

Jewish Question in the Nazi Germany:

Key words: Nurnberg laws, Anti-Semitism, Racism, Social Darwinism, Segregation, Ghetto, Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass), the Holocaust, Anne Frank, Angel of Death, The Final Solution:

..... German Jews were living in Germany (1% of the population) around 1930

Why did Hitler and the Nazis hate the Jews?

- Since the 1870s the Jews were the object of a new wave of **demonization and** **theories**.

“Stab-in-the-back” theory:

View that **Germany was not defeated on the battlefield** but had been **brought down by** on the **home front**. In other words it was claimed that!

Distinctive feature of Hitler's anti-Semitism was that it was **formulated as conspirative theory**.

- Jews became a **scapegoat** for Germany's economic problems. (According to this racist sentiment, "international Jewish financiers had plunged the world into a **War** for their **profit**.")
- Some Germans believed that "Jewish bankers" were responsible for the **Treaty of**
- The Nazis used **hatred of the Jews to unify the German people** and create a new German empire. **Nothing unites people more than when they believe they are constantly under attack and fighting a common enemy.**
-: Germany was hit the hardest by the worldwide economic depression, and successful Jews were **envied**.

Nazi racism:

- **Aryans:**
- The Germans and other “Aryans” as a “**Master Race**” creates “**culture**”. Other groups were seen as **racially inferior, especially**
- “**Racial purity**”: The Nazis were obsessed with the policy “racial purity”. This led them to order **compulsory sterilization** of disabled people and criminals and, later, the murder of mentally and physically handicapped people. During the 1930s and 1940s, the Nazi regime forcibly sterilized hundreds of thousands of people whom they viewed as mentally and physically unfit, an estimated between 1934 and 1937.
- **Social Darwinism:** term that exploited Darwin’s ideas of “survival of the fittest” and applied it on the human society. Only those who are best adapted survive.

Aryans		Inferior Cultures
	X	

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Anti-Semitism, 1933-1938:

The Nazis developed **number of ways of the Jewish persecution:** 1-6:

- 1.
2. 1933:
3. 1934:
4. 1935:
5. From 1936: other laws that restricted Jewish ownership of property, banned Jews from all professional jobs and removed all Jewish children from State schools.
6. "Aryanization": See the "economic oppression" below
6. 1938:

Nuremberg Laws (1935):

The Reich Citizenship Law, Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor

- **The Reich Citizenship Law:** declared those not of German blood to be "state subjects" while those classified as "Aryans" were "citizens of the Reich". "State subjects" were **deprived of their citizenship rights**.
- Jews were forced to wear a yellow **Star of David** on their clothes.

Aryans		Jews
	X	

- **Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor:**
..... +
.....

- **Who is a Jew?:** The **Nuremberg Laws** did not identify a "Jew" as someone with particular **religious** beliefs. Instead, they defined anyone who had three or four Jewish grandparents as a Jew, regardless of whether that individual recognized himself or herself as a Jew or belonged to the Jewish religious community.



A Star of David:

The Star of David is generally recognized symbol of Jewish identity and Judaism

- The star was used by the Nazis as a method of Jews.
- It was still not implemented by *Kristallnacht* in 1938.

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Economic oppression:

• Jews were excluded from the economic sphere of Germany by preventing them from earning a living.

• **Aryanization:**
.....
.....

• By **January 1, 1938**, German Jews were prohibited from operating businesses and trades, and from offering goods and services. Through the enactment from November 1938 all the remaining businesses were transferred to non-Jewish owners and the proceeds were taken by the state.

Jewish exile:

• Many Jews went into exile, like **Albert Einstein** – they spoke against the Nazi regime from abroad

Increased violence, 1938-1941:

- After 1938, the Nazi policy towards Jews became **more violent**.
- When a Jewish student shot dead a German diplomat in Paris, as a protest against the discrimination against Jews in Germany, the Nazis responded with what became known as **Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass)**

Kristallnacht (The Night of the Broken Glass) in 1938:

- November 1938: The **SS organized attacks** on Jewish in a **week-long campaign of terror**.
- Over Jews were killed, were put in concentration camps, and thousands of homes and shops were destroyed. The Nazi government then fined the Jewish community one billion marks for the damage done.
- By 1939, nearly all Jewish businesses were closed or forced to sell

Ghetto:

- **A ghetto:** is a section of a city occupied by a group who live there especially because of social, economic, or legal pressure. The term ghetto was originally used in to describe the area where Jews were compelled to live.
- **Jewish ghettos in Europe:** existed because Jews were viewed as

- Jews in Germany were forced to live in **ghettoes**.
- Starting in 1939, Adolf Eichmann, began to systematically move Polish Jews away from their homes and into designated areas of large Polish cities. The total number of Nazi ghettos in occupied Poland could be counted in the hundreds. In Poland, Jewish people were deliberately deprived of food, which forced them to work in labor camps where many died from starvation and disease.

The Warsaw Ghetto:

- Established in October 1940, was the **largest of the Ghettos formed in Poland**, with about people.
- **Life in the Warsaw Ghetto**: area of 2,6 km². Walls were built to separate the ghetto district from the rest of the city. There were about 7 people living in every room. They were given 1,8 kg of bread per person per month. Anyone who left the ghetto was executed.
- **Resistance in Warsaw (1943)**: when German troops entered the Warsaw Ghetto in April 1943 to **destroy it**, to their surprise they were beaten back, although the Jews were only lightly armed. However, the Germans crushed the resistance.

Holocaust:

Definition: 2 meanings

1. The genocide of approximately **million European Jews** during World War II.

2. Definition of the Holocaust should also include the Nazis' systematic murder of millions of people in other groups, including

..... By this definition, the total number of Holocaust victims would be between **11 million** and **17 million people**.

The Final Solution:

- **Conference in January 1942**: "The *Final Solution to the Jewish Question*" (=plan and execution of the systematic genocide of European Jews) accepted. Four main persons responsible:
- **Labor camps** (..... **camps**): where interned inmates had to do **hard physical labor** under inhumane conditions and cruel treatment. Many of prisoners died in the concentration camps through deliberate mistreatment, disease, starvation, and overwork, or were executed as unfit for labor.

"Angel of the Death"

- Near the end of the war, the camps became sites for medical experiments. The most infamous doctor at Auschwitz was, known as the "**Angel of Death**". Particularly interested in research on identical twins, Mengele performed cruel experiments on them, such as inducing diseases in one twin and killing the other when the first died to perform comparative autopsies. He also took a special interest in dwarfs.

- **Extermination camps** =: camps whose primary function was, systematic killing of the prisoners delivered there.
- **Auschwitz-Birkenau**: death and labour camp, about 1 100 000 victims. The guards were instructed to "**Work them to death**". Life expectancy was three months. Prisoners died through disease, exhaustion or lack of food. If they were too weak to work they were killed.

- **Combined concentration and extermination camps**: Belzec, Chelmno, Sobibor, Treblinka. Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek.

Eugenics:

Pic: Nazi propaganda for their compulsory "euthanasia" program: "This person suffering from hereditary defects costs the community 60,000 Reichsmark during his lifetime. Fellow German, that is your money, too."



- **Eugenics:**
- **Eugenics in the Nazi Germany:** eugenics programs attempted to maintain a through a series of programs that ran under the banner of **racial hygiene**.

Among other activities, the Nazis performed extensive **experimentation on live human beings** to test their genetic theories, ranging from simple measurement of physical characteristics to the experiments carried out by Josef Mengele in the concentration camps.

The story of Anne Frank (1929-1945):

- Gained international fame posthumously thanks to Frank’s diary which documents her experiences of hiding during the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II.
- In July 1942, the family went into hiding in the rooms of her father’s office building. After two years, the group was betrayed and transported to concentration camps. Anne Frank and her sister were eventually transferred to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp where they both died of typhus in March 1945.

