

# Student's Summary

(Includes Teacher's Guide)

# Mein Kampf

Adolf Hitler

Student's Edition Ages 15 To Adult

Hitler's plans for world conquest,  
his formation of the NAZI Party,  
and his views on people and race.

Analysis & Summary

# MEIN KAMPF Student's Summary

**A SUMMARY & ANALYSIS FOR  
STUDENTS AND TEACHERS**

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## Teacher's Notes

*The use of Mein Kampf in a classroom can be a delicate issue. Teacher's are strongly urged to verify approval from the appropriate supervisors before teaching with this material.*

### Teacher Suggestions

*Mein Kampf* is an important educational tool for various subjects from history, to business, to politics, to tolerance. The book *Mein Kampf* should be approached in a clinical manner with students. The book should be placed in student's minds first by establishing who wrote it, why it was written, what it says, what the effect was, and what the effect is today. You can then elaborate on these areas and discuss the lessons to be learned for your specific curriculum.

It is unwise for the teacher to be dismissive of the material or to characterize it as wholly evil or the wholly benign. Such broad characterizations will be blindly accepted by some students, but most students will reject a teacher's attempt to paint any topic with such a wide brush and may seek answers elsewhere that are out of context. Context is an important issue for the teacher when discussing *Mein Kampf* and the teacher must be objective. The teacher should be careful not to present opinions as facts. The teacher may face some difficult questions which must be answered with care and not show embarrassment or anger. Emotional reactions to questions will discourage further questions and we want students to ask questions.

Teachers sometimes avoid questions they personally find difficult to discuss or may not have an answer to. Always remember the context of the discussion and answer questions as fully as possible. If you don't have an answer, it is acceptable to say so.

Avoid common *gut reaction* responses which are inaccurate such as saying Hitler was insane, or that the work is only an attack against Jews, or that it contains the incoherent ramblings of the dictator. None of these are accurate. Hitler was not insane when he wrote *Mein Kampf*. It was only in his later years when his mental abilities declined. You should not characterize it as the work

## Teacher's Notes

of a mad-man. Millions of people in Germany willingly followed him and he made rational, even calculated decisions frequently so it would be inaccurate to dismiss the book as the work of an insane man. It does contain anti-Semitic parts, however so do the writings of many philosophers, politicians, playwrights, composers, and scientists of the day. *Mein Kampf* contains many other elements as well. To pigeon hole it as *only* an anti-Semitic work would be inaccurate. It is also inaccurate to focus exclusively on the anti-Semitic parts of *Mein Kampf*. To do so is to ignore other valuable lessons on history, politics, business, and foreign relations.

Studying *Mein Kampf* is important. If it is not dealt with in a classroom setting, then it will be read and interpreted by those who may not be able to understand the propagandistic nature of the work. If those who are interested in the book are *educated* outside the classroom by groups or individuals with an agenda, then their views can be twisted by inaccuracies and by incomplete information.

This edition was translated into English from the original German language in as unbiased a manner as possible to maintain total objectivity for the original material. This edition includes notes *italicized* in the text which explain people, places, and references that are not familiar to the average English speaker. This edition has also restored passages which were not included in older translations making this version the only complete and uncensored edition. This edition was translated in a manner that makes it easy to read and understand.

It is helpful to give students an understanding of the who, what, when, where, why, and how of *Mein Kampf*. This is where the following student's guide begins.

**Students Will Learn:**

1. How Hitler was able to build his power base and gain support in a democratic system.
2. How Hitler used anti-Semitism to promote his goals.
3. Facts about Hitler's life and selected historical events that resulted from the loss of the First World War and that lead to the Second World War. (*Please note that any historical statements in Mein Kampf should be verified through objective outside sources as some of the points Hitler presents as facts are opinion or propaganda.*)
4. How Hitler used propaganda to influence the public's beliefs.
5. How Hitler used fear to convince Germany they were in danger and he was the only person who could save them.
6. Hitler's racial theories, his political theories, and his use of history to justify them.

**Classroom Discussion and Activities**

- How could Hitler's approach to propaganda be used by a business in a positive way? In a negative way?
- How could Hitler's approach to propaganda be used by a politician in a positive way? In a negative way?
- What economic conditions in Germany helped Hitler's rise to power?
- Name two of Hitler's foreign policy goals he discussed in *Mein Kampf*.
- Discuss Hitler's view of Jews and how he developed these views.
- Why did Hitler devote so many pages to the discussion of syphilis?
- When Hitler read books did he try to expand his understanding or to validate opinions he had already formed? Was this good or bad?
- Is it accurate or fair to compare Hitler to modern leaders? Why or why not?

- Research and discuss the term “Reductio ad Hitlerum.” Have you seen this technique used?
- Why did other countries not act to stop Hitler from gaining power after the publication of *Mein Kampf*? Should they have acted? Why or why not? What would have been the result?
- Discuss what values were important to Adolf Hitler and how values determine our own actions or our inaction.
- Why was Hitler convinced France was the archenemy of Germany?
- Compare and contrast the childhood lives of other dictators against Hitler’s life to see how they are similar and how they are different. Repeat by selecting two democratic leaders.
- Discuss other demagogues and the issues they were promoting. What prejudices or emotions did they appeal to?
- View a video of one of Hitler’s speeches(The movie Triumph Of The Will contains one of his best known speeches and has subtitles). Discuss how the issues mentioned apply to modern countries today. How would his speech be received today if it were given by another person?
- What questions would students ask Hitler if they could? What do the students think his answers would be?
- Why was it important to Hitler to purchase a newspaper?
- Was Hitler’s use of a newspaper to shape public opinion any different from the use of Internet resources today? How?
- How did the Weimar Republic differ from the previous government and from the government Hitler established?
- Obtain a copy of the Nazi Party’s 25 points political platform. Compare and contrast it with modern political platforms of major and minor parties.
- Why did Hitler portray the Jews as parasites?
- Should *Mein Kampf* be banned?

# Student's Guide

## Background and Synopsis

*Mein Kampf* was dictated by Adolf Hitler to his secretary Rudolf Hess while Hitler was in prison. Hitler was imprisoned for treason after attempting to overthrow the government along with the backing of the political party he helped to build, the Nazi party, key political figures, and other nationalist parties. The trial after his arrest gave Hitler a public platform where he could make long speeches and this gained him more popularity.

When he was in prison, he refused to delegate power to anyone else for fear he might not regain power when he was released. At the same time he did not want to lose control of the political party he headed. He decided to use his time in prison to dictate his book, *Mein Kampf*, in an effort to show his party members that he was still a radical and extremist with a vision for the future.

*Mein Kampf* was not written for the general public but for the members of the Nazi party which was mainly composed of poorly educated working men. *Mein Kampf* is very special because it gives a view into Hitler's mind that he did not intend for the public to see.

It is important when reading *Mein Kampf* to keep in mind that it is a work of propaganda. Hitler was trying to show himself as the ultimate leader for the party. It is also important to remember that Hitler was a speaker and not a writer. The book has the feel of a very long speech. He sometimes repeats elements and even contradicts himself in places. Repetition and even contradiction are not uncommon in speeches.

It is frequently asserted that if Allied nations had read *Mein Kampf* they would have acted sooner to stop Hitler. This is an incorrect assumption. Many people did read the book, but much of it is open to interpretation. Today, we have the benefit of hindsight. Before World War II, the book was only a suggestion of political angst with racist sentiments that were common in Germany as well as Britain and the US at the time. The context of the book today is much different than it was in 1939. The first English translation released in 1933 was heavily abridged. It was released with the support of many scholars who contended that making *Mein Kampf* widely available would help to expose Hitler's race based philosophy. The early translations have frequently been criticized for their poor style and bias (shown clearly in their introductions). The anti-Semitic statements are clear, however at the time *Mein Kampf* was written they could have been dismissed as political rhetoric intended to gain



followers with no real backing. That would also have been the easiest belief for other nations to hold and people commonly choose to believe what they wish to be true. This may further explain why the book was not seen as more of a warning. The revelations concerning the nature of his character and his vision of Germany's future were not seen as a plan of action at the time, but as a political ploy to gain support.

*Mein Kampf* was never intended to be a blueprint so it is inaccurate to use it as one in an attempt to show inconsistency in Hitler's actions, such as his befriending of the Soviet Union after the scathing attacks against Communism in *Mein Kampf*. It is also not a work of fantasy because he clearly intended to implement the framework that was outlined in *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler's economic theories in *Mein Kampf* had to be abandoned as they proved unworkable. Hitler modified his theories, just as he had always done, when he learned what worked and what did not work. This applied domestically as well as in foreign policy. He supported theories that would appeal to the masses until he was certain he had a large enough power base. At that point, he could change to a more practical course of action. The initial policies of Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht (Hitler's Economics Minister) were chosen to meet immediate needs such as job-creation to reduce unemployment and wage controls to prevent the threat of inflation. Schacht made trade agreements with the Balkan states which appeared to violate Hitler's ideal of a completely self-sufficient state. These trade agreements provided essential raw materials which Hitler needed to build his war machine. Hitler had to follow a pragmatic course instead of the one outlined in *Mein Kampf* on many occasions.

Hitler later regretted releasing *Mein Kampf*. If Hitler had known his words would be widely distributed to the public, he might not have given such a detailed discussion of his propaganda methods, his feelings on France, or a number of other issues.

The first volume of *Mein Kampf* was written from 1923 to 1924 in prison. Later, when Hitler was released from prison, he wrote a second volume in 1926. They were sold as two separate volumes until 1930 when they were combined in one book.

Reading *Mein Kampf* is like listening to Hitler speak at length about his youth, early days in the Nazi Party, future plans for Germany and his ideas on politics and race.

The original title Hitler chose was "*Four and a Half Years of Struggle Against*

*Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice.*” His Nazi publisher suggested a shorter and easier to understand title: “*Mein Kampf*.” This is commonly translated as “My Struggle,” or “My Battle.”

Hitler begins the book by discussing his early life.

Adolf Hitler was born in Austria on April 20, 1889. His family moved to Passau when he was only three years old. (*Note that Hitler had brothers and sisters whom he never mentioned in Mein Kampf.*)

When he was young, Adolf lived near a large Benedictine monastery. (*There was a coat of arms by the entrance which featured a swastika. At this time the swastika was a common symbol used by religious groups as well as racist groups much as the Christian cross is used today.*) The young Hitler was fascinated by the monastery and planned to enter the priesthood.

As Hitler became older, he lost interest in the priesthood and decided he wanted to become an artist. His father, a government customs official, did not share Adolf’s enthusiasm and wanted young Adolf to learn a trade or become a government official like himself.

Hitler visited Vienna in 1906 hoping to be admitted to a prestigious art school. He was rejected and architecture school was recommended based on his ability to draw buildings.

His mother developed terminal breast cancer and was treated by Dr. Edward Bloch, a Jewish doctor. Cancer was not well understood at the time and many radical treatments were tested in this period. She was given expensive treatments with dangerous drugs. She died on December 21, 1907. Hitler took her death very hard and it apparently affected him the rest of his life.

Hitler lived in Vienna for six years trying to make a living as an artist. He painted mostly water color landscapes and buildings. His income was supplemented by an inheritance from his aunt and an orphan’s pension. Eventually he became homeless and lived in shelters including some funded by Jewish philanthropists. Vienna was both a center of Jewish activity with a high Jewish population and a center of anti-Semitism. There were many anti-Semitic publications available to Hitler.

Hitler discusses syphilis at great length. It has been theorized that he may have contracted the disease from a Jewish prostitute in Vienna sometime in 1908 (this is when Hitler received a large inheritance and just before he is known to have mysteriously spent or lost the sizable inheritance which put him in the

bread lines for the homeless in 1909). It has not been proven that Hitler had syphilis, however many of his physical ailments are consistent with syphilis including mental degeneration later in life. He also received treatments which were consistent with treatments for syphilis during his life. This does not prove he had the disease, but circumstantial evidence is strong.

Hitler moved from Vienna to Munich in May 1913. Soon after, he was served with a notice of required military service in Austria and accused of leaving the country to avoid service. After a sympathetic police chief helped him reach Salzburg without being charged with any crime, he was rejected by the military as unfit.

The First World War began with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Hitler had been following political matters closely and was emotionally invested in the events. Hitler signed up for the Bavarian army. (*Bavaria is a province in Germany.*)

Hitler worked as a runner or messenger which was a high risk job that placed him in the face of live fire regularly. He was injured in October 1916 and taken to a Berlin hospital. He did not like being away from the front lines and requested to return to his unit. Later, he was exposed to mustard gas which resulted in blindness while on the battlefield in Belgium, October 1918.

While Hitler was recovering in the hospital, a Communist led revolt spread through Germany. The leadership of the Communists included Jewish leaders which furthered Hitler's existing hatred of Jews as well as Communists. On November 9th, the Kaiser abdicated and the Communists took over the government. It was not a peaceful transition and there was a great deal of violence including assassinations and demonstrators being shot in the street. The Communist uprising did not gain total control.

Hitler was still in the military when the War ended. His anti-Communist views were known to officials who recruited him into a military intelligence unit that infiltrated the political groups popping up all over Germany. His job was to identify dangerous movements. One of the groups he was sent to check on was the DAP (Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) or the German Workers' Party. At this early point in the party Hitler says it only had a few members (*it actually had around 50 members but Hitler does not mention this*). Hitler saw potential in the group and it already held extremist beliefs that were similar to his.

The party put together a political program consisting of 25 points. These points were mostly items that had wide support and are still common today such as

the creation of old-age pensions, freedom of religion, and a demand for equal rights with other nations. However, it also forbid Jews from being German citizens. Some of the most popular points had to do with revoking the Treaty of Versailles.

The party name was changed to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (in German: Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei or NSDAP). In English it is the NAZI party. The party then purchased an anti-Semitic newspaper to use as its own mouthpiece.

The French had repeatedly complained about war reparations fearing they would not be paid. In January 1923, French troops marched into the Ruhr, which was German territory, defying the Treaty of Versailles. This area contained economic resources vital to Germany including coal mines. The German people resented this occupation. The Weimar leaders responded by paying the workers to not work and the result was economic collapse. Hitler used the situation to promote his party through mass rallies. The party ranks swelled with new members as inflation made the Weimar currency almost worthless.

In his book, Hitler divides humans into categories based on physical appearance, establishing higher and lower orders, or types of humans. At the top, according to Hitler, is the Germanic man with his fair skin, blond hair and blue eyes. Hitler refers to this type of person as an Aryan, though we know today there is no actual race of Aryans. He frequently asserts that the Aryan is the supreme form of human, or master race, and is in danger of disappearing or being corrupted out of existence by interbreeding with other races he considers lesser races, the Untermenschen, meaning subhuman or racially inferior. Hitler focuses mainly on the Jews and the Slavic peoples, especially the Czechs, Poles, and Russians.

Hitler frequently rationalizes his claims by saying the subjugated people benefit by being conquered. He says they need the Aryan leadership and under it they learn from the superior Aryans and prosper. However, he adds they benefit only as long as the Aryan remains the absolute master and doesn't mingle or inter-marry with what he calls inferior conquered peoples.

He further tries to explain why he believes the Jews are engaged in a conspiracy to keep this master race from assuming its rightful position as rulers of the world by tainting its racial and cultural purity and even inventing forms of government in which the Aryan comes to believe he is experiencing equality but fails to recognize his racial superiority.

Hitler describes the struggle for world domination as an ongoing racial, cultural, and political battle between Aryans and Jews. He outlines his thoughts in detail, accusing the Jews of conducting an international conspiracy to control world finances, controlling the press, inventing liberal democracy as well as Marxism, promoting prostitution and vice, and using art and entertainment to poison the minds of the public. At times Hitler is very clear about his feelings including suggesting some be “strung up.” He never mentions a total extermination in so many words anywhere in *Mein Kampf*. With the benefit of hindsight, we can more clearly see that desire is present, however.

Many people in Germany believed they were on the verge of victory near the end of World War I and were surprised by the German surrender. Many felt they were swindled out of victory in a back-room deal. This combined with excessive penalties in the Treaty of Versailles made many Germans angry at other countries and they also sought someone internally to blame for the loss of the war which became the Jews.

Hitler’s personal view of the Jews was the main driving force behind Nazi ideology. This frequently resulted in conflict with his department heads when Hitler insisted race was the cause of a particular problem and they disagreed. Anti-Semitic policies were an extension of his personal obsession. *Mein Kampf* and his speeches created the stereotype of the Jew as a parasite and poison which was the cause of Germany’s illness (economic and social). The solution was to remove the disease according to Hitler. This also gave the people of Germany a simple solution to their social and economic problems which they were willing to accept. We also cannot forget that Hitler offered other ideas that were appealing such as ways to stop inflation, create jobs, ways to build nationalism, and ways to make Germany a proud nation again. Many Germans who had no interest in his racial views still supported Hitler because of his non-racial ideas and promises.

Throughout *Mein Kampf*, Hitler refers to Jews as parasites, liars, middlemen, blood suckers, monsters, crafty, sly, wily, clever, lacking true culture, a foreign, menace, bloodthirsty, avaricious and the destroyer of Aryan humanity.

These are the areas most people focus on when discussing the book, but the majority of it does not deal with the Jews directly and instead deals with his childhood, the creation of the Nazi party, and his views on people, politics and life.

Hitler’s beliefs were not unique in Germany. Most of his ideas already existed and were borrowed from other sources, but he was able to combine them in a

new and well packaged manner, then promote them through propaganda in a way that gained much wider support.

Hitler devotes a great deal of his discussion to Lebensraum, or living space. This is the land that he planned to acquire by force. Hitler says explicitly he is interested in the lands to the east of Germany, namely Russia. That land would be used to cultivate food and to provide room for the expanding Aryan population at the expense of the Slavic peoples, who were to be removed, eliminated, or enslaved. Hitler envisioned a simpler life that was more feudal in nature and not capitalistic.

Throughout the book Hitler uses heroic imagery and made references to Fate, God, and Destiny. He painted an appealing heroic scene where the German people had an opportunity to save not only themselves but the world. The message resonated with Germans who already believed it was their destiny to dominate the world.

When *Mein Kampf* was first released in 1925 it sold poorly. People had been hoping for an autobiography with sordid details of the Beer Hall Putsch (Hitler's attempted overthrow of the government). They were less interested in a lengthy attack on those Hitler saw as incompetent in the government, theories on foreign diplomacy, talk about a greater race, and Hitler's childhood. However, after Hitler became Chancellor of Germany, millions of copies were sold. It was considered proper to own a copy and to give one to newlyweds.

The book is sometimes characterized as having hard to follow sentences and wandering paragraphs that appear to be written by someone who is poorly educated. This attitude ignores the fact that Hitler wrote to the average semi-educated man in the party. To write in a more educated manner would have alienated them or made his writing difficult for them to understand. This attitude also comes from the fact that many early English translations were very poorly made and hard to read as a result.

*Mein Kampf* has been viewed as a guide to hatred and has been banned in some countries. It is a self-help blueprint for business and is read by many company presidents. It is a guide to propaganda and advertising. It is a guide to foreign relations and politics. It is also seen as an example of the power of Will and what a person can accomplish with determination and action.

## Important Topics

### Weimar Republic (*Pronounced as Vai-mahr Republic*)

The end of the First World War also ended the German monarchy. The victorious Allies wrote a constitution outlining a democratic government. Elections were held and this created the Weimar Republic. June 28, 1919 marks the day the German government ratified the Treaty of Versailles. The Treaty required Germany to pay excessive reparations for all damages caused by the war. Germany also lost her colonies and large portions of German territory. The German military was effectively eliminated through limits on armaments and restrictions on the number of troops. The German people viewed the treaty as a source of humiliation. This was especially difficult for a nation with a proud military history.

### Militant Organizations

During the Weimar years many militant groups formed that were strongly nationalist and others strongly Communist. One of these was the anit-Communist Free Corps which was a paramilitary organization of war veterans. The Free Corps violently crushed the Communist uprising in 1919. The Free Corps members later became the brown-shirts of the Nazi party which was effectively a private army.

### The Beer Hall Putsch

After Hitler's party gained public support and he believed he had support from key members of the government, he decided it was time to take control. On November 8, 1923, Hitler held a rally at a Munich beer hall where he called for the overthrow of the Weimar government. The next day, he began his march along with 2,000 armed brown-shirts. His march was patterned after Mussolini's March on Rome. The police received word of the putsch and setup armed resistance. A number of Hitler's men were killed and he included their names in the dedication of *Mein Kampf*. Hitler suffered a dislocated shoulder when someone pulled him out of the line of fire. He fled and was later arrested. His trial gave him a chance to gain more support because the judge was sympathetic and Hitler was allowed to make long speeches which were widely reported. On April 1, 1924, Hitler was sentenced to five years at Landsberg Prison. Hitler received preferential treatment from the guards. He received fan mail from admirers, was allowed visitors freely, allowed to wear his own clothes and did not have to perform hard labor. He was pardoned and released on December 20, 1924, by order of the Bavarian Supreme Court on December

19, which overruled the state prosecutor's objections to Hitler's early release. Including time served during and before his trial, he had served little more than one year of his sentence.

## Out Of Prison

When he was released from prison, Hitler completed a second volume of *Mein Kampf* which was published in December 1926. It described how he built the Nazi party and the development of his 25 point political program. The second volume is often considered the most interesting especially for business people and politicians. Many people see in its pages a primer on how to obtain and hold business or political power, how to use propaganda and terrorism, and how to build a political organization(or a business). The style of the second book is also noticeably different from the first.

After he regained control of his political party, Hitler began working on a way to seize power constitutionally instead of using force. He began making even more speeches to reach more people. He had already become a celebrity after the failed Beer Hall Putsch.

This is where *Mein Kampf* ends, in 1926. Unfortunately, it does not contain any of his thoughts or plans during his political rise or during World War II. Hitler did write a second book in 1928, which was not published at that time, commonly called the *Zweites Buch* or Second Book.

## After *Mein Kampf*

Hitler continued his quest for power through the Nazi party. Nazi party members actively pursued political offices. Hitler himself ran for the presidency in 1932 and received 36.8% of the vote. It was not a victory but was a surprising show of support. This much support forced a run-off election between Hitler and Paul von Hindenburg. A deal was struck where Hitler would be made chancellor in exchange for his political support. He was appointed chancellor in January 1933.

Hitler's "rise to power" ended in March 1933, after the Reichstag adopted the Enabling Act of 1933. The Enabling Act virtually assured Hitler would remain a legal and constitutional dictator. He immediately began to put his plans into effect by calling his top military aides together at the "Führer Conference" in November 1937. Here, he outlined his plans for world domination. Anyone who objected to the plan was dismissed.

Hitler ordered the annexation of Austria and the Sudetenland in 1938 as part of



his promise to restore all Germans to Germany. There was some international concern, but no action was taken against the annexation. He then invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Only then did France and England respond by declaring war on Germany. The war itself is left for the student's further study.

## **Vocabulary**

**Demagogy or demagoguery** (From the Ancient Greek *δημαγωγία*, *dēmos* *dēmos* “people” and *ἄγειν* *agein* “to lead”) is a strategy for gaining political power by appealing to the prejudices, emotions, fears and expectations of the public—typically via impassioned rhetoric and propaganda, and often using nationalist, populist or religious themes.

**Free Corps or Freikorps** - This is the name of a paramilitary organization that appeared after 1918. This was one of the key Weimar paramilitary groups active during that time. Many German veterans felt disconnected from civilian life, and joined the Freikorps when the national military was no longer a true military as a result of the Treaty of Versailles terms. Others, angry at their sudden, apparently inexplicable defeat, joined in an effort to put down Communist uprisings or exact some form of revenge on those they felt were responsible for the sudden loss of the war.

**Fuhrer** - The word in German means leader. The word has become synonymous with Hitler in English speaking countries.

**Lebensraum (Living Space)** - This was one of the major political ideas of Adolf Hitler, and an important component of Nazi ideology. It served as the motivation for the expansionist policies of Nazi Germany, aiming to provide extra space for the growth of the German population, for a Greater Germany.

**Fascism**- A radical and authoritarian ideology that involves strong nationalism. Fascists want to organize a nation on a system of economic, political, or social systems that view a community as an organic body where social solidarity is forced on the population and any distinction between classes or roles among individuals is abolished.

**Reparations** - Compensation or remuneration required from a defeated nation as repayment for damage or injury during a war.

**Sturmabteilung** - Storm Detachment or Battalion, abbreviated SA and usually translated as stormtroopers. This group functioned as a paramilitary arm of the

Nazi Party. It played a key role in Adolf Hitler's rise to power in the 1920s and 1930s. SA men were often called brown-shirts for the color of their uniforms (similar to Benito Mussolini's black-shirts). Brown-colored shirts were chosen as the SA uniform because they were cheap and available after World War I as war surplus, having originally been ordered during the war for colonial troops posted to Germany's former African colonies.

The Beer Hall Putsch - This was a failed attempt to take over the Weimar government during the evening of November 8 and the early afternoon of November 9, 1923. Nazi Party leader, Adolf Hitler, along with Erich Ludendorff, and other heads of nationalistic and militaristic parties unsuccessfully tried to seize power in Munich, Bavaria. Putsch is the German word for a military coup d'état.

Swastika - The swastika is a cross with the arms bent in either a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction. Archaeological evidence of swastika-shaped designs has been found from the Neolithic period in Ancient India. It occurs mainly in the modern day culture of India, sometimes as a geometrical motif and sometimes as a religious symbol. It remains widely used in Indian religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. Though once commonly used throughout the world without stigma, because of its iconic usage as a hate symbol in Nazi Germany it has become stigmatized in the Western world. Use of the swastika has even been outlawed in Germany.

Weimar Republic - The Weimar Republic (*Pronounced as Vai-mahr Republic*) is the name given by historians to the parliamentary republic established in 1919 in Germany to replace the imperial form of government after the German surrender of the First World War. It was named after Weimar, the city where the constitutional assembly took place.

**This summary and analysis is meant to be used with the Ford Translation of *Mein Kampf*. It is available from [HitlerLibrary.org](http://HitlerLibrary.org) or any bookstore.**

- **Mein Kampf(The Ford Translation)** Soft Cover(ISBN 978-0-9841584-2-3) Hardcover(ISBN 978-0977476077) Audio Version(ISBN 978-0-9774760-4-6) - This version is recommended for students and educators because it is the most accurate translation, the easiest to read translation, and it includes explanatory notes. It is available from [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org) or any bookstore.
- **Audio Book of Mein Kampf(The Ford Translation)** ISBN 978-0-9774760-4-6 - Contains the complete and unabridged version of *Mein Kampf* in an easy to listen to audio format. The audio version includes additional historical information and documents referenced by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org)

### **Additional Reading**

The following are recommended for students seeking more information.

- **Dissecting The Hitler Mind**(available as an audio book or printed book) - This is a psychological analysis of Adolf Hitler compiled by the OSS(Office of Strategic Services) and is based on interviews with people close to Hitler and his writing and speeches. It is available at [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org)
- **Mein Kampf: A Translation Controversy**(ISBN 0-9774760-8-1) - Analyzes the *Mein Kampf* text and gives details of translation errors in past versions. Available as a printed book or for free download at [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org)
- **Adolf Hitler** by John Toland ISBN-13: 978-0385420532 - A detailed account of Hitler's life and a highly regarded source used by many researchers.
- **Mein Kampf: A Printing History in Britain and America** ISBN: 9780521072670 - This book details the struggle to print *Mein Kampf* in an English edition and the legal problems faced in the process.
- **Hitler and Napoleon** by Desmond Seward ISBN13: 978-0094765801 - A comparative analysis of the two dictators and their rise to power.
- **The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich** by William L Shirer ISBN13: 978-0671728687
- **Hitler** by Ian Kershaw ISBN13: 978-0393320350
- **Zweites Buch - Hitler's Second Book: The Unpublished Sequel to Mein Kampf** ISBN13: 978-1929631612

There are also a number of free downloadable ebooks available at [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org)

## PREFACE

*Mein Kampf* is one of the most widely known and heavily quoted books of all time. It demonstrates both Hitler's ability to persuade and his ability to instill a sense of heroic destiny.

It is critical that you understand Hitler's reasoning. Short, one-hour video documentaries only provide an abbreviated discussion of "*what Hitler did*", leaving the viewer clueless about who he was and why he did it. His own words are the best way to understand why.

When most people hear the title, *Mein Kampf*, their first reaction is a growing emotional outburst that finally erupts in a yell of anti-Semitism; however anyone who has read *Mein Kampf* knows there is much more to the work. It is a retrospective on history, politics, and a guide to achieving power from the point of view of Adolf Hitler. It has become a dictators' manual, which has been read by all major dictators since World War II including Saddam Hussein who patterned his political movement, the Ba'ath party, after the Nazi party. The accuracy of the political parts of *Mein Kampf* was proven by Hitler's successful rise to power and by the rise of those who have followed his formula.

Many people think *Mein Kampf* is a long diatribe against Jews and other races. The truth is that only a small part of *Mein Kampf* is anti-Semitic. The majority of the book involves Hitler's discussion of the German people's difficult times after the First World War, his political theories and his organization of the Nazi Party, and it includes an especially large number of attacks against his enemies.

*Mein Kampf* is a large work that offers an interesting interpretation of politics, people, and foreign policy matters. To characterize it as simply a racist work is to oversimplify its message. Germany did not follow Hitler because he was a racist, they followed him because he promised a great future, and *Mein Kampf* is where he promised that great future.

It is important to understand that reading anti-Semitic passages or passages on race will not turn anyone into an anti-Semite. You do not have to worry about being filled with hatred simply by reading *Mein Kampf*; it is not a magic tome. Some people have so little faith in their own beliefs that they fear any exposure to *Mein Kampf* might twist them into something evil. If their beliefs are so fragile, so easily twisted, then they are already evil.

Unfortunately, many people are afraid that if they do not violently reject anything

connected to *Mein Kampf*, and reject it in a showy way so that everyone sees their public display of rejection, then it somehow means they approve of the Holocaust. Of course, that is not logical reasoning and it seems silly when it is spelled out, but people often live by their gut reaction and do not think about *why* they dislike *Mein Kampf*—they just know they “do” or that they “should”. They are driven by fear, which leads to a hatred of *Mein Kampf* without a rational basis and without the need to read it in order to understand what it says. They want to live in a simple world where they can conveniently dismiss Hitler as a raving lunatic along with anyone else who does not immediately jump up at the mention of his name to join in the shouting match.

It is foolish to dismiss Hitler’s words as the rantings of a psychopath. To do so is to ignore historical facts. The people of Germany did not follow a ranting crazy man into war. They willingly followed someone they saw as a leader, a father, even a god, because they believed in him. To dismiss his work as lunacy is the equivalent of hiding your head in the sand and pretending the world is a nice place where nothing bad can happen again now that Hitler is gone. To claim Hitler was simply crazy is to oversimplify the facts and ignore the obvious. Someone else will appear who uses the same formula to gain power. **If you cannot recognize the signs of Hitlerian Power, if you do not know how to counter their efforts, if you remain confused and uncertain as your opponent makes his moves, step by step with decisiveness and intention, and your inaction allows him to come closer to power, then you have already lost and they have won, for they know the rules of the game and you do not.**

Only through understanding can we come to grips with why the German people followed Hitler and why so many today still follow his example.

The *Mein Kampf* book has had a number of incarnations. The first volume was written while Hitler served a prison sentence in 1924(*Published July 1925*). The second volume was published in December 1926. Later, after 1930, the two volumes were combined into the *Mein Kampf* we know today. Special editions were produced for Hitler’s 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, for wedding gifts, and a special soldier’s edition among others.

*Mein Kampf* is not strictly autobiographical or strictly political; it is a combination of both. *Mein Kampf* has elements that are autobiographical—for instance, the first chapter of *Mein Kampf* is about Hitler’s childhood, but even this is a political exposition. Hitler’s personal life was so devoted to political ideas that even strictly biographical sections had to be very political in nature.

Hitler never sat down to write *Mein Kampf*. One of the benefits he was allowed in prison was a personal secretary. His secretaries Rudolf Hess and Emil Maurice typed as Hitler paced across the floor and around the desk, dictating what he wanted the Nazi party to know. The second volume was dictated to Hess and Maurice in Hitler's villa on Obersalzberg. *Mein Kampf* was primarily intended as an internal guide for his followers. In it, he reveals more than he might have wanted the public to know.

One of the most marked characteristics of *Mein Kampf* is its emotional tone. It is difficult not to be moved by many passages when Hitler speaks of perceived injustices dealt to the German people. This gave his speeches great power and, though tempered in the written word, this power can still be felt very clearly. The tone can be in part attributed to the environment in which it was composed. Hitler's standing and pacing in his small cell, speaking as his thoughts flowed while Hess frantically transcribed his words, trying to keep up. Hitler increasingly worked himself to frenzy, building on his own fervor, until he became exhausted.

The title Hitler initially wanted to give his work reflects the emotional nature of its content: *Four and a Half Years of Fighting Against Lies, Stupidity, and Cowardice*. His editor found this title to be wordy and asked him to change it to *Mein Kampf*. *Mein Kampf* is most commonly translated as "My Struggle", however, the real meaning is somewhere between "My Struggle" and "My Battle" for the people. It was not intended to describe his own greatness; it was meant to describe his battle for the greatness of Germany and for the preservation of the German race and the world.

Today, many people accept Hitler's contention that human existence is controlled by the laws of an eternal conflict and struggle for a greater good. This is by definition the classic Hero's Struggle. It is not surprising that people followed Hitler. It is surprising that more did not. His words offered the chance for everyone to participate in his personal Hero's journey—to be a part of something greater than they could ever be on their own. He was the hero of his own story, of course, only a fool would write their autobiography any other way. He appealed to very basic human instincts which are still present in everyone and still just as available for another would-be leader to massage and control. Hitler's words have a universal appeal that will continue to resonate among people who seek something greater than they perceive their own life to be.

The world has become so distracted by the later events of World War II and with the handful of racial comments in *Mein Kampf*, it has forgotten about the significance

of the Third Reich's other activities. Hitler withdrew from the League of Nations; Hitler marched into the Rhineland; Hitler repudiated German disarmament; Hitler took back the coal mines of the Saar and established a National Socialist government; Hitler joined Mussolini in Spain and marched into Austria; Hitler forced Chamberlain to accept the Munich pact.

With each act, the world covered their eyes and proclaimed, "Thank goodness this will be the last of Nazi aggressions". Yet Hitler's future plans were already spelled out in *Mein Kampf*. Many have criticized world leaders for not taking the words in *Mein Kampf* more seriously and for not using it as a guide to thwart Hitler's plans. Such accusations are the result of hindsight. *Mein Kampf* does lay out very clearly Hitler's plans, however they are only clear in retrospect. It would be foolish to even attempt to predict what decisions a man will make tomorrow. Hitler made many statements in *Mein Kampf* that were open to interpretation, and many of his statements were revised or reversed in his later speeches. Many of his actions were not predictable, such as his nonaggression pact with Russia and alliance with Japan, which both completely contradicted *Mein Kampf*. Following the exact plan of *Mein Kampf* would have made those events appear impossible. *Mein Kampf* may have clearly predicted a future in 1925, but there was no way anyone could have used it to see that future, no more than if they copied *Mein Kampf* quotes onto Tarot cards and attempted to divine Hitler's plans through a card reading. Even if his individual decisions were not certified and dated, his overall plan was clear and should have been the incitement needed to act much earlier. Unfortunately, the world wanted to wait for proof, more proof, and finally, they wanted to see him act before they felt forced to act against him. Hitler did not have this weakness. He recognized a threat or saw a goal and acted immediately, often even before he had the first piece of proof. That gave him the advantage for many years.

Hitler plays on the common belief of the time in Germany that Jews were responsible for their loss in the First World War: "...the Jewish financial and Marxist press intentionally incited the hatred against Germany until one state after another gave up its neutrality and joined the World War coalition, ignoring the real interests of their people in the process". This view was easy to accept within the borders of Germany, with limited information and a limited view of world events and a history of anti-Semitism. It ignores the accumulation of economic, political, and military rivalries, and the violation of Belgian neutrality that drove England into the war. It also ignores America's entry into the war which was a clear turning point. These factors, and not the influence of Jewish Germans, turned the tables in

The First World War. However, these facts were of no use to Hitler and even the German people were not interested in hearing them.

The mood of the German people in 1933 made them dangerously susceptible to falling under the spell of a strong leader. They tried to return to their normal lives and find some national self-respect, but instead they found the way blocked by other nations and blind misunderstanding. The war victors were interested only in reparations. The German labor parties, which might have helped, were split into half a dozen warring camps. This occurred at a time when the people had become accustomed to a long period of strong nationalism.

Order and security became more important than a political freedom and that was synonymous with violence and bloodshed. Hitler saw these problems and spoke directly to people's fears and desires. The German people wanted a strong leader to solve their problems, a leader who could return their national self-respect.

To the German people, anti-Semitism, concentration camps, and political oppression were byproducts of what was needed to achieve their desires. Following Hitler was not a great leap for the German people. It was what they needed, when they needed it. Understanding how a leader can appeal to and control a nation without being questioned is critical to identifying similar events unfolding today.



## Understanding *Mein Kampf*

There are people who have criticized Hitler for the quality of his writing. Hitler did not write *Mein Kampf*, he dictated it. Hitler was a speaker, not a writer. Choices for punctuation and even wording were altered or added by the person taking down what Hitler dictated, not Hitler. The book does not even appear to have been edited heavily before being published. It is also believed that his secretary, Hess, may have filled in parts he did not have time to type based on his knowledge of Hitler's speeches.

*Mein Kampf* has the feel of a first draft. It is unlikely it was edited any more than minor grammatical fixes. How it came out of Hitler's mouth is how it went on the page and no one dared to change more than a spelling correction without Hitler's prior approval once it was on paper. As far as first-drafts go, it is a good first draft.

*Mein Kampf* must be looked at as if it were a long speech. Some have criticized Hitler for the way he orders his words, however this criticism comes mainly from English speakers who have read the older English translations or those who are not native German speakers and learned German language from books. In German, as in English, it is not uncommon to *order words oddly*.

The choice of word order is a matter of style and a poet often uses unusual word arrangements. This was Hitler's method and it was how he kept his audience's attention. You must also remember that Hitler was speaking to the masses, those in the public working classes, who were less educated. These were the people in his organization. They came from these masses. So, just as Hitler said, he targeted his words specifically to this group. He picked his style to match his audience.

It is quite inappropriate to criticize Hitler's style today. For one, his writing was in German and if a person is not a native, lifelong German speaker, he could not fully appreciate the language itself or its nuances. Even in English, if we look back at books written in English in the 1920's, the English language appears most unusual. They use different phrases which were common at the time, different references, different assumptions about how the audience would interpret their writing, and words that are practically unknown today.

Language changes quickly and what was perfectly acceptable in 1920 in English is considered poor or even ignorant style today. Anyone who is not German and did not live in the 1920's cannot criticize the language style of a German book written in the 1920's when English books themselves have many unusual characteristics from the same period. Some believe if they can criticize the style and grammar, that somehow affects the ideas. Actually, that is not even true. These critics do not care about the actual ideas in *Mein Kampf*, they only want to criticize the "group idea" which is the idea that everyone has about *Mein Kampf*, which has nothing to do with the book's actual contents. They dislike the author and what he did and because of that, many people feel they should dislike his book, and they are afraid that if they do not dislike his book, that somehow others will see that as approval of his message.

Some German sayings have been lost in older translations and some translators, like James Murphy, made up their own sayings to replace German sayings. Those replacements did not always match the original meaning. Some of the older translations also made “corrections” to Hitler’s work which altered the meaning.

The word Jew or any variation of it (Jewish or Jewry etc.) is used 547 times. This is only 4.4% of the book (*based on an average of 20 words per sentence and assuming the word Jew or variations appears an average of once per sentence*). The word negro (*which was not necessarily offensive at the time*) appears 20 times which is 0.16% of the book. The word nigger is never used and neither are any common vulgarities other than a “damned well better” usage which occurs once. Hitler does use the term Hottentot twice which could be considered offensive, though it was common at the time just as we would say “Indian” to mean Native American today. The same is true for several other ethnic groups which were named but not necessarily with an offensive name. Hitler rarely used offensive words in his speeches and used the word *Jüdlein* (*equivalent to Kike*) only once in *Mein Kampf*, otherwise using *Juden* (*Jew*) or variations of it.

The majority of the book is about Hitler, his political beliefs, the German nation and the building of the Nazi party. Make no mistake though, there are passages where Hitler does criticize the Jews and blames them for economic problems, accuses them of controlling the press and attempting to destroy the world. I am not trying to say this is not part of the book or to minimize it, just to say there is more in Neapolitan ice-cream than vanilla.

*Mein Kampf* has approximately 245,244 words total (this number is from the Ford Translation which will be used in all statistics).

#### Word Occurrence Counts:

- The word Jew or Jewish or Jewry is used 547 times
- negro appears 20 times
- nigger does not appear at all
- Marxist appears 135 times
- populist(meaning racialist) appears 98 times
- race appears 339 times
- political appears 447 times
- France appears 129 times
- war appears 450 times
- hero appears 103 times

Today, with the availability of the History Channel and countless Internet resources, the average person is much more informed and much more aware of history which makes the holes in many of Hitler’s Jewish theories quite obvious. Again, I am not trying to minimize his anti-Semitism. I am trying to point out the world Hitler spoke to in 1924 and the world of today are quite different. The Jews played an important role in his rhetoric. His story needed a villain to rally against and that is how he used them. They became the unseen Black Hand behind every ill event and at that time in Germany the people were ready to accept that theory. Hitler was not the first to propose his racial theories. They existed in

various movements, but he was the first to consolidate them into a modernized version that appealed to large numbers of people, along with other elements of the movement.

We often see in documentaries quotes about the “Jewish Question”. This actually results from a translation between German and English. To say question instead of problem makes it sound like a euphemism to say the Jewish “question”, but it is actually nothing more than a translation anomaly where the German word for question and problem are the same and the choice depends on the context when it is translated into English. Hitler also made reference to the “prostitution question” and other problem/questions. There is no direct German translation for the English word *Problem*, but question translates to *Frage* which is not the word used. Many translators simply translate this into Jewish Question when the true meaning is Jewish Problem. Hitler and the Nazi’s were not trying to be obtuse or to obscure their meaning by using Jewish Question, they said what they meant, Jewish Problem, but it was poorly translated into English. In English we can say “solve this math problem” but it would be equally accurate to say “answer this math question”. It is the same in German and the translation choice into English determines how problem or question is used.

*Frage* is question in German, and it is also used for Problem English. *Aufgabe* is problem in German but it usually means task when it is used. It would have been just as accurately translated as *Jewish Problem*. The meaning is the same but you should be aware that problem and question have the same meaning here. The term “Jewish Question” has become so synonymous with the Nazi party that it has continued to be used.

If you do not know what Aryan means, then some parts of *Mein Kampf* may be confusing. Hitler believed that in the past there was one great founding race of people on earth called the Aryans which ‘seeded’ all other cultures because the Aryan culture was the only one capable of creating culture. Without this mythical Aryan influence, other cultures would simply decline and die. No such race actually existed. When Hitler speaks of the great race that spawns cultures, he means the mythical Aryan race.

*Mein Kampf* contains many contradictions:

- In one place he says Jews control the Marxist press which attacks the bourgeois press, but then later he says the Jews also control the bourgeois press.
- Hitler says Marxist doctrine is hidden under a cover various times, but then it is in full public view. Here is a section where he says both at the same time: *‘Under this covering of purely social ideas we find that extremely evil intentions are present. In fact, they are openly presented, in full public view, with the most bold insolence.’*
- Hitler complains about single parliamentarians trying to convince the crowd of parliament that their point of view is valid and their ability to do their job depended on their ability to convince others more ignorant than themselves their point of view was right, but his own system of government which was to replace

the existing parliament involves a crowd of advisors who each try to convince the chairman of the committee that their idea is valid so he can make a decision instead of a decision being made by a vote of the crowd, which is basically the same evil he was preaching against only reversed.

- Hitler says he did not discuss political matters during war but then later he says [on the front] 'I openly expressed my beliefs to my close army friends quite often.'

There are many contradictions which can be found like these.

Hitler's economic and educational plans are crude especially in comparison to his understanding of the requirements of an extremist political movement. He understands how to build a fanatical political organization and the use of propaganda very well but lacks a basic understanding of economics or the education system when explaining his theories of how the new National Socialist government would implement his policies. His basic plans were to return Germany to a feudal society of peasant farmers and to end education for the masses except for basic vocational training while replacing education time with exercise time.

Hitler talks at length about the cultural and intellectual development of the race and how important it is, yet, when he came to power, his own education program completely halted all cultural and intellectual training including ending intellectual classes, requiring classes to be rewritten to focus on Nazi goals, and an end to philosophy and psychology studies if they were not of immediate benefit to the Nazi party. Here is a quote from *Mein Kampf*; "It does not merely assure the preservation of this nationality, but the state must lead the people to the highest freedom possible by continuing to develop its spiritual and intellectual capacities." This goal was changed to an extreme degree and all education was replaced by the teaching of Nazi values.

Some criticize Hitler for using mixed metaphors. This is rather petty in itself because mixed metaphors were not uncommon in the German press at the time and are common even today. It is the equivalent of saying, 'My God, did he end a sentence with a preposition?' which is hardly a condemnable act even if it may not be considered perfect grammar. Hitler's words were for the less educated classes of his followers and it would have been inappropriate for his words to be perfect. To criticize his work in this way is the equivalent of saying, 'I wouldn't do it that way so it must be wrong.' Some have pointed out that Hitler's prose lacks the eloquence of Lenin, but Lenin wrote for the intellectuals, not the common man. The difference is between a thinker and a doer. Such criticisms are attempts to discredit his work without resorting to understanding it first.

Here is an example of one of his mixed metaphors where he starts with mushrooms and ends with squeak: *'Such societies sprang up like mushrooms everywhere, but disappeared without a squeak after a short time.'*

Hitler often based his theories on pseudo-scientific ideas. I say pseudo-scientific because he took leading edge scientific ideas which were then modified by others into concepts often

very far from their original intent. For instance Hitler promoted an idea of Geographical Politics which is presumably a scientific attempt to show that a nation's strength and longevity is determined by the area it occupies. He also used Darwin's theory of evolution but only after it had been re-interpreted by other fringe scientists. Many of Hitler's theories about Jews also came from American anti-Semitic papers. His flawed economic theories, which he later abandoned, came from Gottfried Feder and claimed any charging of interest in the loaning of money was usury and should be illegal. This is actually an old religious idea in Europe. He also believed in making small cities that were self sufficient, as I previously said, it was a return to feudal society. Hitler promotes Feder and his theories in *Mein Kampf* but later was forced to abandon the ideas as unworkable.

Some words can have multiple meanings. For instance, in German spiritual often means moral. The word peoples or people can be interchanged with nations, states, or even race. Often when Hitler talks about peoples or people he means the dominant race, not just the country. The interpretation depends on the surrounding argument.

In America, we generally consider 'state' as a reference to a subdivision of the nation, however in Europe, state is commonly used to describe a country. Hitler frequently uses state to refer to the German National State. What Americans might consider individual states are provinces in Europe (a subdivision of a nation or state), but these can also be called states, the government within a country and other countries themselves can also be states. So don't be confused when you see the word state, it usually means country or national government but can mean smaller subdivisions of the nation.

There are other phrases Hitler uses which should be explained such as *cosmopolitan Jew* which means a Jew of many aspects, due to their worldwide nature and their integration and knowledge of cultures and ability to speak languages worldwide (there was no Jewish state at the time *Mein Kampf* was written). The Reynal-Hitchcock translation sometimes simplified the term into the shorter 'world Jew' or 'international Jew' however international cosmopolitan Jew has a larger meaning so the true meaning is lost if it is trimmed down to a simple word without the reader understanding what word is being replaced and what it really means.

One very important thing to keep in mind when reading *Mein Kampf* is that events did not always unfold in the simplistic way Hitler describes and did not happen as he states. They were often more complicated and had many people on both sides. For instance, he repeatedly attacks the bourgeois for their cowardice and inability to make decisions. This however was only the image he wanted the reader to have. In fact, some bourgeois societies were highly nationalistic and violent, consisting of ex-soldiers, certainly not cowards, and some of his rival political movements were very militant, some more militant than the Nazi party.

Hitler's interpretation of history was also meant to serve his purpose. He is writing a book which is itself propaganda and not a history book. He attacks Chancellor Cuno's plan for passive resistance after the French invasion of the Ruhr area. There is no evidence Hitler spoke against this action at the time, however in *Mein Kampf* he says he warned everyone

of what would happen and that his predictions came true exactly as he said. Many of his foreign policy theories also are over simplifications about events of the time. For example, his claims that the military was weak and no one in charge knew what they were doing, however this is unfounded because the pre-war leaders had put a lot of effort into the military and had their own ideas about world conquest. When reading *Mein Kampf*, keep in mind that the historical references may not be fully accurate, though they are still very instructive and you will learn a lot about foreign policy, how to think about foreign policy, and the consequences of bad foreign policy.

The original party which Hitler joined was called the DAP or Deutsche Arbeiter Partei. Later, in 1920, he renamed the party as the NSDAP or National Socialist German Workers' Party in English or in German it is Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (NSDAP). In English this is shortened to Nazi Party. It is sometimes abbreviated using the English letters as NSGWP.

The D.A.P. or German Worker's Party Hitler originally joined offers some additional examples of inconsistencies. Hitler makes the party sound like they were sitting around doing nothing until he showed up and took charge. This is a revision of history. What annoyed Drexler was Hitler's down-playing of Drexler's role because he was the real founder of the D.A.P. not Hitler. *Mein Kampf* is not a historical book. It is as much propaganda as anything else.

Hitler claimed he was the seventh member of the DAP. This is another area where there are inconsistencies in *Mein Kampf*. He was actually the seventh member of the committee, not the party. In volume two of *Mein Kampf* he says that he joined the six man party in autumn of 1919, however his membership card (which was apparently later forged to say seven instead of 555 - numbering started at 500) showed otherwise and a letter from Drexler later complained about his claim that he was the seventh member and said he was actually member fifty-five, not seven. There is some question about the accuracy of this because membership cards were not issued in order of joining; they were issued in alphabetical order. Hitler may have interpreted his joining as the seventh *active* member and ignored the others who were showing up at meetings. Also Hitler first says the party had nothing printed not even membership cards, yet he later says after he joined he received his card immediately. This statement is also unclear. Since cards were issued in alphabetical order, it is possible they were not issued until later and then issued by going through the files and distributed to everyone at once. Hitler said the party had no membership cards when they are first mentioned, but then at the end of chapter nine of volume one he says "I applied for membership in the German Workers' Party and received a provisional membership certificate bearing the number seven!" The decision to join was made two days after he attended the first meeting so they would have had to have obtained membership cards for everyone in that short time but again later he says the did not have them until after he joined. It is confusing.

Here is part of Drexler's letter:

*No one knows better than you yourself, my Führer, that you were never the seventh member of the party, but at best the seventh member of the committee, which I asked you to join as recruitment director. And a few years ago I had to complain to a party office that your first proper membership card of the DAP, bearing the signatures of Schüssler and myself, was falsified, with the number 555 being erased and number 7 entered. (Kershaw, Hitler: Hubris 1889-1936, Penguin Books, p. 127).*

Further, Hitler says at the first meeting he attended, he was handed a printed red book. Then a few paragraphs later when describing his attendance of the second meeting he again says they had nothing printed at all, yet he already said he was handed a booklet about the party.

In volume one, Hitler says that he first went to Sterneckerbräu Beer Hall for the very first meeting of the DAP before he joined and a second time for the Feder lecture. Then later in volume two he says the party only met previously in a cafe and the Herrengasse meeting room and that he went out and found the Sterneckerbräu for their use as an office.

Many of Hitler's *recollections* are modified to improve his image. For example he claims that at the first party meeting he attended, he asked some highly targeted and intelligent questions to the amazement of those in attendance and then Anton Drexler ran up to him and shoved a booklet in his hand as he was leaving. But, another account says '*Adolf Hitler sprang up from the audience to rebut the argument. Drexler approached Hitler and thrust a booklet into his hand.*' Both describe the same situation but the second account, which was told by a different person, could easily be interpreted as meaning Drexler was upset with Hitler's ignorance and his thrusting of the book was meant to say '*learn something before opening your mouth next time.*' Hitler's retelling of events at meetings and other instances are often adjusted for his benefit or for purposes of propaganda.

*Mein Kampf* is often criticized because of historical inaccuracies yet when compared to any history text book, you can identify one-for-one an inaccuracy in the textbook and find the average history book is equally inaccurate or self serving based on the country where it was published. In France, many of Napoleon's greatest defeats are taught as his greatest victories while the same battles are described as great defeats in American history books. Two history books with two opposite conclusions and many times neither is fully right or wrong. It is inaccurate to dismiss Hitler's view of history as wrong simply because it disagrees with some history books. Anyone who lived through some particular event and then reads about it in the newspaper or history books can immediately see inaccuracies and obvious omissions that other readers are unaware of. The same can be said of Hitler's writing when compared to historical references which we today only refer to. So, Hitler's references may not be considered historically accurate, however that does not necessarily make it wrong.

Hitler paints all other political parties with a broad brush. They are all wrong, incompetent, old men wearing monocles and cowardly intellectuals who cannot do the job. Only his

party has a chance of success, according to Hitler. He uses the same broad labeling method to discuss historical events.

It was Hitler's intention to portray himself and his movement as heroic. He took liberties with facts and circumstances to create this image. This is exactly what we would expect because the work is itself propaganda.

It is important to remember that Hitler's interpretation and retelling of history or events is often intentionally distorted to prove the point he wishes to make. This explains why there are some inconsistencies. He may want to prove one point early in the book and a slightly different point later which means he must adjust the facts a little. He may ignore some facts or give an interpretation as the only one when counter interpretations fit the facts better.

In the second volume is where you truly begin to hear his strong appeal. His speaking style improved between 1924 and 1926 when the second volume was published. His grandiose statements, if you imagine them being played to a large audience, are clearly emotionally appealing and the image he paints of a great future for everyone and a future that is only opposed by the chance of total destruction would draw anyone into the world he creates. There is a noticeable difference between volume one (written 1924) and volume two (published 1926). You can see a more refined and developed style which, even in written form, inspires the audience. Volume two is the real Hitler who influenced a nation with his powerful speeches.

When Hitler says International he means Marxists or those who follow the international Jew, international financiers, as well as those outside the country who control and manipulate national matters. A nationalist is a patriot who keeps control of country assets within the country and wants a strong military, which is a very Prussian attitude so they were often associated with Prussians.

There are some interesting errors in *Mein Kampf*. Several sentences in the original German were so complex they were unclear even to Germans so they were omitted or reworded in later editions. Some names were removed as well such as Henry Ford, the car maker. This may have been at his request, but it is more likely Hitler had his name removed after Henry Ford made a public apology to the Jews over his anti-Semitic newspaper. The first volume listed sixteen men in the dedication, yet in the first print run of volume two Hitler says he wants to refer back to those eighteen men. He was likely thinking of two additional party members who died later. This error was fixed by the second printing. Some names were dropped in later editions because they were simply unimportant in Hitler's opinion such as newspaper magnate Northcliffe's name.

Marxists are also called Reds, internationals, republicans. All of these also refer to Jews. Republic refers to the new Marxist parliamentary republic established in Germany as a result of the 1918 Marxist revolution which occurred with the end of the First World War.

*November criminals* refers to the idea that those who participated in the November 1918 revolution were crooks who betray the country. Hitler repeatedly refers to this event.



The original German text uses *bourgeois* or in German it is *Bürgertum*, and middle class or petite-bourgeois in German is *Spießbürgers*. The Manheim translation used shopkeeper for middle class sometimes (Spießbürgers). The word bourgeois can have various meanings depending on who is using it. Any instances of bourgeois in *Mein Kampf* may be more accurately called leader-class or wealthy-aristocrat but this is not completely accurate. Generally it means someone of privilege who is in an upper social class and has acquired wealth undeservedly. Government officials and nobles, sometimes white collar workers like school administrators or other high level jobs can also be included. In the Ford translation, bourgeois was changed to privileged-class and petty bourgeois to middle-class. In this context, “aristocrats” does not mean by royal birth, but those who inherited or otherwise have money. Hitler talks very little about the real middle-class and mostly about the proletariat masses or the bourgeois upper/ruling classes. Some people assume bourgeois means middle class but this is inaccurate at least in the context of *Mein Kampf*. It would be more accurate to think of a very large proletariat class, a very small middle class and a slightly smaller bourgeois class which was more visible. The middle class was not as dominant as it is today. In Marxism, bourgeois means someone who is part of a property owning class so you can consider middle and leader-class to mean property owners or an exploiter of the worker. Hitler adapted his meaning from the Marxist meaning. Bourgeoisie (ending in -geoisie) is a member of that class also could be business class. Bourgeois is uncommon in English speaking countries but more common in other countries.

Hitler discussed syphilis at length. There is much controversy over why he spent so many pages on the matter. Medical reports discovered after World War II indicated that he may have suffered from syphilis. At any rate, he believed he had syphilis and his doctor administered treatments that were common for syphilis suffers at the time. This could explain why he was so concerned with the disease and felt it was important enough to devote an extensive section of *Mein Kampf* to.

Hitler uses the word propaganda frequently. In English the word propaganda carries negative connotations, however the way Hitler uses it, he means an idea along the lines of education, political-advertising, promoting your ideology or more specifically indoctrination.

Hitler disliked interest, meaning the charging of a fee to loan money (including buying corporate stock, bonds and other financial instruments). This was a matter that was of great concern during the Protestant reformation in Europe, which is something that influenced Hitler. Previously, the Catholic Church banned the charging of interest as usury or theft. Of course, the result was economic stagnation. Calvin's reformations changed this by declaring interest as part of work and work was Godly which opened up many new business opportunities and greatly enhanced commerce because money was no longer sitting idly in bank vaults. Hitler's idea dates back to the previous misguided concept of a *simpler time*.

Hitler talks about International Finance money and financial sectors. What this really means is the type of money that is generated from interest and interest generating financial sectors, stocks, bonds, as opposed to hourly labor wages. The theories these ideas are based on are a misguided understanding of financial systems which only works if you have a government

controlled agricultural and factory based economy which effectively keeps everyone poor. In the 1920's, many aspects of economics were still mysteries. Eliminating interest money effectively ends the possibility of improvement and only allows an economy to grow through a wartime boom. Early on, this was Hitler's goal, a feudal type of society based on agriculture.

It is often claimed that Hitler was an Atheist. After reading *Mein Kampf* it is clear he believed in a God and Heaven, and especially in a fate or more accurately a plan for our destiny that involves self determinism. Claims that he was an Atheist are frequently used to distance him from any religion. No one wants to say they have the same religion as Hitler.

Hitler was a non-practicing Catholic and even considered becoming a member of the clergy in his later youth when he attended a religious school. The claim of Atheism is made on its own, with no support. None is needed with such a broad claim and any attempt to validate the claim is easily disproved. It automatically, in theory, accounts for all of his actions therefore it is reasoned there is no need to dig deeper into the man. People spend time researching his history, where he was, what he said, but they ignore his own book and the words he uses in it. The nail in the coffin of the Atheist argument is when in 1933 Hitler said in a speech. '*I am now and have always been a Catholic and I plan to remain one.*' He may not have been active in the church, but that does not make him an Atheist.

Hitler's ideas were a collection of ideas he picked up from other writers and theoreticians. His ideas on anti-Semitism, Pan-German movements, expansion, etc. were not his original ideas but were widely distributed by race-conscious newspapers of pre-First World War Germany. Hitler did however give them a strong voice, consolidated them into one idea facing a single enemy, and turned them into coherent propaganda that could be used to motivate the masses.

His gift was the ability to piece them together and to motivate the people to, if not follow, at least not obstruct his movement. Some have tried to criticize Hitler for his adoption of the ideas by other people, however the same can be said for any philosopher or any politician. It would be abnormal for a man who was an artist to wake up one day and know the great course for a country with all of the details worked out, all without ever researching the political ideas/opinions of others. Some try to say Hitler had no original ideas when the truth is very few people have had any original ideas. They are based on the writings and thoughts of other people who pieced them together from yet others. Hitler took a set of long existing ideas, turned them into a form with which modern people would identify, created a political platform that people would follow, and motivated them to put those ideas into practice. It does not matter that he was inspired by others, what he did with ideas which had been passed around for hundreds of years with little result is what separates his writing and speeches from the work of others.

A number of top Nazi leaders were known to have never read *Mein Kampf*. This is sometimes used to criticize the book. However, they listened to hundreds of Hitler's speeches which had the same basic content. They did not need to read the book because they had heard it many times over.

## Known Translations

There have been various English translations of *Mein Kampf* and some foreign translations were based on the English versions. These have been dogged by criticism since they were released. I will not go into excessive details on these translations but will give a quick summary of each. I will also not discuss the foreign language translations because they vary so much. However, many foreign language (other than English) translations were based on poor English translations and not the original German. They were created by people who spoke English as a second language and had great difficulty understanding the unusual words and complex sentences of older English translations. As a result, many foreign language versions are filled with errors and excessive embellishments.

You can find more information on the various editions in the

***Mein Kampf: A Collectors Guide eBook from [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org)***

### Dugdale Translation 1933

The first legal translation was an abridged (incomplete) edition called the Dugdale translation. It was criticized for selectively omitting sections, however the omissions appear to be random. The quality of the translation was not up to par, that combined with public complaints about an abridged version led to a new translation. The Dugdale version was published by Hurst & Blackett in London and Houghton Mifflin in the US.

Here is a Dugdale example compared to the **Ford translation**:

**Dugdale-Translation:** I refused to countenance such folly, and after a very short time I ceased to attend the meetings of the committee. I made my propaganda for myself, and that was an end of it; I refused to allow any ignoramus to talk me into any other course.

**Ford translation:** I refused to submit to such foolishness and after a very short time, I stopped attending the committee sessions. I prepared my propaganda and that was that. I also did not let some good-for-nothing interfere with my work, just as I did not concern myself with their business.

The Dugdale quote appears to say that Hitler was producing propaganda for himself. Although we can figure out it means, this is not what was originally intended or written. The Dugdale translation not only omitted paragraphs, it omitted important sentences and critical information from within sentences in an effort to abridge the book as much as possible. Dugdale was significant because it was the first legally published copy of *Mein Kampf*, but it is not commonly read today since unabridged (full) versions are available now. Considering the over-edited nature. Because it is abridged, it will not be used for any further examples or analysis in this text.

## Official Nazi Murphy Translation 1936-37

James Murphy created a translation for the Nazi government. He had some sympathies for their politics and because of this the Nazi propaganda ministry hired him to create the English translation of *Mein Kampf*. He worked on this edition in Germany. Over time, Murphy's opinions about the Nazi government changed. The German government decided they no longer cared for him after he made some critical remarks and told him he had to leave. He left quickly without his translation into English. Later he sent his wife back and she was able to obtain a copy from his German secretary. The German government edited and published the Murphy version which was completed for them, in English, and it was printed within Germany from the presses of the Nazi printing office. Very few copies are known to have been printed. Some copies were sent to POW camps in Germany for British and American POW's. A very rare version of this official Nazi English edition has recently been re-discovered republished for the first time since it was printed by the Nazi government. It is very interesting to compare this translation to both Murphy's later British translation and to the new Ford translation to see the differences.

This edition had the regular British spellings (James Murphy was British) which were common for the time, *to-day* instead of today, and *labour* instead of labor. However, it also had many gross misspellings, punctuation errors, and grammar errors. Apparently an English speaking Nazi Party member took James Murphy's unpolished translation and tried to finish it.

Here are some examples of the errors in the Official Nazi Murphy Edition:

For instance, intelligentsia is spelled as intelligentzia in the Nazi edition.

"..the blackmailers that were arrested and *gaoled*." instead of *jailed* where gaoled is an archaic British term.

"... I was *answerd* with a triple 'Heil'" notice misspelling.

"...that we should 'look out for *ouselves*' and..."

The word *disintegration* is sometimes spelled correctly and sometimes spelled as *disintregation*.

"..would turn out detrimental rather than helpful to the interests of that province- but through fear of an agreement *ment* being established between Germany.." this may be an editing error duplicating the end of agreement or a misspelling of meant.

"I *endeavoured* to *instil* them gradually into the members of the young organization,..."

"...can continue to play an important *rôle* in the world only if Germany be dismembered." Notice the unnecessary pronunciation mark in the word "role".

It would be a mistake to think this is a more accurate translation simply because it is the official Nazi version. The language differences and the poor translation plus the errors are quite jarring to the reader. It is best used as a reference or a comparison against other

translations. It is entertaining to see how the Nazi party tried to explain *Mein Kampf* using English words familiar to themselves. Reading the official Nazi version after reading a good translation is quite interesting so I do recommend you pick up a copy and compare it to other translations. You will discover more about the text for yourself.

### **Murphy British Translation 1939**

After Murphy was kicked out of Germany and he obtained a copy of his manuscript, he continued to work on it. He finalized a deal with Hurst & Blackett, but they ceased publishing the Murphy translation in 1942 when the original plates were destroyed by German bombing.

Murphy often embellished sections, adding references, and making it into his own style, not so much in Hitler's style. Murphy often used long, uncommon words which make the text hard to understand. Some of his words included fructified, fetters, propitious, millions, recalcitrant, ineluctable, loquacious, and other words the average person would simply not recognize.

Murphy took artistic license in some of these descriptions and even with his German language skill, he did not fully understand the meaning of many passages he translated.

He captured the general ideas, but the nuance was lost. He added to descriptions to embellish them, but in doing so, he strayed from Hitler's style and sometimes from the meaning. Hitler often was very straight forward, using simple terms while Murphy used complex words. While Hitler aimed his message at the uneducated masses, Murphy wrote for the intellectual.

Murphy's word choices were often taken out of a German-English dictionary which meant he took the most common meaning, not necessarily the best meaning. For example, in one place Murphy uses the word 'devotion' when the true translation is closer to 'fanaticism' which alters the meaning significantly.

### **Reynal and Hitchcock Translation 1938**

Houghton and Mifflin licensed Reynal & Hitchcock the rights to publish their version of the full unexpurgated translation in 1938. It was translated by a committee of men from the New School for Social Research and appeared on February 28, 1939. This description is misleading because some of the men on the *committee* had nothing to do with the actual translation. Some of the translation is believed to have been completed by assistants.

The Reynal translation was more of a line-for-line translation. It is true to the original to a fault. It is translated directly, sometimes in a way that makes the meaning unclear. The original German sentence structures were often preserved which makes it very difficult to read in English. Reynal also used many uncommon words. When the translators did

not understand a passage, they simply translated it literally word-for-word using word substitution.

## **Stackpole Translation**

Stackpole and Sons commissioned their own translation, without securing copyrights. This was before World War II started so Hitler still had a copyright claim. The entire copyright story is rather involved but interesting. The short version is that Reynal and Hitchcock contracted the rights for the authorized version from Hurst and Blackett so they had a legal claim in the US and stopped the publication of Stackpole's edition after 12,000 copies were printed. The Stackpole translation was rushed, it was inaccurate, and many sentences make no sense at all because they were translated without paying attention to the meaning. It looks like two different people translated it because there is a clear difference in the writing styles between first half of the book and the second half based on the pages, not Volume 1 and Volume 2. Very little is known about the technical work of the translation done by Stackpole. It is just as well that this version was not kept in print because it is one of the worst translations and is filled with errors. The book is considered collectible however.

Here is an example from the **Stackpole translation**:

**Stackpole translation:** The world is ruled by only a fraction of all Wisdom, of which fraction almost any Ministerial Councillor embodies but one atom. Since Germany has become a Republic, however, this is no longer true-that is why the Law to Protect the Republic forbids any one to say or even to believe such a thing.

It says "this is no longer true", but the original German text and the clear meaning of the paragraph shows that it IS true. Such mistakes corrupt the meaning of the original writing and collectively make it confusing and unreadable. The Stackpole translation is filled with errors, sometimes many per page.

Here is another example from the Stackpole translation. This could have just as easily come from the Reynal or Manheim too.

**Stackpole translation:** The further result is, however, that in so doing the danger of a battle of the defenders of the old State against those of the new seems once and for all to be diverted. One cannot emphasize this fact too often.

The use of the word *of* repeatedly creates a confusing sentence. Such choices make the translation hard to understand.

## **Manheim Translation**

Houghton Mifflin commissioned a new translation by Ralph Manheim which was published in 1943. They created this new edition to avoid having to share their profits with Reynal & Hitchcock. They also wanted to offer a more readable translation. It was a definite improvement over past translations, however it still has many errors and fails to identify many critical references. It also mistranslates common sayings used by Hitler. Manheim used footnotes to indicate original German words in an effort to clarify the translation, however to a non German speaker this is not helpful and a German speaker would likely read the original German so these notes were not useful. Many items that should have been footnoted, such as people and places or sayings that were not familiar to English speakers, were not footnoted by Manheim. When Manheim was unsure of a word (for example Sheepshead meaning the Bavarian card game), he left it untranslated and inserted the original German words in the text. His translation contains many German words and sentences. Some passages are also missing from the Manheim translation, most likely because he did not understand them. I conclude this because the missing passages are frequently complex statements that make more sense when spoken with inflection than when written.

Manheim's mechanical translation style also makes his translation difficult to read. Sentences are translated almost word for word from German without thought to word order or overall sentence meaning. The result is a jumbled and disjointed translation which is nothing like the original book.

The Manheim translation contains numerous typographical errors as well. For example, one line refers to a battle in "1948" which is long after *Mein Kampf* was written and obviously should have been 1848. In another place it says: "It would be a stake to think that the followers..." which should clearly have been "mistake", not "stake".

## **Ford Translation**

This is the newest translation made in 2009. The past translations were mostly rushed to press with little time for editing and correction. The Ford translation was not rushed to press and was thoroughly researched. It is the first translation verified by actual German native speakers. This is the easiest to read translation ever made. It has revealed many elements of *Mein Kampf* which were not part of past translations including sayings by Hitler and his poetic style which were edited out of older translations. The Ford translation also maintains a high standard of accuracy. If Hitler used a particular word, then that word was used and not embellished into another word. Every definition was evaluated to make sure the correct translation was chosen, not just the common usage of a word. This translation is also the only *Mein Kampf* ever available as a full length audio book from [www.Mein-Kampf-Audio.com](http://www.Mein-Kampf-Audio.com)

Translating any work is a major project. Simply understanding another language does not mean someone can translate a work of literature. It is a very complex process and it is easy to mis-translate a passage.

Here is an example of a problem in making any translation. In English we use the word *great* but it has various meanings: large, wonderful, powerful. It is very similar in German.

They too have many words with multiple meanings which are often interchangeable, but one meaning is more correct than any of the others. This was a problem in past translations. The translator would pick the most common meaning which may not always be the best meaning and this in turn alters the meaning of the sentence, "God is great." Translated into another language as "God is big" or is it translated to "God is fat" or "God is powerful" or "God is extensive" or "God is very large"? All are possible translations and all are technically correct if you only translate the words, however none of those examples are true to the original meaning of the simple three word sentence.

These kinds of translation problems are found thousands of times when comparing the original German to the older 1930's and 1940's translations. The Ford translators spent a great deal of time and effort to make sure the Ford translation was not only technically correct, but true to the original meaning and intent of Hitler's words.

It was common to use past perfect tense in *Mein Kampf*, and in German writing in general, they would say "the meeting took place" instead of saying "we held a meeting." This can make reading seem slow and boring. Many of these instances were changed to be more active or at least less confusing in the Ford translation. This helps make the Ford translation easier to read.

*If one word is changed, it is not always a big deal but when you change a word here and another there, then elaborate in one area but not another, the original style is lost. Hitler's style is important because this style is what listeners heard at his speeches, this is the style that moved them emotionally and made them want to follow him. When the style is lost, Hitler is lost and it becomes a jumble of words.*



## Hitlerisms

A Hitlerism means the style used by Hitler. Everyone has certain words, phrases, or sentence structures he personally favors when writing or speaking. Hitler's books were dictated, however his speaking style is clearly present in them.

Much of Hitler's original wording and style was filtered out of past translations, for example when Hitler said "through and through" it was simplistically translated as "through" in older translations. When Hitler said "dragging the nation into an abyss of tears" the older translators changed it to "dragging a whole nation down with itself" or another translation said "drags down the whole nation with it into the abyss." You may think such simple omissions are minor, however when they occur in every second or third sentence, they collectively damage the overall translation, they cut out the original style and flow, making the writing seem stilted and flat. Sometimes these seemingly minor omissions alter the meaning of the passage entirely.

Here is an example of Hitler's sarcastic wit as it comes across in the Ford translation:

"To hold a strike, the Marxists[union leaders] were needed, since it was primarily the workers who had to strike."

Here, Hitler was talking about a labor strike and obtaining the Marxist's support. At that time the Marxist political movement in Germany controlled the unions therefore the workers. A very sharp piece of wit in a paragraph dripping with sarcasm which has been unknown to English readers of older translations.

It is interesting to note that Hitler spends more time attacking enemies than promoting friends and allies.

Hitler loved to enumerate. Here are five reasons, there are three kinds of people. Most of these enumerations were kept in the Ford translation to preserve his style. Once in *Mein Kampf*, he began counting and forgot to complete the elements of his list. This oversight is highlighted in the Appendix.

Hitler had a tendency to open a discussion with a problem, explain it, and explain it again in the next paragraph. This style is more noticeable in writing and might not be as obvious during a speech. Some people have criticized Hitler for this style, however it is a valid technique when speaking. If you want your audience to remember what you said, you repeat it. This was usually limited to discussing an event, giving an example, veering off of the topic for a sentence or two, maybe a paragraph, then giving another example and discussing the topic some more.

Some people cite where Hitler goes into depth in Volume One about the need for territorial expansion but then again explains it almost word for word in Volume Two as an example of his repeating himself. We must remember that originally Volume One and Two were

separate books and only later combined into one book. It is unlikely, if *Mein Kampf* were written as a single book, this duplication would have been included, however it was simply not removed when the volumes were combined.

Mainly in Volume Two, Hitler frequently made references to things already said, such as “As I have already mentioned...” He liked to draw the listener or reader’s attention back to what he had previously said. This may have been a method of validating what he was saying as if he were quoting himself as an authority.

Hitler liked to say “mathematical” or “mathematical certainty” too.

Hitler frequently spoke in a long train of thought. This method works in speeches, but in writing it creates complex, long sentences with multiple clauses. Without the vocal inflection to guide the reader, it can be difficult to follow in the original German language.

Hitler often starts a sequence of ideas with “Therefore, the following conclusions result:” “We can, therefore, state the following principles:” or similar introductory statements.

Hitler liked to use “etc.” Some older translations edited these out but they are preserved in the Ford translation to keep Hitler’s original style. Some people criticize him for using etc. by saying it shows a mind that lacks creativity, however the use of etc. actually indicates a complex thought process that is common in intellectuals who have difficulty making a single statement because their minds automatically attach a long list of possibilities, outcomes, and influences to every thought.

Hitler has a tendency to create multiple top levels. For instance he says an organization’s most important goal is to distribute propaganda, then a paragraph later he says the most critical objective of the organization is to select the best people who can carry out propaganda, then a couple of paragraphs later the organization’s most important goal is to avoid disagreements between members. This pattern of multiple “most important” considerations is repeated a number of times in *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler used sarcasm heavily in *Mein Kampf*. Because of this, I think it is important to clearly define what we mean by sarcasm.

Contrary to some definitions, sarcasm is not irony used with the intent to wound the person to whom the remark is addressed. Sarcasm can be hurtful intentionally or hurtful for a joke or not hurtful at all. Irony is defined as: *An expression marked by a deliberate contrast between apparent and intended meaning, usually to draw attention to some incongruity or irrationality. A literary style that uses this kind of contrast for humorous or rhetorical effect is also irony.*

These types of irony give a clue to the true definition of an ironic statement. An ironic statement must appear as if you are sincere, there must be no hint of sarcasm, and you must not be aware that the remark is droll. The line must be delivered straight, so that the recipient misses the hidden message, but onlookers get it loud and clear. This was not

Hitler's style. He made sure everyone knew what he meant by his tone, or quotes in the text. The type of sarcasm Hitler uses was saying the opposite of what was said in words, sometimes to comedic effect. It is the use of words to mean the opposite of what is said.

Hitler often uses a Socratic type of irony which borders on sarcasm because it has attention drawn to it to make it clear. This meant lower classes could easily identify and understand what was really being said. It is the same theory behind good writing. You do not tell the audience everything but give them enough to figure it out for themselves. Yet, at the same time, you cannot make the puzzle too difficult to figure out. It was a technique Hitler used to maintain interest in his speeches and to make people accept what he was telling them as factual. It seemed more valid to the listeners because the audience was able to figure it out.

Sarcasm is often described as the lowest form of wit, but that is incorrect. It is parody that takes that position. Quips are often confused with sarcasm even by the user. They think they are making remarks which are intelligent and sarcastic when in fact they are ignorant and quippy. A quip is a way of indirectly expressing aggression towards others.

The humor of complexity shields the speaker from vulnerability related to openly stating an opinion and standing behind it. "What a great car" can be a quip if the car is clearly not a nice one, but this is not sarcastic. Quip'ers only show a superficial part of themselves and avoid expressing deep opinions as opinions. Users of sarcasm want to make their opinions very clear through their vocal tone (shown by "quotes" in the text of *Mein Kampf*). Sarcasm, true sarcasm, as used by Hitler, is a sign of intelligence and is used to express anger and aggression towards what he sees as unfair, dishonest, or deceiving elements. Sarcasm is highly appropriate in its expressiveness for him.

Spitting out an insult would not have the same effect as the targeted use of sarcasm which combines a jab plus humor which makes a more entertaining statement than the merely negative one would be and it also leads his audience to accept his conclusion and allows them to feel smart because they can figure out what he is saying even though he is not absolutely literal. Sarcasm can also stimulate the ego of the user by asserting themselves as intelligent and powerful. Heavy users of sarcasm are usually aggressive on some level, more than the average person. This can be part of a power game which makes the user feel powerful and can make followers view them as intelligent and powerful which makes them want to follow.

Quips put people down, sarcasm does not, it expresses a hidden opinion in a blatant fashion as if it is a shared secret between the speaker and the listener. It made his speeches more interesting and attractive.

The idea that less intelligent people do not get sarcasm is only partly true. If they are unable to understand sarcasm, then they lack the ability to understand deep meaning anyway. Hitler's use of sarcasm most likely attracted lower educated elements of the population because they could listen and say "yeah, I get what he is saying, what he is really saying."

Hitler's use of sarcasm was to illustrate a point by saying the opposite which could be construed as aggressive in most cases based on his usage. His use of sarcasm is very specific and focused.

## German Race References Explained

What did Hitler really say? This is important when understanding his writing. Many people assume Hitler's speeches were hate filled, vulgar episodes comparable to speeches by Neo-Nazi's or the Ku Klux Klan. In fact, Hitler was careful about his public language. He would likely criticize such offensive speeches if he heard one today as being inappropriate for propaganda purposes. He was almost scientifically clean in a way. The words he used were common in his day and were, in themselves, not excessively offensive. The terms Jew, negro merely described a race of people, they were in common use and had no sinister connotations in themselves. He did not use more charged terms which were available.

The word Hitler used the most was 'völkisch' which means 'belonging to a certain race/people'.

Its actual meaning can be more positive or more negative based on context. The word itself sounds very "nice" and "innocent" which is why the Nazis kept using it instead of the racist sounding "rassisch". The best translation for "völkisch" is one that is somewhat neutral like racialist and not racist.

'Folkish', 'Populist' and 'Racial' are pretty much interchangeable, however no one uses folkish or populist in common speech. These were commonly used in older translations from the 1930's which obscured their true meaning. If you look up populist or folkish in the dictionary, you will find a very 'nice' definition which is not necessarily related to the race-oriented meaning in *Mein Kampf*.

The word 'ethnic' may be considered too religious of a term in German. The German equivalent, 'ethnisch', wasn't used in the original German texts of *Mein Kampf* in other areas, so it's used differently and not an accurate translation for 'völkisch'.

It would be inappropriate to translate populist as racist. The word racist in English has a negative taint which was not associated with the words populist/folkish. Therefore we must be careful not to blindly substitute racist for populist even though it would be a valid word substitution based strictly on the definition, the meaning is skewed by social perception if we do so.

For these reasons, the words *populist* and *folkish* which were used in earlier translations were not used in the new Ford translation. The words simply have no modern meaning to the average person. Ethnic is not accurate either so race/racial was the best choice and is the most accurate translation. Populist was most often replaced with race-aware or racialist (one who uses race to make decisions or studies racial matters, usually informally) in the Ford translation.

Here are some examples of the actual use of race terms in *Mein Kampf*:

**Original German:** Sie hat weder das Siedlungsgebiet der deutschen Rasse vergrößert, noch hat sie den – wenn auch verbrecherischen – Versuch unternommen, durch den Einsatz von **schwarzem Blut** eine Machtstärkung des Reiches herbeizuführen.

**Ford translation:** It did not try to enlarge the territory for settlement by the German race or try to increase the power of the Reich through the use of **black blood**, which would have been a criminal act itself.

In German, both the color black and the race are called “schwarz”. In this paragraph, “schwarzem” clearly references the race. Note also that here German race is originally deutschen Rasse, however it is still neutral in meaning.

“Negro” is best translated from “Neger” in German, and “nigger” would remain “Nigger” in German with the same spelling as in English. “Nigger” is clearly a slur, “Neger” can be neutral, so “schwarz” (the adjective) or “Schwarzer” (the noun) are politically correct. Speaking of “schwarzes Blut” (black blood), however, puts a negative spin on things. Blood is red no matter the skin color, therefore using the term “schwarzes Blut” makes the racist sentiments obvious.

**Original German:** Ich glaube im Gegenteil, daß, wenn dieses Blut der-einst eingesetzt würde, es ein Verbrechen wäre, den Einsatz für zweihunderttausend Deutsche zu vollziehen, während nebenan über sieben Millionen unter der Fremd-herrschaft schmachten und die Lebensader des deutschen Volkes den Tummelplatz afrikanischer Negerhorden durchläuft.

**Reynal-Hitchcock translation:** ...more than 7,000,000 languish under alien rule and the main artery of the German people flows through the playground of **black African hordes**.

**Murphy translation:** ... neighbouring Germans are suffering under foreign domination and a vital artery of the German nation has become a playground for **hordes of African niggers**.

**Stackpole- translation:** ... while close by seven millions are languishing under a foreign regime, and the vital highway of the German people has become the playground of hords of African negroes.[sic-hords]

**Manheim translation:** ...while next door, more than seven millions[sic] languish under foreign domination and the vital artery of the German people runs through the hunting ground of African Negro hordes.

**Ford translation:** On the contrary, I believe that if such blood has to be sacrificed, it would be a crime to do so for two hundred-thousand Germans while next door seven million are suffering under a foreign regime and the vital lifeline of the German people has become the playground of hordes of African negroes.

*[sic] indicates grammatical and spelling errors in the original Manheim and Stackpole editions.*

Murphy translates Negerhorden as 'Nigger'. The RH-translation uses the much nicer 'black African hordes'. I do not believe Murphy did this to make the translation more appealing because he seems to make these decisions randomly. He may have been influenced by the offensive taint to the word. 'Negerhorden' is extremely derogatory due to the use of 'horden'. Here too, 'Horde' most often means a group of animals, not a group of people. However, it still does not say explicitly nigger so his translation was over the top.

'Lebensader' means 'lifeline' or 'main artery'. The full meaning, therefore, is: 'the lifeline of the German people runs through the playground of African negro hordes.'

'Neger' was at one time a fairly neutral word in Germany. Today, many consider it derogatory. However, context is very important. The word itself is not blacklisted by the media and is sometimes still used on radio. Unlike 'Neger', the term 'Nigger' is pejorative regardless of context and definitely considered a slur. In 1927 it was not considered to be as serious of a slur but was still considered offensive.

The word 'nigger' does not appear in the original German language text of *Mein Kampf*, not once.

In the original Official Nazi English translation, Murphy uses the word nigger once as shown here:

During those months, I felt, for the first time that Fate was dealing adversely with me in keeping me on the fighting-front and in a position where any chance bullet from some nigger's rifle might finish me, ...

However, he did not use it again in the Official Nazi version but it appears 3 times in the British Houghton Mifflin version. The word negro, or variations of it, occurs 16 times in the Houghton version and it occurs 17 times in the Nazi version.(negro\*)

In the Nazi version Murphy translates:

On the contrary, I believe that if we have to shed German blood once again it would be criminal to do so for the sake of liberating two hundred thousand Germans, when close at hand more than seven million Germans are suffering under a foreign yoke and a life-line of the German nation has become a playground for **hordes of African negroes**.

This does NOT say niggers as it did in his later Houghton-Mifflin translation. The change may have been meant to make the version published in England more controversial because the original word is more akin to negro as used in the Nazi translation and as translated by other translators.

Murphy may have wanted to create some quotable quotes but did not want to fill the

book with racist words to the point of making it overly offensive so it might have been a marketing decision too.

### Use of derogatory Kike

**Original German:** Sowie man nur vorsichtig in eine solche Geschwulst hineinschnitt, fand man, wie die Made im faulenden Leibe, oft ganz geblendet vom plötzlichen Lichte, ein **Jüdlein**.

#### INACCURATE

**Murphy translation:** On putting the probing knife carefully to that kind of abscess one immediately discovered, like a maggot in a putrescent body, a **little Jew** who was often blinded by the sudden light.

**Reynal-Hitchcock translation:** When carefully cutting open such a growth, one could find a **little Jew**, blinded by the sudden light, like a maggot in a rotting corpse.

#### CORRECT

**Ford translation:** If you carefully punctured this abscess with a knife, like a maggot in a rotten body, who was blinded by the sudden influx of light, you would discover a **Kike**.

This is an example of the only time Hitler used the derogatory word *Jüdlein* in *Mein Kampf*. It is the equivalent of *Kike* in English. Other instances used *Judentum Juden* or variations which are the equivalent of Jew or Jewish. Hitler also made a point of ending the sentence with this slur which was important to preserve his style. Murphy and Reynal changed the word order substantially. Notice how Murphy misunderstood and thought it meant little-Jew and so did Reynal, however, little Jew would have been *kleiner Jude* in German.

These translation examples show how past versions of *Mein Kampf* were poorly translated or intentionally sensationalized. They also show how Hitler avoided racist statements and racist words except for one exception in his entire book.

You can find a more detailed explanation of past translations and examples like these in the book *Mein Kampf: A Translation Controversy*.

# Conclusion

What separates *Mein Kampf* from other books on political theory is the simple fact that Hitler did it! He used his formula to take political control of an entire country. His use of the democratic process proved more successful than his attempt at forceful takeover. This clearly separates his writing from the thousands of theoretical political papers written by college professors and weekend intellectuals.

Other books theorize about how it happened, Hitler tells how he plans to make it happen and what drives him to make it happen. He gives details that no theoretician could dream about such as how to setup your political organization, how to choose people for your organization and most importantly who you should not include.

When you finish reading *Mein Kampf*, you will not think Hitler is a nice guy, but you will understand his strength of Will, determination and you will understand how a nation followed him to destruction. You will have a greater understanding of events in the world today, and you will understand yourself better.

What you have received is a true, honest analysis of Hitler's work. This is not an analyses of what it means, what is right or wrong about it, only the written work itself.

The majority of the book discusses politics and conditions in Germany at the time as well as Hitler's building of the Party which is more interesting than it sounds, especially if you have an interest in politics or want to build a business. He also explains, at least he explains what he wants others to believe, his developing anti-Semitism and his feelings about the Jews.

What is important is that the book makes you think about your own opinions, where they come from, how you are influenced by the people around you, what choices you make and whether you take action or sit back and let things happen.

Now that you understand *Mein Kampf*, you will find much more food for thought in it and you will have a stronger understanding of the material in it and its history.

- **Mein Kampf(The Ford Translation)** Soft Cover(ISBN 978-0-9841584-2-3) Hardcover(ISBN 978-0977476077) Audio Version(ISBN 978-0-9774760-4-6) - This version is recommended for students and educators because it is the most accurate translation, the easiest to read translation, and it includes explanatory notes. It is available from [www.HitlerLibrary.org](http://www.HitlerLibrary.org) or any bookstore.
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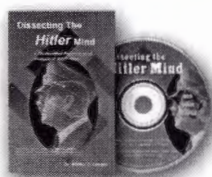
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## Official Nazi English Translation Of *Mein Kampf*

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*Mein Kampf* is an important educational tool for various subjects from history, to business, to politics, to tolerance. Studying *Mein Kampf* is important. If it is not dealt with in a classroom setting, then it will be read and interpreted by those who may not be able to understand the propagandistic nature of the work. If those who are interested in the book are "*educated*" outside the classroom by groups or individuals with an agenda, then their views can be twisted by inaccuracies and by incomplete information.

Combined Student's Guide and Teacher's Guide

Autobiography, Political Theory,  
Holocaust, History

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