



RESOURCE 13

The Jewish Genocide

Description of a school scene in Nazi Germany where a teacher asks who is Jewish and young Rita Kuhn is unsure of what to answer:

‘School was not only a daily trial but also the site of where some children learned of their “Jewish” identity according to Nazi law. Five-year-old Rita Kuhn, whose father was Jewish and mother Christian, was uncertain of her own religion. In school “teacher had to ask the whole class who’s Jewish. I looked around the classroom and nobody raised a hand....I wasn’t really sure whether I was Jewish....I raised my hand, because....I knew I had something to do with being Jewish”. After that, of course, she had no chance of joining the League of German Girls. When her teacher asked who wanted to join, “I raised my hand, I mean, who doesn’t want to be part of a group?” Her teacher explained, gently, that she could not belong. “I couldn’t understand what was the matter with me”, she recalled.’

Source: Between Dignity and Despair: Jewish Life in Nazi Germany, Marion A. Kaplan, 1998

In what sense does Rita Kuhn’s experience illustrate the fact that an identity is sometimes imposed upon a person or a group? What are the consequences in this case?

Human Zoos

‘Human zoos’ – also called ethnological exhibitions – were a widespread, horrific phenomenon in western Europe and North America in the last decades of the 19th century and first decades of the 20th century. These exhibitions displayed conquered indigenous peoples in enclosed compounds and attracted millions of visitors.





A so-called 'Negro Village'



Human zoo



Human zoo in Brussels, Belgium, 1958

Source: [Popular Resistance website](#)

What does the practice of 'human zoos' say about Europeans' representations and treatment of colonised peoples?