

Honors 290: Philosophy and the Holocaust

History Of Germany, Nazism, & Anti-Jewish Policies Before The Holocaust: An Outline (based mainly on Landau, The Nazi Holocaust, and Richard J. Evans, The Coming of the Third Reich and The Third Reich in Power)

- A. Foundation of the German Empire (the “2nd Reich”); Bismarck
- B. Jewish civic rights and integration in the Empire
- C. Origins of political antisemitism
- D. Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the “socialism” of “National Socialism”
- E. World War I (1914-1918) and the “stab in the back” myth
- F. German Jews in WWI
- G. Versailles Treaty (1919)
- H. Weimar Republic (1919-1933, but effectively ended by 1930)
- I. Jews in the Weimar Republic
- J. The Nazi party in the 1920’s
- K. Hitler and his philosophy (My Struggle [Mein Kampf): “rational” vs. “emotional” antisemitism
- L. Fear of communist revolution
- M. How the Nazis and Hitler came to power in Germany
- N. Some key Nazi institutions and personnel: SA (stormtroopers); Gestapo; SS; Himmler; Goebbels
- O. Why Germans supported the Nazi party, and the regime once it came to power
- P. The Reichstag fire (February, 1933) and the Enabling Act (March, 1933)
- Q. Early strategy of the Nazi regime: (1) crush all political opposition; (2) neutralize religious institutions; (3) beginning of incremental pushing Jews out of social, political, economic life

R. Main goals of Nazis: (1) rearm Germany and prepare for war; (2) establish total control over the society, including all cultural production; (3) Purge the German people of the “unfit”; (4) solve the “Jewish question” initially through forced emigration.

S. Concentration camps and the judicial/penal system: different generations and occupants of camps

T. Early eugenics policies

U. development of fascist, authoritarian, and antisemitic regimes in Europe

V. Nuremberg laws (1935)

W. Taking over (“Aryanizing”) Jewish businesses

X. Jewish emigration

Y. takeover of Austria (“Anschluss”) (March 1938)

Z. 1938 anti-Jewish measures: property registration; forbidding Jews to take “Aryan” names

AA. Evian conference (1938)

1. world-wide antisemitism and its effect on Nazi policy

BB. Hitler takes Sudetenland, British appeasement. Hitler’s intentions for “Lebensraum” and its connection to his racial views

CC. Kristallnacht

DD. Lessons of Kristallnacht

EE. Anti-Jewish policies in the wake of Kristallnacht

FF. Euthanasia and the “T-4” program

GG. Hitler invades Czechoslovakia (March 1939)

HH. Hitler-Stalin non-aggression pact, and invasion of Poland (Sept 1939). Beginning of World War II