



The Holocaust in Historical Context: Volume 1: The Holocaust and Mass Death before the Modern Age

Steven T. Katz

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With this volume, Steven T. Katz initiates the provocative argument that the Holocaust is a singular event in human history. Unlike any previous work on the subject, *The Holocaust in Historical Context* maintains that the Holocaust is the only example of true genocide--a systematic attempt to kill all the members of a group--in history.

In a richly documented, subtly argued, and amazingly wide-ranging comparative historical and phenomenological analysis, Katz explores the philosophical and historiographical implications of the uniqueness of the Holocaust. After he establishes the nature of genocide, Katz examines other occasions of mass death to which the Holocaust is regularly compared from slavery in the ancient world to the medieval persecution of heretics, from the depopulation of the New World to the Armenian massacres during World War I, and from the Gulag to Cambodia.

In the first of three volumes, Katz, after setting the groundwork for his analysis with four chapters dealing with essential methodological issues, begins his comparative case studies with slavery in the ancient Greek and Roman world, and continues with such subjects as medieval antisemitism, the European witch craze, the medieval wars of religion, the medieval persecution of homosexuals, and the French campaign against Huguenots. Throughout this investigation of pre-modern Jewish and non-Jewish history, Katz looks at the ways in which the Holocaust has precedents and parallels, and in what way it stands alone as a singular, highly distinctive historical event.

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