Mein Kampf

Translated as "My Struggle," a book written by Adolf Hitler while in jail in 1924. According to his introduction, Hitler's purpose in writing *Mein Kampf* was to present his goals and philosophy. The major themes of the book are the superiority of the Aryan race, Hitler's plan for Aryan world rule, and the guilt of the Jews as the destroyers of the world.

Mein Kampf was written in two volumes. The first volume, called *Eine Abrechnung* ("A Reckoning"), was published in July 1925. The second, *Die Nationalsozialistische* ("The National Socialist Movement"), was issued in December 1926. After 1930 the two volumes were combined into one.

The book focuses on Hitler's political ideas and plans. He wrote about his foreign policy goals, which highlighted the capture of land in Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia to be used as "living space" for the German people. He also used the book as a forum for espousing his anti-Jewish program. Before he wrote *Mein Kampf,* Hitler had advocated the removal of Jews from Germany. However, in the book he used veiled terms to call for the actual murder of the Jews.

Much of the autobiographical information Hitler provided in Volume I is untrue. He probably changed the data so as to make it look like his political views were based on experiences in his early life. In the second volume, Hitler wrote about the history of the Nazi Party, but obscured the facts with ideological statements.

Although not written very well, *Mein Kampf* was a wild success. By 1939, 5.2 million copies had been sold and it had been translated into 11 languages; by 1945, about 10 million copies were in publication and it had been translated into an additional five languages. Since then even more translations have been done, but it has not been published again in German.

Some scholars believe that *Mein Kampf* is an important work that clearly states Hitler's goals, which he then actually pursued when he came to power. Others see it simply as propaganda. (see also Propaganda, Nazi.)