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Aktion (ak tsion)

The term used for anti-Jewish operations carried out against Jews under Nazi orders. It most commonly was used for deportation and killing operations.

Allies

The nations fighting Nazi Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II, primarily the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union.

ally

Someone who forms a helpful association with another, often by speaking out on that person's behalf or in some other way indicating an alliance as opposed to a bystander who chooses not to get involved.

altruism

Selfless regard or concern for the well-being of others.

anti-Judaism

Prejudice against Jews because of their religious beliefs and practices; anti-Judaism implies that Jewish religious beliefs have been superseded or eliminated as a path to salvation.

antisemitism *n.*

Prejudice or discrimination against Jews. Antisemitism can be based on hatred against Jews because of their religious beliefs or their group membership (ethnicity), but also on the erroneous belief that Jews are a race. Nazi antisemitism was racial in nature; Jews were viewed as racially inferior to Aryans and destructive of the world order. —*antisemitic* *adj.*

apathy

A lack of interest or regard; indifference.

Appell (a pell)

“Roll call” in German.

Appellplatz (a pell plah st)

Refers to the square where a roll call was held.

armed resistance

Acts of opposition, defiance, or sabotage using weapons or including typical battles, attacks, or guerrilla strikes. (See also **cultural resistance** and **spiritual resistance**.)

Aryan

A rather ambiguous term the Nazis primarily applied to people of Northern European racial background.

Although never defined, in April 1933, the Nazis defined “non-Aryans” as individuals who had a parent or grandparent who was Jewish.

Auschwitz-Birkenau (ow sch vits-beer ken ow)

A complex consisting of concentration, extermination, and labor camps in Poland. It was established in 1940 as a concentration camp and a killing center was in operation from 1942, where more than one million Jews were murdered. Auschwitz I: The main camp. Auschwitz II (also known as Birkenau): The extermination center. Auschwitz III (Monowitz): The I.G. Farben labor camp, also known as Buna. In addition, there were numerous secondary camps.

Babi Yar (bahbi yahr)

A deep ravine outside the Ukrainian city of Kiev, on the Dnieper River where the Einsatzgruppen C murdered and buried 34,000 Jews over the course of two days (September 29–30, 1941). (See also **Einsatzgruppen**.)

Bar Mitzvah (bahr mits va)

A Jewish male who at the age of thirteen transitions to a state of religious and ritual obligation under the precepts of Jewish law becomes a *Bar Mitzvah*. The term has also come to denote a communal initiation ceremony signifying the beginning of religious/ritual responsibility. Young women reach the status of *Bat Mitzvah* (baht mits va) at age twelve.

Belzec (bel schits)

A Nazi extermination camp in Poland, built in 1942. Approximately 550,000 Jews were murdered there in 1942 and 1943. The Nazis dismantled the camp in the fall of 1943.

Bergen-Belsen

A Nazi concentration camp located in northern Germany that was established in 1943. Although this camp was designated for persons who were slated to be exchanged with German nationals in Allied countries, only a few of the Jews who were brought to Bergen-Belsen were actually set free by the Germans. At the end of 1944 and early in 1945, thousands of Jewish prisoners who were forcibly marched from the east began arriving in the camp. Due to the deteriorating conditions, a typhus epidemic broke out and by mid-April 1945, 35,000 prisoners had perished. On April 15, 1945, the camp was liberated by British forces, who were appalled to find most of the 60,000 inmates in critical condition. During the next five days, 14,000 prisoners died, and in the

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following weeks, another 14,000 perished.

Bermuda Conference

A conference convened by the United States and Great Britain on April 19, 1943, ostensibly to find solutions for wartime refugees. In fact, it marked the high point of efforts by officials in both nations to thwart a move for more effective action to rescue European Jewry.

bigotry

An unreasonable or irrational attachment to negative stereotypes and prejudices.

boycott

To abstain from using, buying, or dealing with as an expression of protest or disfavor or as a means of coercion.

Brownshirts (SA, Sturmabteilung <strum ab tile ung>, Storm Troopers)

The Nazi militia created by Adolf Hitler in 1921 that helped him rise to power but was eclipsed by the SS after 1943; known as “Brownshirts” because of the color of the uniform.

Buchenwald (boo khien vald)

A concentration camp established in 1937 near Weimar, Germany. While it was primarily a labor camp in the German concentration camp system and not an extermination center, thousands died there from exposure, over-work, and execution. Many Jews from other camps were forcibly marched there by the Nazis in early 1945.

BDJJ

A Jewish Youth Movement established in 1933 to organize cultural, social, and educational activities for German-Jewish youth.

bystander

One who is present at an event or who knows about its occurrence without participating in it.

cantor

A role (traditionally held by a man) within formal Jewish religious worship which employs elaborate musical chanting while leading a congregation in prayer.

caricature

A representation, especially pictorial or literary, in which the subject's distinctive features are deliberately

exaggerated to produce a comic or grotesque effect.

Chanukah or Hanukkah

An eight-day holiday that celebrates the unlikely victory of the Israelites, led by the Maccabees, against Greek Assyrian persecution and religious oppression in the Land of Israel in the second century B.C.E. In addition to marking a military victory against religious oppression and the subsequent rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem, Chanukah recognizes a miracle in that a single flask of oil used to light the Temple menorah lasted for eight days.

Chelmno (kheldm no)

A Nazi extermination camp in Poland. Established in 1941, it was the first of the Nazi extermination camps employing carbon monoxide gas vans as the main method of killing. Approximately 150,000 Jews and 5,000 Sinti-Roma were murdered there between late 1941 and 1944, although not continuously. The Nazis dismantled the camp in late 1944 and early 1945.

Christianity

A monotheistic system of beliefs and practices based on the Old Testament and the teachings of Jesus as embodied in the New Testament and emphasizing the role of Jesus as savior.

collaboration *n.*

The act of working jointly; in the context of war, it is often the act of cooperating traitorously with an enemy that is occupying one's country. —**collaborator *n.***

Communism *n.*

An ideological concept or system of society in which the collective community shares ownership in resources and the means of production. In theory, such societies provide for equal sharing of all work, according to ability, and all benefits, according to need. In 1848, Karl Marx, in collaboration with Friedrich Engels, published the *Communist Manifesto* that provided the theoretical impetus for the Russian Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. —**Communist *n.* or *adj.***

concentration camp

Camps established by the Nazi regime, which eventually became a major instrument of terror, control, punishment, and killing performed through both deliberate means as well as attrition by hunger and/or disease.

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crematoria

Furnaces used to cremate bodies. During the Holocaust, crematoria were installed in many camps, among them the extermination camps and the Theresienstadt ghetto.

crimes against humanity

Acts of persecution against a group or groups so heinous as to warrant punishment under international law. The term was first used in the preamble of the Hague Convention of 1907 and subsequently used during the Nuremberg Trials as a charge for actions during World War II — actions that did not violate a specific treaty but were deemed to require punishment. (See also **Nuremberg Trials**.)

Crusades

Military campaigns embarked upon in the name of Christianity to recover the Holy Land from Muslim occupation during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. Many times these campaigns included brutal and murderous attacks on Jewish communities on the road to the Holy Land.

cultural resistance, cultural/spiritual resistance

Acts of opposition that are usually related to cultural traditions and the preservation of human dignity, intended to undermine an oppressor and inspire hope within the ranks of the resisters. During the Holocaust, cultural/spiritual resistance was often the only possible way to oppose Nazi tyranny. Examples of cultural resistance included defying Nazi directives by creating schools in the ghettos, maintaining religious customs, writing poems and songs, drawing, painting, or keeping journals and other records of ghetto or camp life. (See also **spiritual resistance** and **armed resistance**.)

Dachau (dak how)

A concentration camp located in Upper Bavaria, northeast of Munich, that began operating in 1933. Various medical experiments were performed on helpless inmates there.

death march

A forced march of Nazi camp prisoners toward the German interior at the end of World War II. Such marches began when the German armed forces, trapped between the Soviets to the east and the advancing Allied troops from the west, attempted to prevent the liberation of camp inmates. Treated with tremendous brutality during the forced marches, thousands were shot or died of starvation or exhaustion.

dehumanization

As a political or social measure, dehumanization is intended to change the manner in which a person or group of people are perceived, reducing the target group to objects or beings not worthy of human rights.

democracy

A system of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.

Der Stürmer (der sturm er)

The weekly newspaper published by Julius Streicher for twenty-two years, beginning in May 1923. Every issue denounced Jews in crude, vicious, and vivid ways, often through the use of caricatures. (See also **caricatures**.)

discrimination

The denial of justice and fair treatment by both individuals and institutions in many arenas, including employment, education, housing, banking, and political rights. Discrimination is an action that can follow prejudicial thinking.

displaced persons' camp (DP camp)

Camps set up after World War II in Austria, Germany, and Italy as temporary living quarters for the tens of thousands of homeless people created by the war. Many survivors of the Holocaust who had no home or country to which they could return were among the displaced persons.

Eichmann Trial

Adolf Eichmann, SS Lieutenant-colonel and head of the “Jewish Section” of the SD, was arrested at the end of World War II in the American zone, but escaped, went underground, and disappeared. On May 11, 1960, members of the Israeli Secret Service captured him from Argentina and took him to Israel to stand trial. Eichmann was tried in Jerusalem (April–December 1961), convicted, and sentenced to death. Executed on May 31, 1962, Eichmann is the only individual ever sentenced to death by the Israeli penal system.

Einsatzgruppen (ein zats groep en)

Four mobile death squads (A, B, C, and D) estimated to have killed approximately 1.5 million Jews. Victims were executed in mass shootings and buried in unmarked graves — usually in the ditches they were forced to dig. (See also **Babi Yar**.)

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European Jewry

Over 9.5 million European (including the Soviet Union) Jews in the pre-World War II period. By 1948, there were only an estimated 3.7 million Jews remaining in Europe.

Euthanasia Program

A Nazi term for the deliberate extermination of people institutionalized with physical, mental, and emotional disabilities, carried out as a measure to prevent contamination of the Nazi-defined Aryan race. The Euthanasia Program began in 1939, with German non-Jews as the first victims.

Evian Conference

A conference convened by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in July 1938 to discuss the problem of refugees. Thirty-two countries met in Evian-les-Bains, France. However, not much was accomplished, since most western countries were reluctant to accept Jewish refugees.

extermination camp *also called death camp*

A Nazi facility where victims were killed on a mass industrialized scale and their bodies burned or buried in mass graves. The Nazis operated six extermination camps: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibór, and Treblinka.

Fascism

A social and political ideology that has as its primary guiding principle that the state or nation is the highest priority, rather than personal or individual freedoms.

"Final Solution of the Jewish Question" ("Final Solution")

A Nazi code phrase referring to their systematic plan to murder every Jewish man, woman, and child in Europe.

genocide

The destruction of an ethnic or national group of people to the extent that they no longer exist as a defined unit. Genocide includes mass murder and the destruction of cultural and political institutions.

Gentile

Someone who is not of the Jewish faith; most often referring to a Christian.

Gestapo (gesh tah poh)

The Nazi Secret State Police who were directly involved in implementing the murder of Jews and other Nazi

victims during the Holocaust.

ghetto

Sections of towns and cities that the German occupation authorities and their allies used to concentrate, exploit, and starve regional Jewish populations.

Great Depression

The economic crisis beginning with the stock market crash in the United States in 1929 and continuing through the 1930s; a worldwide economic downturn resulted.

Gross-Rosen

A concentration camp established in 1940 and named for the nearby village of Gross-Rosen in present-day Poland. As of January 1, 1945, the Gross-Rosen complex held 76,728 prisoners. Nearly 26,000 of these were women, most of them Jews. This was one of the largest groupings of female prisoners in the entire concentration camp system.

Gypsies

A collective term often used for Sinti and Roma communities living throughout Eastern Europe since the fifteenth century. They were considered enemies of the state by the Nazis and persecuted.

hate group

A group whose worldview is based significantly on strong intolerance or hatred of a certain group(s) of people based on race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. Hate groups usually, but not always, claim superiority to those whom they oppose. They often advocate *separation*: removing themselves from the presence of the people they hate, or removing the people they hate from their presence. They sometimes advocate *elimination*: killing those people whom they hate.

"Hatikvah" (ha tik vah)

The title of the Israeli national anthem; means "hope" in Hebrew.

Hitler Youth (Hitlerjugend <hit ler yoo gend>)

The Nazi Party's compulsory (after 1939) youth movement, which emphasized physical training, Nazi ideology, and absolute obedience to Hitler and the Nazi Party. Youth were subject to intensive propaganda regarding racial and national superiority.

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Holocaust

The murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazis and their collaborators; Sinti-Roma, Poles, people with physical and mental disabilities, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents were among other victims of Hitler's regime.

Holocaust denial

An antisemitic movement that claims the Holocaust never happened or that minimizes or trivializes it.

homophobia

An irrational fear of homosexuals or those perceived to be homosexuals that can lead to discriminatory or violent behavior.

homosexual

A person who is emotionally and physically attracted to individuals of his or her own gender.

"Horst Wessel" (whor st vessel) song

The official anthem of the Nazi Party and the second national anthem of the Third Reich, whose lyrics were taken from a poem written by Horst Wessel, a member of the Storm Troopers (SA).

insurgent

adj. Rising in revolt against established authority, especially a government or the leadership of a political party (*adj.*); —*n.* one who is insurgent

internment camp

A camp in which foreigners, prisoners of war, or others considered dangerous to pursuing a war effort are confined during wartime.

Jehovah's Witness

A religious sect that originated in the United States and had about 2,000 members in Germany in 1933. Their religious beliefs did not allow them to swear allegiance to any worldly power, making them enemies in the eyes of the Nazi state.

Judenrat (yoo den raht), pl. *Judenrate*

A Jewish council established in many of the German or Axis occupied Jewish communities in Europe. These councils were appointed by the Germans to implement various occupier/persecutorial directives within the ghettos.

Judaism

A religion developed among the ancient Hebrews and characterized by belief in one God who has revealed himself to Abraham, Moses, and the Hebrew prophets and by a religious life in accordance with Scriptures and rabbinic traditions.

Kadoshim (ka doe sheem)

Hebrew: plural, literally "sacred ones," or "holy ones," from *Kadosh*, meaning holy.

Kindertransport

The name given to a rescue operation carried out by British Jews for Jewish children from Greater Germany, following the *Kristallnacht Pogrom*, and the British government's declared willingness to allow 10,000 children to enter Great Britain.

kippah (kee poh)

A skullcap head covering worn by some Jews at all times, and other Jews during prayer and/or meals; also known as a *yarmulke*.

kosher

Food that is permissible to eat under Jewish dietary laws; can also describe any other ritual object that is fit for use according to Jewish Law.

Kovno ghetto

After the Nazis invaded Lithuania in 1941, they established a ghetto in Slabodka, just outside of Kovno/Kaunas. When the Kovno ghetto was first established, about 30,000 Jews were confined there. Within the first three months of its existence, 12,000 of the Jews in the Kovno ghetto had been massacred by Lithuanian volunteers under German command. When Kovno was liberated by Soviet forces on August 1, 1944, only a few hundred Jews remained there.

Knesset (k ness et)

The Israeli parliament.

Kristallnacht (kris tahl nakht) *Pogrom*

An organized pogrom against Jews in Germany and Austria on November 9–10, 1938. *Kristallnacht* is also known as the "Night of Broken Glass," or "Crystal Night." Orchestrated by the Nazis in retaliation for the assassination of a German embassy official in Paris by a seventeen-year-old Jewish youth named Herchel

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Grynzspan, hundreds of synagogues and 7,500 businesses were destroyed, almost 100 Jews were killed, and 30,000 were arrested and sent to concentration camps. German Jews were subsequently held financially responsible for the destruction wrought upon their property during this *pogrom*.

Ku Klux Klan

A secret society organized in Georgia in 1915 to reassert white supremacy by means of terrorism.

liberation

The process of an army driving conquerors out of an occupied territory. Holocaust survivors and citizens of occupied Europe used the word “liberation” to refer to the moment they were freed from German control. Individuals and/or nations involved in the liberation are referred to as “liberators.”

liquidated

A Nazi euphemism for eliminating a ghetto and its inhabitants by conducting massive deportations to concentration and extermination camps, or by murdering Jews on the outskirts of town.

Lodz (lo sch) ghetto

The first major ghetto, with 164,000 Jews, was established in Poland on May 1, 1940. Those deported from Lodz (this city was renamed Litzmannstadt under German occupation) during 1942 and June–July 1944 were sent to the Chelmno extermination camp. In August–September 1944, the ghetto was liquidated and the remaining 60,000 Jews were sent to Auschwitz.

Lodz Ghetto Chronicle

A daily chronicle of events in the Lodz ghetto that was written at the initiative of the archivist in the *Judenrat* organization. The compiling of the chronicles by writers and intellectuals in the ghetto continued uninterrupted from January 1941 until July 30, 1944. The writing was cautious, since Chaim Rumkowski, the head of the *Judenrat*, and the Germans themselves oversaw what was written.

Magen David (mah gayn dah veed)

The shield of David, or as it is more commonly known, the Star of David, is the symbol of intertwined equilateral triangles most commonly associated with Judaism today.

Majdanek (mai dah nek)

A concentration camp located in the Lublin district of

Poland. It was established in September 1941 and later functioned as an extermination and labor camp.

Mauthausen (maht how zen)

A camp for men, opened in August 1938, near Linz in northern Austria. Mauthausen was classified as a camp of utmost severity. Nearly 100,000 prisoners of various nationalities were either worked or tortured to death at the camp before American troops liberated it in May 1945.

menorah (men ohr a)

A seven-branched candelabrum used in the Temple; one of the oldest symbols of the Jewish faith.

Molotov Cocktail

A makeshift bomb made of a breakable container, filled with flammable liquid, and provided with a rag wick that is lighted just before being hurled.

nationalism *n.*

A sense of national consciousness with primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests. —**nationalist *n.***

Nazi

Short for Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiter-Partei (N.S.D.A.P.), the political party that emerged in Munich after World War I. The party was taken over by Adolf Hitler in the early 1920s. The swastika was the party symbol.

Nazi ideology or Nazi racial ideology

The Nazi system of beliefs, based on a racial view of the world. According to Nazi ideology, the Nordic Aryan Germans were the “master race.” Other races were inferior to them and the Jews were considered to be the “anti-race,” the exact opposite of the Germans, and an evil and destructive race. Germans were said to be the natural rulers of Europe and, in order to achieve that position, influence of the Jews needed to be ended. Thus, racial antisemitism and solving the so-called “Jewish Question” lay at the heart of Nazi ideology, as did the desire for more territory or Lebensraum (living space).

Nuremberg Laws

Racial laws put into effect by the German parliament in Nuremberg on September 15, 1935. These laws became the legal basis for the racist anti-Jewish policy in Germany. One of the first Nuremberg Laws declared that only Aryans could be citizens of the Reich. This

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stripped the Jews of their political rights. Thirteen additional decrees were added to the Nuremberg Laws over the next eight years; these included the first official definition of who was to be considered a Jew and who an Aryan.

Nuremberg Trials

The trials of twenty-two major Nazi figures in Nuremberg, Germany in 1945 and 1946 before the International Military Tribunal.

occupation

The invasion, conquest, and control of a nation or territory by foreign armed forces.

Palestine

The Roman term for what is now Israel; the name used by the British during World War II to denote the area they held under a League of Nations mandate.

partisans

Forces that use guerrilla tactics when operating in enemy-occupied territory. Throughout occupied Europe, partisans banded together to engage in guerrilla warfare against the Germans. Jewish partisans played a prominent role in parts of the Soviet Union where the geographical conditions permitted such warfare. In southern European countries such as Yugoslavia and Greece, Jews joined general partisan units as they did in Slovakia. In western European countries, such as Belgium and France, resistance was characterized mainly by underground movements, where Jews played a significant role.

Passover

The celebration of the Jewish people's freedom from Egyptian bondage that took place approximately 3,500 years ago, as told in the first fifteen chapters of the biblical Book of Exodus. The celebration is organized into a feast called the Passover *Seder*. The word "*seder*" means "order" or "procedure" in Hebrew and refers to the order of historical events recalled in the Passover meal as well as the meal itself.

perpetrator

Someone who does something that is morally wrong or criminal.

pogrom

A Yiddish word meaning "devastation" used to describe organized, large-scale acts of violence against Jewish

communities, especially the kind instigated by the authorities in Czarist Russia.

prejudice

Prejudging or making a decision about a person or group of people without sufficient knowledge. Prejudicial thinking is frequently based on stereotypes.

propaganda

False or partly false information used by a government or political party intended to sway the opinions of the population.

Purim

A holiday commemorating when the Jewish people living in Persia were saved from a plan to annihilate them. During this joyous holiday, it is customary to read the Book of Esther, parade in costume, give charity to the poor, send friends bags of goodies, and partake in a festive meal.

racism

The practice of discrimination, segregation, persecution, and domination of a group based on that group's race.

Rassenkunde (ras en kund a)

A term literally translating as "racial science." (See **Nazi ideology**.)

refugee

One who flees in search of safety, as in times of war, political oppression, or religious persecution.

Reich (rye ch), **Third Reich**

The official name of the Nazi regime; ruled from 1933 to 1945 under the command of Adolf Hitler. Historically, the First Reich was the medieval Holy Roman Empire, which lasted until 1806. The Second Reich included the German Empire from 1871–1918.

Reichstag (rye ch stagh)

The German Parliament under the Weimar Constitution. It was purely ornamental during Hitler's dictatorship.

rescue

To deliver someone from danger or imprisonment.

resistance

A group's action in opposition to those in power; during the Holocaust, Jews exhibited cultural, spiritual, and armed resistance to the Nazi regime.

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Ressortes (resorts)

The name given by the Jews in the Lodz ghetto to the factories that mostly manufactured materials for the Reich's war economy (from the German *Arbeitsressorte* — "work section").

"Return to Life"

A term referring to how Holocaust survivors began to rebuild their lives following the Holocaust.

revisionism *n.*

Advocating for the revision of an accepted, usually long-standing view, theory, or doctrine, especially a revision of historical events and movements. To give themselves more legitimacy, many Holocaust deniers call themselves "revisionists." —**revisionist** *n.*

"Righteous Among the Nations"

An award given by Yad Vashem in the name of the State of Israel to non-Jews who risked their lives, or in the case of diplomats, their careers, to help Jews during the Holocaust. Approximately 21,000 "Righteous Among the Nations" have been recognized so far.

scapegoat

To blame an individual or group for something based on that person or group's identity when, in reality, the person or group is not responsible. Prejudicial thinking and discriminatory acts can lead to scapegoating. The individual or group blamed is the "scapegoat."

Schutzstaffel (SS) (shoe st stah ful)

Originally organized as Hitler's personal bodyguard, the SS, or secret police, was transformed into a giant organization under Heinrich Himmler. Although various SS units were assigned to the battlefield, the organization is best known for carrying out the destruction of European Jewry.

selection

A euphemism for the process carried out by German physicians to select victims for extermination or forced labor.

sexism

Prejudice and/or discrimination based on gender.

Shoah (sho ah)

A Hebrew word meaning "catastrophe," referring to the Holocaust.

Sinti-Roma

Sinti is the name of a nomadic people of northwestern Europe. They are related to the Roma, who live predominantly in Eastern Europe and whose origin is traced to India. (See **Gypsies**.)

Sobibór (so be bor)

An extermination camp located in the Lublin district of eastern Poland. Sobibór opened in May 1942 and closed the day after a rebellion by its Jewish prisoners on October 14, 1943. At least 250,000 Jews were murdered there.

Socialism *n.*

A theory or system of social organization that advocates the ownership and control of land, capital, industry, etc. by the community as a whole. In Marxist theory it represents the stage following capitalism before reaching communism. —**Socialist** *n.*

Sonderkommando (zon der ko man do)

A special commando, usually referring to Jewish prisoners in extermination camps whose forced labor assignment was to dispose of/cremate bodies of gas chamber victims.

spiritual resistance

Resistance that includes maintaining human dignity in the dehumanizing conditions of the ghettos and camps. (See also **cultural resistance** and **armed resistance**.)

stereotype

An oversimplified generalization about a person or group of people without regard for individual differences. Even seemingly positive stereotypes that link a person or group to a specific positive trait can have negative consequences.

Storm Troopers (See **Brownshirts**.)

survivor

Within the context of the Holocaust, a survivor is someone who escaped death at the hands of the Nazis and their collaborators.

swastika

An ancient Eastern symbol appropriated by the Nazis as their emblem.

Talmud

The name of the two collections (Mishnah and Gemara) of records of the discussion and administration of Jewish

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law by scholars in various academies from 200 C.E.–500 C.E.

totalitarian

A government or doctrine in which one political party or group maintains complete control, down to the level of the intimate details of an individual's life.

Treaty of Versailles (ver sigh)

A peace treaty that was signed at the end of World War I in Versailles, France.

Treblinka (tre blink a)

An extermination camp located in Poland. By November 1943, 870,000 Jews, many from Warsaw, were murdered in Treblinka.

tyranny

A government in which a single ruler is vested with absolute power or control through the use of threats and violence.

underground

Any resistance organization devoted to undermining or overthrowing a government in power.

Vichy (vee she), **Vichy France**

A government set up by the Nazis after they conquered France in spring 1940, with its capital in the town of Vichy.

victim

One who is targeted for persecution or death by another.

visual history testimony

As defined by the Survivors of the Shoah Visual History Foundation, visual history testimony is a videotaped account of one person's experiences of life before, during, and after the Holocaust. Visual history testimony offers a deeper understanding of these events as they were lived, filtered through the reflections of one person.

Wannsee (vahn zey) **Conference**

A conference held on January 20, 1942 beside Lake Wannsee in Berlin. At this conference, the apparatus was coordinated to carry out the total annihilation of European Jews.

war crimes trial

A trial of a punishable offense during war time by a person or persons, military or civilian. Under

international law, war crimes are offenses that fail to adhere to the norms of procedure and rules of battle, including mistreatment of prisoners of war or attacking those displaying a flag of truce.

Warsaw ghetto

Established in November 1940, the ghetto was surrounded by a wall and contained approximately 450,000 Jews. About 45,000 Jews died there in 1941 alone, as a result of overcrowding, hard labor, poor sanitation, insufficient food, starvation, and disease. All told, one out of five ghetto residents died in the ghetto itself. During 1942, most of the ghetto residents were deported to Treblinka, leaving about 60,000 Jews in the ghetto until it was liquidated in May 1943.

Warsaw Ghetto Uprising

A revolt that took place in April 1943 in the Warsaw ghetto when the Germans attempted to deport the remaining inhabitants to Treblinka. The defense forces (the Z.O.B.), commanded by Mordecai Anielewicz, fought the Germans for twenty-seven days, before the ghetto was destroyed. (See also Z.O.B.)

Weimar (vi mahr) **Republic**

The period of German history from 1919 to 1933; named after the city of Weimar, where a national assembly convened to produce a new constitution after the German monarchy was abolished following the nation's defeat in World War I. The first attempt at establishing a democracy in Germany was a time of great tension and conflict, and it ultimately failed with the ascent of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party in 1933.

Yad Vashem

The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem. The name Yad Vashem is taken from an Old Testament passage: "*I will build for them a name and a memorial.*" (Isaiah 56:5).

Yom Hashoah

A day established to commemorate the Holocaust and the six million Jews who perished; it is the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (April 19).

Yom Kippur

The Day of Atonement; the holiest day in the Jewish year.

Zionism *n.*

A political and cultural movement advocating a Jewish

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independent state in the Land of Israel. —Zionist *n.*

Z.O.B.

The Jewish Fighting Organization that led the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. (See **Warsaw Ghetto Uprising**.)

Zyklon B

Hydrogen cyanide, a poisonous gas originally developed as a fumigation agent to remove insects. In October 1941, it was used experimentally on Soviet prisoners of war. The success of these experiments had devastating consequences for millions of Jews who were gassed in the Nazi extermination camps.

