

GLOSSAR

The glossary can also be found online at the following link



A

“Aktion Reinhard”

Code name for the murder of the Jewish population in the Generalgouvernement in Poland under the leadership of SS and police leader Odilo Globocnik. Globocnik and many of his staff members came from Austria. By the summer of 1942, three extermination camps with gas chambers had been built: Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. Austrians were also among the commanders of Sobibor and Treblinka. By 1943, 1,750,000 Jews and 50,000 Romnja/Roma and Sintizas/Sinti had been murdered in this extermination campaign.

“Anschluss” 1938

Term for the seizure of power by the NSDAP in Austria, the occupation of Austria by German troops and the unification of Austria with the German Reich after March 1938. Many National Socialists from Austria who had been illegal until the “Anschluss” prepared this moment. The NSDAP also enjoyed broad support among the population. Already during the “Anschluss” there were the first outbreaks of violence against the Jewish population and political opponents, among others in so-called “friction parties”.

Aryan

The term originally comes from linguistics and refers to peoples who belong to the Indo-Germanic language family. Scientifically completely untenable, the Nazis reinterpreted “Aryans” as a Germanic “master race” that would be free of foreign blood and would have to subjugate or destroy all non-“Aryan” peoples.

“Aryanisation”, “Aryanised”

Expropriation and robbery of the Jews as parts of their persecution. With the “Anschluss” there were “wild aryanisations”, and later a planned “aryanisation” by the “Vermögensverkehrsstelle”. Companies, shops and flats were “Aryanised”.

Auschwitz-Birkenau, concentration camp and extermination camp

Largest concentration and extermination camp near the town of Oświęcim in present-day Poland. Inmates were murdered with “Zyklon B” in large gas chambers. Auschwitz was the central site of the mass murder of European Jews. 90% of the approximately 1,100,000 people who died in Auschwitz-Birkenau through gas, poison injections, shootings, hard labour, disease and starvation were of Jewish origin. Auschwitz was also a huge economic complex in which the prisoners had to perform forced labour.

Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy (also “Habsburg Monarchy”)

Term for the multi-ethnic state ruled by the Habsburgs that emerged from the Austrian Empire in 1867. The monarchy was linked through the person of the Austrian Emperor, who was also King of Hungary. Both parts of the Dual Monarchy had equal rights and their own constitution, parliament and government. Foreign and financial policy as well as the army were conducted jointly.

Austrofascism (“Ständestaat”)

Undemocratic and authoritarian system of rule in Austria between 1934 and 1938, supported primarily by the supporters of the “Christian Social Party” led by Engelbert Dollfuß and Kurt Schuschnigg. Parliament, parties and trade unions were abolished and political opponents were imprisoned.

B

Belzec

see extermination camps

Buchenwald, KZ

Buchenwald near Weimar was one of the largest concentration camps in Germany and was established in 1937. The prisoners worked in the quarry and in 129 sub-commandos in armaments industry factories. Of the 240,000 prisoners, at least 50,000 died through shootings, torture, lack of food, epidemics, medical experiments, exhaustion and deportation to the extermination camps.

C

Concentration camp (KZ)

Established in the German Reich from 1933 to imprison political opponents. Later, Jews, Romnja/Roma and Sintizas/Sinti, clergy, Jehovah’s Witnesses, so-called “asocials”, homosexuals and “enemy” foreigners were also imprisoned there. Countless prisoners were murdered in the concentration camps.

Collective flat/camp

After the “Aryanisation” of their home, Jews were assigned accommodation if they did not manage to escape or leave the country. In these “collective flats” several families lived together in a very small space. Thus, Jews were concentrated in order to facilitate their subsequent deportation to ghettos or extermination camps.

D

Dachau, KZ

Germany's first concentration camp, established near the small town of Dachau near Munich at the end of March 1933. Of a total of over 200,000 inmates, at least 30,000 died in Dachau.

Deportation/deport

Transporting someone to another place against her/his will by force and violence.

Dollfuß, Engelbert

see Austrofascism.

E

Extermination camp

Unlike the concentration camps, which served primarily to exploit labour, in the "extermination camps" established since the end of 1941, people were murdered immediately after their arrival. The existence of these "killing factories" in Poland and Belarus was kept under the strictest secrecy. Over three million people died in the gas chambers or in mass shootings in camps such as Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chełmno, Majdanek, Riga, Sobibor, Treblinka or Maly Trostinec.

F

Fascism

"Fascism" is first understood as the proper name of the political movement of Benito Mussolini, who established a dictatorship in Italy in 1922. However, fascism is also used as an umbrella term for systems of rule which, like National Socialism in Germany or the dictatorships in Italy, Spain, Portugal and Austria, have certain similarities. An important feature is the rule of a leader or a single party. Violence and terror are used to achieve the goals.

Friction parties (Reibpartien)

Immediately after the Anschluss, the notorious "friction parties" took place in Vienna and Lower Austrian towns, in addition to arbitrary arrests and looting. Jewish women and men were forced to clean the streets and pavements with sharp lye and brushes of political slogans of the Schuschnigg regime promoting an independent Austria. The acts of violence took place in public - before the eyes and with the support, approval or at least tacit tolerance of broad sections of the population.

G

Gestapo

Gestapo is the abbreviation for "Secret State Police". The Gestapo was responsible for fighting opponents and people who were classified as enemies by the Nazi regime. It could arbitrarily make arrests and send people to concentration camps. Commandos of the Gestapo deported the Jewish population of Europe to the extermination camps of National Socialism.

Ghetto

The National Socialists set up closed-off "ghettos", especially in the occupied territories of Poland and Czechoslovakia, in which the Jewish population was rounded up, deprived of their property and forced to perform forced labour. The ghettos were often intermediate stations in the deportation to the extermination camps.

H

Hartheim Castle

The largest Nazi euthanasia and killing site on Austrian soil was located in Hartheim Castle near Linz, where about 30,000 people were murdered in a gas chamber. Under National Socialism, the killing programme of Nazi euthanasia affected the mentally ill and people with impairments, who were designated as "unworthy of life", but also socially maladjusted people.

Holocaust

The term "Holocaust" comes from the Greek and means "completely burnt". It stands for the murder of six million Jews and other victim groups during the National Socialist era. Since the term comes from a religious context, many today use the word "Shoah" (the great calamity). See also "Shoah".

K

Kulmhof (Chełmno)

An extermination camp near the Polish town of Łódź. It consisted of a collection point where the mass murder took place in gas vans and a "forest camp" where the murdered were buried. At least 152,000 Jews and over 5,000 Austrian Romnja/Roma and Sintizas/Sinti were murdered in Chełmno. See also "extermination camps".

KZ subcamp

In addition to the "main camps", the SS set up sub-camps, which were called "labour camps", "sub-camps" or "sub-commandos". These camps were usually in the immediate vicinity of armament factories where the prisoners had to perform forced labour.

L

Łódź (Litzmannstadt)

City in Poland. After the conquest, the town was renamed after the NSDAP politician and general Karl Litzmann. The Jewish population of Łódź was crowded into a few neighbourhoods. A quarter of those rounded up there died of hunger, disease and the consequences of forced labour. From 1942 onwards, tens of thousands were deported to the "Chełmno extermination camp" (Kulmhof) 60 kilometres away and murdered, and from 1944 onwards to Auschwitz. Of the total of around 205,000 people deported to the Łódź ghetto, only 5,000 to 6,000 survived.

M

Maly Trostinec

Extermination camp near Minsk, Belarus. In total, tens of thousands of Jews were murdered, mainly by mass shootings and gas vans. Of the approximately 9,000 Austrian Jews deported to Maly Trostinec, only 17 survived. In addition, Belarusian civilians, partisans and above all prisoners of war were also murdered in Maly Trostinec. On 28 June 1944, the SS locked all the prisoners still alive in the barracks and set them on fire.

N

November pogroms

Anti-Semitic riots in the night of 9 to 10 November 1938 in the German Reich, in Vienna during the day on 10 November. Over 1,400 synagogues and prayer rooms were destroyed, Jewish businesses and homes looted and over a hundred people murdered.

R

Ravensbrück, KZ

The Ravensbrück concentration camp, built in 1938/39, was located in Brandenburg, 90 kilometres north of Berlin. It was the largest women's concentration camp in Germany with an attached men's camp. From the summer of 1942, the Uckermark youth concentration camp was located in the immediate vicinity. Between 1939 and 1945, 132,000 women and children, 20,000 men and 1,000 female youths from over 40 nations were registered as inmates of the "Uckermark Youth Camp". Tens of thousands perished in the Ravensbrück concentration camp.

Republican Protective League

Paramilitary organisation of the Austrian Social Democratic Workers' Party founded in 1923. The Schutzbund was supposed to be a counterweight to the Christian Social Home Guards and the Federal Army. In May 1933, the Republican Protection League was banned by the Austrofascist government, but continued to exist underground until its defeat in the civil war in February 1934. Afterwards, mainly young members of the Schutzbund joined the Austrian Communist Party, which was also banned; others fled to Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union or fought in the Spanish Civil War.

Riga

see extermination camps

S

Schuschnigg

see Austrofascism

Shoah

The term "Shoah" (Hebrew for catastrophe/disaster) refers to the anti-Semiticly motivated murder of six million Jews in the sphere of power of the Nazi terror regime. Shoah also means the cultural, social and spiritual destruction of European Jewry.

Selection, selected

In the concentration camps, "selection" meant the separation of concentration camp prisoners into one group that was further used for forced labour and another that was immediately murdered.

Synagoge

Building where Jewish services are held, a house of learning for religious education and a house of assembly for the Jewish community.

T

Theresienstadt, KZ

In Theresienstadt (Terezín) in northern Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) there was a ghetto-like camp from 1941 onwards in which mainly Austrian and German Jews were held. The living conditions were catastrophic. Around 33,500 people died in Theresienstadt, which from 1942 was a transit station for transports to the extermination camps in the East, especially Auschwitz. All three camp commandants of Theresienstadt were Austrians.

Transit camp

People who had been arrested were housed here for a short time, from where they were transferred to a concentration camp.

Typhoid

Bacterial infection. In the racist imagination of the National Socialists, Romnja and Roma or Jews were considered more resistant to typhus than "Aryans". For this reason, they were blamed for transmitting the germ of the disease.