



Survivors: Jewish Self-Help and Rescue in Nazi-Occupied Western Europe

Bob Moore

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Survivors is the first examination of how more than half of the Jews in Western Europe survived the Holocaust. The widely differing rates of Jewish mortality have long vexed historians, who have traditionally concentrated on explaining this problem through national studies or by using a comparative approach, concentrating on the role of perpetrators, victims, and circumstances. In contrast, *Survivors* emphasizes the factors that helped Jews to avoid deportation, either through escape or by going underground. Taken as a whole, it book provides the first comprehensive study of Jewish survival in Western Europe in all its forms.

Firstly, the book focuses on the escape routes used by Jews fleeing from the Nazis, and the disparate networks that ran them, including the routes from France into Spain and Switzerland, but also the lesser know history of the escape of Norwegian Jewry and the famous rescue from Denmark in 1943. Few of these networks were exclusively devoted to helping Jews -- in fact, most of them helped all manner of people, including Allied aircrew, escaping Prisoners of War, and political opponents. Moreover, they were not exclusively the product of the Second World War -- as Bob Moore shows, many had linkages with resistance in the First World War, and indeed to opposition to state power stretching back centuries.

The second half of the book is devoted to three national case studies (France, Belgium, and the Netherlands) that focus on the interrelationship between Jewish self-help and the individuals and organizations that assisted in hiding them, including the Christian churches. These case studies serve to highlight the very different circumstances and structures pertaining in these three countries and how this had a direct bearing on levels of survival. Separate chapters then deal with the case of child rescue and the motivations of those involved in this most contentious of issues. Finally, the spotlight is turned on cases where Jews were saved, either directly or indirectly, by the Nazis themselves - and on the vexed question of Jews who survived by collaborating with the arrest and deportation of their co-religionists.

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