

GLOSSARY

Aktion (German): Operation involving the mass assembly, deportation, and murder of Jews by the Nazis during the Holocaust.

Allies: Twenty-six nations led by Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union that joined in war against Nazi Germany, Italy, Japan, and their allies, known as the Axis powers.

Anielewicz, Mordecai (1919-1943): Major leader of the Jewish resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto; killed May 8, 1943.

Anti-Semitism: Prejudice toward Jews or discrimination against them. Religious anti-Semitism can be differentiated from racial anti-Semitism; the latter implies that Jews are a race as opposed to a religion or those who have a particular religious belief. In racial anti-Semitism conversion to Christianity, for instance, does not change racial blood lines and does not confer protection to Jews.

Anschluss (German): Annexation of Austria by Germany on March 13, 1938.

Arbeit macht frei: German for “work will set you free”. This was the slogan above entrance gates of a number of concentration and death camps. It was deceptive and mocking since there was no intention of setting any Jews free under any circumstances.

Aryan: Originally, a term for peoples of a neutral ethnic classification that were a sub-race of the larger Caucasian race. This term was introduced in the late 19th century and originally had a neutral connotation. In its later Nazi form it took on a different meaning. Hitler proposed that Aryans were a master race of Indo-Europeans, who were Nordic in appearance (blonde hair, blue eyes) and distinctly different from the native south Asian people, called Dravidians.

Aryanization: This Nazi term literally means to “make Aryan.” The word was principally used to refer to the expulsion of non-Aryans from Germany, Austria and Nazi-controlled territories. The term also was used to imply “improving” the population by removing individuals who failed to conform to Aryan ideals. In other instances Aryanization was used euphemistically to describe the takeover of Jewish property by plundering and stealing.

Auschwitz-Birkenau: Largest Nazi camp, located 37 miles west of Cracow, Poland. Established in 1940 as a concentration camp, it included a killing center, at Birkenau, in 1942. Also part of the huge camp complex was I. G. Farben's slave labor camp, known as Buna-Monowitz. Over 900,000 Jews were exterminated at Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Axis: The Axis powers originally included Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan who signed a pact in Berlin on September 27, 1940. They were later joined by Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, and Slovakia.

Belzec: The first of the Nazi concentration camps created for implementing Operation Reinhardt. Belzec was one of six Nazi extermination camps in eastern Poland where an estimated 550,000 Jews were killed between March 1942 and December 1942. Earlier, Belzec functioned as a forced-labor camp.

Bergen-Belsen: Located in northern Germany, transformed from a prisoner-exchange camp into a concentration camp in March 1944. Poor sanitary conditions, epidemics, and starvation led to deaths of thousands—especially from typhus-- including Anne and Margot Frank in March 1945.

Blitzkrieg: Literally means German for “lightning war” – an intense military campaign intended to bring swift results. The term “the Blitz” was used to describe German air raids on London in 1940-41.

Blood Libel: An anti-Semitic lie first used in the first century C.E. accusing Jews of killing Greek children and sacrificing them at the Temple in Jerusalem. The blood libel reappeared almost 11 centuries later, in 1144 in Norwich, England. There, Jews were charged with kidnapping a Christian baby and draining the baby of blood. The charge became so popular it would sweep, in various forms, through Europe and then spread to other parts of the world. In some versions of the blood libel the blood of Christian babies was used at Passover to produce matzo.

Bormann, Martin (1900-1945): Bormann was head of the Party Chancellery and Hitler's private secretary. By the end of World War II he became, in essence, second only to Hitler in terms of political power. Borman was sometimes referred to as the 'Brown Eminence' and was known for undermining rivals for political gain. Borman also established espionage in the army and opposed Church power in Germany. He collected dossiers against Christian clergy.

Bormann advocated harsh measures in the treatment of Jews. In October of 1942 he called for the "permanent elimination of Jews from the territories of Greater Germany" not by emigration but by the use of deadly force. The following year he gave Eichmann absolute power over the Jews, who came under the jurisdiction of the Gestapo. Bormann disappeared after Hitler's death and was tried in absentia by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg in October 1946.

Cardinal Adolf Bertram (1859 – 1945): Archbishop of Breslau and a Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. Throughout World War II Cardinal Bertram remained in Breslau. Bertram opposed what he called the immorality and "neopaganism" of the Nazi Party. In 1930 he refused a religious funeral for a well-known Nazi official on the grounds that the principles of National Socialism were incompatible with the Catholic faith. Because of this the Nazi authorities restricted his activity even further. In 1940 Cardinal Bertram condemned the *Operation Lebensborn* as "immoral" and describing it as "institutionalized adultery."

Chamberlain, Neville (1869-1940): British Prime Minister, 1937-1940. He concluded the Munich Agreement on September 29, 1938 with Adolf Hitler, believing it would bring "peace in our time." The agreement allowed Hitler to annex the Sudetenland.

Chancellor: Chief (prime) minister of Germany, head of the government.

Chelmno: Nazi extermination camp in western Poland where at least 150,000 Jews, about 5,000 Gypsies, and several hundred Poles, as well as Soviet prisoners of war, were killed between December 1941 and March 1943 and between April and August 1944.

Churchill, Winston (1875-1965): British Prime Minister, 1940-1945. He succeeded Chamberlain on May 10, 1940, at the height of Hitler's conquest of Western Europe. Churchill was one of the very few Western politicians who recognized the threat that Hitler posed to Europe. He strongly opposed the Munich agreement in the House of Commons.

Clemens August Graf von Galen (1878 – 1946): A German count, Bishop of Münster, and Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. He received his education in Austria at the Stella Matutina (Jesuit School). After his ordination he worked in Berlin at Saint Matthias, where he became close friends with Nuncio Eugenio Pacelli, later to be Pope Pius XII. An outspoken critic of the **Nazi** regime, he issued forceful, public denunciations of the Third Reich's euthanasia programs and persecution of the Catholic Church, making him one of the most visible and unrelenting internal voices of dissent against the Nazis.

Communism: The political theory that advocates a society in which all property is publicly owned and each person is paid according to his or her needs. A supporter is known as a communist.

Concentration Camps: In German, *Konzentrationslager*. During the 12 years of Nazi reign (1933-1945) some 20,000 camps were constructed to imprison millions of victims. These camps had many purposes. Some were used for forced labor. Other camps were used as way stations (transit camps) or death camps. Most prisoners in early concentrations camps were German Communists, Socialists, Social Democrats, Gypsies, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals and others accused of deviant behavior. After the annexation of the Sudetenland the Nazis arrested Jews and sent them to Bergen-Belsen, Dachau and Sachsenhausen concentrations camps. Concentration camps are distinguished from extermination camps which were all located in Poland for the purposes of mass annihilation.

Crematorium: A building with large ovens for burning dead bodies.

Dachau: The first concentration camp, established in March 1933 near Munich, Germany. At first Dachau held only political opponents, but over time, more and more groups were imprisoned there. Thousands died at Dachau from starvation, maltreatment, and disease.

Death Camp: see **Extermination camp**

Death Marches: These marches were especially common in late 1944 and 1945 with the collapse of the Eastern Front. The SS evacuated concentration camp inmates marching them into the heart of Germany and Austria. The evacuations had three purposes. First, the SS did not want prisoners falling into enemy (Soviet) hands to tell their stories to Soviet liberators. Second, the SS thought they needed prisoners to maintain production of armaments. Third, Himmler believed that Jewish camp survivors could be used as hostages in peace negotiations that would guarantee survival of the Nazi regime. When other means of evacuations proved inadequate the SS resorted to long marches.

SS guards were ordered to kill prisoners who could no longer walk or travel. The SS brutally mistreated prisoners and shot hundreds who collapsed or could not keep pace. Thousands of prisoners died from exposure, starvation and exhaustion. Major evacuations moved prisoners from Auschwitz, Stutthof and Gross-Rosen westward to Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Dachau and Sachsenhausen.

Displaced Person (DP): A person who is left with no country to return to after the war.

Drancy: Located near Paris, Drancy became the largest transit camp for deportation of Jews from France. Between July 1942 and August 1944, about 61,000 Jews were transported from Drancy to Auschwitz, where most of them perished.

Eichmann, Adolf (1906-1962): Sometimes referred to as "the architect of the Holocaust". He was a Nazi and *SS-Obersturmbannführer* charged with the task of facilitating and managing the logistics of mass deportation of Jews to ghettos and extermination camps in Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. After the



Eichmann as *SS-Obersturmbannführer* and at his trial in Israel

war, he traveled to Argentina using a fraudulently obtained laissez-passer issued by the International Red Cross and lived there under a false identity working for Mercedes-Benz until 1960. He was captured by Israeli Mossad operatives in Argentina and tried in an Israeli court on 15 criminal charges, including crimes against humanity and war crimes. He was convicted and hanged in 1962.

Einsatzgruppen: Mobile units of SS and SD (Security Service) which followed German armies into the Soviet Union in June 1941. They were ordered to shoot all Jews, as well as Communist leaders and Gypsies. At least one million Jews were killed by Einsatzgruppen.

Emancipation (*befreiung or liberation*): A period of freedom from traditional ideas, also the state of being free from restrictions or control.

Euthanasia: The original meaning of this term was an easy and painless death for the terminally ill. However, the Nazi euthanasia program took on quite a different meaning: the taking of eugenic measures to improve the quality of the German "race." This program culminated in enforced "mercy" deaths for the incurably insane, permanently disabled, deformed and "superfluous."

Extermination Camps: In German, *Vernichtungslager*. Nazi camps, equipped with gassing facilities, for mass murder of Jews. All of the camps were located in Poland as Hitler had long ago learned that these facilities would not be tolerated on German soil. There were six extermination or death camps: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek-Lublin, Sobibor, and Treblinka. Up to 2,700,000 Jews were murdered at these six camps, as were tens of thousands of Gypsies, Soviet prisoners of war, Poles, and others.

Fascists: Fascists believe that nations and/or races are in constant conflict allowing only the strong to survive. Fascists advocate the creation of a single-party state led by an autocratic and charismatic leader. Fascist governments typically suppress criticism and opposition to their single-party rule. Fascist movements generally support the creation of a totalitarian state. Their leaders have included Benito Mussolini in Italy, Plínio Salgado in Brazil, Nakano Seigo in Japan, and Gyula Gömbös in Hungary. While the words fascism and fascist did, at one time, have specific meanings, their use – since the end of WWII—has been little more than a slur. Some would argue that they don't have true definitions any more.

Final Solution: Nazi euphemism for the physical destruction of European Jewry.

Frank, Hans (1900-1946): Governor-General of occupied Poland from 1939 to 1945. He was Hitler's personal lawyer and member of the Nazi Party from its earliest days. Frank oversaw the segregation of



Jews into ghettos and used Polish civilians for compulsory labor. "Poland will be treated like a colony; the Poles will become slaves of the Greater German Reich." By 1942, more than 85% of the Jews in Poland had been transported to extermination camps yet Frank would claim that he was unaware of the extermination camps in the General Government until early in 1944 and that the extermination of Jews was controlled by Heinrich Himmler.

Frick, Wilhelm (1877-1946): A dedicated Nazi bureaucrat who was appointed Minister of the Interior in 1933 where he was responsible for enacting Nazi racial laws. In 1946, he was tried at Nuremberg, convicted, and executed

Führer (der Führer): German word for "leader."

Genocide: The deliberate, systematic destruction of a racial, cultural, or political group.

Gentile: A person who is not Jewish.

Gerstein, Kurt (1905-1945): Head of the *Waffen SS* Institute of Hygiene in Berlin. While maintaining ties with the resistance, Gerstein purchased the gas needed in Auschwitz, officially for fumigation purposes, but actually used for the killing of Jews.



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In an act of bravery and conscience he passed on information about the killings to Swedish diplomat Baron von Otter, the papal nuncio in Berlin, Father Cesare Orsenigo and numerous members of the Luther and the Confessing Church. Overwhelmed with remorse he hanged himself in July 1945. He is the author of a widely quoted description of a gassing procedure in Belzec in 1945 called *The Gerstein Report*. He is the protagonist of Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy*, and the subject of Saul Friedlander's biography, *The Ambiguity of Good*.

In Gerstein's Report he recorded, in detail, what he saw at Belzec. He described the manner in which Jews entered the camp, were stripped of their possessions and directed to "shower rooms." He maintained to friends that his experience made him determined to inform the world of the horrors he'd observed in the killing centers.

By April 1945 the Third Reich's demise was imminent. Gerstein surrendered himself to French authorities in Reutlingen and was eventually placed under semi-house arrest in Konstanz and later in Cherche-Midi Prison in Paris. It was there that he drafted his final statement now known as the Gerstein Report in which he recounted what he had seen during his service with the SS. Gerstein hanged himself in July 1945.

Gestapo: In German, *Geheime Staatspolizei*. Secret State Police.

Ghetto: The Nazis revived the medieval ghetto in creating their compulsory "Jewish Quarter" (*Wohnbezirk*). The ghetto was a section of a city where all Jews from the surrounding areas were forced to reside. Surrounded by barbed wire or walls, the ghettos were often sealed so that people were prevented from leaving or entering. Established mostly in Eastern Europe (e.g. Lodz, Warsaw, Vilna, Riga, Minsk), the ghettos were characterized by overcrowding, starvation and forced labor. All were eventually destroyed as the Jews were deported to death camps.

Goebbels, Paul Josef (1897-1945): Goebbels was born to a strict Catholic, working-class family from Rheyd, in the Rhineland. He was educated at a Roman Catholic school and studied literature at the University of Heidelberg under Professor Friedrich, Gundolf, a Jewish literary historian.

Goebbels was rejected for military service in WWI because of a deformity resulting from polio that he had contracted as a child. Goebbels was short in stature, had dark hair and was physically flawed. He found a home in the Nazi party where his oratorical gifts, intellect and insatiable lust for power found a home.



His mastery of techniques for mass persuasion was tested in the election campaigns of 1932 when he played a central role in bringing an ambitious Hitler to the center of the political stage. Hitler rewarded

him shortly after being appointed Chancellor by appointing him Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda thereby giving Goebbels total control of the media—radio, press, publishing and cinema.

Goebbels served as Propaganda Minister from 1933-45 and was one of the Führer's most devout followers. Among his propaganda devices he accused many of Germany's ethnic minorities (Poles, Jews, French) of seeking to destroy Germany from within. Following Hitler's suicide Goebbels served as the Third Reich's Chancellor for one day. In the end he and his wife, Magda, killed their six young children before committing suicide.

Göring, Hermann (1893-1946): German politician, military leader and a leading member of the Nazi Party. Among his offices, he was Hitler's designated successor and commander of the *Luftwaffe*



Göring was a veteran of WWI where he had 22 confirmed kills as a fighter pilot. He was the last commander of Manfred von Richthofen's (Red Baron) famous *Jagdgeschwader 1* air squadron. He was convicted of war crimes at Nuremberg and committed suicide by cyanide ingestion the night before he was to be executed.

Grynszpan, Herschel (1921-1943): A Polish Jewish youth who had immigrated to Paris. He agonized over the fate of his parents who, in the course of a pre-war roundup of Polish Jews living in Germany, were deported to the Polish frontier. On November 7, 1938, he went to the German Embassy where he shot and mortally wounded Third Secretary Ernst vom Rath. The Nazis used this incident as an excuse for the *Kristallnacht* pogrom.

Gypsies: Popular term for Roma and Sinti, nomadic people believed to have come originally from northwest India. Traveling mostly in small caravans, Gypsies first appeared in Western Europe in the 1400s and eventually spread to every country of Europe. Prejudices toward Gypsies were widespread. Approximately 250,000 to 500,000 Gypsies are believed to have perished in Nazi concentration camps, killing centers, and at the hands of the *Einsatzgruppen*.

Hebrew: The language spoken in Israel today. Hebrew is a term with an ancient origin referring to the Habiru people (13th century BCE). In modern times it is taken to mean one of Jewish faith.

Hess, Rudolf (1894-1987): was Deputy Führer under Hitler from the earliest days of the Nazi movement. Hess was 2nd in line to Göring should anything have happened to Hitler or Goring. On May 10, 1941, he flew alone from Augsburg and parachuted, landing in Scotland where he was promptly arrested. The purpose of his flight has never become clear. He probably wanted to persuade the British to



negotiate a peace with Hitler just prior to the attack on the Soviet Union. Hitler promptly declared him insane. Hess was tried at Nuremberg, found guilty of “crimes against peace,” and sentenced to life imprisonment. He was the only prisoner in Spandau Prison until he apparently committed suicide in 1987.

Heydrich, Reinhard (1904-1942): Heydrich was born to an upper class family in a town outside of Leipzig. His parents were musicians—his father an opera singer and mother was a pianist. Reinhard himself was an excellent violinist. He was raised as a devout Catholic in a mostly Protestant town and apparently suffered some bullying amidst rumors that he was part-Jewish.

As a boy, he lived in an elegant home with his family enjoying elevated social status. But young Heydrich also suffered as the target of schoolyard bullies, teased about his very high pitched voice and his devout Catholicism in the mostly Protestant town. He was also beaten up by bigger boys and tormented with anti-Jewish slurs amid rumors of Jewish ancestry in his family. He was too young to join the military at the outbreak of WWI. As a young blond-haired, blue-eyed athletic boy he was influenced by the German Völk movement and associated with violently anti-Semitic groups.

After WWI he joined the German Navy and rose through the ranks despite being taunted by cadets for his almost falsetto voice, love of classical music and rumors of his Jewish ancestry. He was forced to resign his naval commission for ‘conduct unbecoming of an office.’

In 1931, at age 27, Heydrich joined the Nazi Party and became a member of the SS (*Schutzstaffel*). Heydrich soon impressed Himmler who then ordered Heydrich to create the intelligence gathering organization known as the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst*), or SS Security Service.

Under Heydrich, the SD watched for party dissenters and created dossiers on all Jews in Germany. By 1934 Heydrich ran the Prussian Gestapo—the largest political police force in the Reich. Heydrich was a key figure in the planning of Kristallnacht. Under his orders “whatever actions occurred should not endanger German lives or property, synagogues could be burned only if there was no danger to the surrounding buildings. Healthy, non-elderly adult Jewish males were to be seized first, and concentration camps notified.

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At a November 12, 1938 meeting--long before Hitler's "Final Solution" became Reich policy--Heydrich stated that simply restricting Jews would be an insufficient measure and that one had to completely rid the Reich of them. Heydrich was co-mingled with the "Final Solution" from the start. Perhaps, because Heydrich was such a willing participant, Himmler assigned the mass murder that occurred after the start of Operation Barbarossa to Heydrich and the *Einsatzgruppen*. Most commanders of the mobile killing units came from Heydrich's SD. After the SS established extermination camps in Poland Heydrich coordinated the "resettlement" of European Jews to these camps.



Heydrich is perhaps best known for organizing the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942. It was there that he invited senior Reich officials and revealed to them his plan for the "Final Solution."

On May 27, 1942 two Czech patriots, Jan Kubis and Josef Gabcik, parachuted from Britain into Prague and ambushed Heydrich's Mercedes. Heydrich was seriously wounded and the driver of a baker's van took him to the Bulkova hospital. He remained in critical condition for days. Heydrich died on June 4, 1942.

A state of emergency was declared in Prague and a reward of 10 million crowns was offered for the capture of Heydrich's assassins. Jews were deported to Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor in a retaliatory operation.

Himmler, Heinrich (1900-1945): Himmler was the son of a pious and authoritarian Roman Catholic schoolmaster. After a brief stint as a fertilizer salesman he joined that para-military, nationalist organization and participated in the Munich Beer-Hall putsch of November 1923. He became an unsuccessful poultry-farmer before being appointed head of Hitler's personal bodyguards, the black-shirted SS (Schutzstaffel). It was under Himmler that the Dachau concentration camp was set up in 1933.

The turning point of Himmler's career was his organization of the *Night of Long Knives*, also known as *Operation Hummingbird*. The operation, which occurred between June 30 and July 2, 1934, was a series of political executions carried out to oust the paramilitary *Sturmabteilung* (Brownshirts) or SA. Hitler used the purge to eliminate critics of his regime—especially those loyal to Vice-Chancellor Franz von Papen. By June 1936 Himmler became head of the Gestapo and was *Reichsführer* of the SS. Himmler was said to have been obsessed with the occult and had a fanatical commitment to the Aryan myth.

In the months prior to the September 1, 1939 invasion of Poland, Operation Himmler provided a false pretext for carrying out the aggression. Himmler provided the propaganda by accusing Polish authorities of organizing violent ethnic cleansing of ethnic Germans in Poland. The goal was simple—to create the appearance of Polish aggression against Germany and justify its invasion.



As chief of the German Police and Minister of the Interior Himmler was one of the most powerful men in Nazi Germany. As *Reichsführer-SS* he oversaw all internal and external police and security forces, including the Gestapo.

Himmler was ultimately in charge of all concentration camps, extermination camps, and *Einsatzgruppen*. In this capacity he coordinated the killing of some six million Jews, three to four million Poles, communists, along with 200 – 500,000 Roma, those with mental and physical disabilities along with members of the Confessing Church. He was arrested by British forces and committed suicide before he could be questioned.

Hitler, Adolf (1889-1945): Hitler was the Reich Chancellor and guiding force behind the Third Reich from 1933-1945. He was founder and leader of the Nazi Party.

Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria and was the son of Alois Schicelgruber Hitler, a 52 year old authoritarian Austrian customs official and a young peasant girl named Klara Poelzl. Young Adolph was strongly attached to his hard-working mother he died of cancer in 1908 when Adolph was 19 years old. Adolph led a vagabond existence and was embittered by his rejection at the Viennese Academy of Fine Arts. He developed a pathological hatred of Jews, Marxists, liberalism and the monarchy.

When WWI broke out he joined the Sixteenth Bavarian Infantry Regiment where he proved a courageous soldier and received the Iron Cross for bravery. He never rose above the rank of Lance Corporal. He was wounded weeks before the end of the war and recuperated in a hospital in Pomerania. Hitler was outraged at the humiliation Germany had suffered as a result of the Versailles Treaty.

In the summer of 1919 Hitler was assigned by the *Reichswehr* to spy on political parties and specifically to investigate a small nationalistic group of idealists, the German Worker's Party. On September 16, 1919 he entered the Party—which boasted 40 members. He would change its name to the National Socialist German Worker's Party (NSDAP) and would be selected as Chairman in July 1921. By November 1921 Hitler was recognized as Fuhrer of the movement which had swelled to 3000. Hitler gave the new party its symbol—the Swastika.

By November 1923 Hitler was convinced that the Weimar was on the verge of collapse. Together with General Ludendorff he sought to overthrow the Bavarian government in Munich. What followed was the famous Beer Hall Putsch. Hitler accompanied by Ludendorff burst into a beer-hall in Munich and declared that he was preparing to lead a new government that would revolt against "Red Berlin." Then,

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leading 3000 men he marched through Munich. Coming head-to-head with the Munich police he was met with a firefight that left sixteen dead bringing the putsch to an end. Hitler was arrested and tried on February 26, 1924. After a guilty verdict he was sentenced to five years in Landsberg and the Nazi Party was banned. He served nine months during which time he dictated *Mein Kampf* to his loyal follower, Rudolph Hess and was released. By 1939 the "bible" of the Nazi party sold over five million copies and had been translated into eleven languages.



The putsch was a turning point for Hitler and transformed him into a political tactician. He rebuilt the movement that had begun to wither with the help of Goering and Goebbels. By January of 1925 the ban on the Nazi Party was lifted and Hitler was once again allowed to speak in public. He succeeded in extending his appeal beyond Bavarian and attracted a wider audience to his movement.

Through the years of the Great Depression Hitler won over vast demographics of German society who felt economically threatened. In addition to small business owners he attracted industrialists, national conservatives and factions of the army. Importantly he received the support of Alfred Hugenberg, a German press tycoon just as the world economic crisis hit Germany.

As a result of the 1930 elections the Nazi Party received 107 seats in the Reichstag. In February 1932 Hitler officially acquired German citizenship and decided to run for the Presidency. Though he lost that election to von Hindenburg, he garnered over 13 million votes. In the July 1932 Reichstag elections the Nazi Party emerged as the largest political party in Germany with 230 seats. Conservative politicians led by Franz von Papen persuaded the reluctant von Hindenburg to nominate Hitler as Reich Chancellor on January 30, 1933. In 1934 the chancellorship and presidency were united in the person of the *Führer*. Soon, all other parties were outlawed and opposition was brutally suppressed.

By 1938, Hitler implemented his dream of a "Greater Germany," first annexing Austria; then, (with the acquiescence of the western democracies), the Sudetenland (Czech province with ethnic German concentration); and, finally, Czechoslovakia itself. On September 1, 1939, Hitler's armies invaded Poland. By this time the western democracies realized that no agreement with Hitler could be honored and World War II had begun. Although initially victorious on all fronts, Hitler's armies began suffering setbacks shortly after the United States joined the war in December 1941. Although the war was obviously lost by early 1945, Hitler insisted that Germany fight to the death. On April 30, 1945, Hitler committed suicide rather than be captured alive.

Holocaust: The term "Holocaust" - literally meaning "a completely burned sacrifice" - tends to suggest a sacrificial connotation to what occurred. The Holocaust has become synonymous with the destruction of some 6 million Jews by the Nazis and their followers in Europe between the years 1933-1945. Though all

the victims of the Nazis were not necessarily Jewish, all Jews were victims—all were marked for complete annihilation. A synonym often used today is the Hebrew word *Shoah*, originally a Biblical term meaning widespread disaster or catastrophe.

Höss, Rudolph (1901 – 1947): *SS-Obersturmbannführer* and from May 4, 1940 to November 1943 was the first commandant of Auschwitz concentration camp, where it is estimated that more than a million people were killed.

Himmler had selected Auschwitz as a major extermination camp because of its easy access by rail and because the large space it offered. Höss tested and perfected techniques of mass killing which made Auschwitz the most efficient “instrument” of the Final Solution and perhaps the most recognizable symbol of the Shoah.

Jehovah's Witnesses: Religious sect that originated in the United States and had about 20,000 members in Germany in 1933. Witnesses, whose religious beliefs did not allow them to swear allegiance to any worldly power, were persecuted as “enemies of the state.” About 10,000 Witnesses from Germany and other countries were imprisoned in concentration camps. Of these, about 2,500 died.

Jewish Council or *Judenrat*. The Council of Jewish leaders were established on Nazi orders in German-occupied towns, cities and ghettos.

Juden: German word for “Jews.”

Judenrat: *See* Jewish Council.

Judenrein: Literally means “Jew-clean” or “Cleansed of Jews,” denoting areas where all Jews had been either murdered or deported.

Kapo: German word for “foreman.” Kapos were prisoners charged with supervision of other prisoners. For this they received more privileges than normal prisoners, towards whom they were often brutal. Many were convicts who were offered their positions in exchange for a reduced sentence or parole. Some kapos were Jewish. Most often Kapos were usually murdered and replaced with a new batch of prisoners at regular intervals. Failure to perform their duties would have resulted in severe punishment or execution.

Killing Centers or Extermination Camps: There were 6 extermination camps—all located in Poland-- equipped with facilities to kill with poisonous gas: Belzec, Chelmno, Sobibor, Treblinka, as well as killing sections of Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek-Lublin concentration camps.

Kindertransport: (Children’s Transport). This refers to the mass evacuation of 10,000 Jewish children from Germany to Britain between 1938 and 1940. Immediately following Kristallnacht (November 9th and 10th 1938) the British government eased immigration restrictions for certain categories of Jewish refugees. Spurred on by public opinion, the British Committee for Jews of Germany and the Movement of the Care of Children from Germany, Great Britain agreed to permit an unspecified number of children under the age of 17 to enter Britain from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland. In all about 10,000 children were saved of which 7500 were Jewish. After the war most of these children became citizens of Great Britain or emigrated to the United States, Israel, Canada or Australia.

Labor Camp (Concentration camp): A prison camp in which inmates are subjected to enforced hard labor. There were hundreds of labor camps throughout Nazi occupied areas—only a few were associated with exterminations camps.

Lidice: Czech mining village (pop. 700). On May 27th 1942 an attempt was made on the life of Reinhard Heydrich. After succumbing to sepsis on June 4 and his burial on June 9, 1942 Hitler sought retaliation

against Czechoslovakia. Why was Lidice chosen? One of the men who assassinated Heydrich had links to Lidice. In addition Gestapo had intercepted what they deemed to be a “suspicious” note that contained the name Lidice. In fact, it was another Lidice in Czechoslovakia – but this only came to light afterwards, once the arrangements had been made to wipe out Frank’s chosen target - Lidice near Prague.

On June 10, 1942 the Nazis “liquidated” the village. On June 10, 1942—less than a week after Heydrich died--all 192 men over 16 years of age from the village were murdered on the spot by the Germans in a much publicized atrocity. Almost two hundred women were sent to *Ravensbruck*. Nearly 100 children were separated from their mothers—most did not survive.

The village was razed to the ground and its name removed from maps. After World War II, a new village was built near the site of the old Lidice, which is now a national park and memorial.

Lodz: A major industrial city in Poland with the second largest Jewish population—next to Warsaw’s. In April 1940, the first major ghetto was created there. Some 43,500 persons died in the Lodz ghetto from starvation, disease, and exposure to cold. Thousands more taken from the ghetto were killed by gassing at Chelmno. In August-September 1944, the 60,000 remaining Jews were sent to Auschwitz.

Majdanek-Lublin: Located near Lublin in eastern Poland, at first a labor camp for Poles and prisoner-of-war camp for Soviets, it existed as a concentration camp from April 1943 to July 1944. Tens of thousands perished there from starvation, maltreatment, and shootings. Majdanek also served as a killing center, where at least 50,000 Jews were gassed.

Martin Luther (1483 – 1546): Luther, a German Catholic priest was best known for his role in initiating the Protestant Reformation. Disturbed by the Church’s sales of indulgences he confronted this issue in his *Disputatio pro declaratione virtutis indulgentiaru* (Ninety-Five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences) published in 1517. This gave birth to Protestantism. Luther was excommunicated by Pope Leo X in 1520.

In 1543 Luther wrote *Von den Juden und iren Lügen* (On Jews and Their Lies) a 65 thousand word treatise. Luther wrote many hateful passages on the Jews including their description as a “base, whoring people, that is, no people of God, and their boast of lineage, circumcision, and law must be accounted as filth.” Luther called for synagogues, schools and prayer books to set on fire and even noted “we are at fault in not slaying them.” His treatise is seen as a major and persistent influence on Germany’s attitude towards its Jewish citizens for the four hundred years between the Reformation and the Holocaust. His 1543 treatise was displayed during Nuremberg rallies. A first edition was even presented to the editor of the Nazi newspaper *Der Stürmer*. Since the 1980s the Lutheran church has distanced itself from Luther’s anti-Semitic statements.

Mauthausen: On August 8 1938, Himmler ordered three hundred prisoners—mostly Austrians and virtually all convicted felons whom the Nazi regime classified as “asocials” --from Dachau concentration camp to the Mauthausen site in order to begin construction of the new camp. By the end of 1938, Mauthausen held nearly 1,000 prisoners. Soon the camp would also host political opponents, and religious conscientious objectors such as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Mauthausen was classified by the SS as a “category three camp”—the fiercest category, and for the prisoners it meant “*Vernichtung durch arbeit*” (extermination by work).

Mein Kampf: (My Struggle) was dictated by Hitler to Rudolph Hess while they were imprisoned in the Landsberg fortress following the 1923 “Beer-Hall Putsch” in 1923. It is part autobiography and part an exposition on Hitler’s political ideology. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler proposed his plans for a future Germany including his “racial ideology” and the right of the German people to have “living space” or *Lebensraum* in the East. The book is also an anti-Semitic rant blaming Jews as both Bolsheviks and Capitalists.

Mengele, Josef (1911-1979): Mengele earned two degrees—one in Anthropology and one in Medicine. He was the infamous “Angel of Death” and gained notoriety for being one of the SS physicians who supervised “selections” at arriving transports of prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau—determining who was to be killed and who would become a forced laborer. He was the Senior SS physician at Auschwitz-Birkenau from 1943-44. Mengele also carried out his infamous experiments on some three-thousand sets of identical twins. In these experiments Mengele attempted to change eye color by injecting chemicals into the children’s eyes. He also carried out amputations, forced sterilizations and shock treatments as well as other brutal surgeries.



In addition to his studies on twins he did a number of horrifying human experiments. In one he put several children into a gigantic oven to determine how long it would take to inflict first, second and third degree burns. He also tested how much force it required to break a human skull.

With the Russian advance on Auschwitz the SS abandoned it on January 27, 1945. Mengele was transferred to the Gross-Rosen Concentration Camp where he worked for a short while. From 1945-49 he worked as a farmhand in a small village in Bavaria. Ultimately he was helped out of the country he escaped to Argentina—possibly with the help of the Odessa Network. He spent more than a decade in Buenos Aires. However, with the Mossad’s capture of Eichmann, Mengele sensed the writing on the wall and left for Paraguay. He lived there until 1978 and died a year later in Brazil.

Munich Agreement: The agreement permitted the German annexation of the Czechoslovakia’s Sudetenland which was mainly inhabited by Czech Germans. The agreement was signed on September 30, 1938 by the major European powers—Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy--without the presence of Czechoslovakia in an act of appeasement. Because the Czechs were not invited it is often referred to as the Munich betrayal. After the agreement the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain returned home declaring “peace in our time.” Less than a year later Europe was plunged into war with the invasion of Poland.

Musselman: A Yiddish word—slang--for a prisoner who had given up fighting for life.

Nazi: Short term for National Socialist German Workers Party, a right-wing, nationalistic, and anti-Semitic political party formed in 1919 and led by the Fuhrer, Adolf Hitler, from 1921 to 1945.

Nuremberg Laws: There were three laws passed at the annual party rally held in Nuremberg in 1935.

The first was the **Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor** which contained five subsections. These laws specifically forbade marriages between Jews and non-Jewish Germans, sexual relations between Jews and German citizens and even the employment of German women under the age of 45 by Jews as housekeepers.

The second was **The Reich Citizenship Law, 1935**. Among its clauses it states that a "Reich citizen is that subject who is of German or related blood only and who through his behavior demonstrates that he is ready and able to serve faithfully the German people and Reich." The Reich Citizenship Law effectively removes citizenship from the German Jewish population.

The third law, the Reich Flag Act, decreed the new German national flag to be the Nazi swastika flag.

Occupation: Control of a country taken over by a foreign military power.

Operation Barbarossa: This was the codename for the German invasion of the Soviet Union beginning on June 22, 1941.

Operation Reinhard: Operation Reinhard (Einsatz Reinhard) became the code name for the German plan to murder some two million Jews in the Generalgouvernement of Poland. Though initiated in the autumn of 1941, the operation was named after SS General Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA), following his death in June 1942 following an ambush by Czech partisans.

Palestine: In the context of World Wars I and II it refers to the geographic area of what was once the British Mandate Palestine (1920-1948), an area that included Transjordan until the establishment of the Kingdom of Jordan in 1922. The term includes the territory in the Middle East including the modern territories of Israel, Jordan, the West Bank and the Gaza strip.

Partisan: Member of a resistance group operating secretly within enemy lines, using guerrilla tactics against occupying forces.

Pastor Martin Niemöller (1892 – 1984): A prominent German anti-Nazi theologian and Lutheran pastor. Although he was a national conservative and initially a supporter of Adolf Hitler, Niemöller became one of the founders of the Confessing Church, which opposed the Nazification of German Protestant churches. He vehemently opposed the Nazis' Aryan Paragraph but made remarks about Jews that some scholars have called anti-Semitic. For his opposition to the Nazis' state control of the churches, Niemöller was imprisoned in Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps from 1937 to 1945. He narrowly escaped execution and survived imprisonment. After his imprisonment, he expressed his deep regret about not having done enough to help the victims of the Nazis. He turned away from his earlier nationalistic beliefs and was one of the initiators of the *Stuttgart Declaration of Guilt*. From the 1950s on, he was a vocal pacifist and anti-war activist, and vice-chair of War Resisters' International from 1966 to 1972. He met with Ho Chi Minh during the Vietnam War and was a committed campaigner for nuclear disarmament.

Persecution: Act of causing others to suffer, especially those who differ in background or lifestyle or hold different political or religious beliefs.

Pogrom: Russian word for "devastation." Organized violence against Jews, often state-sponsored.

Pope Pius IX (1792 - 1878): The longest reigning pope in Church history, serving from 16 June 1846 until his death, a period of nearly 32 years. During his pontificate, he convened the First Vatican Council



in 1869, which decreed Papal infallibility. Pius IX was the last pope who simultaneously ruled as monarch of the Pap States. This all changed in 1870 when the papacy was reduced to a spiritual force.

Pope Pius XI (1922-1939): Pius XI aimed to end the long internal political battle between the papacy and the Italian government by signing the 1929 Lateran Treaty with the Italian government thereby establishing an independent Vatican City. According to the terms of the treaty, Vatican City was given sovereignty in return for the Vatican relinquishing its claim to the former territories of the Papal States. Pius XI became the head of state since the unification of Italy in the 19th century—albeit a very small state. A second treaty recognized Roman Catholicism as Italy’s official state religion and restored religious teaching in all schools. In exchange the clergy agreed to perpetual neutrality in international relations. A third treaty provided financial compensation to the Vatican for loss of the Papal States in 1870.

In terms of Holocaust study Pius XI is best known for his signing of the *Reichskonkordat* on July 20, 1933. When Hitler became Chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933 he asked for a concordat and Pius XI accepted. Negotiations were conducted by Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, who would later become Pope Pius XII (1939-1958). The *Reichskonkordat* included guarantees of liberty for the Church, independence for Catholic organizations and youth groups.

In 1937, responding to increasing Nazi hostility to Christianity, Pius XI issued the encyclical, *Mit brennender Sorge* condemning the Nazi ideology of racism, the Nazi conception of God and Nazi violations of the concordat. The encyclical was smuggled into Germany and was addressed to German bishops and read in all parishes of Germany.

Pope Pius XII (1939-1958): Reigned as the 260th Pope, head of the Roman Catholic Church and sovereign of Vatican City, from 2 March 1939 until his death in 1958. Before election to the papacy, Eugenio Pacelli served as papal nuncio and Cardinal Secretary of State, in which capacity he worked to conclude treaties with European and Latin-American nations, most notably the *Reichskonkordat* with Germany.



As soon as he was appointed Pope, Pacelli did speak out against the 1938 Italian racial laws that dealt with mixed marriages and children of mixed marriages. However, he issued no such condemnation of *Kristallnacht*. His reaction to the Shoah was complex and inconsistent. At times he tried to help the Jews and was successful opening him up to criticism that he might have had greater influence had he spoken up and done more. Much remains to be learned about Pius XII's role in the Holocaust—no doubt much of it will come out during his canonization process.

Protocols of the Elders of Zion: A major piece of anti-Semitic propaganda, compiled at the turn of the twentieth century by members of the Russian Secret Police. The Protocols allege in 24 chapters, or protocols--allegedly minutes from meetings of Jewish leaders--the "secret plans" of Jews to rule the world by manipulating the economy, controlling the media, and fostering religious conflict. It gained great popularity after World War I and was translated into many languages, encouraging anti-Semitism in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States. Long repudiated as an absurd and hateful lie, the book currently has been reprinted and is widely distributed by Neo-Nazis and others who are committed to the destruction of the State of Israel.

Putsch: A sudden attempt at political revolution or a violent uprising, from the German word for "thrust" or "blow".

Rath, Ernst Vom (1909-1938): Third secretary at the German Embassy in Paris who was assassinated on November 7, 1938 by Herschel Grynszpan.

Ravensbruck: First concentration camp for women opened in May 1939, 56 miles north of Berlin. An estimated 120,000 prisoners were inmates there, including many political prisoners, Jews, Gypsies, and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Reich: German word for "empire."

Reichconcordat (July 20, 1933): The concordat between the Holy See and Germany. It was signed by Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli and Franz von Papen on behalf of Pope Pius XI and President Paul von Hindenburg, respectively. It is still valid today in Germany. The main points of the concordat are:

- The right to freedom of the Roman Catholic religion.
- The state concordats with Bavaria (1924), Prussia (1929), and Baden (1932) remain valid.
- Unhindered correspondence between the Holy See and German Catholics.
- The right of the church to collect church taxes.
- The oath of allegiance of the bishops: "(...) *Ich schwöre und verspreche, die verfassungsmässig gebildete Regierung zu achten und von meinem Klerus achten zu lassen (...)*" ("I swear and vow to honor the constitutional government and to make my clergy honor it")
- State services to the church can be abolished only in mutual agreement.
- Catholic religion is taught in school (article 21) and teachers for Catholic religion can be employed only with the approval of the bishop.
- Protection of Catholic organizations and freedom of religious practice.
- Clerics may not be members of or be active for political parties.

Most historians consider the Reichskonkordat an important step toward the international acceptance of **Adolf Hitler's Nazi** regime.

Reichstag: Germany's lawmaking body, its parliament.

Rhineland: Demilitarized zone that Allies established after World War I as a buffer between Germany and Western Europe.

Righteous Among the Nations: (from the Yad Vashem Website)

Attitudes towards the Jews during the Holocaust mostly ranged from indifference to hostility. The mainstream watched as their former neighbors were rounded up and killed; some collaborated with the perpetrators; many benefited from the expropriation of the Jews property. But in this world of moral collapse there was a small minority who mustered extraordinary courage to uphold human values.

One of the principal duties of Yad Vashem is to convey the gratitude of the State of Israel and the Jewish people to those non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. This mission was defined by the law establishing Yad Vashem, and in 1963 the Remembrance Authority embarked upon a worldwide project to grant the title of Righteous Among the Nations to the few who helped Jews in the darkest time in their history. To this end, Yad Vashem set up a public Commission, headed by a Supreme Court Justice, which examines each case and is responsible for granting the title. Those recognized receive a medal and a certificate of honor and their names are commemorated on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem.

This project is an unprecedented attempt by the victims to pay tribute to people who stood by their side at a time of persecution and great tragedy. Based on the principle that each individual is responsible for his or her deeds, the program is aimed at singling out within the nations of perpetrators, collaborators and bystanders persons who bucked the general trend and helped the persecuted Jews. One of the great challenges of the program was to define set criteria for awarding the title. The concept of the Righteous, as defined by the Yad Vashem Law, has become a revered worldwide term of honor denoting a most singular form of human heroism and of choosing good in the face of evil.

The Righteous honored by Yad Vashem come from 44 countries; they are Christians from all denominations as well as Muslims, religious and agnostic, men and women, people from all walks of life, of all ages, educated professionals and illiterate peasants, rich and poor. The only common denominator is the humanity and the courage they displayed by standing up for their moral principles.

SA: In German, *Sturmabteilung*. Storm Troopers. Also called "Brownshirts." Members of a special armed and uniformed branch of the Nazi party.

SD: In German, *Sicherheitsdienst*. Security Service. An intelligence service for the Nazi Party and SS. Headed by Reinhard Heydrich.

Selection: Euphemism for the process of choosing victims for the gas chambers in the Nazi camps by separating them from those considered fit to work

Shoah: The Hebrew word meaning "catastrophe" denoting the catastrophic destruction of European Jewry during World War II. The term is used in Israel, and the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament) has designated an official day, called Yom HaShoah, as a day of commemorating the Shoah or Holocaust.

Shtetl: Yiddish word for small Jewish town or village.

Sobibor: Nazi extermination camp in eastern Poland where up to 200,000 Jews were killed between May 1942 and November 1943. On October 4, 1943 a painstakingly prepared uprising broke out. Eleven SS men and several Ukrainians were killed and some 300 prisoners managed to escape, most of who were killed by their pursuers. Those who had not joined the escape for various reasons were all murdered. Only 50 escapees survived to witness liberation day. After the uprising, the Germans abandoned the idea of turning Sobibor into a concentration camp and closed it down.

Sonderkommando: German word for "special squad." In the context of extermination camps, it refers to units of Jewish prisoners forced to take away bodies of gassed inmates to be cremated and to remove gold fillings and hair prior to their execution. *Sonderkommandos* typically worked for up to 4 months, were given special privileges for their work and were ultimately gassed and incinerated by the next group of *Sonderkommandos*.

SS: In German, *Schutzstaffel*. Protection Squad. Units formed in 1925 as Hitler's personal bodyguard. The SS was later built into a giant organization by Heinrich Himmler. It provided staff for police, camp guards, and military units (Waffen-SS) serving with the German army.

Sudetenland: Mainly German-speaking region that was part of Czechoslovakia. It was annexed by Germany on September 30, 1938 in the Munich Agreement.

Swastika: The swastika was an ancient symbol originally meant to denote prosperity and good fortune and is widely dispersed in both the ancient and modern world. It originally represented the revolving sun, fire, or life. The word swastika derives from the Sanskrit swastika which means, 'conducive to well-being'. It was coopted by Hitler as a symbol of Aryans, this twisted cross became the symbol of Nazi Germany and the centerpiece of the flag of the Third Reich.

Theresienstadt: German name for Czech town of Terezin, located about 40 miles from Prague. Nazis used the camp, established in November 1941, as a "model Jewish settlement" to show Red Cross investigators how well Jews were being treated. In reality, thousands died there from starvation and disease, and thousands more were deported and killed in extermination camps.

Third Reich

Term given by Hitler to his regime (1933-1945). The first Reich was the Holy Roman Empire; the second was the Kaiser Reich.

Treblinka: Nazi extermination camp about 50 miles northeast of Warsaw. Up to 750,000 Jews and at least 2,000 Gypsies were killed at Treblinka between July 1942 and November 1943.

Volkish: German for "of the people". A term appropriated by the Nazis in the 1920s and turned into a nationalistic, antidemocratic concept with powerful anti-Semitic overtones. It motivated violent Nazi outbursts in the party's early years.

Wallenberg, Raoul (1912-19??): Swedish diplomat who, in 1944, went to Hungary on a mission to save as many Jews as possible by handing out Swedish papers, passports and visas. He is credited with saving the lives of at least 30,000 people. After the liberation of Budapest, he was mysteriously taken into custody by the Russians and his fate remains unknown.

Wannsee Conference: The January 20, 1942 conference chaired by Reinhard Heydrich formalizing the Final Solution.

Warsaw: The capital city of Poland, was home to its largest Jewish population. About 390,000 Jews lived in Warsaw on the eve of WWII. In October-November 1940, Germans established the Warsaw ghetto, into which some 500,000 Jews were crowded. Of these, an average of 5,000 to 6,000 died each month from starvation, disease, exposure to cold, and shootings. Tens of thousands were deported to Treblinka in 1942. The Warsaw Ghetto uprising began on April 19, 1943 and lasted for almost a month. The uprising was finally squashed on May 16, 1943, the surviving Jews were deported to Nazi extermination camps.

Weimar Republic: German republic (1919-1933), a parliamentary democracy, established after World War I.

Westerbork: Transit camp in northeastern Holland for almost 100,000 Jews who were deported between 1942 and 1944 to Auschwitz-Birkenau, Sobibor, Theresienstadt, and Bergen-Belsen. Anne Frank and her family were held at Westerbork between August 8, 1944 and September 3, 1944, when they were put on the last transport to Auschwitz.

Wiesenthal, Simon (1908-2005): Famed Holocaust survivor who has dedicated his life since the war to gathering evidence for the prosecution of Nazi war criminals.

Yad Vashem: The Holocaust Martyrs and Heroes Remembrance Authority. This center for Holocaust archives, museum, and memorial in Jerusalem was established in 1953 by the Knesset--the Israeli Parliament. The origin of the name is from a Biblical verse: *"And to them will I give in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name (Yad Vashem) that shall not be cut off."* (Isaiah 56:5).

Yad is Hebrew for memorial and hand. *Shem*, is the word for "name." The purpose of Yad Vashem was to provide a memorial (a place) and a name for those that perished—all too often they were nameless and were never given a resting place.



Located at the foot of Mount Herzl on the Mount of Remembrance in Jerusalem, Yad Vashem is a 45-acre complex containing the Holocaust History Museum, memorial sites, such as the Children's Memorial and the Hall of Remembrance, The Museum of Holocaust Art, sculptures, outdoor commemorative sites such as the Valley of the Communities, a synagogue, archives, a research institute, library, publishing house

and an educational center, The International School for Holocaust Studies. Non-Jews who saved Jews during the Holocaust, at personal risk, are honored by Yad Vashem as “Righteous Among the Nations.”

Yiddish: A language that combines elements of German and Hebrew, usually written in Hebrew characters and spoken by Jews chiefly in eastern Europe and areas to which eastern Europeans have migrated. The language arises in 1000 C.E. when the Jews are living in the Rhineland and seeking a way to communicate with each other using Talmudic references in order to disguise the meaning of their communications.

Zionism: The national movement for the return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the resumption of Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel. Zionism is based on the foundation of historical ties and religious traditions that link the Jewish people to the Land of Israel, where the concept of Jewish nationhood first evolved somewhere between 1200 BCE and the Diaspora (70 CE) that began with the destruction of the Second Temple.

The modern Zionist movement began in the late 19th century. It was formally established by the Austro-Hungarian journalist Theodor Herzl in the late 19th century following the publication of his book *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) and was founded largely by secular Jews as response to European and Russian anti-Semitism. The re-creation of a Jewish homeland was critically important after in the years leading up to, during and immediately following the Holocaust. Today roughly 40% of world Jewry resides in Israel—a number comparable to those that live in the United States.

Zyklon B: A cyanide-based pesticide which released Hydrogen Cyanide gas. It was used in the gas chambers of the Nazi extermination camps.