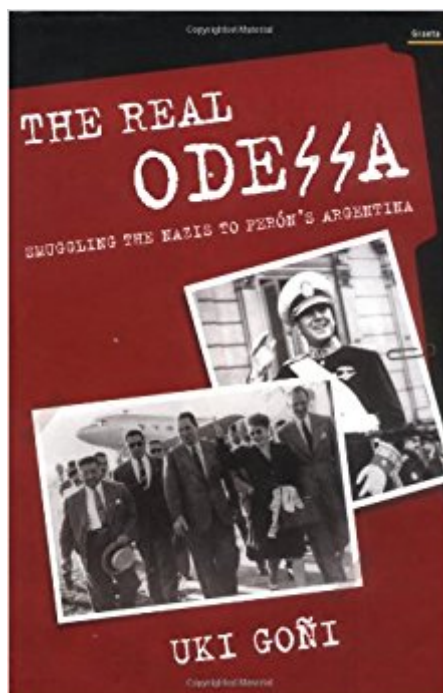


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The Real Odessa: Smuggling The Nazis To Peron's Argentina



Synopsis

It has long been known that Adolf Eichmann, Josef Mengele, Erich Priebke, and many other war criminals found refuge in Argentina. Now, for the first time, a courageous Argentine journalist shows exactly how it was done. This riveting book is the first to map the precise details of the smuggling of Nazis into Argentina, an operation organized with the enthusiastic support of Peron's presidential palace. Using previously unseen archival sources, *The Real Odessa* covers a wide geography — Scandinavia, Switzerland, Italy — and proves the complicity of the Vatican and the Argentine Catholic Church in one of the great postwar scandals. This is a factual, historical version of the events fictionalized in Frederick Forsyth's best-selling novel *The Odessa File*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A remarkable if depressing account...The only bright spot is Goni himself, who has dared to expose these bleak truths." -- Sunday Telegraph
"Documents for the first time how Juan Peron clandestinely maneuvered to bring Nazi and other war criminals to Argentina." -- New York Times--March 9, 2003
"Goni has powerfully exposed the deceits and conniving, and pierced what he calls the 'wall of silence'." -- Sunday Times (London)
"Goni's analysis of the arrival of Nazis and collaborators in Argentina is impressive and convincing." -- TLS
"This astonishing book delineates in gripping detail what was long suspected--and also hints at how much remains to be told." -- Foreign Affairs--January/February 2003
"To work as GoÃf i has...revealing the real Argentina in his journalism, calls for outstanding courage, commitment, dedication and talent." -- Robert Cox, Charleston Post and Courier

Uki Goni was born in 1953 and was educated in the USA, Argentina, Mexico, and Ireland. A regular contributor to American, Argentine, and British newspapers, he has also published two books in Spanish: one on Argentina's 1976-1983 dictatorship and the second, the precursor to *The Real Odessa*, on Peron's relationship with Nazi Germany. Since 1975, he has lived in Buenos Aires.

In the last days of World War II many thousands of Nazis and their collaborators or allies had only one thought, that of escaping justice. In a Europe teeming with literally millions of Allied and Soviet soldiers, and amid often hostile populations over whom they had previously exercised their power with frequently breathtaking brutality, how could so many have made good their escape and live out their lives in relative peace? Uki Goni doesn't have all the answers, but he sure has a lot of them. Goni is concerned in his research with how so many of these malefactors made to specifically to Argentina, more specifically, to Juan Peron's Argentina, and why. To this end he looks at Peron's ambitions and goals, the various networks available to him established both during the war and after its end, and at the type of people he was able to bring over. We see how routes are established (and eventually blocked) through Spain, Denmark and Sweden, Austria to Italy (Genoa), and most importantly of all, through the good offices of the Vatican. Some of these routes and people running them overlapped, others were independent; at times the operation seemed centered in Europe, at other times run by remote control from Buenos Aires. But throughout, there is the money, the support, the direct intervention from the very top in Argentina. Why? Although Schellenberg was to remark that Argentina shared a similar world view with the Nazis, the fact is that Belgians, French, Croatian and other war criminals were defended or helped first, Germans as a general rule not until later. While Peron made an effort to bring in engineers for his jet pilot program, he was specifically looking more for Catholics, anti-communists and not Germans per se. The Vatican shared an interest in protecting Catholics, especially Croations, from deportation back to justice, and had hoped to rely on anti-communist Ustashi elements, for example, to help roll back godless Tito-communism. Goni has done tremendously detailed research, revealing more documented evidence than ever seen before, showing exactly how these various trails led from danger to South America. His work is very well footnoted, his recreation of what took place riveting. Few people, including agents representing Britain and the United States, come off looking entirely clean; officials representing Switzerland, the Red Cross, the Vatican - including Pope Pius XII - and of course Peronist Argentina, are fully exposed. Some of the more prominent war criminals' individual journeys are examined in greater detail - Mengele, Eichmann, Priebke, Bohné and Schwammberger. It is

interesting contrast the very different lives led by some of these types, eg Mengele's relative comfort vs Eichmann's abased destitution in exile. Goni also sheds some valuable light on the way Eichmann was identified in the first place, and how/why the Israeli government came near to welching on their payment of the reward, paying up only 12 years after Eichmann's capture. There is plenty of information not covered in this book; per above, Goni is interested in the Argentine connection, not the escape of any or all war criminals, and as such does not do more than touch on the involvement of governments in Chile, Paraguay, Bolivia or Brazil as it relates to the subject. He touches but little on Skorzeny or Rudel's involvement in the postwar scene, or join the hunt for Martin Bormann or Heinrich 'Gestapo' Mueller. But when it comes to indictment of his own nation, and of the enthusiastic participation of the Vatican and numerous SS or SD or collaborationist free-lancers, this book is definitive and outstanding in every way.

Having spent many months in north-western Argentina around the city of San Miguel del Tucuman I found this story truly amazing. It is also truly disgusting as well to find out how the Vatican assisted in the protection of many Nazis. Very factual and a "must read".

The most damning information that Goni found was that the Vatican had no qualms about helping "good, honest, catholics" from escaping their fates in Europe for what they did during WW2. Hundreds (maybe thousands) of SS and those who ran the 'concentration camp' system were smuggled out through Italy and Spain with the connivance of the Church and the IRC (International Red Cross). Everyone turned a blind eye to those men (like Mengele and Eichman) who used phony names on passport applications that were signed by 'fellow travelers'. In many cases Argentina would allow five or six Jews to immigrate on a ship that carried SS Officers and their families so as to look magnanimous. What's worse is that Pope Pius XII, who never made public statements about the plight of the Jews before and during the war, was complicit in giving protection and succor to the perpetrators of the 'worst genocide' ever committed. In fact, none of those who were later condemned at Nuremburg or escaped, were ever ex-communicated. Monsignor Montini (who was later to be elevated as Paul VI) acted as co- Secretary of State for Pius during this time and met regularly with the groups in the Vatican who were working to help SS and others to emigrate to Argentina. Unfortunately, the Vatican still refuses to open up the Archives from Pope Pius XII and allow scholars to review documentation of correspondence between the Holy See and Buenos Aires during this time. Though many of the Argentine archives relating to those who were smuggled out of Europe were destroyed in 1996, enough is left over in other places that show who

help develop the 'ratlines' that allowed these murderers to escape prosecution for their deeds. Sadly in many cases both the governments of the US and UK assisted in helping these people hide in the hope of fomenting unrest back behind the 'Iron Curtain' or using their scientific knowledge. Zeb Kantrowitz

Everyone has heard about the myth of Odessa, the secret organization with hidden contacts intended to provide sanctuary for the worst nazi criminals after the end of the Second World War. After six years of deep research in Argentina and Europe, Mr. Goetz shows clearly how the actual Odessa operated smuggling nazis from the Old continent to the South American secluded country, unveiling a contact network made by pro-nazi Peron Argentine government assistants, corrupted diplomats, first rescued nazi criminals with new identities back in Europe, far right Europe politicians acting as liaisons and priests of the Catholic Church in the Vatican. Every interview, record, event and character mentioned is cited with its reference source allowing the reader to delve further in every single topic of his choice. Many novels are written about the Nazi war criminals and their secrecy as a marketing tool in order to attract avid suspense readers and make run of the mill bestsellers, unlike those stories, this is an objective and factual work written as a documentary that can be used in any college course as a contemporary history text book. Great job

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