

Introduction to Elie Wiesel's Night

The Holocaust and other Background
Information

The Holocaust: Terms to Know

- Holocaust:
 - burnt offering; a sacrifice consumed by fire
- Genocide:
 - The systematic annihilation of a whole people or nation
- Antisemitism:
 - Prejudice against or hatred of all Jews
- Ghetto:
 - a confined area of a city in which members of a minority group are compelled to live because of social, legal, or economic pressure.

The Holocaust: Terms to Know

- Totalitarianism:

- is the total control of a country in the government's hands
- It subjugates individual rights.
- It demonstrates a policy of aggression.

- SS:

- German abbreviation for Schutzstaffel (protection squads). A paramilitary formation of the Nazi party initially created to serve as bodyguard to Hitler and other Nazi leaders.



The Holocaust: Terms to Know

Bilder neuerer Rassen 1



Skizze eines blonden Mannes, nordische Rasse, typisch für die nordische Rasse.



Nordische Rasse



Skizze einer blonden Frau, nordische Rasse, typisch für die nordische Rasse.



Skizze eines rötlich-braunen Mannes, fatische Rasse, typisch für die fatische Rasse.



Fatische Rasse



Skizze einer rötlich-braunen Frau, fatische Rasse, typisch für die fatische Rasse.



Skizze eines dunkelhaarigen Mannes, westliche Rasse, typisch für die westliche Rasse.



Westliche Rasse



Skizze einer dunkelhaarigen Frau, westliche Rasse, typisch für die westliche Rasse.

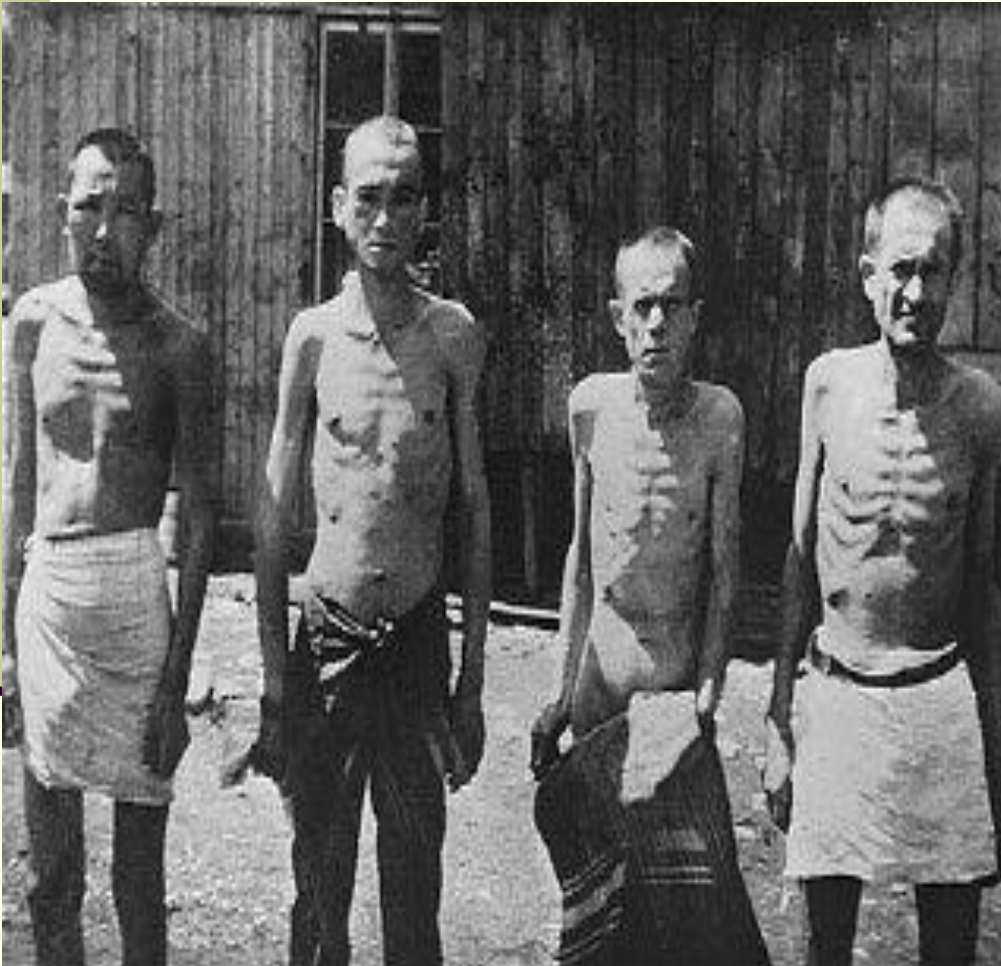
- Aryan:
 - in Nazi Germany, non-Jewish and non-Gypsy Caucasians were labeled Aryan. They usually had features such as blonde hair and blue eyes and were considered to be the most superior of Aryans, members of a “master race.”

The Holocaust: Terms to Know

- Concentration Camp:
 - Concentration Camps were established by the Nazi regime and managed by the SS to detain and, if necessary, kill so-called enemies of the state (i.e., Jews, Gypsies, etc.)
 - Living conditions in camps were extremely poor.
 - Prisoners slept in barracks that were small and extremely close together.
 - The buildings were poorly constructed and unsanitary.



More on Concentration Camps



- Prisoners spent around 10 hours a day working at hard labor.
- Then, they had to stand for long roll call assemblies, stand in lines for meager rations (typically less than 1700 calories), and stand in line for the wash room.

The Holocaust: Terms to Know



- Auschwitz:
 - the largest Nazi concentration camp complex, located 37 miles west of Kraków, Poland
- Birkenau:
 - also known as Auschwitz II. Birkenau contained the large-scale killing apparatus at Auschwitz.

Jewish Terms

- Judaism:

- the monotheistic religion (belief in one god) of the Jews, having its ethical, ceremonial, and legal foundation in the precepts of the Old Testament and in the teachings and commentaries of the rabbis as found chiefly in the Talmud

- Talmud:

- the most significant collection of Jewish oral tradition

Jewish Terms



- Torah:
 - The first five books of the Hebrew scriptures

Jewish Terms

- Synagogue
 - A Jewish place of worship



Jewish Terms

- Cabbala (Kaballah)
 - the religious mystical system of Judaism claiming an insight into divine nature
- Kaddish
 - A prayer recited in the daily synagogue services and by mourners after the death of a close relative.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1933

- Adolf Hitler's Nazi Party gains control of the German government.
 - Nazi: The National Socialist Workers' Party
 - The Nazis decree a 3 day boycott of Jewish businesses.



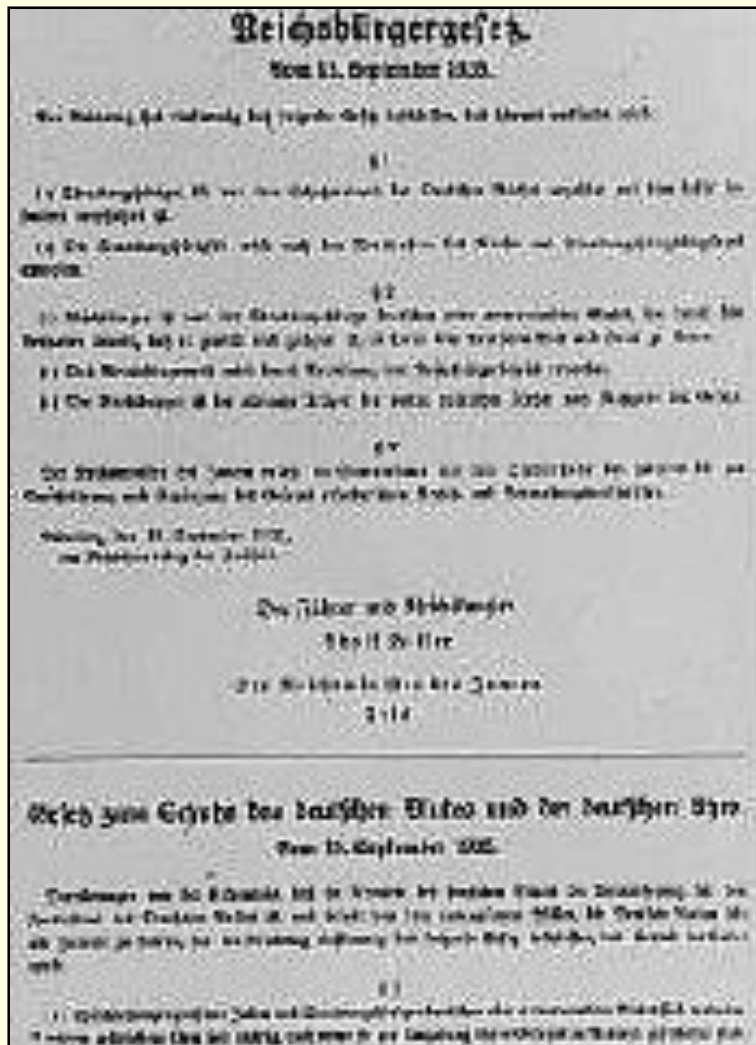
Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1933

- The Nazis establish a concentration camp at Dachau, the first of many prison camps where they will confine communists, socialists, trade unionists, homosexuals, Gypsies, Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other "undesirables."
- Nazi laws remove Jews from German courts and civil service positions, limit the number of Jews who can attend German universities, remove Jews from German college faculties, and expel Jews from German cultural life (i.e., film, theater, literature, music, journalism).

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1933

- Jewish food preparation rituals are outlawed.
- Nazi laws require involuntary sterilization of mixed race children, the physically or mentally handicapped, Gypsies, Blacks, and others deemed racially or genetically "inferior."

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1935



- The Nazi's "Nuremberg Laws" prohibit marriage and extramarital relations between Jews and non-Jews, revoke the citizenship and civil rights of German Jews, and forbid Jews to display the German flag.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1938

- Nazi laws require Jews to report their financial assets and property.
- The Nazi government assumes control of all Jewish religious institutions.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1938

- Nazi laws forbid Jews to practice law or medicine, and require Jews to carry special identification cards at all times.
- Jews are ordered to turn in their passports so they can be stamped "Jew."



Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1938

- Kristallnacht

- ("The Night of Broken Glass," November 9): a government-sanctioned night of anti-Jewish riots, during which synagogues are burned, Jewish homes looted, Jewish businesses destroyed, and thousands of Jews beaten, tortured, arrested, or killed.



Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1938

- Nazi police arrest approximately 30,000 Jewish men for deportation to concentration camps.
- **Deportation:** the removal of people from their areas of residency for purposes of resettlement elsewhere.
- Nazi laws ban Jewish newspapers and journals, expel Jewish children from German schools, and bar Jews from theaters, museums, and other public gathering places.
- The Nazi government closes all Jewish businesses and prohibits further Jewish business activity.
- The government imposes a tax on Jews to pay for Kristallnacht property damage.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1939

- The Nazi Gestapo assumes control of all Jewish affairs.
- **Gestapo:** The German State Police
- The Nazis establish detailed procedures for confiscating Jewish property.
- **Nazi Invasion of Poland** (September 1): Nazi Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing squads) follow the advancing German army and execute thousands of Poles, whom the Nazis regard as "subhuman." Thousands more are shipped to Germany as slave laborers or relocated within Poland to provide open space for German settlement.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1939

- Nazi forces round up approximately 3 million Polish Jews and confine them in urban ghettos.
- Polish Jews are required to wear the Star of David.
- In Germany, the Nazis initiate a euthanasia program to kill institutionalized and handicapped patients who are deemed incurable.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1940

- Nazi Conquest of Europe: Anti-Jewish policies are imposed in Nazi-occupied Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, France, and in other European countries under Nazi domination.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1941

- Nazi Invasion of the Soviet Union (June 22): Einsatzgruppen following the advancing army exterminate Jews, Gypsies, communists, and other "undesirables"; more than one million people are massacred.
- Extermination camps with gas chambers for mass executions are constructed in Poland at Auschwitz-Birkenau, Chelmno, Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek, and Treblinka.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1941

- Nazi leaders, meeting in Wannsee outside Berlin, adopt a policy of mass execution as "the final solution of the Jewish question."
- Deportation of Jews from Nazi-occupied and Nazi-dominated countries across Europe to the extermination camps in Poland begins.

Timeline of Holocaust Events: 1945

- The Nazi's extermination camps, concentration camps, and forced labor camps remain in operation until Germany surrenders on May 7.



Elie Wiesel: The author of Night



Elie Wiesel

- Born 1928 in Sighet, Romania
- Deported to concentration camps during WWII
- Parents and little sister killed; two older sisters survived
- Survived Auschwitz, Buna, Buchenwald, and Gleiwitz
- Liberated in April 1945

Elie Wiesel

- 1955: published Night
- 1978: appointed chair of Presidential Commission on the Holocaust (later renamed U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council)
- 1985: awarded Congressional Gold Medal of Achievement
- 1986: awarded Nobel Peace Prize
- 2016: Died