

Lecture Topic: Hitler and the Germans – Notable Quotations

Yehuda Bauer speaking about the uniqueness of the Holocaust:

"what was unique in the Holocaust was the totality of its ideology and of its translation of abstract thought into planned, logically implemented total murder."

Ian Kershaw's places Hitler's insanity into the context of understanding how systematic murder could have been devised in a modern, civilized, nation-state:

We come no closer to how "such a person could become ruler of Germany and how his ideological paranoia came to be implemented as a government policy by non-paranoids and non-psychopaths in a sophisticated, modern bureaucratic state."

Robert Gellately's observation about German support for Nazism:

"Successful enforcement of Nazi policies depended on the actions of enough citizens, operating out of an endless variety of motives, which could include greed, careerism, opportunism, personal motives, and approval."

Detlev Peukert's explanation of German perceptions of Nazism:

"Many older people today, looking back on the Third Reich [which they lived through], still see it as having had two strong points in its favour that made up for a lot: people could leave their bicycles unlocked outside their front doors; and long-haired layabouts were hauled off into Labour Camps. Even if such attitudes fell short of a demand for the death penalty or the gas chamber, they testify to the existence of popular consent to a specific form of terror, namely dealing with non-standard behaviour, or non-standard categories of persons by bundling the individuals concerned into camps and subjecting them to drill even if not to annihilation."