CID information received from JA
HIAS	Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society
HICEM	Jewish Refugee Society
HMSO	His or Her Majesty's Stationary Office
HQ	Headquarters
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IGCR	Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees
IMT	International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg)
ISK	Illicit Services, Knox
ISLD	Inter-Service Liaison Department – British MI6 in Middle East
ISOS	Intelligence Service Oliver Strachey – decrypts of German radio messages, British
ISOSICLE	subsection of ISOS, decrypts of German SD messages
ISSU6	Inter-Service Signal Unit 6 – SOE in Mediterranean, British
IZL	Irgun Zvai Leumi – National Military Organization, Zionist military underground
JA	Jewish Agency
JAG	Judge Advocate General, U.S.
<i>JHGS</i>	<i>Journal of Holocaust and Genocide Studies</i>
JIC	Joint Intelligence subcommittee, British Chiefs of Staff (COS)
JICAME	Joint Intelligence Collection Agency Middle East, U.S.
JIS	Joint Intelligence Staff, British
KL – KZ	Konzentrationslager, concentration camp(s)
LEHI	Lohami Herut Yisrael – Stern Group, radical Zionist
<i>LRB</i>	<i>London Review of Books</i>
MEIC	Middle East Intelligence Center, British
MEW	Ministry of Economic Warfare, British
MGFA	Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt, Potsdam



*Abbreviations*

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MID	Military Intelligence Division, War Department – U.S.
Mapai	Mifleget Poalei Eretz Yisrael – Zionist Labor Party
MI5	Home Intelligence, British
MI6	Secret Intelligence Service, British (also SIS)
MI9	British Intelligence Organization in charge of rescuing servicemen from behind enemy lines
MOI	Ministry of Information, British
MO4	SOE in Balkans, also Force 133, British
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration, U.S. (also NA)
NG documents	Nuremberg Government, U.S.
NKVD	Soviet Secret Police
NSA	National Security Agency, U.S.
NSDAP	National Socialist German Workers Party – The German Nazi Party
NYRB	<i>New York Review of Books</i>
NZO	New Zionist Organization, Jabotinsky's political party
Ogr.	SS Obergruppenführer – SS General
OKW	Oberkommando der Wehrmacht, Supreme HQ of the German Armed Forces
OKW/Chi VN	Chifrierabteilung of the OKW, verlässliche Nachrichten, reliable news read by the code breakers of the OKW
ONI	Office of Naval Intelligence, U.S.
ORT	Russian abbreviation of Organization for Rehabilitation and Professional Training among Jews
OSS	Office of Strategic Services, U.S. Intelligence Agency
OSS-FNB	OSS bureau in charge of information gathering on foreign nationals in the United States
OSS-R&A	OSS division in charge of research and analysis
OSS-SI	OSS division in charge of secret intelligence
OSS-SO	OSS division in charge of subversive and guerilla operations behind enemy lines
OSS-CID	Central Information Division
OSS-MO	Moral Operation, OSS branch in charge of “black propaganda”
OSUSCC	Office of U.S. Chief of Counsel, War Crimes (Nuremberg)
OWI	Office of War Information, U.S.
PICME	Political Intelligence, Middle East, British
PKP	Communist Party of Palestine
POW(s)	prisoner(s) of war
PPR	Polish Workers Party
PWE	Political Warfare Executive, British
PRO	Public Record Office, British

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*Abbreviations*

PS documents	Paris Storey records, assembled for IMT in Paris, France, in office commanded by Colonel Robert G. Storey, U.S.
PSF	President's Secretary Files (FDR Library)
RAF	Royal Air Force
RFSS	Reichsführer SS – head of the SS – Heinrich Himmler
RG	Record Group, U.S. National Archives
RSHA	Reichssicherheitshauptamt – Reich Main Security Office, combined Gestapo, Criminal Police, and SD organization of the SS and the Nazi state
RSS	Radio Security Service, British
SA	Sturm Abteilung, Nazi storm troopers
SD	Sicherheitsdienst of the Reichsführer SS – Nazi Party Intelligence Office and later Home and Foreign Intelligence Office of the Third Reich
SD Ausland	Amt (office) VI of the RSHA, in charge of foreign espionage
SHAEF	Supreme HQ, Allied Expeditionary Force, Europe
Shai	Sherut Yediot, Hagana's Home Intelligence
SIGINT	Signal Intelligence
SIM	Italian Secret Service
SIME	Security Intelligence, Middle East, British
SIPO	Sicherheitspolizei, Security Police – combined Gestapo and Criminal Police organization of the SS and the Nazi state
SIS	Signal Intelligence Service, U.S. – later SSS, SSA
SO	Special operations branch of the OSS
SOE	Special Operation Executive, organization in charge of subversion and guerilla warfare behind enemy lines, British
SPD	Sozial Demokratische Partei Deutschlands
SPOC	Special Projects Operations Center, British
SS	Schutzstaffel, Nazi Party and Third Reich's race and security order
SSO	Special Service Office, RAF
SSU	Strategic Service Unit(s), successor organization of OSS, U.S.
TAJB	<i>Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte</i> – TA annual for German history
TICOM	Target Intelligence Committee, British and U.S.
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.S.	United States
USAFIME	United States Forces in the Middle East
VfZ	<i>Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte</i>

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VOA	Voice of America
WRB	War Refugee Board, U.S.
WVHA	Wirtschafts – und Verwaltungshauptamt, SS main office in charge of the concentration and death camps
X-2	Counterintelligence branch, OSS
ZOA	Zionist Organization of America