In 1968 Albert Friedlander’s anthology *Out of the Whirlwind: A Reader of Holocaust Literature* was published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC, the umbrella organization of Reform Judaism in the United States).\(^1\) Rabbi Friedlander was then teaching at Leo Baeck College, having taken up a post at the Wembley Liberal Synagogue in north London in 1966. Most likely the book was conceived because no existing publication encompassed the diverse sources he desired for a course on the Holocaust, and no single text conveyed the variety of impressions he wished to impart to students. "A whirlwind cannot be taught;" Friedlander asserted in the first line of his introduction: "it must be experienced, and we cannot know what happened during the *Shoah*—that whirlwind of destruction in which Hitler’s Germany killed six million Jews—solely by learning historical facts and figures and scholarly explanations. Facts, figures, and explanations are necessary. But we must also touch and feel and taste the dark days and burning nights."\(^2\) Its title articulated one of the earliest, if not the first application of the term "Holocaust literature", which is commonplace in the third decade of the 21st century. Indeed, the academic world accepts that there is such an entity, and an immensely important one at that, as "Holocaust literature." Albert Friedlander, through *Out of the Whirlwind*, helped to conceive the very notion of such a body of literature, unified by the stigmatization and vilification of Jews under the Nazis, along with the rationale for why it is so vital for understanding the Holocaust.

The initial volume was soon recognized as a highly original compilation.\(^3\) It was republished, in paperback, by Schocken Books in 1976. In 1999, a revised and expanded edition appeared with the UAHC Press. I myself read it for a course on the Holocaust, as an undergraduate at Hobart College, in Geneva, New York, in 1978. It was one of the most important books, along with Hannah Arendt’s *Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), George Mosse's *Crisis of German Ideology* (1964) and Mosse's anthology, *Nazi Culture* (1966), inspiring me to become a cultural historian, with Jewish history and the Holocaust as central concerns.
Although it is not typically good historical practice to rely on hearsay, in this case it may be appropriate. One of the books I reviewed toward the beginning of my career, 1994, was another collected volume on the Holocaust, *Holocaust Remembrance: The Shapes of Memory* (1993), edited by Geoffrey Hartman (1929-2016). That book contains several superlative essays I recommend regularly, and the volume overall holds up quite well. Hartman himself came to Britain on the *Kindertransport* from Frankfurt in 1939, and in a few years made his way to the United States to join his mother. Hartman became a leading scholar of comparative literature, a pioneer of literary theory, and was at the forefront of integrating writing on the Holocaust into the canon. He also helped to found the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale, which preceded the massive (and mixed-quality) Spielberg project, and has served as an extraordinary resource for scholars such as Lawrence Langer, Alan Rosen, and Noah Shenker.

Well, something strange happened in the wake of writing a review of Hartmann's book for a relatively obscure journal. Hartman noticed it and, much to my surprise, wrote to me: "I want to thank you warmly for your review of my collection. All the more so since the book has attracted almost no reviews, and yours was so generous. I guess you're right that I shied away from the theme of postmodernism, but in the introduction I try to engage it via what is called *posthistoire* on the Continent, as well as in my remarks on Baudrilard and the relation of the media to our historical sense." All fair and good. He helped set a wonderful model for me: I learned that it is permissible, even enjoyable, to get in touch with those who have spent time with, and made a serious attempt to understand one’s books. Some of my closest colleagues are those I know from reviewing their books (and manuscripts), as well as those who have reviewed my own books.

I do not recall when this occurred, but I ran into Professor Hartman at a conference, possibly of the German Studies Association (GSA) or the Association for Jewish Studies (AJS), some time later. Among other things we talked about Jewish historical and Holocaust anthologies. His *Holocaust Remembrance* book still had not garnered much attention, compared to his other (mainly well-received) works, which he found frustrating. We discovered that we were in firm accord over the signal importance of *Out of the Whirlwind* and agreed that it deserved far more acclaim than it
had received. Along with Hartman, my Doktorvater, George Mosse, regarded Out of the Whirlwind revealed Friedlander as unequalled for his historical contextualization of literature grounded in the Holocaust. Mosse, too, considered Out of the Whirlwind indispensable for his undergraduate teaching and the doctoral preliminary examinations he administered in the European cultural history field at the University of Wisconsin. Out of the Whirlwind, I believe, remains one of the most significant and useful anthologies not only on the Holocaust, but in all of modern Jewish literature and history.

Perhaps Albert Friedlander himself did not fully appreciate the pathbreaking nature of Out of the Whirlwind. That certainly is the feeling I had when I spoke to Albert. And this sentiment was reinforced by a few conversations I had with his wife Evelyn about the book. Alas, I did not succeed in enjoying the dedicated conversation I had intended, with Evelyn, concerning the origins and editing of Out of the Whirlwind. But the brief chats we did manage, preceding the more formal interview that never materialized, were nevertheless quite helpful. Evelyn, too, maintained that it was an extremely important book, and Albert, although proud of it, did not realize the extent to which it helped to both shape and shake up the field. Evelyn also informed me that she played a substantial part in the book's conception. Indeed, Albert writes in the Acknowledgements: "From the very beginning I had the encouragement and active assistance of my wife, Evelyn Friedlander, who helped in selecting the material." Upon her death Evelyn was recalled as an important scholar and curator in her own right. Before the 1990s, however, as is true of many in that generation, if would be difficult to disentangle Albert’s work and hers. Both of them shared a sensitivity to the tactile and visual that was not the norm for rabbinical or literary-scholarly realms.

Friedlander originally described Out of the Whirlwind as arising out of a largely collaborative effort. In the Acknowledgments he wrote: "I cannot begin to express my thanks to the many people who have shared in the planning and development of this anthology. I owe special gratitude to Rabbi Alexander M. Shindler and his staff, particularly Myrna Pollak, of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, without whose vision, integrity, and dedication this work could never have been completed." Alexander Shindler (1925-2000) was born in Munich, but not from the
mainstream, typical German-Jewish milieu: his father, Eliezer, was a Yiddish poet. Shindler’s family, originally escaping to Switzerland, settled in Washington Heights, New York, which was especially known for its dominant modern Orthodox community. He became a long-term president of the UAHC, when it famously opened "its congregations to unaffiliated Jews, non-Jews and those born of intermarriage, and made room in its pulpits for women and gays". It appears that Ms Pollak later became the director of publications of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, and several scholars since Out of the Whirlwind have expressed their gratitude to her. Horace Kallen, in Creativity, Imagination, Logic: Mediations for the Eleventh Hour, referred to Pollak as "my friendly critic". "Up to its final stages", Friedlander continues, "this book was improved through the helpful criticism of my colleagues, Heinz Warschauer, David Polish, David Hachen, Byron T. Rubenstein, Robert Sperber, Leon Fram, Levy Smolar and Bernard Mehlman."

Perhaps not surprisingly, this was a constellation of outstanding figures who made Judaism a progressive and potent force in the postwar United States. Warschauer, like Friedlander, was a refugee from Germany. He had been vital in Berlin's Jewish youth movement. Having first fled to England, Warschauer was deported to Canada and eventually became Director of Education of the Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto. David Polish, from Cleveland, was a leader of the Reform movement and long-term congregational rabbi in Evanston, Illinois, as well as author of several books. Rabbi David Hachen, who I remember from NELFTY (the North Eastern Lakes Federation of Temple Youth), was noted for promoting "interfaith activities, racial integration and peace." Byron Rubenstein "served as a Navy chaplain with the Marines in the Pacific in World War II" before leading synagogues in the Midwest and eventually Westport, Connecticut. Robert Sperber spent most of his career in public education in the northeast. He is credited with "desegregating the teaching staff of the Pittsburgh school system under a 'conscious preferment' policy to increase the number of African-American teachers in the schools." Leon Fram was a founder of the avant-garde-powerhouse Temple Israel in Detroit. Levy Smolar, who also became a noted scholar, was the President of the Baltimore Hebrew College in the era before Jewish Studies became a part of the established secular university landscape. Bernard Mehlman "began his
rabbinic practice as a United States Army Chaplain at Fort Hood, Texas and Frankfurt, West Germany." Like many in this cohort, he too was committed to fostering interfaith relations.\textsuperscript{18} Although \textit{Out of the Whirlwind} was overwhelmingly the creation of Albert and Evelyn Friedlander, it arose in a moment when a group of highly talented Jewish educators aspired to deploy the literature and history of the Holocaust in order to educate a new generation of Jewish clergy as central to their general quest to create a better world.

It is important to recall that Albert Friedlander spent most of the remainder of his life, since the late 1960s, in Britain. There the religious-institutional environment for Judaism was dominated by the increasingly bellicose United Synagogue, which insisted that only itself and those to its right wing, exclusively, should be respected as Jews. It is not surprising, therefore, that Friedlander's ecumenical and humanitarian political impulses found more fertile ground in continental Europe. I suspect that a detailed, future study of Friedlander's activity in West Germany, later Germany, will reveal that he played a rather large part in fostering a formidable historical shift that is too often taken for granted. After all, the post-World War II accommodation of Jews as a legitimate entity in Europe was not automatically the consequence of the Allied victory over the Nazis along with a simple change of heart on the part of Christians. The ongoing postwar remaking of Europe was complemented by the dogged efforts of the likes of Albert Friedlander, and his wife Evelyn, to build constructive relations with churches, seminaries, museums, student groups, and non-governmental organizations. In part, as may also be seen through the efforts of Gerhart Riegner (1911-2001) of the World Jewish Congress,\textsuperscript{19} the lessening of antisemitism as a pre-eminent cause of the European right (alas, until the recrudescence of Banon, Farange, and their fellow travellers) outside the successor states of Eastern and East Central Europe can be traced the ethnic-religious diplomacy of activists including the Friedlanders.

The integration of Jews into the European religious landscape also was due, in no small part, to the obvious erasure of Jews as a significant presence due to the Holocaust, the containment and then the demise of Communism, and eventually, the spectre of supposed new enemies—such as the imagined threats of radical Muslims and Turkey's entry into Europe. Nevertheless, the bridges built
by Albert and Evelyn Friedlander became part of an infrastructure that has proven to be resilient yet largely unacknowledged. The instantaneous transformation of Nazis into 'good Germans' as depicted by the tunnel vision of Daniel Goldhagen, to the extent that it can be said to exist, grew in no small part out of the long-term efforts of people such as Evelyn and Albert Friedlander.

For the Friedlanders as progressive, cosmopolitan Jews in the United Kingdom in the 1960s through 1980s, like Hamlet, the time for them was "out of joint." And because the field of Jewish Studies itself had barely begun to materialize—and we still do not have a reliable history of its formation—the kind of minds that conceived Out of the Whirlwind did not have many outlets for expression and dialogue. Although this must remain a matter of pure speculation: perhaps Albert and Evelyn would have been more appreciated if the world of academic Jewish Studies had been further developed when Out of the Whirlwind came onto the scene. The book mattered a great deal, to me, and Susannah Heschel warmly concurs that Albert Friedlander's work on Leo Baeck was critical in her own early scholarship.²⁰ It is unfortunate, though, that the exposure and impact of Albert and Evelyn's sharp minds did not extend even further.

This is no doubt part of the background that makes Out of the Whirlwind so remarkable. The work itself begins with a story by Elie Wiesel, “An Evening Guest”. Wiesel’s cross between a folktale and memoir is cast as a brief and straightforward recollection: it relates that, as was his custom for Pesach, Wiesel’s father brought a stranger home for the first night’s Passover seder in 1943. But rather than being grateful and retiring, the stranger upbraids Wiesel’s family for their apparent complacency in the face of their impending demise. Wiesel portrays the guest as not simply like the prophet Elijah, but ultimately as the prophet himself—who was carried away, in flames, among the first transports from Hungary to Auschwitz.

Friedlander's introduction follows. It is relatively short, less than ten pages. It stipulates that the work is not a conventional literary or historical work or collection: it intends to stress how the Shoah was experienced. (Perhaps this helps to explain why the academically dubious Daniel Goldhagen was included in the last edition, as certainly Goldhagen may be seen in this light.)²¹ With its focus on the 'experiential', in a decidedly expansive manner, it was on the cutting edge of
later attempts to capture interdisciplinarity—encompassing the psychological and the social, as well as remembrance, forgetting, and distortion. As we approach the 2020s, the history of “emotions” is all the rage: this was front and centre for Friedlander in 1968. “[W]e can add to our knowledge of ourselves, of man’s inner nature”, he stated, “of that range of emotions moving from love to hate and fear of death—only as we experience the daily lives of those who lived within the hell that was Nazi Germany . . . in the literature of the period it is not only facts but emotions which are transmitted.”

This would be fleshed out only in decades to come by the best of Holocaust scholars, such as Saul Friedlander, Marion Kaplan, Christopher Browning, Alexandra Garbarini, Sam Kassow, and Atina Grossmann.

Concerning the depth and quality of the brief introduction to each selection, *Out of the Whirlwind* has some resemblance to the recent, extraordinary anthology on Nazism by Anson Rabinbach and Sander Gilman, in which the small explanatory essays are gems in themselves. In *Out of the Whirlwind*, after the short memoir/story of Elie Wiesel, we find selections from Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl*; Bruno Bettelheim's *The Informed Heart*; the highly controversial *Jewish Resistance* by Alexander Donat; the *Terezin Requiem* by Josef Bor; *The Last of the Just* by Andre Schwart-Bart; *Herod's Children* by Ilse Eichinger; *Wear the Yellow Badge with Pride* by Robert Weltsch; the *Memory of Two of Our Dead* by Leo Baech; *From a Historian's Notebook* by Salo Baron; *The Holocaust Kingdom* from Alexander Donat; the *Scroll of Agony* by Chaim Kaplan; *Night of the Mist* by Eugene Heimler; *If This Is a Man* by Primo Levi; the *Janowska Road* by Leon W. Wells; *The Town Beyond the Wall* by Elie Wiesel; the *Mission* by Hans Habe; *Blood from the Sky* by Piotr Rawicz; *The Whole Land Brimstone* by Anna Langfus; *Rescue in Denmark* by Harold Flender; the *Deputy* by Rolf Hochhuth; *Yossel Rakover's Appeal to God* by Zvi Kolitz; *Night* by Elie Wiesel; another part of *The Holocaust Kingdom* by Alexander Donat; *The Truce* by Primo Levi; the *Hunter* by Tuvia Friedman; *Forgive them Not* by A. M. Rosenthal; *The Concept of God after Auschwitz* by Hans Jonas; *The concept of man after Auschwitz* by Jack Bemporad; *the Meaning of this Hour* by Abraham Joshua Heschel; *Our Faith in the Secular World* by Emil Fackenheim; *the report of a Final conversation with Paul Tillich* by Albert Friedlander; *This
People Israel by Leo Baeck. The short preface to *The People Israel* may be the most boiled-down version of Albert Friedlander’s own humanistic Judaism, which never privileged Jews or Judaism over other peoples or faiths:

"Every people is a question which God addresses to humanity . . . " and Leo Baeck reminds us that just as man questions God, God also questions man. . . . [this] final section of his last work . . . comes to view history as theology, as God is approached through the total experience of man. Baeck's vision was never crowded. In the poisonous miasma of the concentration camp, and in the post-Auschwitz darkness of our own days, he acknowledged all aspects of human suffering. But he found in them also pathways, and these pathways led to the mystery, to the hope, to the task of man. Aware of the fullness of man's inadequacies, moving through the realm of human experience, Baeck reminds us of the ultimate dimensions of humanity which reach through the Holocaust and encounter the mystery of God. Despite all that happened, many can still act ethically.25

The Epilogue, an unattributed parable, is based on Second Kings, Chapter 2, and also revisits the opening story by Elie Wiesel. It would be easy to occupy an entire article, or a few dozen, on any number of these significant selections, many of which were not yet widely recognized as being of particular importance.

What makes *Out of the Whirlwind* all the more remarkable is the substantial section in the middle, referred to an "Interlude: Songs in the Night: The Art and Music of the Shoah."26 Friedlander writes in the introduction to this section: "At a time when speech is stifled by Darkness, songs live on. When writing fails to communicate, pain smeared on a canvas, crayons scrawled on a piece of dirty linen, or just an actor's gesture can reveal a great deal. . . . The music and art of the Shoah should not be viewed as a direct communication to us, the next generation, to those who were outside the whirlwind of destruction. **Those who suffered only addressed one another.** [emphasis mine]27 This is as profound an analysis as scholarship which was built on decades of subsequent research. "Children expressed their puzzlement of a world that had suddenly
grown dark and fearful,” he continues. “Musicians asserted the vitality of a folk music that was then reaching towards the stage and concert halls, ready to make a significant contribution to Western civilization. Music and art were part of Jewish life. Why should they cease—until the last Jew was dead? . . . "

Friedlander's view of music in the Holocaust as a thing-in-itself would be reflected decades later in the finest scholarship integrating music and the Holocaust, such as in the work of Shirli Gilbert and Lisa Peschel. Although it does not have a place in Out of Whirlwind, Albert Friedlander also was aware that photography was among the arts that can help us to reconstruct and interpret the Holocaust. Frank Dabba Smith, who was advised by Albert on his rabbinic thesis at Leo Baeck College, produced one of the first and most comprehensive scholarly studies on the role of photography in the Holocaust, without excessively focusing on Nazi atrocity pictures.

While Out of the Whirlwind contains no photographs, there is something of a photographic subtext. The artist Jacob Landau (1917-2001) produced the lithographs, which according to Friedlander's Acknowledgements, "so vividly depict the mood of this volume." The illustrations help to make it the exquisitely produced and memorable book it is. Jacob Landau himself was quite a character: "printmaker, painter, humanist and teacher", he "was an artist whose works explored the basic themes of human existence and morality with an insight that was both passionate and indignant." He also, like Albert, had a sharp and saucy sense of humour. Landau was an American Jew, and beginning in 1943, served in the Mediterranean Theater of World War II "which utilized his artistic talents. His service in Italy included work as the art editor, photographer and reporter of At Ease, a special services magazine. After his discharge in 1946, Landau used the G.I. Bill to further study art." At Ease, now hard to find, was in American parlance "cheesecake", as well as in the British argot, "cheeky". Albert and Jacob probably were quite a pair.

Along with its avant-garde aspects, Out of the Whirlwind also was, it seems, beholden to restraining influences in Albert Friedlander's time, despite the fact that he was relatively free to speak his mind as a Liberal rabbi. Since 1963 the institutional Jewish world was still reeling from the controversies arising from the apprehension and trial of Adolf Eichmann by the Israelis. The
Eichmann trial is generically mentioned in Friendlander's introduction to the piece by historian Salo Baron, so it clearly was on his mental map. Hannah Arendt's blistering report, appearing originally in the New Yorker, and later as a book entitled *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, sparked heated arguments and rifts that still have not abated. Neither Hannah Arendt, nor a key historian upon whom she most relied, Raul Hilberg, were given full voice in *Out of the Whirlwind*. Had I had the chance for an extended talk with Evelyn about the making of the volume, this was one of the questions I would have asked: did Albert pull his punches, or might he have been limited in the choices, due to the book's continued association with the Reform movement?

As much as Albert Friedlander's "General Introduction" and his contextual interventions at the beginning of each section exhibit unusual insight, his historical perspective also reveals, in retrospect, how the historiography on the Holocaust has evolved since 1968. For instance, Friedlander suggestions that antisemitism was overwhelmingly imposed on German society after 1933, downplaying the extent to which institutions such as universities and churches were complicit, and already 'Nazified' by 1933, as revealed in the scholarship of Robert Ericksen. Friedlander also repeats the long-held but incorrect assertion about the thoroughness of Nazi records, which we now realize were far from comprehensive, and almost totally bypassed the naming of over a million Jews murdered by the Einsatzgruppen.

I wish to return to a reading list of one of my undergraduate courses in Jewish Studies for my final comment. We had, as a required text, another superb anthology: the *Jewish Expression*, edited by Judah Goldin. I was far too immature and ill-informed to get much out of it—which might also be said of my incapacity to make better sense of *Out of the Whirlwind*. But for all of the erudition and insight packed into the twenty selections of Goldin, which included Gershom Scholem, Solomon Schechter, and a cast of heavyweights, I knew that that was not the kind of history I found most compelling. I wanted the stuff with stories, poems, songs, and pictures—to read and use books that encompassed more than text and felt good to the touch. *Out of the Whirlwind* was, in a word, much more than a book, and at the moment I first encountered it in the late 1970s, there was nothing like it.
I wish to dedicate this article to my friend and colleague, Professor George Vascik of Miami University, Ohio.

1 The name of the organization, since 2003, is the Union for Reformed Judaism.
8 See the obituary by Eva Koppen, at https://www.aejm.org/evelyn-friedlander/ [accessed 17 January 2020].
14 Grant Segall, "Rabbi David S. Hachen served the region’s Reform temples." *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, June 3, 2010.
20 Susannah Heschel to the author, email, 4 February 2019.

22 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 11-12.


25 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 522: From *This People Israel* by Leo Baeck. Translated by Albert H. Friedlander.

26 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 258-287.

27 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 262.

28 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 262-3.


31 See the website of the Jacob Landau Institute: [http://www.jacoblandau.org/theartist.html](http://www.jacoblandau.org/theartist.html) [accessed 17 January 2020].

32 Introduction to Jacob Landau Collection, An Inventory, at Drew University, Madison, New Jersey; see [https://walter.drew.edu/library/scua/special-collections/PDFs/JacobLandauCollection.pdf](https://walter.drew.edu/library/scua/special-collections/PDFs/JacobLandauCollection.pdf) [accessed 17 January 2020].

33 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 133.

34 There is a single, passing reference to Hilberg, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 16-17.


36 *Out of the Whirlwind*, 13.