

## Primary Source Reading 11-1 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Mein Kampf****■ About the Selection**

Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf*—his combination manifesto and autobiography—while in prison in 1924. In English the title means “My Struggle” or “My Battle.” Typical of Hitler, the title and book paint him as a suffering hero of history. After World War II, many people said that Germany’s course under Hitler surprised them. Reading *Mein Kampf* would have alerted them—in it the essential irrationality, racism, anti-Semitism, and hatred in the Nazi ideology are there for all to see.

**Reader’s Dictionary**

**Marxist philosophy:** theory whose ultimate goal was a society without classes

**edifice:** massive structure of an organization

**GUIDED READING**

As you read, note Hitler’s basic ideas of the Nazi (folkish) state. Then answer the questions that follow.

The result of all racial crossing is therefore in brief always the following:

- (a) Lowering of the level of the higher race;
- (b) Physical and intellectual regression. . . .

To bring about such a development is, then, nothing else but to sin against the will of the eternal creator. . . .

The folkish state . . . must set race in the center of all life. It must take care to keep it pure. *There is only one holiest human right, and this right is at the same time the holiest obligation, to wit: to see to it that the blood is preserved pure and, by preserving the best humanity, to create the possibility of a nobler development of these beings.*

. . . the Jew of all times has lived in the states of other peoples. . . .

He regards commerce as well as all financial transactions as his own special privilege which he ruthlessly exploits. Finance and commerce have become his complete monopoly. . . . People begin to look at the foreigner more and more closely and discover more and more repulsive traits and characteristics in him until the cleft becomes unbridgeable.

. . . Finally the Jewish influence on economic affairs grows with terrifying speed through the stock exchange. . . .

Thus, Freemasonry is joined by a second weapon in the service of the Jews: the *press*. With all his perseverance and dexterity he seizes possession of it. With it he slowly begins to grip and ensnare, to guide and to push all public life. . . . He uses all the knowledge he acquires in the schools of other peoples, exclusively for the benefit of his race. . . . He poisons the blood of others, but preserves his own. The Jew almost never marries a Christian woman; it is the Christian who marries a Jewess. The [children] take after the Jewish side.

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*The folkish philosophy is basically distinguished from the Marxist [and democratic] philosophy by the fact that it not only recognizes the value of race, but with it the importance of the personality [individual leaders], which it therefore makes one of the pillars of its entire edifice. Marxism also had a goal, and it too has a constructive activity (even if it is only to erect a despotism of international Jewish world finance). . . .*

The principle which made the Prussian army in its time into the most wonderful instrument of the German people must some day, in a transferred sense, become the principle of the construction of our whole state conception: *authority of every leader downward and responsibility upward.*

From *Mein Kampf*, by Adolph Hitler. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin.

**READER RESPONSE**

**Directions:** Answer the following questions on the lines below.

1. According to Hitler, what does the Nazi state place at the center of all life?

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2. What is the basic Nazi principle for building the state?

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3. What does Hitler believe is the highest human right and obligation?

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4. **Critical Thinking** Write a one-paragraph rebuttal of Hitler's blatant racism.

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