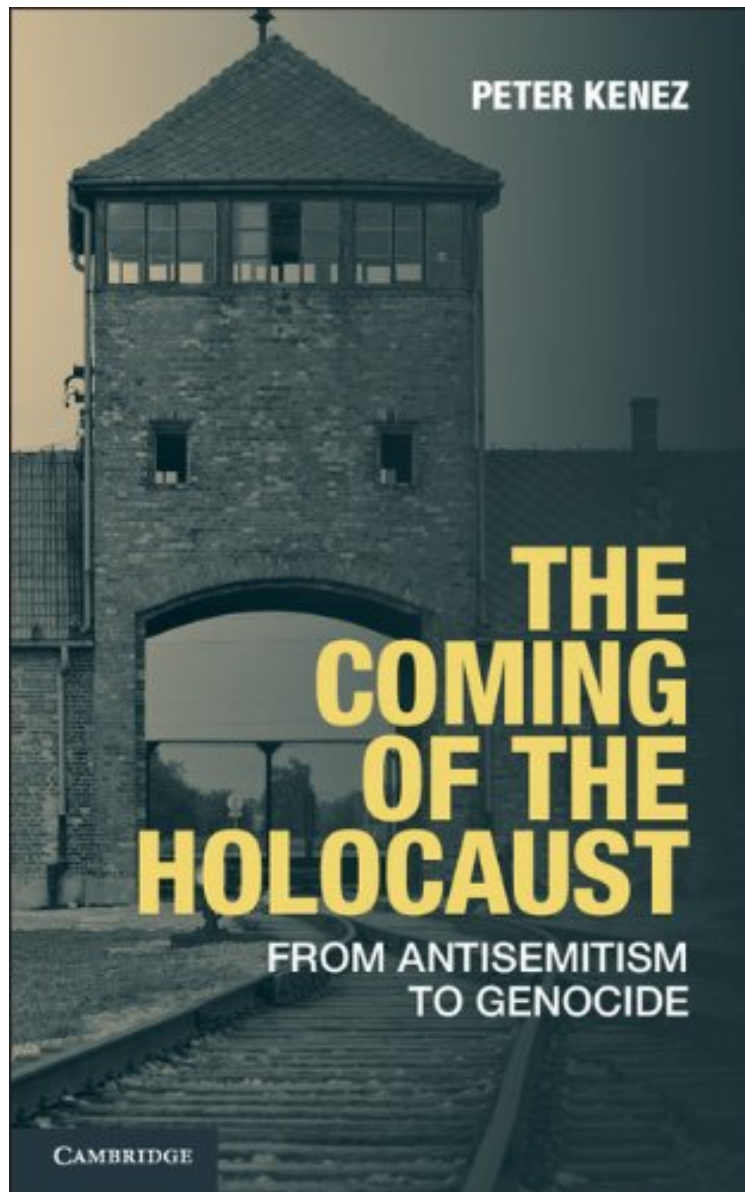


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The Coming of the Holocaust: From Antisemitism to Genocide

Peter Kenez

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The Coming of the Holocaust aims to help readers understand the circumstances that made the Holocaust possible. Peter Kenez demonstrates that the occurrence of the Holocaust was not predetermined as a result of modern history but instead was the result of contingencies. He shows that three preconditions had to exist for the genocide to take place: modern anti-Semitism, meaning Jews had to become economically and culturally successful in the post-French Revolution world to arouse fear rather than contempt; an extremist group possessing a deeply held, irrational, and profoundly inhumane worldview had to take control of the machinery of a powerful modern state; and the context of a major war with mass killings. The book also discusses the correlations between social and historical differences in individual countries regarding the success of the Germans in their effort to exterminate Jews.

"The distinguished University of California, Santa Cruz historian Peter Kenez has taken on the daunting and complex task of explaining the origins of the 'Final Solution.' He does so with deep erudition, perfect moral balance, patient reasoning, and crystal-clear prose. The Coming of the Holocaust will surely become the standard introduction to this painful and important subject." Norman M. Naimark, Stanford University "An extraordinarily insightful and prolific author, Peter Kenez has again produced an important oeuvre, which combines the modern history of Jewish emancipation, antisemitic reaction, and the tragic story of the Holocaust. Although written by a survivor, the style is judicious, scholarly, and, at the same time, highly readable. Kenez clearly proves that the Holocaust was the consequence of the nineteenth-century emancipation of European Jews and of their incredible successes in nearly every aspect of human endeavor. Fear, resentment, and greed motivated the Russian pogromists as well as the Nazis and the East European extreme nationalists. Fortunately, there were also many helpers of the Jews and so, at last, the antisemites triumphed only partially." Istvn Dek, Columbia University "This remarkably concise volume covers much territory with lucid prose. Its overall tone is straightforward and calm, a composure that is especially impressive given the passionate differences of opinion about the Holocaust. Among the book's more prominent traits is its focus on the unintended consequences and terrible ironies of decisions made - by all in involved - in these appalling years: victims, victimizers, bystanders, and those who don't really fit into any neat category." Albert Lindemann, University of California, Santa Barbara "This work by a veteran historian is a helpful addition to the field of Holocaust studies." The Russian About the Author Peter Kenez is Emeritus Professor of History, University of California, Santa Cruz. He is the author of many books, including Hungary from the Nazis to the Soviets: The Establishment of the Communist Regime in Hungary, 1944-1948 (Cambridge University Press, 2006), A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to the End, 2nd edition (Cambridge University Press, 2006) and Red Attack, White Resistance (2005). He is a board member for the journal Revolutionary Russia.