



The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry

By Vasily Grossman

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The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry is a collection of eyewitness testimonies, letters, diaries, affidavits, and other documents on the activities of the Nazis against Jews in the camps, ghettos, and towns of Eastern Europe. Arguably, the only apt comparison is to *The Gulag Archipelago of Alexander Solzhenitsyn*. This definitive edition of *The Black Book*, including for the first time materials omitted from previous editions, is a major addition to the literature on the Holocaust. It will be of particular interest to students, teachers, and scholars of the Holocaust and those interested in the history of Europe.

By the end of 1942, 1.4 million Jews had been killed by the Einsatzgruppen that followed the German army eastward; by the end of the war, nearly two million had been murdered in Russia and Eastern Europe. Of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, about one-third fell in the territories of the USSR. The single most important text documenting that slaughter is *The Black Book*, compiled by two renowned Russian authors Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman. Until now, *The Black Book* was only available in English in truncated editions. Because of its profound significance, this new and definitive English translation of *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* is a major literary and intellectual event.

From the time of the outbreak of the war, Ehrenburg and Grossman collected the eyewitness testimonies that went into *The Black Book*. As early as 1943 they were planning its publication; the first edition appeared in 1944. During the years immediately after the war, Grossman assisted Ehrenburg in compiling additional materials for a second edition, which appeared in 1946 (in English as well as Russian).

Since the fall of the Soviet regime, Irina Ehrenburg, the daughter of Ilya Ehrenburg, has recovered the lost portions of the manuscript sent to Yad Vashem. The texts recovered by Ms. Ehrenburg include numerous documents that had been censored from the original manuscript, as well as items that had been hidden by the Grossman family. In addition, she verified and, where appropriate, corrected the accuracy of documents that had already appeared in earlier editions of *The Black Book*.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Outstanding Title! Originally scheduled for publication in 1947 by the Soviet government, the Jewish authors of this volume became victims of Stalin's antisemitic purge following the end of WW II, and the book was forbidden publication... Based on eyewitness testimonies, letters, diaries, and other documentary evidence, the book describes in detail the Nazi massacres at Babi Yar, Minsk, Auschwitz, Treblinka, Vilnius, and other areas of German-occupied Russia and Poland. This new and definitive English translation is a major literary and intellectual event and will remain the indispensable account of the Nazi genocide against the Jews in the Soviet Union, where about one-third of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust were annihilated by the Germans. Of particular use to students, teachers, and scholars of the Holocaust, this book should be included in all library collections. All levels.”

—J. Fischel, *Choice*

"Only the most benighted Holocaust denier could read this volume without flinching. For the rest of us this is history almost too raw for us to digest."

– *TLS*

"You and Transaction are making an enormous contribution to the historical record by publishing the text of *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry* in English."

– Professor Joshua Rubenstein, Harvard University, Davis Center for Russian Studies

"[*The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*] can claim to be the most complete of all: it contains the full "official" text as well as all the materials that Soviet censorship excised in the main accounts of local collaboration. It is a translation of the Russian text published in Vilnius in 1993 (although without the photo-documentation of that edition). In this edition, materials that were removed by the censor are included in brackets."

– John D. Klier, *Journal of Modern History*

"This book details the horrors of the atrocities that the Germans inflicted on the Jews--the humiliation and torture and mass murder, and the horror of their plans to commit such acts against humanity....Reading this book is a harrowing experience."

– *Jewish Currents*

“Nazi Germany and its collaborators murdered at least one million Russian Jews during the Holocaust. Now, more than fifty years after Ilya Ehrenburg and Vasily Grossman compiled the documents—diaries, letters, reports, and eyewitness testimonies—that fill the devastating pages of *The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry*, David Patterson's awesome translation makes this entire testimony available in English for the first time and drives home his contention that “one cannot claim to know something about the Holocaust and know nothing about *The Black Book*.” Thanks to Ehrenburg, Grossman, and Patterson, their dedicated translator, English-speaking readers will see more clearly how the Nazis intended the annihilation of Jewish life to signify the destruction of the very idea of a common humanity that all people share.”

—John K. Roth, Russell K. Pitzer Professor of Philosophy, Claremont McKenna College

“This heart breaking and detailed account of Jewish life, resistance, and death in Eastern Europe is crucial for anyone wishing to study, reflect on, and be informed about the Holocaust. Victims, both those who survived and those who perished, tell their stories; deprivation, torture, the cruelty and deception of the Nazis and their many helpers, it is all here for the reader to take into her/his mind and soul. Some of these testimonies were introduced as evidence at the Nuremberg Trials. This expanded edition of the book, initially published by Ilya Ehrenberg and Vasily Grossman, was compiled by Ehrenberg’s daughter, Irina. Professor David Patterson’s lucid translation and editing brings the nightmare world of the Shoah to our consciousness. For the first time, in English translation, we have detailed access to the fate of Lithuanian Jewry. This is a vital addition to those books about the Holocaust which must be read.”

—Alan L. Berger, Raddock Eminent Scholar of Holocaust Studies, Florida Atlantic University

About the Author

Ilya Ehrenburg (1891-1967) was a Soviet novelist and journalist. He is best known for his six volumes of memoirs.

Vasily Grossman (1905-1964) was a major Soviet writer. His most important novel is *Life and Fate*.

David Patterson is Bornblum Chair of Judaic Studies at the University of Memphis. He is the author of numerous books and articles on the Holocaust, and has won the Koret Jewish Book Award.

Irving Louis Horowitz (1929-2012) was Hannah Arendt Distinguished University Professor Emeritus of Sociology and Political Science at Rutgers University. He was the founder and served as chairman of the board and editorial director of Transaction Publishers.

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Users Review

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Margherita Pettit:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be up-date about what going on or information even knowledge to make these keep up with the era that is certainly always change and advance. Some of you maybe will update themselves by looking at books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know which one you should start with. This The Complete Black Book of Russian Jewry is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and wish in this era.

Nancy Garcia:

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