

Films, Nazi Antisemitic

Films used by the Nazis to help spread their antisemitic ideology and psychologically prepare the German people for the extermination of European Jewry. In late 1938, the German Propaganda Ministry asked the country's film companies to begin making movies with antisemitic content. In 1939 two anti-Jewish films were produced, which used comedy to make fun of the Jews and portray them as sub-human.

During 1940, three anti-Jewish movies appeared in Germany. The first to come out was *Die Rothschilds* (The Rothschilds). The subject of this film was the Rothschilds, a wealthy Jewish family of bankers who originally came from Germany. The German propagandists attempted to portray Jews as greedy parasites who suck in more and more of the world's money while others die for their country (Germany) on the battlefield. The film was unsuccessful in the theaters and was withdrawn soon after its premier.

The next antisemitic film was called *Jued Suss* (Jew Suss), which told the story of an eighteenth century banker named Suss Oppenheimer who served as a financial advisor to a German duke. Oppenheimer is depicted as a horrible person who rapes the blonde Aryan heroine, while the other Jews in the film are dirty, immoral, and ugly. Ultimately, Oppenheimer is arrested and executed. Unlike *The Rothschilds*, this film was wildly successful. SS chief Heinrich Himmler ordered all members of the SS and police to see it. It was also shown to concentration camp guards, who were then spurred on to treat their Jewish prisoners as the sub-humans portrayed in the film.

The third and most despicable of the three propaganda films was *Der ewige Jude* (The Eternal Jew). This film was touted as a documentary, which supposedly "revealed" the Jews to be filthy and parasitic leeches who thus deserve to be wiped out. The producers "proved" their claims with maps and statistics, and closed with "footage" of a Jewish ritual murder, perpetrating the medieval lie that Jews use the blood of Christian children on Passover. Nonetheless, the film was also a failure at the box office.

