

RESISTANCE TO NAZI EFFORTS DURING THE HOLOCAUST

I. Examples of Resistance Within Germany

- A. By the Confessing Church (*Bekennende Kirche*)
 1. founded 1933 by **Martin Niemöller** as dissenting minority of German Protestants
 2. opposed Evangelical Reich Church (unification of Protestants) anti-Semitism
 - a. Barmen Declaration (1934): most important dissenting statement
 - b. at peak: 5,000 German pastors; about 1/3 of Protestant clergy
 - c. Niemöller and others spent years in concentration camps Sachsenhausen & Dachau
 3. Most famous individual protester: **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**
 - a. often cited as example of Christian opposition to Hitler
 - b. preached against Hitler (“Hitler is the Anti-Christ . . . we must . . . eliminate him”)
 - c. arrested, hanged by SS at Flossenbürg 9 April 1945 (days before Germany surrendered)
- B. Jehovah’s Witnesses
- C. Other organized Protest Movements: **The White Rose**
 - a. Univ. of Munich student group
 - 1) Hans and Sophie Scholl
 - 2) Willi Graf, who had seen *Einsatzgruppen* activity as German soldier
 - 3) Alex Schmorell, Christoph Probst
 - 4) Philosophy Prof. Kurt Huber
 - b. circulated flyers of dissent in 1942-early 1943
 - c. Scholls, Probst arrested, tried 4 days later on 22 February 1943; beheaded 8 days later

II. Examples of Resistance by Jews Under Duress

- A. **The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising**
 1. July 22, 1942: deportations from the Warsaw Ghetto to Treblinka begin (part of *Aktion Reinhard*)
 2. July 28, 1942: Jewish Fighting Organization (ZOB, from Polish initials) set up
 3. Fall, 1942: sporadic attacks on Jewish police force by ZOB
 4. Jan 18, 1943: general armed resistance by Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto begins
 5. April 19, 1943: Waffen SS attacks Jewish Resistance in Warsaw Ghetto; 3 days allotted for liquidation
 - a. resistance continued until May 16
 - b. major resistance from bunker at **18 Mila Street**; 120 Jewish fighters, only a handful survived
 - c. Jewish hero: **Mordechai Anielewicz**; German commander: SS Brigadier **Jürgen Stroop**
- B. Rebellion in the Camps
 1. Sachsenhausen, Oct 22, 1942: SS put down revolt by group of Jews about to be sent to Auschwitz
 2. Treblinka, August, 1943: 750 workers revolted; 70 escaped; camp liquidated, plowed, planted
 3. Sobibor, October 14, 1943
 - a. massive escape from Sobibor as Jews and Soviet POWs break out
 - b. 300 make it safely into nearby woods; 50-60 survive
 - c. exterminations cease at Sobibor; all traces of death camp removed, trees planted
 4. Auschwitz II-Birkenau, October 7, 1944: Greek Jewish *Sonderkommandos* blow up one crematorium

III. Examples of Assistance and Resistance by Non-Jews Under Nazi Domination

A. National Resistance

1. Widespread National Resistance: **Denmark**
 - a. October 1943: early warning of imminent deportation of Jews
 - b. Danish Underground transports 7,220 Danish Jews by sea to Sweden (neutral)
 - c. nearly all Danish Jews survive Holocaust
2. Italy
 - a. Mussolini's government initially resisted Nazi demands to deport Jews
 - b. Italy surrendered to Allies 8 September 1943
 - c. Nazi occupation of N Italy brought Jews there into harm's way
3. France
 - a. genuine general resistance (?)
 - b. Vichy France (Nazi puppet regime in unoccupied south)
 - 1) openly anti-Semitic; gave up foreign Jews to Nazi deportation
 - 2) reluctance to surrender French Jews; more resistance late in war

B. By Persons in Positions of Authority: **Raoul Wallenberg**

1. Raoul Wallenberg was Swedish businessman and diplomat in Hungary
2. issued protective passes with official-looking Swedish diplomatic touches
3. these passes helped to protect thousands of Hungarian Jews from deportation in 1944
4. Jews were also protected in "Swedish Houses" declared by Wallenberg Swedish territory
5. he disappeared into the Soviet Union when Russian troops took Budapest

C. Assistance by Individuals

1. the citizens of **Le Chambon-sur-Lignon**, in Vichy France
 - a. Jews were fed and hidden by many in this town
 - b. **André Trocmé** (protestant minister) and wife **Magda Trocmé** led effort
 - c. André's cousin, **Daniel Trocmé**: captured with Jewish children, died at Majdanek
2. **Oskar Schindler**
 - a. Czech-German industrialist/businessman; had contracts with German army
 - b. saved 1200 Jews from SS *selektions* by employing them in factory
 - c. subject of "Schindler's List"

IV. Non-Jews are Remembered at Yad Vashem on "Avenue of the Righteous"