Holocaust Glossary

Aktion – The German word for "operation." For the Nazis, after the invasion of the Soviet Union, an *Aktion* generally involved seeking out, assembling, and either shooting or deporting individuals to concentration, labor, or extermination camps. With some important exceptions, an *Aktion* invariably took place in a shtetl or ghetto.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee – *see* Joint.

Anschluss (German for "union") – When used since the era of the Third Reich, it invariably refers to the union of Germany and Austria in March 1938, thereby creating "Greater Germany." But the concept predated Hitler with a great many Austrians calling for Anschluss with Germany in the closing months of the First World War to embrace President Wilson's notion of "national self determination"—a proposal firmly rejected in 1919 by the major powers at the Paris Peace Conference. Many Austrians greeted the Anschluss with joy in 1938. It led quickly to some of the most brutal prewar antisemitic excesses against Austria's 185,000 Jews.

Antisemitism – Although a modern word (Wilhelm Marr, a German journalist, first used the word *antisemitismus* in 1879) denoting hatred of Jews, anti-Jewish hostility should be recognized as an ancient prejudice with pre-Christian roots. "Antisemitism" was coined to distinguish a modern nationalist/racist antagonism to the political and social equality of Jews from a traditional Judeophobia based primarily on religion. Although traditionally hyphenated—"anti-Semitism"—when spelled in English, the word never implied a hatred for Arabs, a people also grouped among so-called "Semites." Accordingly, most scholars no longer use the hyphen.

Appel (German for "roll call") – Early each morning, and then upon returning from work in the evening, a roll call was required of all prisoners—the living and the dead—in the area in front of each of the camp blocks (barracks). *Appel* was dreaded almost as much as *Selektion*; it could be a time of considerable suffering, especially if coming after a day of hard labor when a prisoner was missing. Inmates were often forced to stand at attention for hours, both in the heat of summer and in the bitter cold of winter.

Arbeit macht frei – Best translated as "labor liberates," the slogan was infamously emblazoned across the gate at Auschwitz I (the *Stammlager* or main camp) upon orders of camp commandant Rudolf Höss. Not unique to Auschwitz, it was employed at several other camps, including Dachau, Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen, Sachsenhausen, and Theresienstadt (Terezin).

Aryan – Derived from the Sanskrit word for "noble," this term originally referred to people speaking Indo-European languages. The word began assuming a racial connotation in the late nineteenth century, with racists in both Europe and North America employing it to represent so-called superior people descended from Northern Europeans. Nazi anthropologists contended that pure Aryans were generally blond-haired, blue-eyed Nordics, found most commonly among the German, Dutch, and

Scandinavian peoples. Increasingly, Europeans used the term to distinguish anyone who was neither Jewish nor gypsy—for example, the area outside ghetto walls in Poland was often referred to as "the Aryan side."

"Aryanization" – The Nazi term for the removal of all non-Aryans (i.e., Jews) from the German economy, the process of Aryanization may be traced back to the nationwide boycott of April 1933, but was not pursued in earnest until 1938. It was intended in part to segregate, impoverish, and demoralize Jews, thereby inducing their emigration.

Ashkenazim (Hebrew for "German Jews") – A word identifying Yiddish-speaking Jews, many of whose forebears had migrated to Eastern Europe from western Germany in the thirteenth and fourteen centuries to escape religious and economic persecution.

Auschwitz – This serves as an umbrella term for the Nazis' most notorious camp complex, situated 37 miles west of Kraków near the Polish town of Oświęcim ("Auschwitz" is the town's German name). Established in June 1940 as a modest concentration camp for Polish prisoners, it was placed on a major rail line in a sliver of Western Galicia annexed to Germany. Under its first commandant, Rudolf Höss, the original camp became the *Stammlager* (main camp) for a massive expansion during 1941-43 that included two new camps: Birkenau (Auschwitz II), an extermination camp built by and, initially, for Red Army prisoners; Monowitz-Buna (Auschwitz III), a labor camp run by the German industrial firms of I.G. Farben, Krupp, and Siemens. Approximately forty other sub-camps would eventually make up the gigantic Auschwitz complex. Auschwitz-Birkenau played a central role in the Nazi plan to annihilate Europe's Jews. Four large crematoria buildings were constructed between March and June 1943, each with three physical components: a disrobing area, a large gas chamber, and crematorium ovens. Systematic gassing operations, beginning in the spring of 1942, continued at Birkenau until November 1944. During its brief existence, from 1.1 to 1.5 million prisoners were murdered in Auschwitz—900,000 of whom went directly to the gas chambers without being registered. In addition to Jews, thousands of Poles, Roma (gypsies), and Soviet POW fell victim to the Nazis in Auschwitz.

Babi Yar – A partially wooded ravine on the northwest edge of Kiev, Babi Yar was the scene of systematic mass murder at the hands of *Einsatzgruppe* C following the German capture of the Ukrainian capital on 19 September 1941. The first and most notorious slaughter occurred on 29-30 September when 33,771 Jews were massacred and buried in the ravine. Subsequent killings of Jews, gypsies, and Soviet POW at Babi Yar brought the total number of victims to ca. 100,000. In 1961 the Russian poet Yevgeni Yevtushenko commemorated Babi Yar with a poem that was set to music in 1962 by Dmitri Shostakovich in his Thirteenth Symphony.

BdM (*Bund deutscher Mädel*) – *see* Hitler Youth.

Bełżec – *see* Operation Reinhard.

Bergen-Belsen – A camp opened in April 1943 near the city of Hanover in northern Germany, it was originally conceived as an SS detention center for prisoners, mostly Jews, who were to be exchanged for Germans being held by the Allies. Few such exchanges took place. Evolving in 1944 into a typical concentration camp, it began to fill with thousands of prisoners who were deemed too sick to work. During the war's final six months, Bergen-Belsen was overwhelmed with prisoners arriving on death marches from camps further east. Designed to hold a few thousand, the camp was bulging with 61,000 prisoners upon its liberation by the British on 15 April 1945. Starving and ravaged with typhus, 11,000 died within days of liberation. Anne and Margo Frank were among the 35,000 who died at the camp prior to liberation.

Birkenau – *see* Auschwitz.

Block 11 – Within the main camp (*Stammlager*) of Auschwitz was a dreaded building labeled Block 11. This notorious block was known as "a prison within a prison." Among its sadistic components were *Stehbunker*, or standup cells, wherein prisoners were forced to crawl through a small door on the floor to then stand in a tiny space, sometimes with two or three other prisoners. The block contained suffocation cells, in which groups of as many as twenty men were locked with sufficient oxygen for perhaps one or two, and starvation cells. Few prisoners survived who entered Block 11.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (1906-1945) – A German Protestant pastor and theologian who became active in the anti-Nazi resistance and was among the first German Christians to recognize the antisemitic implications of traditional New Testament teachings. A member of the "Confessing Church" (*Bekennende Kirche*), he found hiding places for German Jews while helping with their escape to Switzerland. His active participation in the anti-Hitler resistance resulted in his arrest in April 1943 and his execution at Flossenbürg in the final weeks of the war. His writings provided a postwar foundation for Christianity's reassessment of its relationship with Judaism.

Buchenwald – One of prewar Germany's largest concentration camps, Buchenwald was built near Weimar in July 1937. Designed for German political prisoners and "asocial elements," it was briefly home to several thousand German Jews in the immediate aftermath of *Kristallnacht*. In addition to German political prisoners, Buchenwald held thousands of Polish and Soviet prisoners during the war, many of whom were engaged in slave labor at armament factories. Indeed, Buchenwald held more than 80,000 prisoners by 1945—20,000 of whom were Jews sent from the East—with many more occupying its 85 sub-camps. When their SS guards abandoned the camp in April 1945, the prisoners liberated themselves, shortly before the arrival of American soldiers. Of the ca. 239,000 prisoners who passed through the Buchenwald complex, more than 56,000 perished.

Chełmno (German, Kulmhof) – A small village in western Poland, located ca. 50 miles northwest of Łódź, that was site of the first extermination center. Initiating regular mass killings on 8 December 1941, Chełmno was the only extermination camp to rely solely on mobile gas vans. Given the assignment of reducing the size of the Łódź

ghetto and eliminating the Jewish population in western Poland (the Warthegau region), Sonderkommando Kulmhof established a camp on two sites, 2.5 miles apart: a villa (called the *Schloss* or palace) in the village itself, and the *Waldlager* (forest camp) in the nearby Rzuwowski Forest. Victims were brought by rail to a nearby station, loaded into trucks for their trip to the village, then forced from the cellar of the *Schloss* into the rear of gas vans. The gas vans drove their bodies to the forest camp, where they were buried in mass graves. The camp was operational until March 1943, then reopened for three months in April 1944. The bodies in the forest were exhumed and cremated in September 1944. Approximately 320,000 people were murdered at Chełmno.

Concentration Camp (German, *Konzentrationslager*) – A term first applied by Spanish authorities to camps developed in Cuba in the 1890s, concentration camps became in the twentieth century a favored means for isolating political opposition and sometimes terrorizing entire populations. Makeshift concentration centers were established in Germany within days of Hitler's appointment on 30 January 1933. From the outset they held political opponents—i.e., Communists, Social Democrats, labor-union officials, and other individuals committed to the Weimar Republic. Although not initially designed for Jews (Jews were among the Communists, Social Democrats, and others incarcerated), many thousands were sent to the camps in November 1938 following the *Kristallnacht* pogrom. The camps were placed under SS jurisdiction in 1934, with Heinrich Himmler appointing Theodor Eicke (commandant of Dachau) as overall camp inspector. Eicke eliminated all the concentration camps but Dachau in 1936, then began a process of building several new camps: Buchenwald, Flossenbürg, Gross-Rosen, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück (for women), and Sachsenhausen. Mauthausen was added following the March 1938 *Anschluss* with Austria. New categories of prisoners were also added in 1936: gypsies, habitual criminals, homosexuals, prostitutes, religious dissenters (especially Jehovah's Witnesses), and vagrants. The concentration-camp system, which expanded enormously following the outbreak of World War II, held more than 700,000 prisoners by January 1945. Among the incarcerated were resistance fighters, and both Polish and Soviet POW. The death marches of late 1944, early 1945, overran the camps with survivors from the East. It was during these months that the concentration camps witnessed a sharp increase in Jewish prisoners. Overcrowding resulted in malnutrition and disease in the last phase of the war, both of which triggered as much death as SS brutality and executions. *See also* Extermination Camp.

Czerniaków, Adam (1880-1942) – Czerniaków taught for many years prior to World War II at a Jewish vocational school in Warsaw, serving also on the city's Jewish community council. After conquering Warsaw, the German authorities appointed Czerniaków head of a new Jewish Council (*Judenrat*) in October 1939 and ordered him to designate its other members. Until his suicide on 23 July 1942, Czerniaków led the Judenrat that was compelled to preside over the Warsaw ghetto, created in November 1940. The Judenrat took responsibility for all facets of Jewish life, from health and nutrition to labor and housing. When the Nazis began to deport ghetto residents in 1942, Czerniaków initially accepted their assurances that they were being resettled to

alleviate overcrowding. Suddenly realizing in July that deportees were being exterminated in Treblinka, Czerniaków swallowed poison.

Dachau – Constructed in March 1933 near the village of Dachau (about ten miles from Munich) by Heinrich Himmler's Bavarian State Police, it was the first official concentration camp established by the Nazis and became the prototype for all subsequent camps. Theodor Eicke, camp commandant from June 1933, used Dachau as a training center for the SS Death's Head units (camp guards and administrators). The camp was greatly expanded in 1937-38 and with its thirty sub-camps came to play a major war production role as a slave-labor camp. It is estimated that 206,000 prisoners passed through Dachau, of whom 31,000 died. Although there was a crematorium at Dachau to dispose of bodies, the camp's gas chamber was never used. When liberated by American soldiers on 19 April 1945, about 60,000 prisoners remained alive, one-third of whom were Jews.

Death Camp – *see* Extermination Camp.

"Death March" – A term coined by the prisoners who survived them, "death march" refers to one of the forced evacuations in the final eight months of the war (September 1944 to April 1945) of German camps—concentration, labor, and extermination—in danger of being liberated by one of the Allied powers. Under horrific conditions, the SS marched (sometimes transported by rail) ca. 750,000 prisoners on long treks back to Germany—or, in the war's final weeks, from one camp to another within Germany. Already weakened by heavy labor, malnutrition, and disease, as many as 250,000 died during the marches from hunger, exposure, or summary execution.

Der Stürmer – *see* Julius Streicher.

Displaced Persons (DPs) – When World War II ended in May 1945, the human flotsam scattered throughout Central Europe was enormous. There were, for example, ten million *Wehrmacht* prisoners, eight million German refugees, two million Soviet POW, and millions of slave and forced laborers. In all, fourteen million Europeans had been uprooted by the war, many of whom could not go home or refused to do so. This was the raw material for the Displaced Persons tragedy that haunted Europe for almost a decade after the conclusion of the war, with millions scratching for food and shelter in the ruins that the war had wrought. The most difficult situation was faced by anti-Soviet Eastern Europeans and a smaller number of Holocaust survivors. But as the numbers of other DP categories declined, the percentage of Jewish DPs increased. By 1947 Jews made up ca. one-third of the 700,000 people remaining in DP camps.

Eichmann, Adolf (1906-62) – An SS officer and administrator who was given major responsibility during the war for the deportation of Jews to ghettos, labor camps, and extermination camps. Born in Germany, but raised in Austria, he was an early member of the Austrian Nazi Party, but moved back to Germany when Hitler came to power. Assigned to the Jewish division of the intelligence section at SS headquarters in Berlin, he was sent to Vienna after the *Anschluss* to organize the emigration of Austrian Jews.

Distinguishing himself in this role, he caught the attention of Reinhard Heydrich and in 1941 was placed in charge of the Jewish Division at the Reich Security Main Office. Following his participation in the Wannsee Conference, he assumed the task of coordinating the transport of all Jews in German occupied Europe to camps in Poland. His last major task was supervising the deportation of Hungarian Jews in 1944. Slipping away to Argentina after Germany's defeat, he was captured and kidnapped by Israeli agents in 1960. His subsequent trial, conviction, and execution in Israel served to focus international attention on the Holocaust for the first time.

Einsatzgruppen (translated variously as "operational groups" or "action groups") – First appearing during the *Anschluss* (March 1938), the Einsatzgruppen were initially intelligence units of the police that accompanied the invading army and were under orders to combat elements deemed hostile to the Reich. They reappeared for the invasion of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and for the invasion of Poland in September of that year. On 21 September 1939 Reinhard Heydrich ordered them to round up and concentrate Jews in large communities on major rail lines. Disbanded in November 1939, the Einsatzgruppen were reassembled in the spring of 1941 in four separate groups—A, B, C, and D—and provided orders for the coming invasion of the Soviet Union. Now operating as mobile killing units, the Einsatzgruppen were comprised of 3,000 men drawn mainly from the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD or Security Service) or the *Sicherheitspolizei* (Sipo or Security Police), both organizations of the SS. Directly responsible to Heydrich, but receiving logistical support from the *Wehrmacht*, the Einsatzgruppen received assistance from Eastern European Hiwis, regular police units (*Ordnungspolizei* or Order Police), and the *Waffen SS*. Each Einsatzgruppe was assigned a specific sector of the Eastern Front: Einsatzgruppe A, the Baltic states and northern USSR; Einsatzgruppe B, the north-central sector around Minsk; Einsatzgruppe C, much of the Ukraine; Einsatzgruppe D, eastern Romania and the Crimea. Their principal assignment was to annihilate those perceived to be racial or political enemies, including gypsies, Soviet Commissars, and anyone engaged in passive resistance. But their key victims were Jews. Although they employed gas vans on a small scale, their most common method of execution was to herd their victims into trenches and shoot them. The Einsatzgruppen murdered well over one million Jews during the war. Although extermination camps were created to do the job more efficiently, the Einsatzgruppen continued to operate until the end of the war.

Euthanasia – This word is properly understood to mean the merciful and painless killing of incurably ill individuals wishing to die. Although Nazi Germany adopted an official—if confidential—euthanasia program, it was not founded on this concept. The Nazis embraced a radical concept of eugenics, referred to as "racial hygiene," and sought to eliminate "genetically defective" Germans who (a) posed a long-term threat to the German "body politic" (*Volkskorper*), and (b) were judged "life unworthy of life" (*Leben unwertes Leben*). With rare exception, the victims did not wish to die. Moreover, relatives were often unwilling to approve their elimination. Thus, beginning in 1939, Hitler ordered that a secret euthanasia program, codenamed Operation T4, be carried out under the direction of Viktor Brack, an official from Hitler's chancellery. Brack recruited administrators and doctors to screen medical records and identify

handicapped and disabled—including disabled war veterans—to be killed. Six regional T4 centers were established in Bernburg, Brandenburg, Grafeneck, Hadamar, Hartheim, and Sonnenstein. In general, victims were killed with carbon monoxide in gas chambers disguised as shower rooms. When word leaked out about the T4 program, a public protest led Hitler to end the program in August 1941. By that time, ca. 70,000 lives had been taken by T4. Although ended officially, the program continued in greater secrecy until the end of the war, with more than 80,000 additional victims. Veterans of the T4 program were, meanwhile, transferred east to serve as "experts" for the far larger extermination operations. The program also served as a training ground for SS members who staffed the extermination camps.

Evian Conference – The unusually brutal persecution that greeted Austria's Jews in the wake of the March 1938 *Anschluss* led President Franklin D. Roosevelt to propose an international conference to (a) facilitate the emigration of refugees from Germany and Austria, and (b) establish a new international organization to work for an overall solution to the refugee crisis. Recognizing the impossibility of convincing Congress to increase the immigration quotas of the United States, Roosevelt made clear from the outset that no participating country would be expected to significantly change its present policies. He underscored, nonetheless, that the annual German and Austrian quotas of 27,370, until then undersubscribed, would be opened for full use in the United States. Roosevelt's proposed conference met from 6-15 July 1938 in Evian, France, on the shore of Lake Geneva with representatives from thirty-two countries. The American delegate, Myron Taylor, reiterated President Roosevelt's earlier commitment to the U.S. quota. But as the days passed, the delegates from country after country excused themselves from accepting *any* further refugees. Many referenced the Great Depression and the unemployment problem as precluding further immigration. Only the Dominican Republic, among the last countries queried, volunteered to contribute unspecified areas for agricultural colonization. The conference established an Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (ICR) to both continue the discussions and attempt to gain greater cooperation from Nazi Germany, but its efforts bore no fruit prior to the outbreak of war in September 1939. The tragedy of the Evian Conference was that it had raised the hopes, perhaps unwittingly, of tens of thousands of European Jews. Those hopes were crushed by the outcome.

Extermination Camp (German, *Vernichtungslager*) – The final component in the Nazi camp system, the six extermination camps were unique as they were designed entirely, or in large measure, for industrial mass murder, annihilating between them from 2,700,000 to 3,500,000 lives in the three years from December 1941 through December 1944. The first camp, Chełmno, began operating in December 1941. It was followed in 1942 by the three Operation Reinhard camps—Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka—dedicated exclusively to extermination with carbon monoxide gas. Auschwitz and Majdanek were also opened in 1942, but they served as both concentration and extermination centers. Majdanek killed with both carbon monoxide and Zyklon B; Auschwitz relied exclusively on Zyklon B. The extermination camps are sometimes referred to as "death camps," but this term should be avoided as death was a product of every camp in the Nazi system. *See also* Concentration Camp.

Final Solution (German, *Endlösung*).– The so-called "Final Solution to the Jewish Problem" is now commonly understood to be the genocide undertaken by Nazi Germany from 1941 to the end of World War II in 1945 and formally enunciated at the Wannsee Conference of 20 January 1942. Yet, the term has an interesting pedigree. From early in the nineteenth century, various Europeans—including Jews—spoke frequently of finding a solution to the "Jewish Question." Only a tiny fraction at the lunatic fringes of society may have envisioned the "solution" finally landed on by Nazi Germany. Indeed, within the twelve years of the Third Reich, genocide had not always been the meaning of "Final Solution." Making Germany "Jew free" (*Judenrein*) by means of emigration or, later, deportation was deemed a "Final Solution." In the early stages of the war, particularly upon the collapse of France in May-June 1940, shipping millions of Jews to the French colony of Madagascar—the "Madagascar Plan"—was referred to in documentation as the "Final Solution." It was at some point in late 1941, however, that "Final Solution" was redefined to mean the extermination of every Jew living in Europe—perhaps, by extension, every Jew living.

"Five-by-five" (*Fünferreihe*, or "rows of five") – The command "form fives" appears more than once in Elie Wiesel's *Night*. The horror of being marched "five-by-five" is etched on the minds of many survivors. The following testimony appears in the Fortunoff Archives (Yale University): "Christa M. climbed a nearby hill and looked back. She could 'see columns marching, five by five, SS on both sides, front and back . . . pushing and shoving.' If anyone fell out, they were shot or dogs were set upon them." A report from the Gelanovo ghetto records that the "Jews were conducted inside [the building] five by five and here they were shot." Reporting on his wartime experience in a camp, a Greek Jew from Salonika said: "We wait in line, in lines of five. Five hundred people, two barracks, from 250 each. We were wondering, what happened to the first ones? We were kids, 19-20 years old. Five-by-five, they go in and they don't come out. This is it, we thought, the end, it's over. And we hear nothing."

Gauleiter (District Leader) – The highest ranked Nazi Party official below the level of the top Reich officials (*Reichleiter*), each of the 43 Gauleiter was responsible for a Gau, a territorial unit organized by the party in the mid-1920s. A Gauleiter held jurisdiction in his district for political and economic activities, as well as civil defense and labor mobilization. Within their domains, which they often treated as virtual fiefdoms, Gauleiter wielded enormous power. Each Gau was, in turn, subdivided into *Kreise* (circuits), administered by *Kreisleiter* (circuit leaders), and then subdivided again into *Ortsgruppen* (local groups).

General Government (*Generalgouvernement für die Besetzten Polnischen Gebiete*, or General Government for the Occupied Areas of Poland) – An administrative domain established on 12 October 1939 by the Germans and comprised of those Polish territories that had not been either incorporated into the Reich or turned over to the Soviets. The prewar population of Poland was approximately 31 million; the population of the General Government was 12 million (1.8 million of whom were Jews). The area, which allowed for no Polish autonomy, was divided into four districts—Kraków, Warsaw, Radom, and Lublin—with central administrative

headquarters in Kraków under the overall formal supervision of a Governor General, Hans Frank (Frank found his authority regularly undermined by Heinrich Himmler's SS appointees). Following the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, a fifth district, Eastern Galicia, was created, adding between three and four million to the population. Under the Nazis, Polish cultural and political institutions were destroyed, artistic treasures were plundered, and a plan was instituted by which the population served as no more than a reservoir of manpower owing total obedience to their German overlords. The Poles suffered from extreme terror: for each German killed by the underground, from fifty to one hundred Poles were executed. It is estimated that ten percent of the Polish population was killed over the course of the war.

Genocide – Although the crime of genocide was certainly known prior to 1944, there was no word clearly identifying the crime until it was coined in that year by the Polish-Jewish lawyer, Raphael Lemkin (1900-59). Seeking to describe Nazi policies of systematic murder, including the destruction of the European Jews, Lemkin formed the word "genocide" by combining geno-, from the Greek word for race or tribe, with -cide, from the Latin word for killing. In proposing this term, Lemkin had in mind "a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves." On 9 December 1948, the United Nations established genocide as an international crime by approving the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. The Convention states that "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group" must be viewed as genocide. Both the Holocaust and the Nazis' concurrent attempt to destroy the Poles as an ethnic group must be viewed as acts of genocide. Since 1945, the word may be applied to instances of mass murder in Cambodia, Bosnia, Iraq, and Rwanda. The current destruction of black Africans in Darfur should also be viewed as genocide.

Gestapo (*Geheime Staatspolizei*, or Secret State Police) – Created in the state of Prussia by Hermann Göring soon after Hitler's appointment in January 1933, the Gestapo was transferred to the SS under Heinrich Himmler's authority in 1934. Falling within the domain of the Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*, or Sipo), one of the two main divisions within the SS, the Gestapo established offices throughout Germany while being directed from Berlin. It was given unlimited authority to locate and suppress political opponents—i.e., Communists, Social Democrats, trade unionists, monarchists, religious dissenters, and anti-Nazi conservatives. In September 1939 the Gestapo was linked with the Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, or SD) under Reinhard Heydrich to form the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*). The result was an ever more powerful and ruthless police agency. Although never so large an organization as suspected, the Gestapo created an atmosphere of fear in Germany, enhanced by the ready collaboration of many citizens.

Ghetto – The term "ghetto" as referencing a segregated neighborhood for Jews originated in 1516 Venice (the word has been linked to the original site of Venice's municipal copper foundry, "ghetto" coming from the Italian verb *gettare*, meaning "to pour or to cast"); nevertheless, confining Jews to specific residential areas in towns and

cities was already widespread in the Middle Ages. The ghetto was designed to both isolate and protect the Jewish residents of Venice; while able to carry on business in the city during daylight hours, Jews lived within the ghetto walls at night. Both model and name were soon transported elsewhere on the Italian peninsula, thereafter moving into other European cities. The concept of a ghetto as revived by the Nazis in 1939 was substantially different from this history. Created initially in western Poland as temporary holding centers in preparation for mass deportations further east, ghettos were soon institutionalized as closed and semi-permanent city enclaves as they proliferated throughout the General Government and, following the invasion of the Soviet Union, in the western reaches of the USSR. While taking on various forms, ghettos were generally administered by a Jewish Council (*Judenrat*) and were left with a modicum of autonomy, so long as they followed Nazi dictates. Inadequately supplied with food and medicine, ghettos experienced high death rates, which while acceptable to the Nazis, were never part of a long-range plan to exterminate the inhabitants. Beginning in 1942-43 the ghettos were eliminated as advocates for wholesale extermination generally trumped those promoting the need for Jewish labor. The remarkably productive ghetto in Łódź was the last to be liquidated in August 1944.

Globocnik, Odilo (1904-45) – An SS officer who as an Austrian-Croat (he was born in Trieste) had joined Austria's illegal Nazi Party in 1931, which led to his arrest and imprisonment prior to the *Anschluss*. Although appointed Gauleiter of Vienna following the Anschluss, he was removed from the position in 1939 on charges of corruption. Nevertheless, Heinrich Himmler appointed him *SS und Polizeiführer* (SS and Police Leader) for the Lublin district of the General Government in November 1939. In 1942 Himmler entrusted Globocnik with implementation of Operation Reinhard, which aimed at the extermination of all Polish Jews living in the General Government. Ruthlessly fulfilling his orders, Globocnik oversaw the extermination of close to two million Jews. Amazingly, his brutality and lawlessness were so notorious that they led in August 1943 to his transfer to Trieste, where he was captured late in the war by the British. He committed suicide in May 1945.

Göring, Hermann (1893-1946) – Among the most powerful figures in Nazi Germany, he was deemed Hitler's heir apparent until the lackluster performance of the *Luftwaffe* during World War II compromised his influence with the *Führer*. An early Nazi, he led the party's Reichstag delegation prior to Hitler's appointment as chancellor in 1933, serving as the German parliament's president when in July 1932 the Nazi Party became the largest faction in the Reichstag. As Prussia's Interior Minister in 1933, Göring created the Gestapo and then went on to accumulate numerous state offices. Hitler appointed him head of the Luftwaffe and then in 1936 chief of the Four Year Plan—a plan designed to get Germany's economy ready for war. Göring was chiefly responsible for the Aryanization of Jewish property, especially in the aftermath of *Kristallnacht*. Focused exclusively on confiscating Jewish wealth, Göring relegated other anti-Jewish measures to Heinrich Himmler and the SS. In July 1941 he signed a memo, probably drafted by Reinhard Heydrich, ordering Heydrich to devise a "total solution to the Jewish problem"; the memo is generally viewed as a key document in

the paper trail to the "Final Solution." Captured at the end of the war, he committed suicide while standing trial at Nuremberg.

Heydrich, Reinhard (1904-42) – Next to Heinrich Himmler, who recruited him in 1931 to create a security office within the Nazi Party—i.e., the *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD, or Security Service)—Heydrich was the most powerful figure in the SS. When in late 1938 Hermann Göring relinquished control of anti-Jewish policies to the SS, Heydrich assumed direction for a new Reich Central Office for Jewish Emigration. The following year, a new Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*) was placed under his direction. Whereas the origin of the decision to systematically mass murder the Jews remains clouded, Heydrich was responsible for planning and implementing the genocide. He unveiled both the plans and process in January 1942 at the Wannsee Conference. In May 1942, while visiting Prague in his role as Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, he was assassinated by Czech agents.

Himmler, Heinrich (1900-45) – Arguably the most powerful person in Nazi Germany after Hitler, the latter appointed Himmler chief of the SS (*Schutzstaffel* or Protective Staff) in 1929. Attracted to the Nazi movement's racist (*Völkisch*) mysticism, his combination of unswerving diligence and absolute loyalty to Hitler allowed him to work his way up through the Nazi bureaucracy. Assuming a position as head of Bavaria's political police after Hitler's appointment as chancellor in 1933, Himmler began a three-year process of gaining control over all of Germany's police forces, achieving his goal in 1936 when Hitler named him *Reichsführer-SS*. The war served to increase his powers further with (a) the formation of the *Waffen SS*, an armed force that served to rival the traditional army on the battlefield, and (b) his appointment as Reich Commissar for Strengthening of the German People, a position giving him broad authority to "cleanse" Eastern Europe of Jews and Slavs. Thus, while Himmler delegated much of his authority to individuals such as Reinhard Heydrich, he held overall responsibility for the "Final Solution." He committed suicide at the end of the war, after being captured by the British.

Hitler, Adolf (1889-1945) – Leader (*Führer*) of the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), Hitler's appointment as Chancellor on 30 January 1933 brought an end to Germany's Weimar Republic. Born to an Austrian bureaucrat in Braunau am Inn, a town just across the Inn River from Germany, he grew up in Linz and moved in 1907 to Vienna, where he applied in vain for entry into the Academy of Art (*Kunstakademie*). Perhaps to avoid service in the Habsburg army, he relocated in 1913 to Munich; yet, upon the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914, he enlisted in a Bavarian regiment. Active on the Western Front, he was twice wounded and, as a corporal, received the Iron Cross (First Class). Hospitalized near the end of the war, he returned to his regiment in November 1918 in Munich and was assigned to an intelligence unit. In this capacity, he visited a meeting of the German Workers' Party (DAP) in September 1919 and, inspired by what he heard, soon joined the party, leaving the army in March 1920. He thereafter devoted his life exclusively to the party, which he renamed the NSDAP in April. In July 1921, following a bitter struggle with the party's leadership, he was elected chairman. Hitler initially aimed to depose the

Weimar Republic through a "national revolution," similar to what Mussolini achieved in Italy. However, following the failure of his Beerhall Putsch in November 1923 and a year of incarceration for high treason, he initiated a process of gaining power legally. Although the NSDAP developed Germany's most sophisticated political apparatus, it struggled to achieve national prominence and gained only 2.6 percent of the vote in the national elections of May 1928. But the Great Depression was a godsend for Hitler and his party, providing them the leverage needed to successfully attack the failures of the Republic and those parties supporting it. Hitler's appointment, coming just as his constituency was starting to unravel, likely saved Hitler and the NSDAP from oblivion.

From the outset of his political career, Hitler was fixated on fighting a second war to reverse the outcome of the first. His resolution was founded on the belief that the catastrophe of 1918, both the armistice and the formation of the "Jewish Republic," was a product of the Jews. Already in 1919 he was calling for the "removal of the Jews altogether." Four years later he wrote in *Mein Kampf* that the "sacrifice of millions at the front" would not have occurred if "twelve or fifteen thousand of these Hebrew corrupters of the people had been held under poison gas" at the beginning of the war. Although Hitler's statements did not provide a framework for genocide, they clearly had genocidal connotations. And once Hitler became Germany's leader, his belief system—*Weltanschauung* or "world view"—provided a potentially very powerful state with its ideological dynamic. Thus, because Hitler demonized "the Jew," the need to cleanse Germany of Jews became a foundational principle of the Third Reich. Ian Kershaw, arguably the most gifted student of Hitler, claims that by the beginning of World War II, "the Nazi leadership had been forged" by Hitler "into a proto-genocidal elite. . . . Without Hitler, the 'final solution' would have been unthinkable.'"[1]

Hitler Youth (*Hitlerjugend* or HJ) – The Nazi youth organization, the Hitler Youth had its origins in the *Jungsturm Adolf Hilter* (Youth Storm Troop of Adolf Hitler), an organization founded in 1922 as part of the SA and renamed Hitlerjugend in 1926. Originally designed for boys only, the HJ evolved a separate organization for girls in 1928, which became known from 1930 as the *Bund deutscher Mädel* (BdM, or League for German Girls). Baldur von Schirach, appointed Reich Youth Leader in 1931, evolved the HJ into a vast organization that included, in addition to the BdM, the *NS-Schülerbund* (League of Nazi Students); the *Deutsches Jungvolk* (German Youngsters), a junior branch of the HJ for boys aged ten through fourteen; and the *Jungmädel* (Young Girls), a junior branch for girls aged ten through fourteen. By 1936, when membership became compulsory for German youth, 60 percent of the country's youth belonged to the HJ. By 1940 the HJ had over eight million members. The iron discipline, ideological indoctrination, and physical fitness associated with the HJ made the organization a fundamental pillar of the regime. Typically, when a HJ boy reached age 18, he joined either the *Wehrmacht* or the SS.

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[1] Ian Kershaw, *Fateful Choices: Ten Decisions that Changed the World, 1940-1941* (New York: Penguin Press, 2007), pp. 435-437. Kershaw is author of a definitive two-volume biography of Hitler: *Hitler, 1889-1936: Hubris* (New York: Norton, 1999); and *Hitler, 1936-1945: Nemesis* (New York: Norton, 2000).

Hiwis (*Hilfswillige*, or volunteer helpers) – To alleviate manpower shortages on the Eastern Front during the war, the Germans—both SS and regular army (*Wehrmacht*)—recruited Soviet POW and civilians to serve as volunteers. Hiwis received special training at a labor camp south of Lublin called Trawniki. Dressed in German uniforms, they were assigned to duties with either the army or SS behind the front lines. Whereas some were little more than drivers or mechanics, many served as camp guards or auxiliaries with the *Einsatzgruppen* in their actions against Jews. As many as one million men served in such capacities as Hiwis, eventually being absorbed into special "Eastern Battalions" of the Wehrmacht. Collaborating because of their hatred of Jews or Communism, or to escape the brutal conditions of a POW camp, Hiwis were routinely executed when captured by the Soviets. Although the USSR insisted upon their repatriation at the end of the war, some Hiwis managed to evade this fate and escape to other countries throughout the world, including the United States.

Höss, Rudolf (1900-47) – An early member of the Nazi Party, Höss joined the SS following Hitler's appointment as chancellor. Assigned first to Dachau and then to Sachsenhausen, he honed his skills as a junior camp administrator before promotion and appointment in May 1940 as the first commandant of a newly established camp at Auschwitz. It was through his ingenuity that this small concentration camp for Polish prisoners in newly incorporated territory at the far western corner of Western Galicia evolved into the largest combined concentration/labor/extermination camp in the Nazi state. Charges of corruption led to Höss's reassignment to Oranienburg in November 1943, but he was returned to Auschwitz in March 1944 to oversee the arrival and gassing of hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews. Captured and tried in Poland after the war, he wrote his memoirs during his imprisonment prior to execution.

"Joint" (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, or JDC) – An American charitable organization, the JDC was formed in 1914 by numerous influential American Jews to provide relief and publicity for threatened Jewish populations abroad. "The Joint," as it was widely called, extended valuable assistance to a wide range of European Jews before, during, and after the Holocaust. In the late 1930s the Joint extended funds in support of German Jews being impoverished by the Nazis' Aryanization program. It managed to function in Europe during the first two years of World War II (1939-41), prior to American involvement, distributing food, clothing, and medicine. Stymied in its relief efforts from Pearl Harbor until 1943, the Joint was eventually able to aid the remnants of the Jewish community in Transnistria (meaning the region "across the Dniester River"), while supporting illegal immigration of Jews from Europe to Palestine. The greatest proportion of the JDC's aid was extended after the war, when over 250,000 Jewish Displaced Persons (DPs) received some sort of assistance from various programs funded by the Joint.

Judenräte (Jewish Councils; originally called *Judenältestenräte*, or Councils of Jewish Elders) – Throughout Nazi-controlled Europe, German authorities either ordered Jewish communities to form Jewish Councils or selected members from among Jewish communities to service on such councils, which acted as intermediaries between the Jews and Nazi officials. They were employed by the Nazis to govern a single ghetto or

cluster of ghettos; however, in Western Europe, Jewish Councils often held responsibility for entire countries (e.g., Belgium, France, and the Netherlands). Jewish Councils, comprised of either twelve or twenty-four members (depending upon the size of the community), were obliged to provide for a broad range of needs, including food rationing, health services, schools and orphanages, and a Jewish police force. They were also required to collect valuables from their charges, supply labor for forced labor activities, and identify Jews for further deportation. Once reviled for collaborating with the Nazis, Jewish Councils now receive a more nuanced appraisal.

Kanada – Immediately upon arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau, prisoners were separated from their belongings—they had been told to bring essential items for "relocation." Their luggage, so carefully packed, was taken away and sorted in large warehouses (*Effektenkammer*) in a section of Birkenau nicknamed "Kanada," because Poles considered the North American country a place of abundance. The hundreds of prisoners, both male and female, assigned to work with the Kanada squads (*Kommandos*) treasured the assignment as it allowed them to steal food and clothing.

"Kapo" – A term apparently derived from the Italian "capo," meaning "head," a Kapo was a prisoner who served in a role somewhat equivalent to that of a foreman on a job site. One Kapo was assigned to each block (or barrack) in a camp and to each work "commando." The Kapo had enormous power over fellow prisoners, a power that was often abused. Given their immediate proximity to and moment-to-moment contact with other prisoners, Kapos are remembered by survivors, more often than are SS guards, as making life inside the camps intolerable. Yet, if they failed to please their SS masters, they ran a risk of losing their positions. Speaking of the Kapo's job, Heinrich Himmler once remarked: "As soon as we are no longer satisfied with him, he is no longer a Kapo and returns to the other inmates. He knows that they will beat him to death his first night back."

Korczak, Janusz (1878-1942) – An educational reformer and child psychologist with an international reputation, Korczak applied his theories at both Jewish and Polish orphanages before World War II. When Warsaw fell and a ghetto was established, Korczak chose to remain with his Jewish orphans, dedicating all his energies to meeting their basic needs. Declining offers to escape to the "Aryan" side when rumors surfaced in 1942 that resettlement might mean execution (it appears that he did not believe this), he led his orphans singing to the railroad collection square—*Umschlagplatz*—on 5 August, and then traveled with them to his death at Treblinka.

Kristallnacht (or *Reichskristallnacht*) – During the night of 9-10 November 1938, a massive *pogrom* (state-sponsored anti-Jewish violence) was orchestrated by the Nazi government throughout Germany and the recently annexed state of Austria. A total of 815 shops, 29 department stores, 171 residences, and 267 synagogues were burned or otherwise destroyed. Ninety-one Jews were killed. The shattered panes of beveled glass that littered sidewalks, most coming from the shop windows of Jewish stores, gave the pogrom its name: *Kristallnacht* or "Night of Broken Glass." In the days that followed, 25-30,000 Jewish men were arrested and taken to concentration camps. Many among

the Nazi leadership did not favor pogroms; nevertheless, Kristallnacht marked the regime's first centrally organized operation of large-scale, anti-Jewish violence. It served as important prelude to the Holocaust.

Lebensraum (living space) – A term coined in 1901 by Friedrich Ratzel, a professor of geography, in an article entitled "Lebensraum," it was widely disseminated in the 1920s by Karl Haushofer, a professor of geopolitics at Munich University. Haushofer, who was introduced to Hitler by Rudolf Hess in the early twenties, popularized the term as meaning the "natural" tendency for nations to compete for territory to satisfy the basic needs of their people. At the time, this notion of geopolitics was not unusual—it mirrored the concept of "Manifest Destiny" popularized in the United States. The prominence of Lebensraum in his 1923 book *Mein Kampf* testifies to how riveted Hitler was by the idea. He argued that as a superior race, the Germans had a moral right to conquer and settle Eastern Europe—specifically, Poland and parts of the USSR. Inextricably linked with such expansion was Hitler's concept of "ethnic cleansing"—the newly acquired territories must be racially purified. Accordingly, Hitler's theory of Lebensraum must be combined with his racial ideology; it serves as a basic principle in explaining both the Second World War and the Holocaust.

Łódź – *see* Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski

Lublin – A city in Eastern Poland of about 120,000 people, about a third of whom were Jews, serving as administrative hub for the Lublin district of the General Government. Soon after Lublin fell to the Germans in September 1939, it became headquarters for *SS und Polizeiführer* (SS and Police Leader) Odilo Globocnik, the officer later placed in charge of the Final Solution in the General Government. Earlier, in October 1939, Lublin served as the assembly point for Jews from throughout Europe destined for a Jewish reservation established near Nisko, a small town on the San River (thus, the Nisko Plan). Fewer than 5,000 Jews were transported to Lublin under the Nisko Plan, mostly from Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (western Czechoslovakia), before it was deemed unfeasible (the plan, not followed after November 1939, was scrapped in April 1940). A ghetto was established in Lublin in April 1941. When dissolved in April 1942, 30,000 of the ghetto's residents were sent to their deaths at the new Bełżec extermination camp. Aside from a few who survived the war in hiding, the remaining remnant of Lublin's Jews were either killed at Majdanek, a combined concentration and extermination camp built on the southern edge of Lublin, or were murdered in Operation Harvest Festival.

Madagascar Plan – *see* Final Solution

Mengele, Josef (1911-1978) – The most notorious SS physician at Auschwitz, Dr. Mengele, who received his medical degree from the University of Frankfurt, joined the SS in 1938 and volunteered for the medical corps in 1939 to serve with the *Waffen SS*. Wounded in May 1943, he was transferred to Auschwitz to recuperate. At this point Mengele began applying his medical skills to racial experimentation. Deliberately infecting prisoners with such diseases as typhus and tuberculosis, he allegedly sought to

compare the varying impact of such diseases on different racial types. His depraved research on gypsies and Jewish twins, many of whom were children, aimed to discover a means for increasing Aryan births among Germans. Upon finishing with his subjects, he generally administered fatal injections directly into their hearts. When Auschwitz was evacuated, Mengele was transferred to Mauthausen. When that camp was liberated on 5 May 1945, he had vanished. Living abroad variously in Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, he apparently drowned in a swimming accident in Brazil in December 1978.

Mischlinge (mixed ancestry) – Mischlinge were individuals of mixed German and Jewish (or German and gypsy) heritage, classified as such under the "First Supplementary Decree to the Reich Citizenship Law" of 14 November 1935—a decree serving as follow up to the Nuremberg Laws of September 1935. Two categories of Mischlinge were defined. The first, *Mischlinge erst grad* (mixture first degree), were half Jews, having two Jewish grandparents (but not practicing Judaism or married to a Jews) and numbering in 1935 ca. 75,000 people. The second, *Mischlinge zweite grad* (mixture second degree), were quarter Jews, having one Jewish grandparent, and probably numbering ca. 125,000. Mischlinge generally retained the legal rights of Germans, although those of first degree could marry only Jews or other Mischlinge. Proposals to sterilize Mischlinge arose periodically, including at the Wannsee Conference. Recent research suggests that the SS was preparing in 1944 to deport and exterminate first degree Mischlinge. Although the SS sought to similarly classify gypsies in Germany, evolving various categories of pure and mixed-race gypsies, there was confusion and lack of uniformity regarding their treatment. Heinrich Himmler, for example, seemed convinced that a pure gypsy was also a pure Aryan.

Muselmann – Camp prisoners applied this term to a fellow prisoner who had crossed a psychological line of despair, resulting from starvation and exhaustion, from which recovery was invariably impossible. Although the bodies of many prisoners had been reduced to mere skeletons, the telltale sign of a Muselmann were eyes devoid of expression. The term apparently implied the similarity between a prone and dying "Muselmann," wrapped in a blanket, and a Muslim prostrating himself in prayer.

Nazi (member of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, NSDAP) – An acronym formed from the first syllable of *NAtional* and the second syllable of *SoZIalist*. Properly, the term should be used only for any member of the *Nationalsozialistische deutsche Arbeiterpartei*. The NSDAP was created by Hitler in April 1920 as successor to the German Workers' Party (*Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, DAP), an organization founded in Munich in January 1919. One should not be deceived by its relatively innocuous name. The Nazi movement was a product of the First World War—both in terms of its violence and in its need to find a fundamental reason for Germany's defeat. The NSDAP and its predecessor were intensely nationalistic, xenophobic, and militaristic. Above all, and in conformity with the ideology of its leader, the NSDAP was pathologically antisemitic. Nazi antipathy for Jews far exceeded conventional antisemitism; indeed, the Jews were viewed as a supreme existential danger. The party was also fiercely hostile to Marxism and a sworn enemy of democracy, especially as represented by Germany's Weimar Republic (1918-33). After Hitler's release from

prison in late 1924—imprisonment linked to his role in the November 1923 Beerhall Putsch—the NSDAP became increasingly single minded in its aims to (a) establish a dictatorship under Hitler, (b) overturn the Versailles Treaty, and (c) reverse Jewish emancipation and assimilation. Although only a minority of the thirteen million Germans who voted Nazi in 1932 were committed antisemites, they all voted fully understanding that this party intended to exclude Jews from German society. But one must not conclude that a vote for the NSDAP was a vote for genocide. Once Hitler was granted total power, however, his paranoid fixation on the Jews increased the odds of a genocidal outcome. Since Hitler wanted a second war to overturn the outcome of the first, and since he believed that Germany's salvation required the removal of the Jews, the NSDAP would be molded into a proto-genocidal tool by the time war came in 1939.

Nisko Plan – *see* Lublin.

Nuremberg Laws (*Nürnberger Gesetze*) – Announced on 15 September 1935, the final day of that year's Nuremberg Party Rally, these two laws served to further isolate Jews from the broader German community. The Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honor (*Gesetz zum Schutze des deutschen Blutes und der deutschen Ehre*), prohibited marriage and sexual intercourse between Germans and Jews. Henceforth, sexual relations between Germans and Jews constituted the crime of *Rassenschande* (race defilement). The Reich Citizenship Law (*Reichsbürgergesetz*) reduced the legal status of German Jews from citizens to subjects. The application of both laws was complicated by the difficulty of defining mixed ancestry (*Mischlinge*).

Oneg Shabbat (Sabbath Delight) – *see* Emanuel Ringelblum.

Operation Harvest Festival (*Akton Erntefest*) – *Erntefest* was an operation undertaken in early November 1943 that aimed at exterminating all Jews remaining in the Lublin district of the General Government. Directed by *SS-Gruppenführer* Jakob Sporrenberg (successor to Odilo Globocnik in Lublin), in the aftermath of inmate revolts in the extermination camps at Treblinka and Sobibór, the operation massacred about 40,000 Jews in the camps at Majdanek, Poniatowa, and Trawniki over the course of three days.

Operation Reinhard (*Aktion Reinhard*) – Named in honor of Reinhard Heydrich after his May 1942 assassination, this was a Nazi plan aimed at the extermination of the 2.2 million Jews residing in the General Government of Poland. Heinrich Himmler placed Odilo Globocnik in charge of the operation. Globocnik constructed three extermination camps—Bełżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka—to carry out the operation. Approximately 450 Germans, many who had been involved in the T4 "Euthanasia" Program, together with several hundred Ukrainian Hiwis, were involved in the operation. The endeavor included construction, deportations, and operation of the extermination camps, at which ca. 1.7 million Jews were killed with carbon monoxide between March 1942 (when Bełżec began operations) and October 1943 (when Sobibór and Treblinka ceased operations). In terms of the totals, at least 600,000 people were murdered at Bełżec, the prototype for the three Reinhard camps; 250,000 were killed at Sobibór; more than 800,000 were murdered at Treblinka.

Order Police (*Ordnungspolizei*, or Orpo) – *see* SS

Pale of Settlement – A section of western Tsarist Russia in which Jews were required to reside. The Pale was first established in 1791 under Catherine the Great when Jews in Byelorussia, which had passed under Russian rule at the first partition of Poland (1772), were forbidden to join guilds in areas of the empire outside of Byelorussia. Two successive partitions of Poland (1793 and 1795) resulted in enlargement of the Pale to include large sections of Lithuania and the Ukraine. It was more rigorously institutionalized during the reign of Nicholas I (1825-55). Although home to a large Jewish population, Poland itself was not included in the Pale. Nevertheless, Jews within the area of ethnic Poland were forbidden to reside in the Pale, while Jews living in the Pale were precluded from living in Poland. Certain residence exemptions were periodically extended to various so-called classes of Jews, including some merchants, people possessing a higher education, and Jews engaged in military service. These exemptions were dramatically curtailed under Tsar Alexander III in 1891.

Pogrom – Arising from a Russian word meaning "devastation," pogroms were generally violent attacks by mobs made up largely of peasants and unskilled urban workers (often of recent peasant origin), combined with elements of the petty criminal class, bound together by a desire for pillage as much as a commitment to punish local Jews for some perceived historic, religious, or economic misdeed. Often state-sponsored and prearranged, the anti-Jewish violence was at the very least either condoned or tolerated by the authorities. Prior to the Third Reich, such attacks were associated mostly with Tsarist Russia, impacting communities in southern and south-western sections of the Ukraine. In 1881, for example, approximately 250 communities in the Russian Pale of Settlement experienced violence in which tens of thousands of Jews, their houses and workplaces ransacked, found themselves homeless and without any means of livelihood. Worse yet were the human casualties as the dead, wounded, and raped left many Jewish communities permanently traumatized, thereby leading to the emigration of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Eastern Europe to Western Europe, North and South America, and Palestine. *Kristallnacht* (9-10 November 1938) was the single instance of a pogrom in Nazi Germany.

Reich (Empire) – Hitler regarded his regime as the logical extension of two prior German Empires. The "First Reich" was the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, which lasted from the coronation in Rome of Otto the Great (a Saxon king) in 962 CE to its abolition in 1806 by Napoleon. The Second Reich, or Wilhelmine Reich, was founded in 1871 by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck; it lasted until the end of the Hohenzollern dynasty (i.e., the abdication of Wilhelm II) in 1918. In adopting the term "the Third Reich," Hitler appropriated the title of Arthur Moeller van den Bruck's 1923 book, *Das dritte Reich*. Hitler was convinced, however, that his was the greatest German empire, destined to last 1,000 years.

Resistance – For some decades after World War II, especially during the period surrounding the Eichmann Trial, the question of Jewish resistance was sensitive and

sparked angry debate. The image of Jews as docile victims—"they went like sheep to the slaughter"—has ebbed in recent years, rendering a more nuanced image in which Jewish resistance is recognized as having been reasonably widespread. The newer image accepts (a) the single-minded nature of Nazi intensions, (b) the extreme vulnerability of Europe's unarmed Jews, and (c) the concept that noncompliance must also be recognized as resistance. Of basic importance is appreciating that Jewish resisters did not enjoy the asset of a friendly and cooperative native population, as found in France or Greece, prepared to either hide or assist resisters engaged in sabotage or other acts of anti-Nazi terror. During 1939-42, one saw the evolution of underground resistance in the ghettos focused on religious worship, establishing schools, creating archives, publishing newspapers, and smuggling food. When suspicions regarding the extermination process emerged in 1942, so did armed Jewish resistance organizations such as the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB, or *Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa*), created by young Zionists in the Warsaw ghetto in August 1942. The ŻOB staged a major armed rebellion against the Nazis in April-May 1943, and uprisings occurred in the extermination camps of Sobibór, Treblinka, and Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1944., Most resisters perished in these rebellions; yet, they were able to underscore the potential Jews possessed to fight their Nazi oppressors.

"Righteous Among the Nations" – In 1953 the Israeli parliament (Knesset) approved the "Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Law" whereby Yad Vashem—Israel's institute for Holocaust commemoration and education—was charged with establishing a memorial for "Righteous Gentiles," non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews during the Holocaust. Since 1963 a committee of the Yad Vashem Remembrance Authority has identified over 16,000 individuals as "Righteous Among the Nations." Among the best known are the German industrialist, Oskar Schindler, the Swedish businessman, Raoul Wallenberg, the Swiss diplomat, Charles Lutz, the Portuguese diplomat, Aristides de Sousa Mendes, the Japanese diplomat, Chiune Sugihara, the French pastor, André Trocme, and the Polish underground organization, Zegota. In 2006, Martha and Waitstill Sharp joined Varian Fry as the only United States' citizens identified as "Righteous Among the Nations."

Ringelblum, Emanuel (1900-44) – Oneg Shabbat, the clandestine archive of the Warsaw ghetto, will be forever attached to the name Emanuel Ringelblum. A Jewish historian from Eastern Galicia, Ringelblum received his doctorate in 1927 from the University of Warsaw, developed an expertise on Jewish history in Warsaw, and taught Jewish history in Polish high schools. In the final months before Germany's invasion of Poland, he worked with the "Joint" in assisting Jews who had been expelled from Germany in the weeks leading up to *Kristallnacht*. But Ringelblum is best known for his efforts to chronicle Jewish life in Warsaw under Nazi occupation. Establishing and administering the Oneg Shabbat archive, he ensured the preservation of reports and personal testimonies—including his own wartime writings—thereby providing a rich and powerful source of material on Jewish life in the Warsaw ghetto under German rule. Ringelblum was involved with the Jewish Fighting Organization (ŻOB, or *Żydowska Organizacja Bojowa*) and survived the Warsaw ghetto uprising of April-May

1943. After escaping from the Trawniki labor camp, he was recaptured in March 1944 and executed with his family.

Rumkowski, Mordechai Chaim (1877-1944) – Born in Russia, Rumkowski was a failed businessman who was serving as an orphanage director when the Germans invaded Poland in 1939. Living in Łódź, Poland's second largest city (after Warsaw) and a major industrial center, he was appointed chairman of the *Judenrat* in the Łódź ghetto—a position he held until 1944. Aiming at employing Jews for the Nazi administration of Łódź, Rumkowski established more than 100 factories in the city, which the Germans had renamed "Litzmannstadt" and incorporated into the German Reich. Late in 1941 he was forced to begin organizing deportations to the Chełmno extermination camp. His moral compromise—"I'll meet the deportation quota, provide important work for the Germans, and save some percentage of Jewish lives"—helped extend the life of the Łódź ghetto beyond that of any other ghetto. It also resulted in Łódź having a relatively large number of Holocaust survivors. The Łódź ghetto was, nonetheless, liquidated in August 1944—shortly before the arrival of the Red Army—and Rumkowski and his family were deported to Auschwitz, where they were killed.

Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*, or Sipo) – *see* SS.

Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, or SD) – *see* SS.

Selections (*Selektionen*) – The formal process of separating those prisoners in the camp who could work—or were allowed to work—from those who could not was known as "selection." Those who could not work were earmarked for *Sonderbehandlung* ("Special Treatment"). At Auschwitz the initial selection took place immediately upon a deportation train's arrival at the camp. SS officers, often medical doctors, routinely and haphazardly inspected their human cargo on the railway platform, selecting those who were judged fit for work. The remainder, generally 80 percent or more of the transport, were sent directly to the gas chambers. In virtually every concentration and labor camp, the SS undertook periodic selections to determine who was too ill or exhausted to continue working. Sometimes these were killed immediately, more often they were sent to an extermination facility.

Sephardim (Hebrew for "Spanish Jews") – Jews expelled from Spain in 1492, they and their descendants migrated and settled all along the shores of the Mediterranean (Italy, the Balkans, North Africa, and the Middle East) and in various parts of Western Europe (e.g., Amsterdam).

Sho'ah – The word "Holocaust" derives from the Greek *holókauston* (from *holos*, "completely," and *kaustos*, "burnt"). Due largely to either the inappropriate use or overuse of "Holocaust," "*Sho'ah*," a Hebrew word meaning "desolation," is preferred by many scholars when referring to the destruction of nearly six million European Jews during World War II. First appearing in a 1940 Hebrew publication, *Sho'ah Yehudei Polin* (*The Destruction of the Jews of Poland*), the term was largely forgotten until recovered by Israelis in the 1960s and 70s.

Shtetl – The Yiddish word for "small town," thousands of *shtetlakh* (plural for shtetl) had for centuries marked the rural countryside of eastern Poland and the former Pale of Settlement in Lithuania, Byelorussia, and western Ukraine. Inhabited largely, but not exclusively, by Jews, the shtetlakh experienced periods of relative tolerance and prosperity as well as times of extreme poverty and hardships. They were romanticized in the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* (based on shtetl stories by Sholom Aleichem); in fact, the Jews who lived in them at the turn of the nineteenth-twentieth centuries lived in poverty and constituted a large percentage of those murdered during the Holocaust.

Sonderbehandlung (Special Treatment) – A euphemism used by both Nazi politicians and members of the SS as a code word for camouflaging mass murder.

Sonderkommando (Special Units) – SS administrators at the extermination camps of Auschwitz, Bełżec, Chełmno, Majdanek, Sobibór, and Treblinka established the Sonderkommando, teams of male prisoners who were relatively young and in good health, to dispose of corpses from the crematoria. Sonderkommando enjoyed better living conditions than other inmates selected to live; they were given decent food, they slept on straw mattresses, and they could wear normal clothing. Inevitably, however, most were eventually gassed as they became weak or sick. The SS also disposed periodically of those prisoners who had witnessed the horrors at these facilities.

SS (*Schutzstaffel* or "Protective Staff") – The SS was originally recruited in 1923 from the SA (*Stürmabteilung* or Storm Section) to serve as Hitler's bodyguard. As time passed, and under the leadership of Heinrich Himmler, it came to represent the police establishment of the Third Reich while also embodying Nazi racial ideology. By the beginning of the Second World War, the SS had evolved into a vast police network with two key divisions: first, the Security Police (*Sicherheitspolizei*, or Sipo) and, second, the Order Police (*Ordnungspolizei*, or Orpo). Sipo consisted of the Criminal Police (*Kriminalpolizei*, or Kripo) and the Secret State Police (*Geheime Staatspolizei*, or Gestapo), operating under the command of Reinhard Heydrich. Orpo, commanded by Kurt Daluege, included the municipal police (*Schutzpolizei*), the rural police (*Gendarmerie*), and small-town police (*Gemeindepolizei*). From September 1939, the Gestapo joined with the Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*, or SD) to form the Reich Security Main Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*, or RSHA) under the leadership of Heydrich. This office was devoted to the ruthless implementation of Nazi racial policy, including deportations, confinement to ghettos, organization of both the camp system (under the *Totenkopf* or Death's Head units) and forced labor, and extermination. Also in 1939, the SS established an elite military force, the *Waffen-SS*, which by the end of the war was a powerful organization of 39 divisions. Thus, the SS evolved from Hitler's tiny bodyguard unit into the infamous organization that was instrumental in destroying European Jewry through implementation of the "Final Solution."

Stangl, Franz (1908-71) – Born in Austria, Stangl entered the Austrian police force in 1931, then joined the Austrian Nazi Party in 1936. He enrolled in the SS in 1938 and was active with the Gestapo in Linz before being assigned to the euthanasia center at

Hartheim (near Linz), where the handicapped were systematically killed under the T4 program. He was appointed commandant of the Sobibór extermination camp in the spring of 1942, overseeing the murder of 100,000 Jews prior to his transfer in September to Treblinka. In under a year he supervised the extermination of ca. 800,000 Jews at Treblinka. In August 1943 he was transferred with Odilo Globocnik to Trieste to participate in a campaign against Yugoslav partisans. Although arrested by American soldiers in 1945, his record remained unknown and he was able to move to Rome, then Syria, and finally Brazil, where he worked for sixteen years before being extradited to West Germany in 1967. Convicted of murder, he died in prison in 1971.

Streicher, Julius (1885-1946) – Born in Bavaria, Streicher was a notorious antisemite and widely regarded, by friend and foe alike, as the Nazis' foremost Jew-baiter. Joining the Nazi Party in 1921, he served as *Gauleiter* (Nazi Party district leader) of Franconia from 1925 until 1940. His notoriety came chiefly through *Der Stürmer*, a vicious and obscene antisemitic newspaper that Streicher published and edited from 1923 until 1945. Streicher organized the anti-Jewish boycott of 1 April 1933.

Sugihara, Chiune (1900-1986) – The Japanese consul general in Kovno, Lithuania, who in July-August 1940 issued more than 2,000 transit visas for Jewish refugees. After leaving Lithuania in September 1940, Sugihara was posted to Prague, and later Königsberg and Bucharest. When he returned to American-occupied Japan in 1947, the Foreign Ministry retired him with a small pension as part of a large staff reduction. In 1984, Yad Vashem named Sugihara one of the "Righteous Among the Nations" for his efforts to save Jews.

T4 "Euthanasia" Program – *see* Euthanasia

Talmud (derived from the Hebrew verb "to learn") – The Talmud, known as "Oral Law," is the compilation of historic rabbinic discussions that codifies those rabbis' understandings of the Torah. The concept of "law" in Judaism may be divided into two parts. "Written Law" is another name for the Torah—or, more specifically, for the 613 commandments embedded in the Torah. Because Torah law may be vague and incomprehensible, so-called "Oral Law" evolved as legal commentary on the Torah. Oral Law, despite the assignation, was first written down in ca. 200 C.E. in a compendium known as the Mishnah. A second vast compendium of rabbinic commentary, focused largely on expounding the Mishnah and known as the Gemara, followed in ca. 500 C.E. Together, the Mishnah and the Gemara comprise the Talmud, a complex and systematic record focused on Jewish law, ethics, customs, and history. Talmudic study has long formed an integral component of Judaic scholarship.

Theresienstadt (Terezin in Czech) – A fortress town originally founded under the Austrian Empire and named for Maria Theresa, Theresienstadt became a special ghetto in November 1941, designed for prominent Jews from Germany and Western Europe. Described by the Nazis as a "retirement town" for Jews, it became little more than a

front for the "resettlement" of Jews further east. Beginning in 1942, Jews from Theresienstadt were deported to ghettos in Białstok, Łódź, Minsk, Riga, and Warsaw, from which many were sent to extermination camps. Many more were sent directly to Auschwitz, Majdanek, and Treblinka. Approximately 140,000 Jews from Western and Central Europe spent time in Theresienstadt during the Second World War.

Torah ("teaching," "instruction," or "law" in Hebrew) – Properly, the word "Torah" refers to the Five Books of Moses—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy—also known as the Law of Moses, and comprising the first five books of both the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. But the word is sometimes used to refer to the entire Hebrew Bible (the Christian Old Testament), a body of scripture correctly known to Jews as the Tanak. In the synagogue, the Torah is kept on a scroll, known as a "Sefer Torah," hand-written by a skilled scribe in Hebrew calligraphy. The scroll is covered with fabric and kept in a cabinet in the synagogue known as an "ark."

Treblinka – *see* Operation Reinhard.

Umschlagplatz ("collection place" or "reshipment square") – Once the Nazis decided to exterminate Europe's Jews, the need for "reshipment" became paramount for Jews located in the many ghettos in Eastern Europe. The point in or near the ghettos designated to assemble for such reshipment was designated "*der Umschlagplatz*." Best known is the Umschlagplatz, now a memorial, on Stawski Street, just outside the northern boundary of the Warsaw ghetto. This was where Warsaw's Jews assembled prior to boarding trains for transport to the extermination camp at Treblinka.

Volksdeutsche (Ethnic Germans) – The term *Volksdeutsch* was used in the early twentieth century to describe ethnic Germans living outside of Germany—in the Baltic States, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and even Russia. The term differentiated these people from *Reichsdeutsche*, Germans who resided within Germany. Although the Nazis welcomed—in many case, forced—Volksdeutsche back to Germany, especially to those areas incorporated into the Reich from Poland, they were often treated as second-class citizens by Reichsdeutsche with whom they came into contact.

Wannsee Conference – A conference held 20 January 1942 at a villa in the Wannsee district of western Berlin. While the decision to exterminate Europe's Jews had already been made in late 1941, the meeting was held to coordinate and implement the "Final Solution" (*Endlösung*) under the leadership of Reinhard Heydrich. Of the fourteen high ranking Nazis in attendance, most realized that Jews were already being mass murdered in recently occupied areas of the Soviet Union—indeed, a few were SS police officials engaged in the killing. Heydrich successfully asserted his authority at the conference, signifying that the SS would thereafter wield total control for the Final Solution. There was broad agreement for the plan among the meeting's attendees.

Warsaw – *see* Adam Czerniaków *and* Resistance.

Wehrmacht – In 1935 Hitler changed the name of Germany's defense forces from "Reichwehr" to "Wehrmacht." Technically, the word refers to all of Nazi Germany's armed forces: the army (*Heer*), the navy (*Kriegsmarine*), and the air force (*Luftwaffe*). Nevertheless, it is most often associated narrowly with the army. Although the principal perpetrators of war crimes in the Third Reich were such organizations as the *Waffen-SS* and the *Einsatzgruppen*, members of the traditional defense forces, especially on the Eastern Front, engaged in their own war crimes, both as perpetrators and as collaborators. The name "Wehrmacht" was discontinued after World War II and replaced in the Federal Republic of Germany by "*Bundeswehr*."

Yellow Badge (Star of David) – During the Second World War, the Jews of Germany and occupied Europe were forced to wear a distinguishing emblem on their clothing to help facilitate their identification and separate them psychologically from non-Jews. The requirement began on 1 December 1939 in Poland, roughly two months after that country's occupation, with white armbands and a blue Star of David serving as the original sign. By 1941 the badge was changed to a six-pointed yellow star, to be worn on the left side of one's breast and, sometimes, on one's back. Inside Greater Germany (including Austria and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) Jews six years of age and older were first required to wear the yellow badge with the inscription *Jude* (Jew) in September 1941. In Western Europe the yellow badge was imposed—with inscriptions such as *Jood* (Dutch) or *Juif* (French)—in the spring and summer of 1942. Hungarian Jews were not required to wear the badge until April 1944.

Yeshiva (Hebrew for "sitting") – An Orthodox Jewish educational institution, dating back to the Talmudic academies in Babylon, restricted to men—ranging in age from mid-teens to late middle age—and devoted principally to organized Torah study and in-depth exploration of Talmud and its commentaries. The regimen of traditional yeshivos (plural) was quite rigorous, with students expected to study ten or more hours each day. Although one found yeshivos throughout Eastern Europe, the most famous were located in Lithuania, Byelorussia, and several Polish cities—most notably, Lublin.

Yiddish – A Jewish language, generally associated in the twentieth century with Eastern Europe, that arose among the *Ashkenazim* in the twelfth century. The persecution of Jews in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Germany induced many to leave Central Europe and settle in the region of Poland. The dialect they introduced is based largely on German and Hebrew—indeed, the word is a rough combination of *Yid*, or Jew, and *Deutsch*, or German—although it has borrowings from both Slavic and Romance languages. Some argue that Yiddish is in fact fourteenth-century German, written in Hebrew letters.

Żegota – A codeword for the Provisional Committee for Aid to the Jews, Zegota was an underground organization made up of Poles and Jews dedicated to assisting Jews in German-occupied Poland from September 1942 to the end of World War II. The organization, founded by Zofia Kossak-Szczucka and Wanda Krahelska-Filipowicz, provided Jews with hiding places, foster homes, forged papers, and medical attention. By the end of 1944 it had supplied financial assistance to ca. 4,000 Jews and was

supporting ca. 2,500 Jewish children in foster homes. Yad Vashem declared Zegota, as an organization, "Righteous Among the Nations" in October 1963.

Zyklon B (commercial name for hydrogen cyanide—HCN—crystals) – A pesticide—in its liquid form, hydrocyanic acid, it is known as prussic acid, or *Blausäure* ("blue acid") due to its derivation from Prussian blue dye—that turns into a lethal cyanic gas when oxidized, it was used by the Nazis as a tool for mass murder. Manufactured as early as the 1880s for use as an insecticide, it was first tested on 3 September 1941 on a group of Soviet prisoners in Block 11 of Auschwitz I. Zyklon B was thereafter employed massively and exclusively in the Auschwitz gas chambers. Majdanek used both carbon monoxide and Zyklon B. The other extermination camps relied solely on carbon monoxide. Zyklon B was produced principally by Degesch, an acronym for the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Schädlingsbekämpfung (German Vermin-Combating Corporation), partly owned by the giant chemical firm I.G. Farben, but controlled by Degussa, an acronym for the Deutsche Gold und Silber Scheide-Anstalt (German Gold and Silver Metallurgical Institute).