

In Conjunction with



Nazi Germany and the Holocaust



Jewish civilians: copy of a German photograph taken during the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto, Poland, 1943. (Image courtesy of the [National Archives and Records Administration](#). [Pictures of World War II (238-NT-282.)] [Electronic Records].)

Course Highlights

This course features a detailed [assignments](#) section.

Course Description

The rise and fall of National Socialism is one of the most intensively-studied topics in European history. Nevertheless, after more than half a century, popular views of Nazism in the media and among the public remain simplistic-essentialized by equal parts fascination and horror. Adolf Hitler, for instance, is often portrayed as an evil genius of supernatural ability; while the Nazi state is similarly imagined to have held absolute power over every aspect of its subjects' lives. Such characterizations allow ordinary Germans to be portrayed as helpless victims of Nazism, ensnared or coerced into submission by forces beyond their control. Another popular characterization is that German culture itself is fundamentally flawed - that all Germans were basically Nazis at

heart. This schema conveniently erases the manifestations of fascism in other Western nations, and allows Americans and other Westerners to reassure themselves that the horrors of Nazism could never emerge in their own enlightened national cultures.

Syllabus

Description

The rise and fall of National Socialism is one of the most intensively-studied topics in European history. Nevertheless, after more than half a century, popular views of Nazism in the media and among the public remain simplistic-essentialized by equal parts fascination and horror. Adolf Hitler, for instance, is often portrayed as an evil genius of supernatural ability; while the Nazi state is similarly imagined to have held absolute power over every aspect of its subjects' lives. Such characterizations allow ordinary Germans to be portrayed as helpless victims of Nazism, ensnared or coerced into submission by forces beyond their control. Another popular characterization is that German culture itself is fundamentally flawed - that all Germans were basically Nazis at heart. This schema conveniently erases the manifestations of fascism in other Western nations, and allows Americans and other Westerners to reassure themselves that the horrors of Nazism could never emerge in their own enlightened national cultures.

In fact, most of the myths about Nazism can be traced directly back to images that the National Socialists themselves carefully constructed in their rise to power. (And post-1945 political concerns-the need for a "new" Germany to distance itself from the crimes of the Nazi regime; Cold War efforts to equate Nazism with Communism and fascism with capitalism-reiterated these myths.) This class will peel away at the image of Nazism by investigating the rise of National Socialism as a political, social, and cultural phenomenon, and by placing its development firmly within the larger framework of German history.

About a third of the class studies will address the perpetration of the Holocaust, the nadir of Western civilization. We will grapple with the roots of the Holocaust in ideology, culture, prejudice, and even in some of the most mundane practices of modern life. One of the central aims for this course is to think about whether Nazism, and the crimes that it perpetrated, were part-and-parcel of what we think of as "modernity," or were a horrific deviation from it.

Requirements

There will be a final exam.

Sessions

SES #	TOPICS
1	Introduction to Class and Requirements: What is "Fascism"? What is "Nazism"?
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imperial Germany and the First World War • <i>Discussion</i> • Fabri, Friedrich. Short excerpt from <i>Does Germany Need Colonies?</i>
3	Total War and Total (?) Defeat
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revolution and the Weimar Constitution • Remarque, Jünger. "Letters from the Front and Home Front"
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Treaty of Versailles • Economic Shock • Paramilitary Politics
6	Recovery, and Weimar Culture I: Art and the Avant-Garde
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weimar Culture II: The New Woman • Berghaus, Gunter. "Girlikultur: Feminism, Americanism, and Popular Entertainment in Weimar Germany." <i>Journal of Design History</i> (1988). Nanno, Nancy. "Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin."
8	Film: "The Blue Angel" (<i>Die Blaue Engel</i>) (1930, 107 minutes)
9	Countercurrents: Anti-Semitism, Völkisch Nationalism (and the Origins of the Nazi Party)
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fallada, Hans. <i>Little Man, What Now?</i> 1933.
11	The Great Depression and the Polarization of Politics
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allen, William S. <i>The Nazi Seizure of Power</i>.

SES #	TOPICS
13	The Nazi Seizure of Power and <i>Gleichschaltung</i>
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Socialist Propaganda and Aesthetics: The New Mass Media • Film: Excerpts from Leni Riefenstahl's <i>Triumph of the Will</i> and <i>Olympia</i> • The films of Leni Riefenstahl Fest, Joachim. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i>. (Goebbels)
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allen, William S. <i>The Nazi Seizure of Power</i>.
16	The Racial State
17	The Rise of the SS State, and Everyday Life under Nazism
18	Outbreak of the Second World War
19	The Course of the War, and the Eastern Front
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origins of the "Final Solution" and the Machinery of Mass Murder • Film: Excerpt from <i>Die Ewige Jüde</i> • Report of Einsatzgruppe C (1941) Minutes of the Wannsee Conference (1942)
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Browning. <i>Ordinary Men</i>. • Fest, Joachim. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i>. (Höss)
22	Meeting with Instructor: Review of "Der Brand" (Strategic Bombing)
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Defeat of Germany and <i>Götterdämmerung</i> • Allen, William S. <i>The Nazi Seizure of Power</i>. Fest, Joachim. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i>.
24	"Zero Hour" and Denazification
25	Film: <i>Germany Year Zero</i> (1947, 78 minutes) or <i>Somewhere in Berlin (Irgendwo in Berlin)</i> (1946, DEFA), 79 minutes.
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Legacy of Nazism in History, Memory and Myth

SES #	TOPICS
	Final Exam

Readings

Note: Wherever possible, the book citations below reflect the specific editions used in the course.

Books

Fallada, Hans. *Little Man, What Now?* Chicago, IL: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1983, c1933. ISBN: 0897330862. (*Kleiner Mann, was nun?*)

Allen, William S. *The Nazi Seizure of Power*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1989. ISBN: 0140228780.

Levi, Primo. *Survival in Auschwitz*. New York, NY: Summit Books, 1986. ISBN: 0671605410.

Browning, Christopher. *Ordinary Men*. Reinbek bei Hamburg, Germany: Rowohlt, 1993. ISBN: 3498005693.

Fabri, Friedrich. "Bedarf Deutschland des Colonien?/Does Germany Need Colonies?" In *Studies in German Thought and History*. Edited and translated by E. C. M. Breuning, and M. E. Chamberlain. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998, pp. 2-177, 179, and 181. ISBN: 0773483713.

Jünger, Ernst. *Storms of Steel*. Translated by B. Creighton. New York, NY: Howard Fertig, 1975, pp. 300-319. ISBN: 0865273103. (excerpt)

Remarque, Erich Maria. Chapter 4 in *All Quiet on the Western Front*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books, 1987. ISBN: 0449213943. (excerpt)

Fest, Joachim. *The Face of the Third Reich*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1999. ISBN: 030680915X. (excerpt)

Nenno, Nancy. "Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin." In *Women in the Metropolis. Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*. Edited by Katharina Van Ankum. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997, pp. 145-161. ISBN: 0520204654.

Kershaw, Ian. *The "Hitler Myth"*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0192802062.

Koonz, Claudia. *Mothers in the Fatherland*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin, 1988. ISBN: 0312022565. (excerpt)

Peukert, Detlev. "The Genesis of the Final Solution from the Spirit of Science." In *Nazism and German Society*. Edited by David Crew. New York, NY: Routledge, 1994. ISBN: 0415082404.

Spielvogel, Jackson J. *Hitler and Nazi Germany: a History*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2001. ISBN: 0139759964.

Readings by Class Session

Readings Table		
LEC #	TOPICS	READINGS
1	Introduction to Class and Requirements: What is "Fascism"?, What is "Nazism"?	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imperial Germany and the First World War Fabri, Friedrich. Short excerpt from <i>Does Germany Need Colonies?</i> 	
3	Total War and Total (?) Defeat	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revolution and the Weimar Constitution Remarque, Jünger. "Letters from the Front and Home Front" 	

Readings Table

LEC #	TOPICS	READINGS
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Treaty of Versailles • Economic Shock • Paramilitary Politics 	
6	Recovery, and Weimar Culture I: Art and the Avant-Garde (Visual Presentation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fest. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i>. pp. 1-14 (Hitler), 15-26. • Kershaw. <i>Hitler Myth</i>. pp. 14-24.
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weimar Culture II: The New Woman • Berghaus, Gunter. "Girllkultur: Feminism, Americanism, and Popular Entertainment in Weimar Germany." <i>Journal of Design History</i> (1988). Nenno, Nancy. "Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin." 	
8	Film: <i>The Blue Angel (Die Blaue Engel)</i> (1930, 107 min.)	
9	Countercurrents: Anti-Semitism, Völkisch nationalism (and the Origins of the Nazi Party)	Fest. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i> . pp. 15-26. (Hitler)
10	Fallada, Hans. <i>Little Man, What Now?</i> 1933.	


Readings Table

LEC #	TOPICS	READINGS
11	The Great Depression and the Polarization of Politics	
12	Allen, William S. <i>The Nazi Seizure of Power</i> .	
13	The Nazi Seizure of Power and <i>Gleichschaltung</i>	Fest. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i> . pp. 27-38. (Hitler)
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Socialist Propaganda and Aesthetics: The New Mass Media • Film: Excerpts from Leni Riefenstahl's <i>Triumph of the Will</i> and <i>Olympia</i> • The films of Leni Riefenstahl Fest, Joachim. <i>The Face of the Third Reich</i>. (Goebbels) 	
15	Allen. <i>Nazi Seizure of Power</i> .	
16	The Racial State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuremberg Laws (September 1935) • Peukert, Detlev. "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the Spirit of Science."
17	The Rise of the SS State, and Everyday Life under Nazism	
18	Outbreak of the Second World War	Fest. pp. 62-67. (Hitler)
19	The Course of the War,	Begin reading Browning. <i>Ordinary Men</i> .

Readings Table

LEC #	TOPICS	READINGS
	and the Eastern Front	
20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origins of the "Final Solution" and the Machinery of Mass Murder • Film Excerpt from <i>Die Ewige Jüde</i> • Report of Einsatzgruppe C (1941) • Minutes of the Wannsee Conference (1942) 	
21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Browning. <i>Ordinary Men.</i> • Fest, Joachim. <i>The Face of the Third Reich.</i> (Höss) 	
22	Meeting with Instructor: Review of "Der Brand" (Strategic Bombing)	Read Primo Levi. <i>Survival in Auschwitz.</i>
23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Defeat of Germany and <i>Götterdämmerung</i> • Allen. <i>The Nazi Seizure of Power.</i> • Fest, Joachim. <i>The Face of the Third Reich.</i> 	
24	"Zero Hour" and Denazification	
25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film: <i>Germany Year Zero.</i> (1947, 	

Readings Table		
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	78 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • or <i>Somewhere in Berlin (Irgendwo in Berlin)</i> (1946, DEFA), 79 minutes. 	
26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Legacy of Nazism in History, Memory and Myth 	
	Final Exam	

Touro Institute  מכון טורו

In Conjunction with the



Presents

The Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry, 1933-45

Professor Nora Levin

About the lecturer

[Professor Nora Levin](#) is Associate Professor of Modern Jewish History and Director of the Holocaust Archive at Gratz College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Her book [The](#)

[*Holocaust: The Destruction of European Jewry, 1933-45*](#), for which this course is named, received instantaneous and widespread acclaim on its publication by Crowell in 1968. It was chosen as an Alternate Selection by the Book-of-the-Month Club, received the Jolson award of the National Jewish Book Council, and was selected as an outstanding academic book by [*Choice*](#). It has since appeared in paperback in several printings by Schocken Books, and has been widely used as a textbook in college and high school courses on the Holocaust. It is the basic text for this course.

Professor Levin has also written [*While Messiah Tarried: Jewish Socialist Movements: 1871-1917*](#) (Schocken, 1977, and currently published by Oxford University Press in the Littman Library of Jewish Civilization). Her new book, [*Soviet Jewry Since 1917: Paradox of Survival*](#), will soon be published by New York University Press. Professor Levin's articles have appeared in numerous publications and she has presented papers at many conferences and seminars. She has frequently appeared on the lecture platform throughout the country and is also actively involved in Jewish community affairs, particularly in relation to Soviet Jewry.

This course was sponsored by:

The Samuel Bronfman Foundation

Supplementary Reading List: Fiction, Semi-Fiction, and Poetry

Aichinger, Ilse. [*Herod's Children*](#). New York, 1963.
Becker, Jurek. [*Jacob the Liar*](#). New York, 1969.
Berger, Zdena. [*Tell Me Another Morning*](#). New York, 1961.
Bor, Joseph. [*Terezin Requiem*](#). New York, 1963.
Habe, Hans. [*The Mission*](#). New York, 1966.
Hersey, John. [*The Wall*](#). New York, 1950.
Lustif, Arnost. [*A Prayer for Katerina Horovitzova*](#). New York, 1973.
Sachs, Nelly. [*O The Chimneys*](#). New York, 1967.
Schaeffer, Susan Fromberg. [*Anya*](#). New York, 1974.
Schwarz-Bart, A. [*The Last of the Just*](#). Bantam, 1960.
Steiner, Jean-Fraçois. [*Treblinka*](#). New American Library, 1976.
Wiesel, Elie. [*A Beggar in Jerusalem*](#). Avon, 1970.

Historic Roots

Lecture 1

- Introductory Remarks: Definition of Holocaust, complexities of subject, brief overview of material to be covered
- History of European anti-Semitism and particular features of German-Jewish experience as contributing factors in Holocaust:
 1. Long history of Christian attacks on Jews as a deicide people, rejected, doomed to wander and suffer, made Jew disposable
 2. Jews were expelled from most countries of Europe and lived precariously in ghettos, segregated economically and socially, targets of abuse and physical violence
 3. Christian Europe for centuries was conditioned to think of Jews as degraded, evil, suspect, outside the pale – an indigestible element in society that would forever remain foreign, strange, and undesirable
 4. Popular as well as officially-inspired anti-Semitism infected all of Europe to a lesser or greater degree, and lingered long after the so-called emancipation following the French Revolution
- In Germany, complications of its unique history deformed German-Jewish relations with particularly fateful consequences:
 1. Late unification
 2. Absence of tradition of dissent, democracy, middle-class support of political reform – as in France and England
 3. Religious split
 4. Geographical vulnerability, giving rise to fear of encirclement
 5. Late industrialization and late development of capitalism, movements which threatened low middle class elements, landed aristocracy and political conservatives with new, risky economic activities in which Jews played conspicuous role
 6. Jews were frequently blamed for political failures: French victories in early 1800s, German setbacks at Congress of Vienna in 1815, German defeat in World War I
 7. Jews were continuously being tested, from early 1800s on, as to their eligibility for citizenship, civil emancipation, patriotism, and were often deemed unworthy
 8. Superimposed on Christian anti-Semitism, the Germans developed a virulent body of thought called racial anti-Semitism, which made the Jew inherently and biologically incapable of ever being a true German and, more sinister, defined him as an enemy

(To listen to the corresponding Lecture please hold “Control” on your keyboard and Left “Click” on your Mouse to follow link)

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Suggested Reading

Cohn, Norman. *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy*. New York, 1967.

Parkes, James. *An Enemy of the People: Anti-Semitism*. Penguin, 1946.

Pulzer, Peter G. J. *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria*. New York, 1964.

Shirer, William. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. Fawcett, 1962.

Snell, John L. *The Nazi Revolution: Germany's Guilt or Germany's Fate?* Lexington Mass.: Heath and Co., 1959. The Problems in European Civilization series

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Dawidowicz, L. *The War Against the Jews*. pp. 29-62.

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 3-27.

1. The definition of Holocaust as referring to the unique and singular annihilation of the Jews has been expanded to include other victims. What are the arguments for each definition?
2. Enumerate the anti-Jewish measures adopted by Hitler that were borrowed from earlier Christian anti-Semitic antecedents.
3. How did the absence of democratic traditions in German history influence events in Germany after 1933?
4. In what ways was the Emancipation process in Germany incomplete?
5. What was the Volkisch movement and why did it play such an important role in derogating Jews?
6. Why were ideas of Aryan racial superiority more readily accepted in Germany than in France or England?

Hitler and the Failure of the Weimar Republic

Lecture 2

1. Historic forces notwithstanding, the Holocaust would have been impossible without Hitler, whose hatred of the Jews was a central, elemental drive ultimately leading to the mass destruction of European Jewry. Even so, his obsession to cleanse Germany – and then the world – of Jews needed a set of historic conditions that propelled him to power in Germany:
 1. Hitler's experiences in Vienna and in World War I crystallized his fanatical hatred of Jews

2. His obsession with German racial purity may have had its origins in the dubious legitimacy of his parents' marriage and his father's illegitimate birth
3. His tenacity in holding together the rag-tag elements of the German Workers' Party (which became the National Socialist Party) despite the aborted putsch in 1923, was a striking indication of his political ambitions and singlemindedness, despite earlier failures
4. Hitler's opportunity came during the declining years of the Weimar Republic:
 1. The Republic was associated with Germany's defeat in World War I
 2. It never succeeded in establishing popular support
 3. Violations of the Versailles Treaty were not fully prosecuted
 4. The Republic could not cope with inflation, the myth of the "stab in the back," the depression of the early thirties, the threat of bolshevism, or the political fragmentation
 5. Army elements and industrialists began to look increasingly to Hitler to restore Germany's place in the sun and solve Germany's internal unrest
 6. The deadly conflict between Communists and Socialists in Germany and the increasing street violence played into Hitler's hands and led millions of Germans to look to him as Germany's savior
 7. Five national elections in 1932 created untenable national frustration and fear
 8. Acceptance of Hitler as Chancellor on January 30, 1933, created illusion that he had come to power constitutionally and would adhere to constitutional process

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Suggested Reading

Halperin, S. William. *Germany Tried Democracy: A Political History of the Reich from 1918 to 1933*. New York, 1965.

Hitler, Adolf. *Mein Kampf*. Trans. Ralph Manheim. Boston, 1943.

Mosse, George L. *Germans and Jews*. New York, 1970.

Nicholls, A. J. *Weimar and the Rise of Hitler*. 2nd ed. New York, 1979.

Vogt, Hannah. *The Burden of Guilt*. New York, 1964.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Bullock, A. *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*. pp. 187-250.

or

Shirer, W. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. pp. 120-262.

and

Snell, John L. *The Nazi Revolution*. pp.15-29.

or

Snyder, Louis L. *Nationalist Germany*. pp. 1-24, and 78-98.

1. What were the serious problems facing the Weimar Republic after World War I?
2. What elements and traditions of pre-war German life remained after the Republic was created, and how did they obstruct democracy?
3. What forces in modern life that frightened many Germans did the Jew come to symbolize? How were the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* used to blame Jews for the post-war crises?
4. How did the Leipzig Trial in 1930 increase Hitler's popularity?
5. How do you account for the great political gains made by the Nazis in the national election of 1930?
6. How did General von Schleicher and von Papen misjudge Hitler's political shrewdness and single-minded ambition in their maneuvers in 1932?
7. Why did not the large Communist and Social Democratic parties in Germany unite and create an anti-Nazi front in the early 1930's?
8. Discuss the basic ideas Hitler had about Jews and his experiences in Vienna, which were of great importance in shaping them.
9. Why did so many Germans, including Jews, believe that the Hitler regime would not last very long?

The Consolidation of Hitler's Dictatorship and the First Phase of Persecution of Jews, 1933-38

Lecture 3

- Nazi-instigated Reichstag fire on February 28, 1933, leading to emergency decree abolishing constitutional guarantees of individual freedoms
- Unleashing of Brown Terror, February 28-March 5, 1933, prior to new elections
- Passage of Enabling Act, destroying power of Reichstag, and Hitler's assumption of Presidency, making him Commander-in-Chief of Army
- Destruction of all political opposition, trade unions and opposition press
- Creation of first concentration camps for political and clerical opposition
- Anti-Jewish boycott, April 1, 1933, and application of "Aryan paragraph"

- Support of Army reassured by purge of S.A. (Storm Troops) in June, 1934, at same time that Heinrich Himmler became head of Prussian Gestapo
- Jews isolated, stigmatized as state enemy; Jewish "influence" in mathematics, science, literature condemned
- Emergence of Himmler and Heydrich and S.S. and S.D. terror-structures
- Nuremberg Laws of 1935 fatefully defined a Jew, leading to expropriation, ghettoization, and finally destruction
- Lacking a national body to represent German Jews vis-à-vis the government, a *Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden* was established, with Rabbi Leo Baeck as head
- Steady decline of German Jewish morale and hope, in the face of escalating persecution

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Suggested Reading

Allen, William Sheridan. *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935*. Chicago, 1965.

Crankshaw, Edward. *Gestapo: Instrument of Tyranny*. New York, 1956.

Dicks, Henry V. *Licensed Mass Murder*. London, 1972.

Schoenbaum, David. *Hitler's Social Revolution: Class and Status in Nazi Germany*. New York: Norton, 1980.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Shirer, W. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*. pp. 263-381.

or

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 59-73.

and

Dawidowicz, L. *The War Against the Jews*. pp. 93-116.

or

Snyder, L. *Nationalist Socialist Germany*. pp. 25-43, and pp. 99-128.

1. How did the Nazis exploit the burning of the Reichstag on February 27, 1933 to advance their cause?

2. What was the significance of the Enabling Act in leading to Hitler's dictatorship?
3. What were the chief systems of terror introduced by Hitler?
4. Why did Hitler drastically purge the SA (Storm Troop movement) and weaken it on June 30, 1934?
5. How did German Jews, generally speaking, react at first to the Hitler regime?
6. Analyze the effects of the anti-Jewish boycott of April 1, 1933, and the "Aryan paragraph"?
7. How did Rabbi Leo Baeck help to strengthen the spirit of German Jews as they faced Nazi persecutions?
8. What were some of the inconsistencies in Nazi policy in the 1930s, up to November 1938, that confused German Jews about their ultimate fate and led many of them to think there would still be a future for them in Germany?

1938: The Fateful Year

Lecture 4

- Hitler's determination to seize Austria and go to war to obtain Czechoslovakia
- Intensified persecution of Jews: confiscation of Jewish property, destruction of several synagogues in June, compulsory addition of "Israel" and "Sarah" to names
- Failure of Evian Refugee Conference, July 1938; Hitler's victory at Munich
- Deportation of former Polish (Jewish) nationals to Poland in October, followed by slaying of German official in Paris by Herschel Grynszpan, and unleashing of Kristallnacht, November 9-10
- Imposition of one billion reichsmarks "atonement fine" on Jews and mass arrests of Jews
- Eichmann in Austria after Anschluss, giving Gestapo full control of Jewish "emigration"
- Threat by Hitler to destroy all Jews in Europe "if international Jewry in Europe and elsewhere should involve the European peoples in a new world war."

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Suggested Reading

Baker, Leonard. *Days of Sorrow and Pain: Leo Baeck and the Berlin Jews*. New York, 1978.

Kochan, Lionel. *Pogrom: 10 November 1938*. London, 1957.

Schleunes, Karl L. *The Twisted Road to Auschwitz: Nazi Policy Toward German Jews, 1933-1939*. Urbana, Ill., 1970.

Wighton, Charles. *Heydrich: Hitler's Most Evil Henchman*. Philadelphia, 1962.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Dawidowicz, L. *The War Against the Jews*. pp. 117-142.

or

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp.74-112.

and

Morse, A. D. *While Six Million Died*. pp.199-240.

1. Why was it important for German Jewry to create a representative national body, the *Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden*?
2. What were the provisions of the Nuremberg Laws of 1935, and why are they considered the first step leading to the "Final Solution"?
3. How did Hitler's decision to absorb Austria and Czechoslovakia affect the conditions of life for Jews in those countries and in Germany?
4. What were the results of the refugee conference at Evian in 1938?
5. Describe Western reactions to the *Kristallnacht* pogroms November 9-10, 1938?
6. What policy decisions affecting Jews were made by Hitler after *Kristallnacht*?
7. What was the significance of putting Eichmann in charge of "Emigration Offices" in Berlin, Vienna, and Prague?

The Jewish Struggle to Leave Europe

Lecture 5

(To listen to the corresponding Lecture please hold "Control" on your keyboard and Left "Click" on your Mouse to follow link)

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-
- Panic emigration of Jews in 1933 – 37,000 Jews left Germany in an unplanned, unorganized exodus
 - Jewish agencies worked with Weimar left-over civil servants from 1934 to 1937 in programs of vocational retraining. By the end of 1937, 25 percent of German Jewry had left the country, many to France and England, some to Palestine, but few to the U.S
 - American immigration policy unyielding: native anti-Semitism, depression, control of Congress by conservatives, weakness of American Jewry; anti-Jewish bias of American consuls
 - Failure of dozens of resettlement schemes: British Guiana, Rhodesia, Bolivia, Ecuador, etc.

- Efforts of *Mossad* agents to make deals with Gestapo to allow Jews to leave – for a price – while Gestapo at same time mounted immense anti-Semitic campaign abroad
- Failure of Evian conference, July 1938
- Gestapo control of emigration after conquest of Austria; ruthless treatment of Austrian Jews, marking end of orderly emigration
- British White Paper of May 1939 and hounding of ships carrying Jews struggling to escape from Europe
- Except for refuge in Shanghai, under Japanese control, escape from Europe was virtually impossible after German invasion of Poland Sept. 1, 1939, and spreading war

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Suggested Reading

Feingold, Henry. *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-45*. New Brunswick, N.J., 1970.

Friedman, Saul S. *No Haven for the Oppressed*. Detroit, 1973.

Frier, Recha. *Let the Children Come: The Early History of Youth Aliya*. London, 1961.

Habas, Bracha. *The Gate-Breakers*. New York, 1963.

Kimche, Jon. *The Secret Roads: The "Illegal" Migration of a People*. London, 1954.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 124-146.

Morse, A. *While Six Million Died*. pp. 130-149, 241-269.

1. Why was the dismissal of Hjalmar Schact in January 1939 of fatefull importance to the Jews of Europe?
2. How did the Transfer Agreement (*Ha-avara*) save the lives of many German Jews? Why has it been criticized? How do you react to this criticism?
3. How did American emigration officials effectively prevent German Jews from emigrating to the United States?
4. What factors in American society in the 1930's militated against a liberal immigration policy toward Jewish refugees?

5. What success did the *Mossad le Aliyah Bet* have in rescuing Jews in the later 1930's?
6. Discuss the British White Paper of 1939 and its effect on the Jewish emigration struggle.
7. How do you interpret the Japanese willingness to allow Jews to find a haven in Shanghai in 1939-40?

Ghettoization of Polish Jews

Lecture 6

- Heydrich's directive of September 21, 1939 ordering ghettoization of Polish Jews: evacuation of all Jews to points near railheads, creation of Jewish Councils to foster illusion of Jewish autonomy, and seizure of Jews for forced labor
- Deliberate Nazi choice of Poland as laboratory for process of physical and psychological attrition, entrapment, and ultimate destruction
- Perversion of Jewish Councils for Nazi ends: early positive achievements, gradual distortion to serve Nazi purposes, inability of early Councils to discern ultimate Nazi design
- Example of ghetto in Warsaw as prototype: population, housing, economy; social services, tenant's committees, clandestine schools, cultural programs
- Varying types of ghetto-experiences: Lodz, Bialystock, Vilna – making generalizations inaccurate
- Tenacity of writers such as Ringelblum and Kaplan in keeping diaries in order to record the events of daily life for posterity
- Nazi-ordered labor camps set up in Poland, in which first gassing experiments were made; establishment of Auschwitz, February 1940

(To listen to the corresponding Lecture please hold “Control” on your keyboard and Left “Click” on your Mouse to follow link)

[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

Dobroszyscki, Lucian. *The Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto*. New Haven, Conn., 1984.
Kaplan, Chaim. *A Scroll of Agony*. New York, 1964.
Meed, Vladka. *On Both Sides of the Wall: Memoirs from the Warsaw Ghetto*. Israel: Ghetto Fighter's House, 1972.
Tushnet, Leonard. *The Pavement of Hell*. St. Martin's Press, 1974.
Hilberg, Raul, ed. *The Warsaw Ghetto of Adam Czerniakow: Prelude to Doom*. New York, 1979.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Dawidowicz, L. *The War Against the Jews*. pp. 327-420.

and

Ringelblum, E. *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto*. pp. 61-168.

or

The Warsaw Diary of Adam Czerniakow. pp. 304-385.

1. What were the sinister implications involved in Heydrich's order of September 21, 1939?
2. Why was Poland to become the Nazi laboratory for the physical annihilation of Europe's Jews?
3. What were some of the traditional *kehilla* functions the Jewish Councils were expected to perform?
4. In what ways did the Jewish Councils unwittingly become instruments of Nazi policy? What were some of the painful dilemmas they experienced?
5. How do you evaluate Rumkowski's policy that work was the Lodz Ghetto's salvation?
6. What were some of the underground educational and cultural activities the ghettos engaged in?
7. How did the "labor camps" in the Lublin Reservation, set up by Odilio Globocnik, lead irreversibly to death centers?

Nazi Invasion of Soviet Union and Official Decision to Destroy Europe's Jews

Lecture 7

- Analyze linkage between evolution of "Final Solution" and invasion of Russia
- Ignorance of Russian Jews re: persecution of Jews in western and central Europe, as a result of Hitler-Stalin Pact
- Unleashing of *Einsatzgruppen*, to accompany German army of invasion and murder Jews in Soviet Union
- Profile of Otto Ohlendorf, commander of *Einsatzgruppe D*, and summary of his testimony at Nuremberg
- Mass massacre at Babi Yar; inability of Russian Jews today to publicly commemorate massive losses during World War II
- Escalation of war paralleled escalation of destruction process, leading to formal and official decision coded "The Final Solution" at Wannsee, January 20, 1942

(To listen to the corresponding Lecture please hold "Control" on your keyboard and Left "Click" on your Mouse to follow link)

[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

Gilboa, Yehoshua. *The Black Years of Soviet Jewry*. New York, 1971.
Hautzig, Esther. *The Endless Steppe; Growing up in Siberia*. New York, 1968.
Kogon, Eugene. *The Theory and Practice of Hell*. New York: Octagon, 1973.
Kuznetzov, Anatoly. *Babi Yar*. New York, 1967.
Musmanno, Michael. *The Eichmann Kommandos*. Philadelphia, 1961.
Sereny, Gitta. *Into That Darkness: From Mercy Killing to Mass Murder*. New York, 1974.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Ehrenburg, I., and V. Grossman, eds. *The Black Book*. pp. 3-91.
Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 234-287.

1. How do you connect the evolution of the "Final Solution" with the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941?
2. Why were Soviet Jews totally unprepared for the murderous Nazi assault upon them?
3. What missions were given to the *Einsatzgruppen*?
4. Like Ohlendorf, many of the mass killers in the *Einsatzgruppen* were well-educated. How were they conditioned to murder without remorse?
5. Why were so many Jews in Eastern Poland deported to Siberia in the period from August 1939 to June 1941? What was their fate?
6. Why is Babi Yar of particular significance in Soviet Jewish history?
7. Who attended and what was decided at Wannsee on January 20, 1942?

Jewish Resistance

Lecture 8

- Singular conditions under which Jews resisted: isolation, lack of arms, lack of support from Allies, absence of government or central directing force; whereas other resistance

movements in Europe were bolstered by Allies, governments-in-exile, arms, and aid from nationals

- Jewish resistance not valued by Allies for political, psychological, or military reasons
- Falsity of notion that Jews went like sheep to slaughter – without overstating case for Jewish resistance
- Need to understand diversity of Jews and their diverse attitudes toward Judaism, death; survival, and need to understand deceptions of Nazis which blunted or lulled Jewish perception of Nazi designs
- Decision to resist physically not aimed at victory over Nazis; decision came when some Jews began to understand what their ultimate fate would be; wanted "to die with honor"
- Revolts in Warsaw, Bialystok, Minsk, Crakow, Vilna, Kovno, Bendin and other ghettos, as well as extermination centers – Sobibor, Auschwitz, and Treblinka
- Jewish partisan units most successful in areas under Russian control; other efforts were generally wiped out by Germans, Poles, or Ukrainians
- Struggle to retain human communities, conduct schools and religious services and cultural activities – forms of spiritual and intellectual resistance

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[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

Barkai, Meyer, ed. *The Fighting Ghettos*. Philadelphia, 1962.

Hannah Senesh: *Her Life and Diary*. Schocken, 1973.

Mark, Ber. *Uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto*. Schocken, 1975.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Suhl, Y. *They Fought Back*. pp. 1-6, 7-50, 92-127.

Syrkin, M. *Blessed Is The Match*. pp. 133-265.

1. What were the problems and obstacles facing Jewish resistance fighters which other resistance forces did not have to face?

2. Why did most Jewish resistance efforts begin only after it was realized that Jews were doomed no matter what they did?
3. Why did it take so long for many Jews to realize that the Nazis had planned death for all of them?
4. Explain why anti-Nazi resistance did not slow down the deportations.
5. What were the experiences of Jews trying to fight as partisans in the woods and forests?
6. How did Nazi deceptions and psychological warfare disable Jews from active resistance?
7. Why was there no Allied help to the Jewish ghetto and partisan fighters?
8. Defend or refute the proposition that underground religious and cultural activity were also forms of resistance.

Deportations from Western Europe: Scandinavian Countries, France, Holland, Belgium, and Germany

Lecture 9

- Specific factors shaping the ultimate fate of Jews in these countries: degree of Nazi control, native collaboration, relations of non-Jewish nationals to Jews, presence of foreign Jews, resistance efforts
- Salient features of each deportation process

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[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

Boehm, Eric. *We Survived: The Stories of the Hidden and the Hunted of Nazi Germany*. New Haven, 1949.

Frank, Anne. *The Diary of a Young Girl*. Press Pocket Books, 1964.

Gross, Leonard. *The Last Jews in Berlin*. New York, 1982.

Hillesum, Etty. *An Interrupted Life: The Diaries of Etty Hillesum*. New York, 1983.

Leboucher, Francois. *The Incredible Mission of Father Benoit*. New York, 1969.

Lowrie, Donald A. *The Hunted Children* New York. 1963.

Marrus, Michael, and R. O. Paxton *Vichy France and the Jews*. New York, 1981.

Presser, Jacob. *Breaking Point*. New York, 1959.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Gilbert, M. *Final Journey: The Fate of the Jews in Nazi Europe*. London, 1979. pp. 9-41, 126-167.

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 389-458, 469-476.

1. What were the major factors that determined the scope and totality of the Nazi plan to kill the Jews of Europe?
2. In what respects is the story of the rescue of Danish Jews unique in Holocaust history?
3. What made Dutch and Dutch-Jewish resistance to the Nazis virtually impossible?
4. What were some of the elements in the story of Belgian Jewry that made it possible for half or more to survive the Nazi assault?
5. How do you account for the French policy of giving up its foreign-born Jews for deportation while refusing to deport French-born Jews?
6. What was the fate of German Jews deported "to the East" in the fall and winter of 1941?
7. What were some of the legalistic problems facing the Nazis at the Wannsee Conference in their efforts to define who was Jewish and who was German?

Deportations from Central and Southern Europe: Austria, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Greece, and Yugoslavia

Lecture 10

(To listen to the corresponding Lecture please hold "Control" on your keyboard and Left "Click" on your Mouse to follow link)

[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

Friedlander, Albert H. *Leo Baeck: Teacher of Theresienstadt*. New York, 1968.

Katz, Robert. *Black Sabbath*. New York, 1969.

Lederer, Zdenek. *Ghetto Theresienstadt*. New York, 1983.

Schoenberger, Gerhard. *The Yellow Star*. Bantam, 1979.

Volavkova, Hana, ed. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. Schocken, 1978.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 476-506; 527-547; 459-468; 507-526.

Zuccotti, S. *The Italians and the Holocaust*. pp. 52-165.

1. How did the Nazis disguise the nature of Theresienstadt? What were the actual conditions there?
2. How do you account for the remarkable cultural activity that took place in Theresienstadt, despite the fact that it served as a way-station to Auschwitz?
3. In early 1942, the Vatican knew that Slovakian Jews were being sent to their deaths and urged the Catholic leaders of Slovakia to stop the deportations. However, Slovakia did not respond. How do you interpret this refusal by Catholic political leaders? Could the Vatican have gone further than it did?
4. Why were Italian anti-Jewish laws, passed in 1938, so much milder than those in Nazi Germany?
5. What were the experiences of Jews in the Italian zone of Yugoslavia? In Greece?
6. On what basis did Franco intervene to save some Greek Jews?
7. How did the fall of Mussolini in September 1943 affect the fate of Jews who had been in Italian zones (in France, Yugoslavia, and Greece)?

Deportations from Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, and Mass Murder of Jews in Soviet Union

Lecture 11

(To listen to the corresponding Lecture please hold “Control” on your keyboard and Left “Click” on your Mouse to follow link)

[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

[Dorian, Emil](#). *The Quality of Witness: A Romanian Diary, 1943-1944*. Philadelphia, 1983.

Fischer, Julius. *Transnistria*. New York, 1969.

Hautzig, Esther. *The Endless Steppe*. New York, 1968.

Kluger, Ruth. *The Last Escape*. New York, 1974. with Peggy Mann

Malaparte, Curzio. *Kaputt*. Avon Books, 1966.

Wells, Leon W. *The Death Brigade (The Janowska Road)*. Holocaust Library paperback, 1978.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Avon, 1969.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Levin, N. *The Holocaust*. pp. 548-618.

Hirschmann, I. *Life Line to a Promised Land*. pp. 46-71, 82-132, 150- 164.

1. What were the factors in Bulgaria's relationship with Germany and Bulgarian attitudes toward Jews that led to the saving of Jews in Old Bulgaria?
2. Why were the Jews in the annexed territories of Bulgaria completely vulnerable to Nazi plans, and thus deported?
3. Despite its notorious anti-Semitism, most Jews in Old Romania survived. How do you account for this fact?
4. To what extent were Jews able to flee Romania by boat in 1940-41?
5. How was Hungary able to hold off German pressures to deport Jews until May 1944?
6. What led to Hungary's capitulation to German demands?
7. What methods did Eichmann use to reassure Hungarian Jews that they would not suffer the fate of other Jews in Europe?

Rescue Efforts and Failures

Lecture 12

- Attitude of Allies: Jewish rescue not an objective; declared aim was to win the war and punish persecutors and murderers
- Attitude of International Red Cross: "Stirring up a scandal over the Jewish problem would have endangered everyone, without saving a single Jew"
- Attitude of Vatican and Christian Churches
- Jewish rescue efforts: parachutists, Brand Mission, Europa Plan, Zionist undergrounds in Holland and France
- Efforts of "Righteous Gentiles" – Zegota group in Poland, Danish, Italian, and Bulgarian rescue efforts, which constitute an unusual and humane chapter in Holocaust history
- Allied failure to bomb extermination centers

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[Listen](#) 

Suggested Reading

Bierman, John. *Righteous Gentile: The Story of Raoul Wallenberg*. New York, 1981.
Feingold, Henry L. *The Politics of Rescue*. New Brunswick, N.J., 1969.
Flender, Harold. *Rescue in Denmark*. New York, 1963.
Friedlander, Saul. *Pius XII and the Third Reich*. New York, 1966.
Friedman, Philip. *Their Brothers' Keepers*. Schocken, 1978.
Laqueur, Walter. *The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth About Hitler's "Final Solution"*. Boston, 1980.
Hirschmann, Ira. *Lifeline to a Promised Land*. New York, 1946.
Weissberg, Alexander. *Desperate Mission: Joel Brand's Story*. New York, 1958.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Morse, A. *While Six Million Died*. pp. 37-99.
Wyman, D. *The Abandonment of the Jews*. pp. 288-340.

1. When did the Allied governments first acknowledge the reality of the physical annihilation of European Jews? What response was made?
2. How was the official American suppression of news about this annihilation exposed?
3. What rationalization did the British use for not taking any steps to save Jews?
4. Why were Jewish leaders severely handicapped in their rescue efforts?
5. What evidence is there that Allied airmen could have bombed Auschwitz or railroad lines leading to it?
6. Analyze the reasons for the Vatican's silence regarding the fate of Jews during the Holocaust
7. How did Wallenberg manage to save over 30,000 Jews in Hungary?
8. What was the mission of the Jewish parachutists? Why did they start their operation so late?
9. What was the "Europa Plan"?
10. What evidence is there to indicate that some Nazis were seriously interested in ransoming Jews?

Reflections on the Holocaust

Lecture 13

- Everlasting trauma for Jewish people
- Great proliferation of literature indicative of need to wrestle with facts, questions, causes, and the question of lessons
- Need to teach and study Holocaust continuously and establish rituals of commemoration
- Implications for Christian thinking – need to reexamine anti-Jewish dogmas and attitudes; some pioneering steps being taken
- Implications for American-Jewish "coming of age" as new roles are thrust upon it
- Impact on Israel – the alleged siege mentality
- Continuing eruption of anti-Semitism and the predicament of Jews trying to maintain their psychic balance in a post-Holocaust world that is far from secure for them

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Suggested Reading

Cohen, Arthur, ed. *Arguments and Doctrines: A Reader of Jewish Thinking in the Aftermath of the Holocaust*. New York, 1970.
 Des Pres, Terrence. *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps*. Pocket, 1977.
 Katz, Steven T. *Post-Holocaust Dialogues*. New York, 1985.
 Levi, Primo. *Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity*. Collier, 1969.
 Steinitz, Lucy, and David Szonyi. *Living After the Holocaust: Reflections by the Postwar Generation Living in America*. New York, 1976.
 Wiesel, Elie. *One Generation After*. Avon, 1972.

Topics for Discussion

Required Reading

Fleischner, E. *Auschwitz; Beginning of a New Era?* pp. 113-128, 155-178, 201-235.
 and
 Borowitz, E. *Choices in Modern Jewish Thought*. pp. 187-217, 275- 289.
 or
 Katz, S. *Post-Holocaust Dialogues*. pp. 141-145, 150-155, 163-169, 205-247, 268-286.

1. What does Elie Wiesel mean by "the secret and the silence" of survivors, even as he places responsibility on them for transmitting their experiences?
2. How was the debasement of medicine, law, teaching and science during the Nazi period a prerequisite process leading to the destruction of European Jews?
3. Discuss some of the efforts being made by Christian theologians and thinkers to purge Christian dogma and texts of anti-Semitism
4. How have Emil Fackenheim and Eliezer Berkovits responded to the events of the Holocaust in their religious thinking?
5. How can Jews achieve a balance between anxiety over Israel's survival and criticism of certain of Israel's policies?
6. How can Jewish parents and teachers who want children to know the facts of Holocaust history help them retain enough trust in the world to enable them to live purposefully and affirmatively?
7. In what ways is anti-Semitism internally useful to the Soviet and Arab regimes?
8. How do you account for the resilience and strength of Holocaust survivors?