

History of the Holocaust



Summary of the Holocaust

- Early elements of the Holocaust include the Kristallnacht pogrom of the 8th and 9th November 1938 and the T-4 Euthanasia Program, leading to the later use of killing squads and extermination camps in a massive and centrally organized effort to exterminate every possible member of the populations targeted by Adolf Hitler and the Nazis.
- The Jews of Europe were the main victims of the Holocaust in what the Nazis called the "Final Solution of the Jewish Question" (*die Endlösung der Judenfrage*) or "the cleaning" (*die Reinigung*). The commonly used figure for the number of Jewish victims is six million, though estimates by historians using, among other sources, records from the Nazi regime itself, range from five million to seven million. Millions of other minorities also perished in the Holocaust in addition to this figure.

Concentration Camps

Of the approximately 6 million Jews murdered in the Holocaust, more than half were systematically exterminated in the highly rationalized gas chamber/crematorium system of the Nazi Death Camps between 1942 and 1945. The names of Treblinka, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Dachau, Chelmno, Sobibor, Belzek and Majdanek are indelibly stamped on history. Following the Wannsee Conference in Berlin, January 20, 1942, the "Final Solution" was an official policy and a major obsession of the Nazi regime. It was at that point that camps were constructed for the express purpose of rational mass extermination, principally of Jews, but of other groups as well. Some of the concentration camps are as listed: **Auschwitz- Birkenau**, **Maidanek** and Treblinka.



Did you know?

- Did you know that in Greek the word Holocaust means “burnt offering.”
- There were 5,830,000 Jews killed in the Holocaust.