

Participation of the Wehrmacht in Mass Shootings of Jews

Germany's military attacks on Poland, Serbia and the Soviet Union 1939-1941 marked the beginning of the genocide of the European Jews. This study day looks at how these wars prepared the ground for establishing the National Socialist's 'new order' in Europe. The Russian campaign was styled a war of ideologies against an enemy 'Slavic race' of 'inferior beings', in which the Jews, said to be the 'carriers' of bolshevism, were to be 'exterminated'.

Points covered

- German invasion of the Soviet Union
- Murder of Soviet Jews
- Partisans and resistance against the German occupiers
- Scope for action for members of the German occupying forces in eastern Europe
- International law and war

Methods

- Guided tour of the permanent exhibit focusing on WWII
- Explanation of the system of command to murder
- Analysis of Hitler's 'prophecies' on the annihilation of the Jews
- Discussion of a documentary film on crimes committed by the Wehrmacht
- Written work in groups using documents and eyewitness reports
- Analysis of letters written by German and Russian soldiers
- Presentation of group work and discussion on the significance of command and obedience today

This study day is designed for students aged 17+ and adults.
