

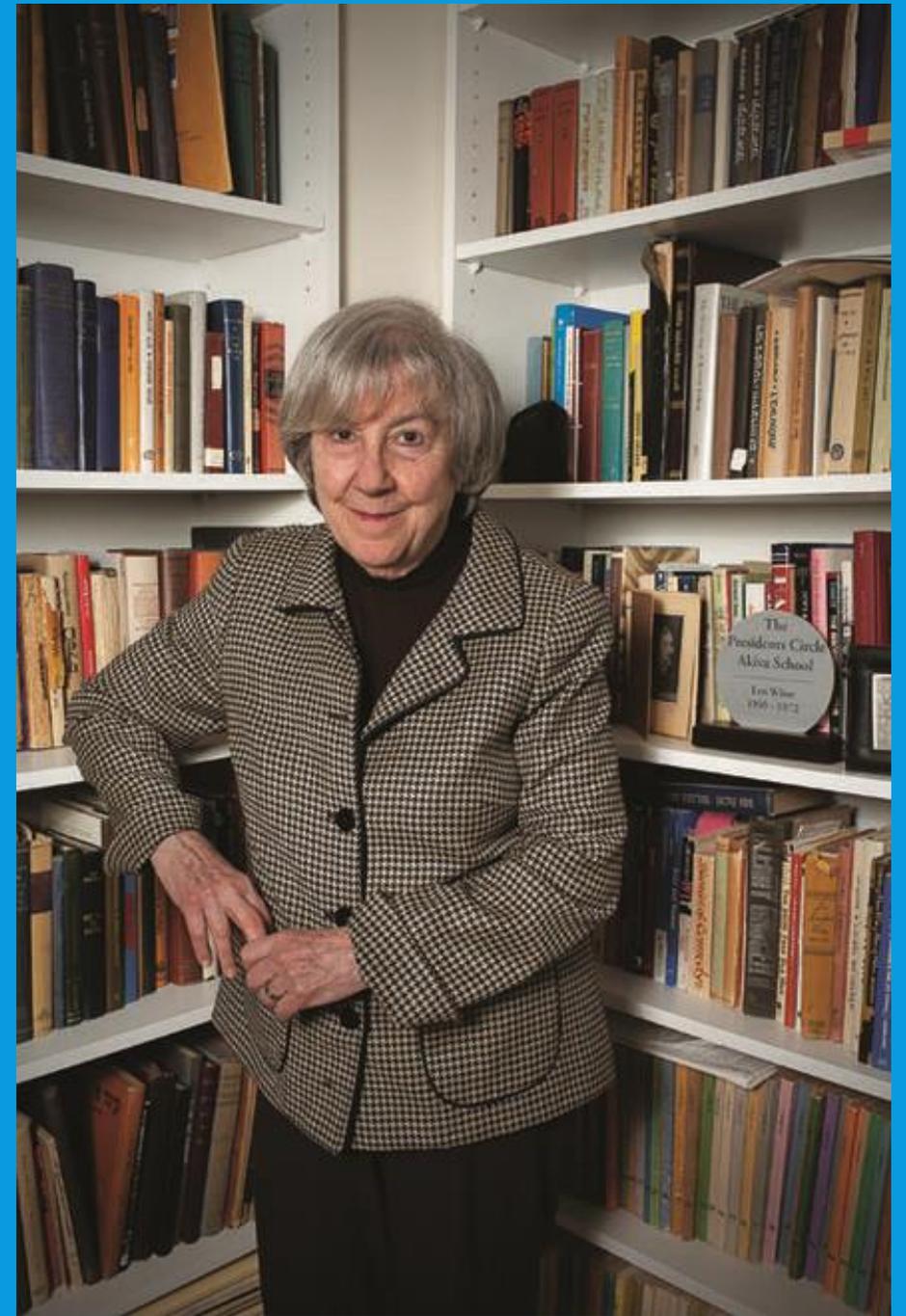
# My Quarrel with Hersh Rasseyner

*The first full English translation of the classic Yiddish story*



**BY CHAIM GRADE**

Translated and with an introductory essay by Ruth R. Wisse



The final shift of scene in the third chapter, the technique by which an author moves his readers from one sphere to another, I consider **one of the most stunning in Jewish literature**: *Nine more years passed, years of war and destruction, during which I wandered across Russia, Poland, and Western Europe. In 1948, on a summer afternoon, I was riding in the Paris Métro. . . .*

Grade had earlier pivoted from 1937 to 1939 with the simple declaration “Two years passed.” **By just as casually bridging the nine years that followed, the years of the *khurbn*, the great destruction of the European Jews, he refuses to accord them a decisive role in Jewish history or Jewish thought.** The Holocaust was a German initiative. The Nazi party planned and executed the Final Solution that reduced the Jews by a third of their number and all but terminated the two millennia of Jewish life in Europe. It cost this story’s two former yeshiva classmates their families, their wives and parents, their friends and native communities: they could never recover any of what they had lost. **But what did it really have to do with them and their *krig*? Grade’s audacious response is—almost nothing.**

**“Nine more years passed” confirms that the same issues facing Jews before the war remained in place after it, essentially unchanged by all that was destroyed.**

“If there are ranks in suffering, Israel takes precedence of all the nations — if the duration of sorrows and the patience with which they are borne ennoble, the Jews are among the aristocracy of every land — if a literature is called rich in the possession of a few classic tragedies, what shall we say to a National Tragedy lasting for fifteen hundred years, in which the poets and the actors were also the heroes.”

Deronda had lately been reading that passage of Zunz....

George Eliot, Daniel Deronda, beginning of Chapter 42

“The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 introduced new elements, turning back the clock of history. The Crystal Night destruction of Jewish property and synagogues in 1938 was conducted by the official Nazi apparatus itself. Even in the Middle Ages, Jews could retain some sort of order, could enjoy some rights, even if those rights were restricted. But under the Nazi regime, the Jews became a classless society....In ancient times, the anti-Semitic scourge was religious. But in modern times it was simply what the sociologist calls ‘dislike of the unlike,’ the hatred of something different. There are many other reasons, rational and irrational, but one fundamental difference between the millennia of anti-Semitism and the manifestations of the Nazi-era is this: Never, not even during the many pogroms, did anti-Semitism result in mass-murder and genocide.”

JTA archives (4-25-61) of Salo Baron’s testimony and cross examination at the trial of Adolf Eichmann

א חורבן (*a khurbn*)

דער דריטער חורבן (The 3<sup>rd</sup> *khurbn*)

א שטענדיק פאָרגראָם (a permanent pogrom)

The Catastrophe

השואה (The *Shoah*)

The Holocaust

The International Military Tribunal was opened on **October 18, 1945**, in the Palace of Justice in **Nuremberg**. The first session was presided over by the Soviet judge, Nikitchenko. The prosecution entered indictments against 24 major war criminals and six criminal organizations – the leadership of the Nazi party, the Schutzstaffel (SS) and Sicherheitsdienst (SD), the Gestapo, the Sturmabteilung (SA) and the High Command of the German armed forces (OKW).

The indictments were for:

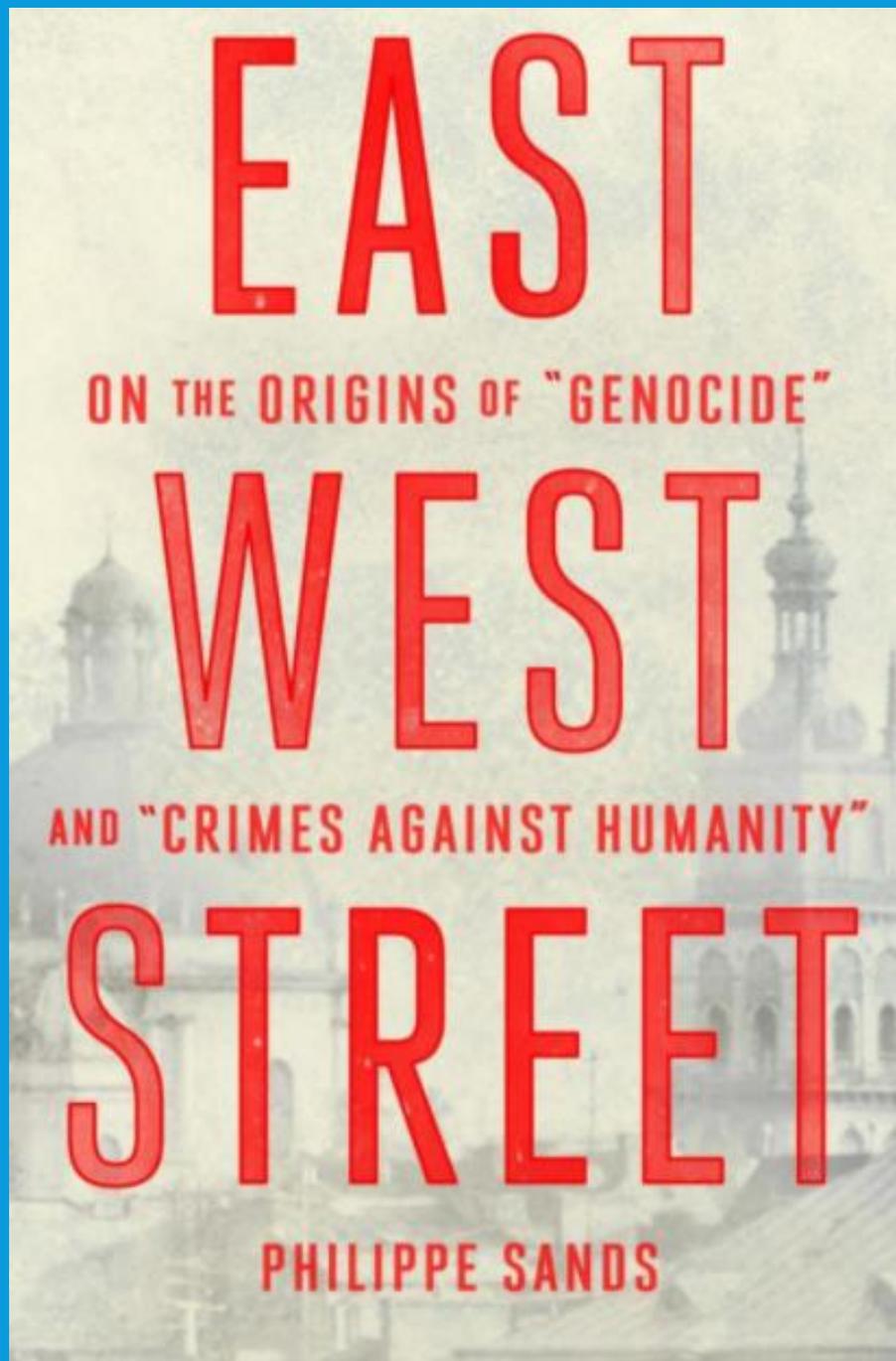
1. Participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of crimes against peace
2. Planning, initiating and waging wars of aggression and other crimes against peace
3. War crimes
4. Crimes against humanity



**Raphael Lemkin 1900 – 1959**



**Hersch Lauterpacht 1897-1960**



Phillipe Sands, (b. 1960), British and French lawyer at Matrix Chambers and Professor of Laws and Director of the Centre on International Courts and Tribunals at University College London

# THE FAITH AND DOUBT OF HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

REEVE ROBERT BRENNER



In your experience did the Holocaust or your concentration camp experience:

Cause you to believe in God

Strengthen your belief in God

Weaken your belief in God

Destroy completely your belief in God

Confirm your atheism

Weaken your atheism

Cause you to believe in an impersonal God

Strengthen your belief in an impersonal God

Other

A. Theologians hold various views concerning God's role and the Holocaust. With which of the following do you most closely identify?

1. God causes or allows tragedies like the Holocaust to test man's faith and to teach him to keep the Torah.
2. The suffering that God brings or permits in this world is compensated for in the world to come.
3. Both of these views.
4. Neither of these views.

B. With regard to the destruction of the Six Million, which one of these is most acceptable to you?

1. It is inappropriate to blame God for acts of man (a man may decide to kill or not to kill).
2. It is not for us to judge the ways of God.
3. God was unable to prevent the destruction.
4. The Holocaust was the will of God (it was part of His divine plan).
5. Nothing can excuse God for not having saved them.

C. With which of the following do you agree most:

1. The Six Million were destroyed not because of sin but because of man's relationship to man; with no connection to God.
2. The Six Million who were destroyed were sinners and were punished for their sins; otherwise God would not have allowed them to die.
3. The Six Million were destroyed because the entire Jewish people sinned and they were the sacrifice.
4. The Six Million were destroyed because of the sins of the entire world and God chose them as a sacrifice.

D. How is God to be understood and what is His relationship to man?

1. Is He a benevolent, omnipotent God except that He does not interfere in the area where man's will prevails?
2. Or is it that while He is benevolent and omnipotent, His ways are simply incomprehensible to and hidden from man?
3. Or while it may be inconceivable to believe that God is all-good, perhaps God is not all powerful.
4. Or is it simply that God does not exist at all?
5. I don't know.

E. For those who perished and whom you knew, to whom you were close in life and whose death you may have witnessed:

1. Were they “holy and pure?”
2. Were they for the most part “good people?”
3. Were they average individuals with no special claims of distinction apart from the fact of their death during wartime?

F. Thinking about the close association of the Holocaust with the establishment of the State of Israel:

1. Did the Six Million die so that the State of Israel could be established?
2. Did the Six Million die to teach Jews to keep the commandments?
3. Both of these reasons?
4. Neither of these reasons?
5. I don't know.

G. If the Holocaust was the only way for the State of Israel to have been reborn, was the sacrifice of the Six Million worth the price?

1. Yes

2. No

	Prior to the Holocaust	During the years of the Holocaust	After the Holocaust	Today	Never
Are catastrophes like the Holocaust God's will?	26%	29%	24%	24%	67%
Do you believe in the coming of the Messiah?	35	28	26	28	65
Are Jews the Chosen people?	49	36	36	41	43
Is the Torah <i>the word of God</i> ?	54	39	36	41	41
Is Judaism a true religion?	64	47	49	61	22
Is Judaism the only true religion?	41	33	32	26	53