



University of Haifa

The Weiss-Livnat International MA in Holocaust Studies

Nazi Germany: An Introduction

Dr. Kobi Kabalek

Semester: Spring 2019

Class Time: Sunday, 13:15-14:45

Room:

Office Hours: Sundays, by appointment

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Course Description:

This seminar provides students with a broad overview of a variety of themes that are essential to the study of the political, cultural, and social history of Nazi Germany. It covers the origins and main features of Nazi thought and the cultural context in which it developed; various perspectives on the notion of a Nazi revolution; the power relations and hierarchies within the Nazi party and in “Hitler’s state”; it discusses whether the regime succeeded in forging a “national community” and what were the racial and social elements in this endeavor; the policies of exclusion against “enemies of the Reich” and the Nazi regime’s use of legal means, terror, and social pressure for this purpose; perceptions and practices regarding gender roles and sexuality and their functions within the Nazi state; the persecution and murder of German Jews, and the state’s exclusion and murder of those deemed “racially unfit” to belong to the German people. The course further considers the benefits that “Aryan” Germans could gain from the Nazi regime in its “good years” and the destruction and violence that they underwent in Nazi Germany’s “bad years” as well as the question of German resistance against Nazism. The class focuses mainly on views from “inside” Nazi Germany, considering the perspectives of victims, perpetrators, and complacent onlookers and fellow-travelers.

Course Requirements:

Weekly reading assignments: The articles and chapters assigned aim to provide different perspectives on the topic of each week’s discussion and to offer starting points for further reading. As such, you do not have to read every single page of the texts assigned, but rather read enough to understand central arguments and interpretations and their significance for the course.

Response papers: Every student must submit 2 short response papers (no more than 500 words!) in the weeks of your choosing. A response paper should not summarize the assigned readings. It should discuss at least two of the assigned texts and connect them. The connection can take the shape of a common historical problem, point to contradictions or similarities between the texts and try to explain what these contradictions/similarities are based on. The paper may also use the readings to raise analytical questions relevant to our course and/or the study of the Holocaust. Do not ask questions that are easily answered or which you already know very well. Try to be creative in composing your responses and in doing so you may also include texts and ideas that you know



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from other sources in order to enrich the insights you gain from the reading. Papers must state your name, date, and the response paper number (by weeks) and they are to be submitted to me as email attachments (in Word) no later than 11:00 a.m. on the day of the seminar. Late response papers will not be accepted.

Class participation: active attendance in at least ten weeks of the course is required. Unexcused or repeated absence will influence your grade.

Final paper:

By **May 5, 2019**, you should submit an initial **proposal** (2-3 pages, double-spaced, font 12) for either

a) an *Exercise* (no more than 10 pages, double-spaced, font 12, including footnotes and bibliography), or

b) a *Seminar Paper* (25-30 pages, double-spaced, font 12, including footnotes and bibliography).

A proposal should include research questions and a preliminary bibliography. Late proposals will not be accepted.

You must receive my written approval of the proposal before you can pursue your final paper.

Final papers should follow standard academic practice, especially when quoting or using ideas of other scholars.

This only applies if you intend to submit a paper of whatever kind.

Submission Dates:

Exercises: **July 14, 2019**

Seminar Papers: **October 27, 2019**

Delay in submitting your exercise (referat) or seminar paper will influence your grade. A paper submitted one week after the deadline will reduce 5 points from your grade, a later submission will reduce 5 additional points.

Final Grade:

Class participation	20%
Response papers	30%
Final paper	50%

Course Outline and Reading List

Week 1 (February 24): Introduction

1. Mary Fulbrook, "Democracy and Dictatorship, 1918-1945," in idem, *A Concise History of Germany* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 155-204.



Week 2 (March 3): Nazi Thought in Its Cultural and Ideological Context

1. Fritz Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair: A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 1-22.
2. Ofer Ashkenazi, "The Incredible Transformation of Dr. Bessel: Alternative Memories of the Great War in German War Films of the Late 1920s," *History & Memory* 20: 1 (Spring/Summer 2008): 121-152.
3. Richard J. Evans, "The Emergence of Nazi Ideology," in Jane Caplan, ed., *Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press 2008), 26-47.
4. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 284-330 (vol. 1, chapter 11)

Week 3 (March 10): The Nazi Revolution

1. Peter Fritzsche, "The NSDAP 1919-1934: From Fringe Politics to the Seizure of Power," in Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, 48-72.
2. "The Story of a Farmer," in Theodore F. Abel, *The Nazi Movement: Why Hitler Came to Power* (New York: Atherton Press, 1965), 289-301.
3. Watch film: *Hitlerjunge Quex* (dir. Hans Steinhoff, 1933)

Recommended:

Ian Kershaw, "The Third Reich: 'Social Reaction' or 'Social Revolution'?", in *The Nazi Dictatorship*, 161-182.

Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941), 456-467, 577-583 (excerpts from vol. 1, chapter 12, and vol. 2, chapter 1).

Week 4 (March 17): Hitler and the Volksgemeinschaft – Vision and Reality

1. Ian Kershaw, "'Working towards the Führer': Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," in idem, *Hitler, the Germans, and the Final Solution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 29-48. (available also in Hebrew: pages 35-53).
2. Jill Stephenson, "Inclusion: Building the National Community in Propaganda and Practice," in Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, 99-121.
3. Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2008), 19-38.

Recommended:

Michael Wildt, *Generation of the Unbound: The Leadership Corps of the Reich Security Main Office* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2002), 32 pages.

Michael Wildt, *Hitler's Volksgemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion: Violence against Jews in Provincial Germany, 1919-1939* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 15-50.

Week 5 (March 24): Terror, Denunciation, and Social Pressure

1. Nikolaus Wachsmann, "The Dynamics of Destruction: The Development of the Concentration Camps 1933-1945," in Jane Caplan and Nikolaus Wachsmann, eds,



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Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany: New Histories (London: Routledge, 2010), 17-43.

2. Robert Gellately, "Rethinking the Nazi Terror System: A Historical Analysis," *German Studies Review* 14: 1 (February 1991): 23-38.
3. Michael Burleigh, "Faith, Hope, and Even a Little Charity Too," in idem, *The Third Reich: A New History* (London: Macmillan, 2000), 219-228. (available in Hebrew: pages 221-235).

Week 6 (March 31): Resistance

1. Wolfgang Benz, *A Concise History of the Third Reich* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 121-130, 234-249.
2. Valerie Hebert, "Disguised Resistance? The Story of Kurt Gerstein," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 20: 1 (Spring 2006): 1-33.
3. Martin Broszat, "Resistance and Resistenz," in Neil Gregor, ed., *Nazism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000, Doc. 65.

Week 7 (April 7) Body and Power: Gender, Sex, and Romance in Nazi Society

1. Eleanor Hancock, "'Only the Real, the True, the Masculine Held Its Value': Ernst Röhm, Masculinity, and Male Homosexuality," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 8: 4 (1998): 616-641.
2. Michael Wildt, "'Racial Defilement': Honor, Gender, and Volk's Justice," in idem, *Hitler's Volksgemeinschaft and the Dynamics of Racial Exclusion*, 165-200.
3. Stephen Brockmann, "*Die große Liebe* (1942) or Love and War," in idem, *A Critical History of German Film* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010), 166-179.
4. Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Wippermann, *The Racial State: Germany 1933-1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 242-266.

Recommended:

Dagmar Herzog, "Hubris, Hypocrisy, Incitement and Disavowal: Sexuality and German Fascism," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 11: 1/2 (2002): 3-21.

Week 8 (April 14) Eugenics, Euthanasia, and the Persecution of the Jews

1. Henry Friedlander, "The Exclusion and Murder of the Disabled," in Gellately and Stotzfus, *Social Outsiders in Nazi Germany*, 145-164.
2. Harald Welzer, "Mass Murder and Moral Code: Some Thoughts on an Easily Misunderstood Subject," *History of the Human Sciences* 17: 2/3 (2004): 15-32.
3. David Bankier, "The Germans and the Holocaust: What did they know?" *Yad Vashem Studies* 20 (1990): 69-98 (available also in Hebrew).
4. Victor Klemperer, *I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941*, (New York: Random House, 1998), 9-14 (Entries March 27-April 20, 1933 – available also in Hebrew).

Recommended:

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Shmulik Lederman, "History of a Misunderstanding: 'The Banality of Evil' and Holocaust Historiography," *Yad Vashem Studies* 41: 2 (2013): 173-209 (available also in Hebrew).

David Deutsch, "Antisemitism and Intimacy in the Writing of Goebbels," *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust* 26: 1 (2012): 9-37 (available also in Hebrew).

Passover break – April 17-April 26**Week 9 (April 28) "Good Times": Plunder, Prosperity, and Leisure**

1. Adam Tooze, "The Economic History of the Nazi Regime," in Caplan, *Nazi Germany*, 168-195.
2. Götz Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries: How the Nazis Bought the German People* (New York: Metropolitan, 2007), 1-9.
3. Ulrich Herbert, "Good Times, Bad Times: Memories of the Third Reich," in Richard Bessel, ed., *Life in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 97-110.
4. Ishay Landa, "'A Shower of Hail to All Orchards': On the Consumerist Interpretation of National Socialism," *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust* 31: 2 (2017): 89-110 (available also in Hebrew).

Recommended:

Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 378-411.

Week 10 (May 5) "Bad Times": Fear, Violence, and Destruction in the Final War Years

1. Richard Bessel, "The Shadow of Death in Germany at the End of the Second World War," in Paul Betts, Alon Confino, and Dirk Schumann, eds, *Between Mass Death and Individual Loss: The Place of the Dead in Twentieth-Century Germany* (New York: Berghahn, 2008), 51-68.
2. Robert Gellately, "Dictatorship and People at the End of the Third Reich," in idem, *Backing Hitler: Consent and Coercion in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 224-255.
3. Daniel Blatman, "A Society in Collapse," in idem, *The Death Marches: The Final Phase of Nazi Genocide* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 247-271. (available in Hebrew: pages 347-380).
4. Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin: Eight Weeks in the Conquered City. A Diary* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1955), 13-33.

May 12 – NO CLASS**Week 11 (May 19): The Wehrmacht**

1. Sönke Neitzel and Harald Welzer, *Soldaten: On Fighting, Killing, and Dying: The Secret WWII Transcripts of German POWs* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012), 26-119.



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Week 12 (May 26): Unreal Realities

1. Eric Kurlander, "Hitler's Monsters: The Occult Roots of Nazism and the Emergence of the Nazi 'Supernatural Imaginary,'" *German History* 30: 4 (2012): 528-549.
2. Kelly Bulkeley, "Dreaming in a Totalitarian Society: A Reading of Charlotte Beradt's *The Third Reich of Dreams*," *Dreaming* 4: 2 (1994): 115-125.
3. Florentine Strzelczyk, "Motors and Machines, Robots and Rockets: Harry Piel and Sci-Fi Film in the Third Reich," *German Studies Review* 27: 3 (2004): 543-561.

Week 13 (June 2): German Society at the End of the War

Film: *The Murderers Are Among Us* (dir. Wolfgang Staudte, Soviet Occupation Zone, 1946)

Week 14 (June 9): Conclusion

1. Helmut Walser Smith, "The Vanishing Point of German History: An Essay on Perspective," *History & Memory* 17: 1/2 (2005): 269-295.

Recommended:

Alon Confino, *A World without Jews: The Nazi Imagination from Persecution to Genocide* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2014).