



Turton School History Department

Name _____

Class _____



Yr 9 History

Homework Book – Topic 2

The Holocaust

Homework 1

To be completed by:

What was the Nazi view about Judaism?

Despite years of anti-Semitic rhetoric, when Adolf Hitler and the Nazis first came to power in Germany in January 1933, they had few concrete policies for dealing with the Jews. During his first years in office Hitler concentrated on destroying his political enemies, improving the economy, and rebuilding German power.

He did not, however, ignore pressure from the anti-Jewish elements in the Party and the SA (the *Sturm Abteilung* or storm troopers - the party militia). In April 1933 he permitted an organised boycott of Jewish businesses and his government enacted a string of laws that gradually excluded the Jews from government employment and public life. Under the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 German Jews were reduced to subject status and lost the rights of citizens. Germany became, in effect, an apartheid state.

However, Jews who had fought in the 1914-18 war were excluded from discriminatory measures for as long as Field Marshall Paul von Hindenburg was President. Hindenburg had led Germany during the war, and felt a sense of obligation to Jewish veterans. When he died in 1934, and Hitler became head of state, this restraint was removed. Hitler was also aware that foreign opinion and trade might be adversely affected by harsh persecution of the Jews. As a consequence, 1936, the year of the Berlin Olympics, when there were many foreign visitors in Germany, was notably 'quiet' for German Jews.

What did Hitler concentrate on when he first came to power? What did he organise in April 1933?

How did Hitler expand?

By 1937-8, Hitler felt secure at home. The economy was strong and he was popular. He now embarked on an expansionist foreign policy. Expansionism helped to radicalise the treatment of the Jews. In March 1938, Hitler ordered the occupation of Austria, and a wave of anti-Semitic violence descended upon Austrian Jews. As part of the process of gearing the German economy for war, Hitler sanctioned semi-legal measures to seize the businesses and assets of German and Austrian Jews - a process called 'Aryanisation'.

Following the annexation of the Czechoslovakian borderlands, Hitler permitted his propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels to incite a huge pogrom against Jews in the Reich (supposedly in revenge for the assassination of a German consular official in Paris by a Jew). On 9-10 November 1938, hundreds of synagogues were burned down, thousands of Jewish homes and stores were ransacked, around 30,000 Jewish men were sent to concentration camps, and more than 90 were murdered. The November pogrom, dubbed *Kristallnacht*, or the 'Night of Broken Glass', by the Nazis, represented a significant radicalisation of attitudes towards the Jews.

Few top Nazis were involved in organising *Kristallnacht*, and several were annoyed at the disruption it caused. But all noted that the German population did not object - instead it seemed to take the role of spectator. Another important consequence of the pogrom was that the SS security apparatus, the Gestapo (secret police), the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst* or security service) and the SS asserted its leadership of anti-Jewish policy.

What is Aryanisation? What did Hitler order Joseph Goebbels to do? What was the 'Night of Broken Glass'?

Homework 3

To be completed by:

Anti-Jewish policy

Few top Nazis were involved in organising *Kristallnacht*, and several were annoyed at the disruption it caused. But all noted that the German population did not object - instead it seemed to take the role of spectator. Another important consequence of the pogrom was that the SS security apparatus, the Gestapo (secret police), the SD (*Sicherheitsdienst* or security service) and the SS asserted its leadership of anti-Jewish policy.

Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich, who controlled the SS, complained that the violence did nothing to 'cleanse' the Reich of Jews. Instead, they suggested there should be a concerted effort to make Jews emigrate. It became Nazi policy to 'solve the Jewish question' by emigration, forcing the pace by the use of terror.

Occupied Poland, though, did offer a radical alternative. In late 1939, the Nazi leadership considered using the area around Lublin as a 'Jewish reservation'. Adolf Eichmann, an SS officer running emigration offices in Vienna, Prague and Berlin, was tasked with organising the first deportation of Jews from Austria and the Czech lands to Poland.

Eichmann later described the 'Nisko project' as the first of several attempts to find a 'territorial solution' to the 'Jewish question'. It failed, however, because the Nazis had other priorities. In the meantime, Heydrich decreed that Polish Jews should be concentrated in towns and cities prior to being removed. They were stripped of their rights and property, denied work (except forced labour for the Germans), and crammed into the worst slum districts.

The Polish Jews were soon afflicted by mass starvation and disease. To prevent the spread of epidemics the Nazi authorities built walls around the Jewish districts - and thus the ghettos were created. But this was a temporary measure and more a case of desperation than design.

What did Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich complain about? What was the Nisko project?

Homework 4

To be completed by:

New solutions

In May-June 1940, the German army conquered France and most of western Europe, bringing more Jews under Nazi control. But the fall of France offered a promising new 'solution'. The German Foreign Office suggested deporting the western European Jews to the French island colony of Madagascar. Eichmann, at the behest of Heydrich, enlarged the plan to include all the Jews of Europe.

This was a radical new step, based on a barbaric vision of uprooting millions of people and shipping them to an island, under SS rule, that would clearly be unable to support them all. The 'Madagascar Plan' was latently genocidal. It was never implemented, because as long as Britain held out against the might of the Third Reich the Royal Navy denied the freedom of the seas to Germany.

Within months another territory suggested itself. In late 1940, Hitler ordered his generals to prepare the invasion of the Soviet Union. When the Nazi governors in occupied Poland learned of this, they stopped building ghettos - in anticipation of the imminent removal of the Jews to 'the East'. The Nazi leadership was convinced that the USSR would be easy to subdue - and thought that after victory they could despatch Europe's Jews to the wastes of Siberia.

The war against Russia had a radicalising and brutalising effect. It was conceived as a genocidal war - Nazi planners and the German army envisaged the death by starvation of 30 million Russians. More specifically, Hitler and the Nazis saw Russia as the centre of Bolshevism and Jewish power. Hitler ordered his army commanders to kill all captured commissars (Communist Party officials) and Jews in the service of the Communist Party and the state apparatus. Mobile killing squads staffed by the SS and police, known as the *Einsatzgruppen*, were assigned to this murderous task.

What happened to the Jews after Germany conquered France and most of Western Europe? What was the Madagascar plan?

What was the Holocaust?

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators. The Nazis came to power in Germany in January 1933. They believed that the Germans belonged to a race that was "superior" to all others. They claimed that the Jews belonged to a race that was "inferior" and a threat to the so-called German racial community. By 1945, the Germans and their allies and collaborators killed nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of the "Final Solution." The "Final Solution" View This Term in the Glossary was the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe.

During the era of the Holocaust, German authorities also persecuted other groups because of their perceived racial and biological inferiority. These included Roma ("Gypsies"), people with disabilities, some of the Slavic peoples (Poles, Russians, and others), Soviet prisoners of war, and blacks. German authorities persecuted other groups on political, ideological, and behavioural grounds. Among them were Communists, Socialists, Jehovah's Witnesses, and homosexuals.

What was the Holocaust? What was the Final solution?

The Technology of Mass Murder

As the war drew to an end, Germans feared the anger of their enemies. Even as the Allies discussed the best way to hold German leaders formally accountable, victorious troops were expressing that anger and taking revenge on German civilians.

On April 26, 1945, Soviet troops entered Berlin. Jacob Kronika, a Danish journalist, watched as Soviet soldiers ransacked the city and terrorized its inhabitants. In this dangerous atmosphere, Kronika took refuge in a bomb shelter inside the Danish legation (a building that houses the offices of foreign diplomats). On May 3, a Soviet officer stormed into that shelter. Kronika recalled:

The Russian commissar [officer] spoke fluent German. He took a great interest in the German . . . employees in the Danish bunker. The younger women, who had been kept out of sight by curtains, empty cardboard boxes, and so on, were told to come out and take a spot on the mats with the men and children. I was requested to sit next to the commissar; I had no idea what his intentions were. He gave a fairly long speech:

“If I were to ask you individually, I am certain that not one person among you would be a Nazi. We know this already; now that the German army has been defeated, all Germans are suddenly opponents of Hitler and have always been anti-Nazi. . . . I am a Russian, a Communist, and a Jew. I have seen the German atrocities in my country. My mother and father were murdered by the SS, because they were Jews; my wife and my two children have disappeared; my home is destroyed. Millions of people have gone through what I and my family have gone through. Germany has murdered, raped, plundered, and destroyed. . . . What do you think we’d like to do now that we have defeated the German armed forces?”

The Germans crouched down, trembling with fear. The commissar stared at Carl’s oldest son, a twelve-year-old boy. [Carl was the caretaker of the Danish legation.]

“Stand up!” he ordered. “How old are you?”

“Twelve years old,” answered the boy.

“That’s around the age my boy would have been today. The SS criminals took him from me. . . .”

His hand disappeared under his uniform. He brought out a revolver and pointed it at the boy. Carl leaped up; his wife grabbed for the boy.

“But commissar, this boy cannot be made responsible . . .” I began. The tension was dreadful.

“No, no, ladies and gentlemen,” continued the commissar. “I won’t shoot. But you must admit, I’d have reason enough. So many people are crying out for revenge.”

He put the revolver back under his uniform.

In Kronika’s story, the Soviet commissar chose not to shoot. Often, however, victorious troops did choose to take revenge on the German civilian population.

Why does the commissar have the impulse to shoot the 12-year-old son of a German caretaker? Why does Jacob Kronika say that “this boy cannot be made responsible”?

What is the difference between justice and acts of revenge? Can revenge ever be part of justice?

Homework 7

To be completed by:

How did Auschwitz work?

People from all over Europe were crammed into cattle wagons without windows, toilets, seats or food, and transported to Auschwitz.

There they were sorted into those who could work and those who were to be immediately killed.

The latter group were ordered to strip naked and sent to the showers for "delousing" - a euphemism used for the gas chambers.

Guards from the so-called "Hygienic Institute" would then drop powerful Zyklon-B gas pellets into the sealed chambers, and wait for people to die. It took about 20 minutes. The thick walls could not hide the screams of those suffocating inside.

Then Sonderkommandos - other prisoners, usually Jews forced to work for the guards or be killed - would remove artificial limbs, glasses, hair and teeth before dragging the corpses to the incinerators. Ashes of the bodies were buried or used as fertiliser. Belongings of those gassed and those sent to work were taken for sorting in a part of the camp known as "Canada" - so named because the country was seen as a land of plenty.

How were people transported to Auschwitz? What took place at the hygienic institute?

Homework 8

To be completed by:

End of war

At the end of the war, Germany's boundaries were redrawn, and the country was divided into four "zones of occupation." Each zone was governed by one of the Allied powers: the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. After the first trial at Nuremberg, each Allied power continued holding trials for former Nazis and their collaborators in their own zones of occupation.

Doctors who had carried out medical experiments on concentration camp inmates, as well as engineers and technicians who helped to create the technology of mass death, were among those tried by the Allies. Leo Alexander, a psychiatrist who was a consultant to the Office of the Chief Counsel for War Crimes in Nuremberg, summarized his findings about Nazi medical research:

A large part of [German] research was devoted to the science of destroying and preventing life. . . In the course of this . . . research, methods of mass killing and mass sterilization were investigated and developed for use against non-German peoples or Germans who were considered useless.

. . . A rapid method developed for sterilization of females, which could be accomplished in the course of a regular health examination, was the intra-uterine injection of various chemicals. . . . The injections were extremely painful, and a number of women died in the course of the experiments. Professor Karl Clauberg reported that he had developed a method at the Auschwitz concentration camp by which he could sterilize 1,000 women in a day. . . .

The development of methods for rapid and inconspicuous individual execution was the objective of another large part of . . . research. . . . Poisons were the subject of many of these experiments. A research team at the Buchenwald concentration camp, consisting of Drs. Joachim Mrugowsky, Erwin Ding-Schuler and Waldemar Hoven, developed one of the most widely used means of individual execution under the guise of medication treatment—namely, the intravenous injection of phenol [a toxic chemical] or gasoline

What were the zones of occupation? What was a large part of German research dedicated to?

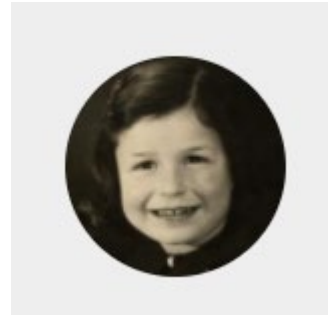
Homework 9

To be completed by:

Research Task – Holocaust survivor, Jacqueline Mendels Birn

You need to research the story of this Holocaust survivor. Visit this web site to aid you:

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-survivors/volunteers/jacqueline-mendels-birn>



What is the story of Jacqueline Mendels Birn?

Homework 10

To be completed by:

Research Task – Holocaust survivor, Ruth Cohen

You need to research the story of this Holocaust survivor. Visit this web site to aid you:

<https://www.ushmm.org/remember/holocaust-survivors/volunteers/ruth-cohen>



What is the story of Ruth Cohen?

Revision Quiz

A good historian (or student of any subject) needs to know the key information and facts about their subject. In history you will be expected remember information such as dates and names along with the key events. This will allow you to explain your answers fully when you are assessed. One tool to help you do this is to use flash cards and revision quizzes. A set of electronic flash cards has been created for you to access on the website 'Quizlet'.

Scan the QR code using your phone to be taken directly to the flashcards. These can be used as a revision aid and also to create your own quizzes about the period.

Additional websites:

There are a number of useful websites to visit to help build up your knowledge about this period:

<https://www.hmd.org.uk/learn-about-the-holocaust-and-genocides/the-holocaust/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/16690175>

<https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/the-holocaust>

<https://www.ushmm.org/>

Wider reading

There are many great reading books covering this period, specifically designed for you to understand the period and also see it from a different point of view.

The Holocaust Laurence Rees has spent twenty-five years meeting the survivors and perpetrators of the Third Reich and the Holocaust. In this sweeping history, he combines this testimony with the latest academic research to investigate how history's greatest crime was possible.

What we knew. Although many people believed after WWII that ordinary citizens couldn't have known about the Holocaust during the war, the fact remains that the discrimination, persecution and murder of millions of people didn't just happen. Eric Johnson's book analyzes what everyday life was like in Germany during the rise of the Third Reich, how people coped, survived, and justified what was happening, and just how much people really knew about the Nazi's evil.

