

# The Road to Holocaust

# The Program

- Hitler's belief that the Jews represented the principle of evil in the world
- The need for visible enemy
- „There cannot be two chosen people” (Hitler)
- The Jew as the Anti-Man
- Genetical engineering of the New Man
- Eliminating from the gene pool all inferior elements (people with hereditary diseases, homosexuals, Gypsies, Slavs, Jews)

# Jews living in the German Empire

- 1933-38 elimination of the Jews from German public life by depriving them of their civil rights and undermining their means of livelihood
- 1938-41 enforced emigration

# Racial revolution

- Racism as an ideology of essential inequality of human beings (national socialism as 'applied racial science')
- Claimed superiority of the Aryan race
- Revolutionaries with good cause (love of own's race)
- Idealism, indoctrination, mass seduction

# Gradual evolvement

- In 1933 there was no master plan
- Nazification of the whole German society
- „The destruction of Jews was not so much a product of law and commands as it was a matter of spirit, of shared comprehension, of consonance and synchroniztion” (Hillberg)

# Hitler's public announcements

- Hitler's belief in declaration of war by the Jews on Germany
- January 1939, Hitler's warning that the Jews will be annihilated in case of war (which he wanted)
- January 30, 1941 repetition of the threat he had made two years earlier

# Preparations

League of Reich Physicians (Gerhard Wagner)  
Office of Public Enlightenment on Population  
Politics (Walter Gross)  
Expert Committee for Population and Racial  
Policy (catalyst for drafting racial legislation)  
The sterilization law of July 14, 1933

# The period of wild actions and uncoordinated assaults 1933-39

- Gleichschaltung
- Wait and see position
- Attacks on Jewish intellectuals, scientists, artists, writers, musicians
- 1935 September (Nuremberg Laws)
- Public cooperation
- Stage managed from above and carried out from below



# Normalization of the Abnormal

- The Nazi regime steadily accustomed the population to acts of public brutality and thereby managed to enmesh ordinary Germans into active support
- Wild actions were a failure
- Blockade of Jewish business and department stores (on March 9, 1933)
- Nationwide boycott on April 1, 1933
- Economic assaults („voluntary Aryanization“)
- November 9-10, 1938. Kristallnacht (267 synagogues were burned, 7500 businesses were vandalized, 91 Jews were killed)





# Instrument of the Racial Destruction

- Sovereignty – the right to be exceptional
- Himmler, the architect of SS, police, concentration and annihilation camps
- True believer, fugitive of freedom
- Visionary and bureaucrat
- Crazy petty bourgeoisie
- The idea of human breeding
- Himmler and Heydrich

# Himmler and Heydrich

- The bond between the 33 years old racial fanatic chief and his 29 years old psychopathic sidekick
- SS and its Security Services
- The SD Department of Jewish Affairs
- Massive index card catalogue
- Network of informers
- Taking over the Gestapo in 1934

# SS

- SS weekly journal (Das Schwarte Corps)
- The presentation of SS as an noble elite
- Using the Jesuit model
- Perverse spirituality
- Struggle, obedienced, sense of superiority, cohesion
- Death's Head Units



The all-black tunic and peaked cap at left above were worn by a *Scharführer*, or staff sergeant, of the Allgemeine-SS Standarte 45, a regiment based at Oppeln in Upper Silesia. The red border on the cuff band indicates that the wearer belonged to the 3d Battalion. A braided aluminum chin strap marks the cap above as an officer's hat. The dress boots were worn by all ranks.

# From Euthanasia to Ethnic Cleansing

- Prototype of annihilation program
- Top secrecy (acronym T 4, fraudulent death certificates, false letter of condolence )
- Authorization of Hitler
- Scholarly participation
- Bureacracy
- Racial vision of cleansing the German gene pool
- Child euthanasia and adult euthanasia (stationary gas chambers disguised as showers)
- Experimentation
- „Most humane method of killing”
- Killing sites
- Training ground for the Holocaust



# The concentration camp

- Instrument dedicated to the systematic destruction of human beings by violence, starvation and labor
- British concentration camps in South-Africa
- Soviet concentration camps in Siberia (Gulag)
- Professionalism (culture of terror)
- The first concentration camp: Dachau in 1933

# The KZ universe

- Veil of secrecy
- 24 000 in 1933
- 714 211 in 1945
- 23 major camps and thousands of subcamps
- Transit camps, collection camps
- Annihilation camps (assembly lines of death)  
in Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek and  
Treblinka



# Dehumanization

- Comrades of the SS! You all know what the Führer has called upon us to do. We haven't come here to treat those swine inside like human beings. In our eyes, they are not like us, they are something second class. For years they have been able to pursue their criminal devices. But now we have got the power. If these swine had taken over, they'd make sure that our heads rolled in dust. So we too know no sentimentality. Any man in our ranks who can't stand the sight of blood doesn't belong here., he should get out. The more of these bastards we shoot, the fewer we shall have to feed-

# The beginnings

- Deportation
- Concentration (ghettoization)
- Expropriation
- Resettlement
- Establishment of Jewish councils
- Conflicting interests of the warfare and the policy of destruction of Jews

# Disorder

- 1942: 11 million Jews caught
- Shifting goals
- Dropping plans for emigration and establishment of Jewish reservations
- Deportation eastward, ghettos (administered by Jewish councils)
- The conflict between Himmler and Frank

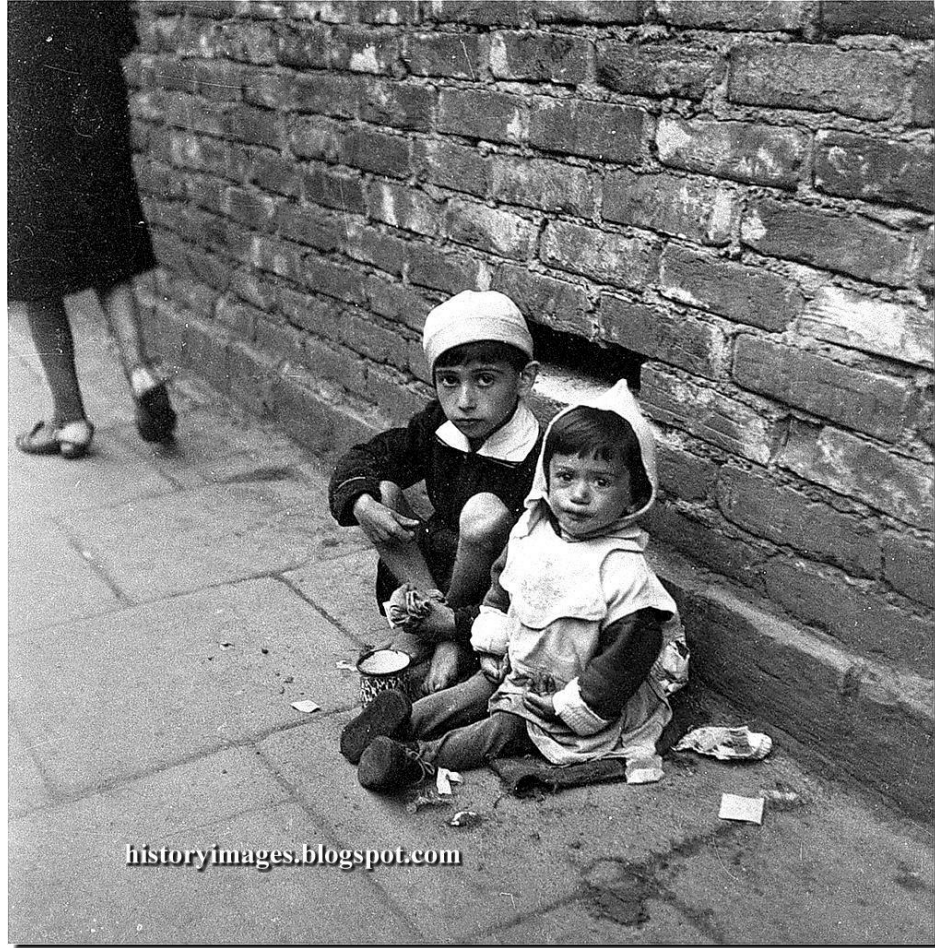
# The ghettos

- Mass starvation in the ghettos
- Unsanitary conditions justifying to wipe out the ghetto dwellers
- „transitional solution”
- Works vs. Death
- Spring 1942:”The Final Solution”
- No written order of Hitler

# Warsaw ghetto







[historyimages.blogspot.com](http://historyimages.blogspot.com)

# The turning point

- Attack of the Soviet Union (June 22, 1941)
- Einsatzgruppen (fierce competition)
- Mass shootings
- All the Jews on Soviet soil should be exterminated
- Efforts of concealment

# The Wannsee conference

- January 20, 1942
- Heydrich presiding, secretary Eichmann
- Representatives of the agencies involved in the Final Solution
- Jews represent a hazard to the Reich
- 11 million Jews to be exterminated (whole of Europe)
- Collection, deportation, extermination
- Disagreement over the method (shooting, gassing, death by slave labor)

# Attendees



Gauleiter  
Dr. Meyer



Reichsamtseiter  
Dr. Leibbrandt



Staatssekretär  
Dr. Stuckart



Staatssekretär  
Neumann



Staatssekretär  
Dr. Freisler



Staatssekretär  
Dr. Bühler



Unterstaatssekretär  
Luther



SS-Oberführer  
Klopfer



Ministerialdirektor  
Kritzing



SS-Gruppenführer  
Hofmann



SS-Gruppenführer  
Müller



SS-Obersturmbannführer  
Eichmann



SS-Oberführer  
Dr. Schöngarth



SS-Sturmbannführer  
Dr. Lange



SS-Obergruppenführer  
Heydrich

# 1942-1944

- Stateless status
- 100 Reichsmark and 50 kilogram
- Transport by the German Reichsbahn
- Five extermination camps: Auschwitz, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka. Majdanek
- Zyklon-B
- Selection after arrival
- Deception
- Gassing
- Cremation