

Propaganda Poster from Occupied Poland: “Beware of Typhus. Avoid Jews” (1941)

Abstract

As German troops invaded and took over Eastern territories, the Germans deployed a variety of propaganda measures to stir up the local populations, with the goal, in particular, of intensifying local tensions between ethnic groups. For instance, during the invasion and occupation of Poland, the Nazis tried to agitate already existing antisemitic passions and to enlist Poles in their antisemitic cause. This poster from the war depicted Jews as degenerate and a source of disease threatening the populace. Lice, which were known to transmit the bacillus causing typhus, are shown crawling all over a Jewish man's body, thus illustrating the danger the Jews supposedly posed to public health. This motif had of course long existed in the Nazi lexicon: in Nazi rhetoric, Jews were defamed as parasitic, linked to other vermin, and filth. Of course, it was the brutal policies of the Nazi invaders that led to the impoverished, overcrowded and unsanitary conditions in the ghettos that led to typhus.

Source



Source: Propaganda poster, 1941. Artist: R. Saniyorski. Muzeum Okregowe w Rzeszowie.

Muzeum Okregowe w Rzeszowie

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