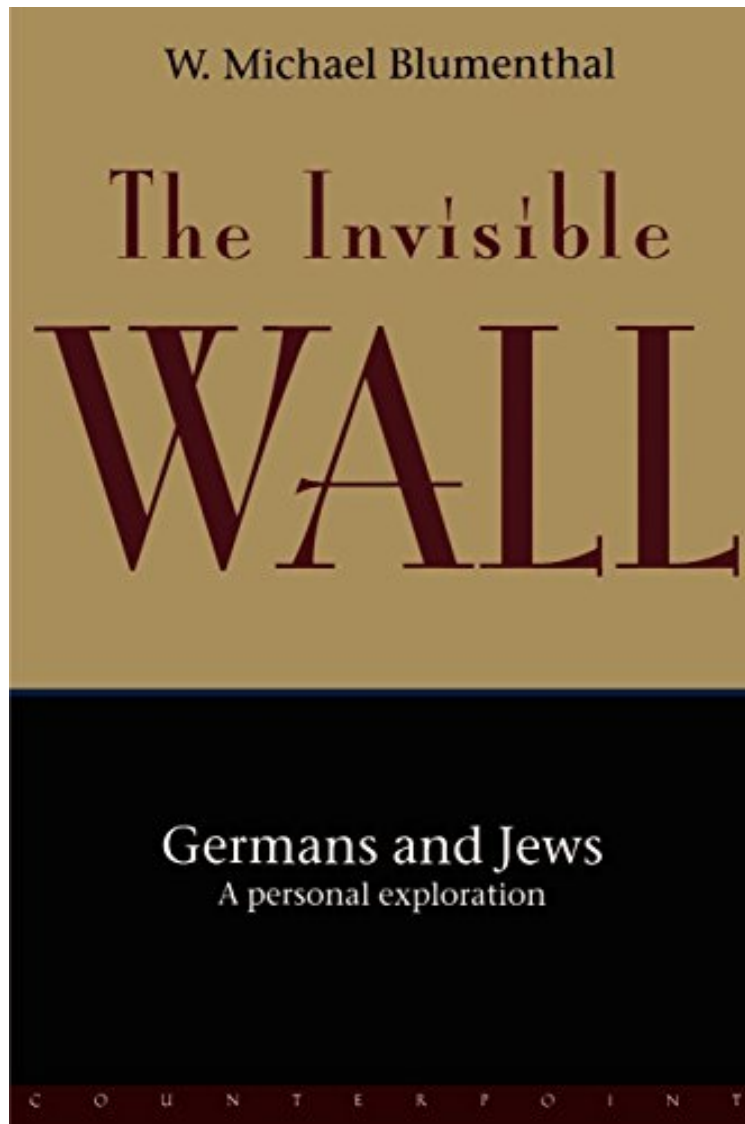


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The Invisible Wall

W. Michael Blumenthal

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After reading this fascinating account -- I loved the interweaving of biography with general history -- I feel I now understand why the Holocaust happened in Germany. Germany looked like a modern country, but was not really part of Western European culture -- it was dominated by a militarized aristocracy, had never developed true representative democracy, and had achieved a very late unification by rallying its people around racism -- the idealization of the German race, and the denigration of the Jews in their midst. The biography of their monarchs shows a line of really sick, sadistic, militarily obsessed rulers, suitable progenitors for Hitler. A veneer of high culture and a strong economy made them look like a modern country, but underneath was a much more backward country, morally and politically.

This text is one man's quest to understand the failure of the German-Jewish relationship to explain the character and attitudes of Germany's assimilated Jews over a 300-year period. Juxtaposing the broad picture of history and politics in Germany against the stories of six of his own ancestors, Blumenthal explores the triumphs and tragedies of Jews of successive generations, seeking the sources and outcomes of the prejudices that separated them from other Germans.

About the Author
W. Michael Blumenthal was U.S. secretary of the treasury in the Carter administration from 1977 to 1979. He was chairman and chief executive officer of the Bendix Corporation and of Burroughs Corporation (later Unisys). Currently serving as president and chief executive of the Berlin Jewish Museum, he lives in Princeton.