



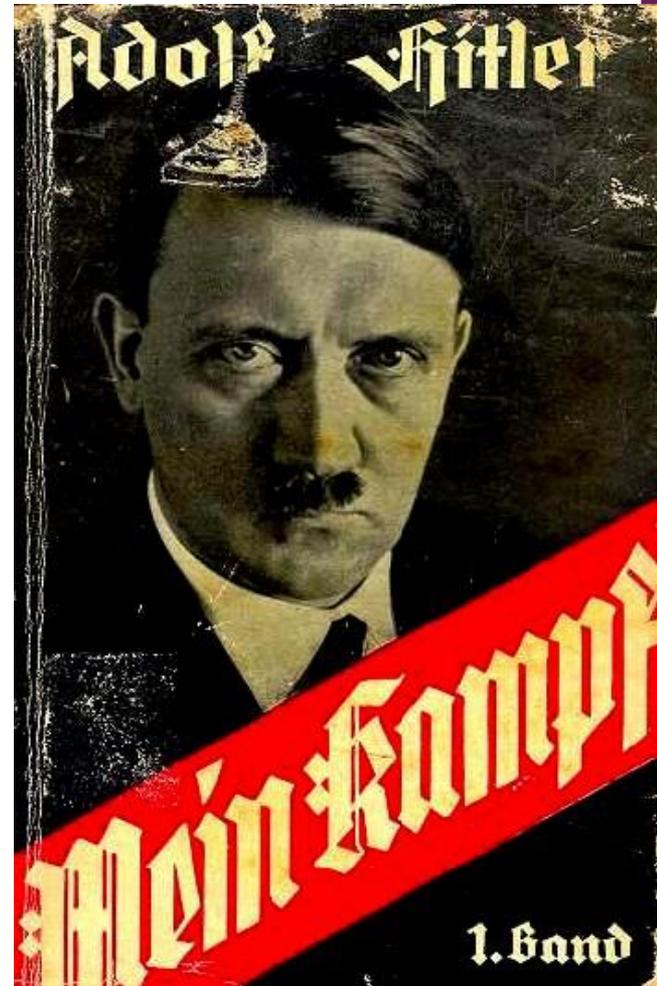
OPERATION BARBAROSSA

The German Attack on the Soviet Union



THE DECISION TO ATTACK

- ◉ *Mein Kampf* (1925):
 - Germany has a “moral right to the acquisition of foreign land and soil.”
- ◉ *Mein Kampf* index entry:
 - “German territorial gain in Europe is only possible at Russia’s expense.”



OPERATION BARBAROSSA

- Largest military invasion in world history
- Named after Frederick Barbarossa (1152-1190)
- 1933 = Hitler makes clear the premium of *Lebensraum*



SECRET PLANNING

- ◉ Non-Aggression Pact (1939) was meaningless
- ◉ Summer 1940 = Wehrmacht shifts to the East
- ◉ 31 July 1940 = Hitler makes clear his intentions to his military
 - They will attack the Soviets in Spring 1941
- ◉ No Soviet offensive?



HIMMLER'S PLANNING

- Wants “war of extermination”
 - 19 May 1940, from Supreme Command: “*Bolshevism is the deadly enemy of the National Socialist German people . . . This struggle requires ruthless and energetic action against the Bolshevik agitators, guerillas, saboteurs, and Jews, and the total elimination of all active or passive resistance.*”



HIMMLER'S PLANNING

- Top secret memo (25 May 1940): “Reflections on the Treatment of Peoples of Alien Races in the East”
 - Divide and rule
 - No education for Russians beyond grade-4
 - “Simple arithmetic up to 500 at most; writing one’s name; . . . divine law to obey the Germans and be honest, industrious, and good. I don’t think that reading is necessary.”

NO PROTECTION FOR CIVILIANS

- “Barbarossa Decree” (13 May 1941)
 - Not normal war
 - “Guerillas” needed to be killed without mercy
 - Soldiers forbidden from detaining civilians
 - “Acts” against civilians would not be prosecuted



IGNORE THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS

○ “Commissar Order” (6 June 1941):

- International law is false
- Political commissars are not soldiers
- International law does not apply to commissars
- Separate them; kill them

○ Regular Soviet POWs?

- Routinely shot
- Allowed to freeze
- No barracks
- Hardly any food



IGNORE THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS

- ◎ By February 1942 . . .
 - 2,000,000 Soviet POWs dead
- ◎ During WWII . . .
 - 5,700,000 Soviets captured by Nazis
 - 3,300,000 died
- ◎ 27,000,000 Soviet citizens died in WWII
 - 8,600,000 were soldiers
 - Pop. decline of 13.5%

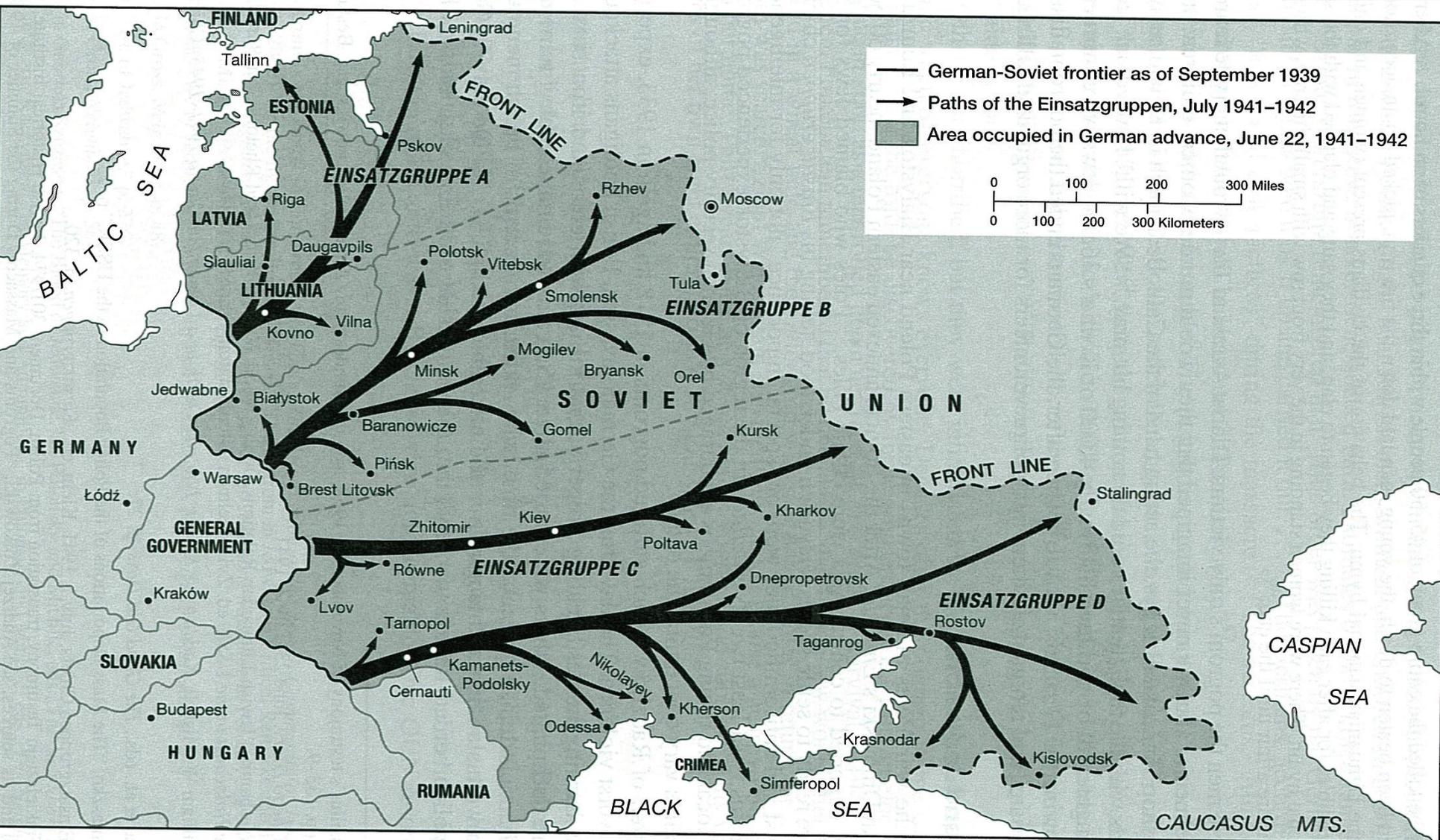
SPECIAL FORCES

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- ◉ Himmler & Heydrich establish *Einsatzgruppen*



SPECIAL FORCES

- Nearly *all* Jews in Nazi-occupied Soviet territory were killed
- Himmler & Heydrich establish *Einsatzgruppen*
 - “deployment group”
 - Forces of 600-1000 men
 - To “carry out special security tasks *outside the ambit* of military forces.”
- Under supervision of SD (Security Service)
- 23 battalions of “Order Police”
- Recruiting locals . . .
 - By 1943 - 300,000 locals helping

HEYDRICH'S ORDERS

- 2 July 1941 = to police chiefs:
 - “The following are to be executed: Communist party functionaries, Jews in Party or State positions, and other radical elements (saboteurs, propagandists, snipers, assassins, rabble-rousers, etc.)”
 - “No hindrance is to be placed in the path of self-cleansing attempts by local anti-Communist or anti-Jewish circles. On the contrary, they are to be encouraged *surreptitiously*, so that these local self-protection circles may not later be able to refer to orders . . .”



HITLER'S INSTRUCTIONS

- ◉ 16 July 1941 = meeting on policies for the East
- ◉ Hitler explains:
 - “The Russians have now ordered partisan warfare behind our front. This also has its advantages: it gives us the opportunity to . . . exterminate . . . All who oppose us.”



EINSATZKOMMANDO 3

○ Reports of 1 December 1941:

- Reporting on past five months
- “The carrying-out of such Aktionen is in the first place a question of organization. The decision to systematically make every district Jew-free required careful preparation. Jews had to be assembled. Depending on numbers, an appropriate site for the burial had to be selected and the graves dug. The usual distance from the collection point to the graves was about 4-5 km. The Jews were marched there in groups of 500, with gaps of at least 2 km between them.”
- Tally so far: 133,346 “Jews, Communists, and others

SUMMARY

- ◉ Difference in war between East and West
- ◉ Deliberate violation of Non-Aggression Pact
- ◉ Deliberate violation of int'l law
- ◉ Plans for drastic subjugation of Slavic people
- ◉ Precise tallies of killings by *Einsatzgruppen*:
 - By mid-August 1941, ca. 50,000 Jews killed
 - By the end of 1941, another 500,000 Jews killed