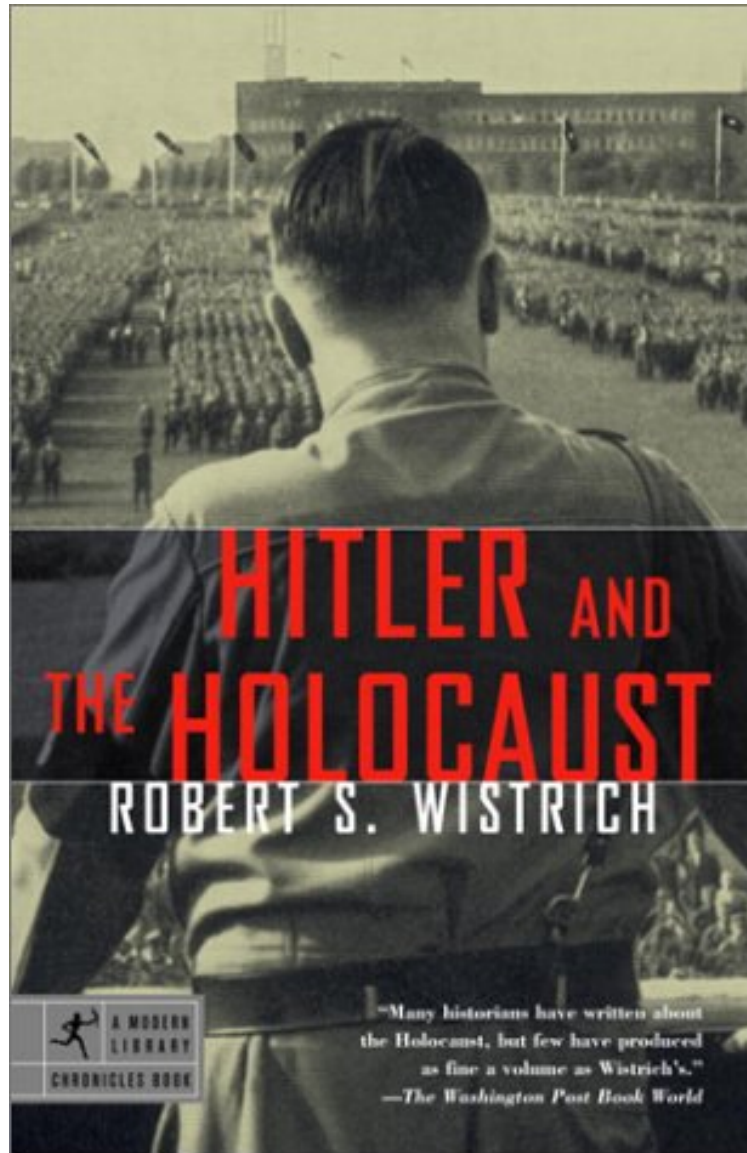


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## Hitler and the Holocaust (Modern Library Chronicles)

*Robert S. Wistrich*

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**Robert S. Wistrich : Hitler and the Holocaust (Modern Library Chronicles)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hitler and the Holocaust (Modern Library Chronicles):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. but I was too depressed and disgusted reading about this sick bunch of psychopaths to finish ...By packrat18 Extremely well researched and documented work. Extensive use of original archived material. Might have given it a 5-star rating, but I was too depressed and disgusted reading about this sick bunch of psychopaths to finish the whole thing. 29 of 35 people found the following review helpful. A Magisterial

SummaryBy Werner CohnWhat makes this fine book such an outstanding achievement is that it combines two qualities that rarely go together: a) an authoritative introduction to a complex subject, suitable for a beginner; and b) a summary of the most current technical findings, suitable for the expert. This book can confidently be given to a high school student, whose knowledge of modern history will, with this book alone, take a qualitative leap forward. And it should be read by those who have already read everything else on the subject, whose knowledge will be brought up-to-date. As always, Professor Wistrich's style is fluent and engaging, and the Modern Library has done its part by producing a physically attractive object. I do have just two little quibbles. It would have been useful, particularly for the beginner, to include suggestions for further readings in a special section. Professor Wistrich does make such suggestions, but they are somewhat buried in his Notes. And for the serious student, an alphabetic list of all the cited references would have made life just a little easier. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommend reading. By scott Fascinating inside the mind of a powerful persuasive meglomaniac. That destroyed 50 million people. Highly recommend reading.

Hitler and the Holocaust is the product of a lifetime's work by one of the world's foremost authorities on the history of anti-Semitism and modern Jewry. Robert S. Wistrich examines Europe's long history of violence against its Jewish populations, looks at the forces that shaped Hitler's belief in a satanic Jewish power that must be eradicated, and discusses the process by which Hitler gained power and finalized his plans for mass genocide. He concludes by addressing the abiding legacy of the Holocaust and the lessons that can be drawn from it. Combining a comprehensive picture of one of the most cataclysmic periods in recent history with contemporary scholarly developments and fresh historical inquiry, *Hitler and the Holocaust* is an indelible contribution to the literature of history.

.com In *Hitler and the Holocaust*, part of the Modern Library Chronicles series, Robert S. Wistrich is less concerned with detailing the "what" and "how" of this century's most infamous genocide than he is in answering the seemingly unanswerable: "Why?" World War II, Wistrich posits, was not only a German attempt to obtain territorial hegemony but simultaneously (and perhaps more importantly, in Hitler's eyes) a crusade against the "mythical Jewish enemy," those people he felt were the source of "all evils"--internationalism, pacifism, democracy, Marxism, and Christianity among them. Jews were nonpeople--vermin, bacteria, a contagion--and therefore "unworthy of life." This ideology was most immediately a reaction to Germany's defeat in World War I and the economic chaos and national humiliation that followed, but Wistrich suggests, this "apocalyptic theology" was only the ghastly tip of an anti-Jewish iceberg that had floated on European seas for the best part of two millennia. The Nazi agenda was aided and abetted, Wistrich goes on, as much by the indifference toward and abandonment of the Jews by most European Christian religious bodies (both Roman Catholic and Protestant) and American and British political exigencies as it was by modern technology. This is a grave, dense book, one almost entirely unrelieved by anecdote. It is, as well, rigorous, adamant, and sure to generate controversy. Though it catalogues many individual trees, many of them difficult to behold, its primary value is to look upon the entire Holocaust forest and to describe that disturbing, grotesque panorama in eschatological terms. --H. O'Billovitch From Publishers Weekly Wistrich, professor of modern Jewish history at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, has masterfully condensed four decades of Holocaust research into an accessible and informative book that will benefit specialists and lay readers alike. This new addition to the Modern Library's Chronicles series of short histories is organized thematically, exploring 2,000 years of anti-Semitism, the context and events that yielded the Third Reich and what differentiates the Holocaust from other 20th-century genocides. As depicted here, the few rays of light offered by the noble actions of Denmark, Italy and Bulgaria are snuffed out by the Protestant and Catholic churches' inactivity, the shameful behavior of Britain and the U.S., and the atrocious actions of Germans and other Europeans, particularly the German allies. Wistrich (*The Jews of Vienna in the Age of Franz Joseph*) continually refers and responds to other Holocaust studies; of particular interest is the controversy concerning "ordinary men" and "ordinary Germans" that erupted with Daniel Jonah Goldhagen and Christopher Browning's studies. Wistrich draws a connection between the infamous Nazi euthanasia program and later developments, and briefly discusses the debate between "functionalists" (those who believe the Holocaust to be an outcome of the war) and "intentionalists" (those who believe Hitler always intended to exterminate the Jews). The general reader will be interested in Wistrich's detailed description of the decision to implement the "Final Solution." The most provocative chapter, though, is surely the last, on "Modernity and the Holocaust." Most commentators (secular and religious) have argued that the Holocaust represents the complete antithesis of Western civilization, but some scholars interpret it as the logical, brutal outcome of Western modernity's bureaucratic, technocratic and rationalist impulse. Wistrich's balanced, nuanced discussion is illuminating. Agent, Andrew Wylie. (On-sale: Oct. 2) Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Organized thematically, this work by Wistrich (Neuberger Professor, Hebrew Univ. of Jerusalem) presents a concise view of the major issues of the Holocaust, from Hitler's ideology to the questions of local collaboration and Allied policy. Although most short studies degenerate into oversimplification, Wistrich is generally fair to the major historiographical issues and usually avoids the polemics so common to discussions about such issues as why the Allies didn't bomb Auschwitz. Some of the most controversial issues are raised in the chapter "Between the Cross and the

Swastika," which discusses the role of Christianity and the Christian churches in the Holocaust. For example, Wistrich is critical of the Catholic Church hierarchy and in particular Pope Pius XII's refusal to condemn Nazi racial laws publicly. Yet he is careful not to condemn all Christians, although he does address the impact that centuries of Christian anti-Semitic dogma had upon events. Although well written, this book does assume a certain familiarity with events. Those who need a quick reference framework can read R.S. Botwinick's short *A History of the Holocaust* (Prentice-Hall, 2001) to good advantage. Recommended for all libraries. Frederic Krome, Jacob Rader Marcus Ctr. of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.