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Chaplin's film hasn't aged well, but in 1940 it was perceived to be original, bold and controversial due to its combination of slapstick satire of Hitler and agit-prop.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: B+ | Feb 23, 2006



David Parkinson
Empire Magazine
★ TOP CRITIC



Though the slapstick may seem tired now, there are moments of greatness.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 4/5 | Dec 30, 2006



Mark Bourne
DVDJournal.com



So Chaplin may not have halted a war, but he still left us with more than just a funny movie.

[Full Review](#) | Apr 14, 2006



Time Out
★ TOP CRITIC



The representation of Hitler is vaudeville gooney all the way, but minus the acid wit and inventive energy that Groucho Marx managed.

[Full Review](#) | Feb 9, 2006



Dennis Schwartz
Dennis Schwartz
Movie Reviews



Charlie Chaplin's first all-talking feature is a controversial one.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: B | Jul 30, 2005



Brian Gibson
Vue Weekly
(Edmonton, Alberta)



[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 4/5 | Jan 13, 2005



Louis-Jérôme Cloutier
Panorama



The Great Dictator mrite amplement de faire partie des lments clés du cinéma.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: A+ | Dec 16, 2004



Thomas Delapa
Boulder Weekly



[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 4/5 | Oct 27, 2004



Steve Crum
Kansas City Kansan



A fascinating, unprecedented spoof of Hitler, one of the few before WWII that dared to take him on.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: A+ | Oct 25, 2004



Roger Ebert
Chicago Sun-Times
★ TOP CRITIC



It is a funny film, which we expect from Chaplin, and a brave one.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 3.5/4 | Oct 23, 2004



Andy Klein
New Times



[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 5/5 | May 29, 2004



Alex Ramirez
Cinenganos



Un clísmico

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 5/5 | Jan 11, 2004



Rich Cline
Shadows on the Wall



[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 5/5 | Dec 24, 2003



Jamie Russell
BBC.com
★ TOP CRITIC



Charlie Chaplin's first talkie, made over a decade after the introduction of sound, stands as a brave and controversial piece of filmmaking.



Tim Dirks
Filmsite



The Great Dictator (1940) is director/actor Charlie Chaplin's first full all-talking ("talkie" with dialogue) picture (in a film similar to the Marx Brothers' anti-war comedy Duck Soup (1933)) in which he delivered spoken lines...

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: A+ | Dec 26, 2019



John Kinnloch
California Eagle



The Chaplin masterpiece is a mecca of motion-picture art to which the industry's devout will make repeated pilgrimages in future years.

[Full Review](#) | Oct 25, 2019



Danielle Solzman
Solzy at the Movies



The Great Dictator may have been a bold piece of satirical storytelling at the time but the film has aged like fine wine.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 5/5 | Oct 17, 2019



Jesús Fernández Santos
El País (Spain)



Chaplin contrasts war's delusions of grandeur against traditional human values: truth, liberty, and justice. [Full Review in Spanish]

[Full Review](#) | Jul 16, 2019



Rob Vaux
Cinema-stache



The lessons remain, and the strength of his statement still inspires his descendants - professional or otherwise - to follow his example.

[Full Review](#) | Apr 4, 2017



Franz Hoellering
The Nation



The only trouble is that such perfect scenes as this are followed by more conventional passages which would be funny enough in an average picture but let one down in a film that deals so ambitiously with so great a theme.

[Full Review](#) | Jan 18, 2013



Philip Martin
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette



...a great movie because it works as a film, and because it is a document of courage and faith, the prime exhibit in Chaplin's humanist brief ... Dictator is a comedy, the work of a clown, but it is no joke. Chaplin had lethal intent.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 90/100 | May 20, 2012



William Goss
Film.com
★ TOP CRITIC



The first full-blown talkie from the biggest star of the silent era, complete with a message that Chaplin couldn't have sent more loudly or clearly.

[Full Review](#) | Jun 1, 2011



James Kendrick
Q Network Film Desk



While it is not the greatest of Charlie Chaplin's feature films, it is certainly his bravest, if not one of the bravest films ever made.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 3.5/4 | May 30, 2011



Chris Barsanti
Eyes Wide Open
(Medium)



Stared evil in the face long before the rest of Hollywood even thought it was possible.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 3/5 | May 20, 2011

 **Kat Sachs**
Chicago Reader
★ TOP CRITIC

 Chaplin's iconic speech at the end of the film is only too relevant nowadays.

[Full Review](#) | Feb 7, 2025

 **George Orwell**
Time and Tide

 What is Chaplin's peculiar gift? It is his power to stand for a sort of concentrated essence of the common man, for the ineradicable belief in decency that exists in the hearts of ordinary people, at any rate in the West.

[Full Review](#) | Oct 2, 2023

 **Sean Axmaker**
Stream on Demand

 ... confronts the hatred and anti-Semitism of Hitler's Germany in the days before America's entry into World War II while lampooning the despots responsible.

[Full Review](#) | Aug 19, 2023

 **Rob Aldam**
Backseat Mafia

 It works wonderfully, but *The Great Dictator* will perhaps be remembered most fondly for Chaplin's moving closing speech.

[Full Review](#) | Sep 26, 2022

 **Dilys Powell**
Sunday Times (UK)

 For me the film contained one major error: the final speech... This finale is so blatantly out of harmony with what has gone before as to nullify much of the effectiveness of the preceding two hours.

[Full Review](#) | Aug 9, 2022

 **André Bazin**
Esprit

 It is not... the genius of Chaplin that permitted him to create *The Great Dictator*. It was nothing but that moustache. The Tramp waited for the right moment, did what he had to do, then escaped for all eternity with his facial hair intact.

[Full Review](#) | May 26, 2022

 **Brian Eggert**
Deep Focus Review

 Chaplin beckons the viewer to recognize and fight against tyrants, and every few years, as another despot comes along, *The Great Dictator* becomes achingly relevant again.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 4/4 | Feb 14, 2022

 **Fico Cangiano**
CineXpress Podcast

 Charlie Chaplin's first talkie became an example of an effective satire. One that was way ahead of its time. [Full review Spanish]

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 4/5 | Mar 11, 2021

 **Marion Aitchison**
Tampa Bay Times

 Though *The Great Dictator* provides a good many laughs [it] merits serious consideration for the superior presentation of the message it is trying to put across to that part of the world where democracy is still a precious possession.

[Full Review](#) | Jan 13, 2021

 **Mike Massie**
Gone With The Twins

 More than the expected assemblage of skits, the film attempts to tell a grander, straightforward story, but utilizes too many subplots in the process.

[Full Review](#) | Original Score: 8/10 | Aug 5, 2020