

Nazism and the Rise of Hitler | Easy Notes for class 9th

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Introduction:

In the world history the two major events; [world war 01](#) and [world war 02](#) left the entire world aghast. Till today these are considered as the most destructive happening of the past. Do you know why such circumstances occur? Well, this chapter will help you get the answer. Through this chapter, we will learn about Germany after world war 1 and the beginning of World War 02. Meanwhile we will read about the suffering of Jews, Gypsies and Polish civilians caused by Nazi Party. Lastly, we will learn about the consequences.

Birth of the Weimar Republic:

- [World War 01](#) lasted for four years and resulted in Allied power's victory.
- After getting defeated, **Germany** (that led the opposition- Central power) **was held responsible** for the losses.
- **German Emperor Wilhelm** had to **abdicate** from his position due to lack of support from military and many subjects.
- As a result, the **German National Assembly** met at Weimar and established a **democratic constitution** with a federal structure.
 - All the adult voters including women got the political right on equal basis.
 - then all the elected Deputies (legislative body) sat in the **German Parliament** or **Reichstag**.
- However, the **peace treaty at Versailles** made the Weimar Republic unpopular.

- **Treaty of Versailles:** It was *harsh and humiliating peace treaty* between the Government of Germany (Weimar Republic) and Allies.
 - This treaty made Germany lose its overseas colonies.
 - A tenth of its population
 - 13 % of its territories
 - Also, 75 % of its iron and 26 % of its coal to **France, Poland, Denmark and Lithuania**.
 - Moreover, the Allied Powers demilitarised Germany to weaken its power.
 - Germany became liable to pay compensation amounting to £6 billion.

The Effects of the War:

- The war had a devastating impact on the entire continent both **psychologically** and **financially**.
 - **Economic Recession:** There was a time when Europeans used to be creditors but after WW1 almost all European nations became debtors.
 - **Public Humiliation and disgrace:** Unfortunately, the republic had to carry the burden of war guilt and national humiliation. Also, it became financially crippled as it had to compensate for the losses.
 - **Stab in the back myth in Germany:** Those people who supported the Weimar Republic, mainly Socialists, Catholics and Democrats became easy targets of attack in the conservative nationalist circles. They were mockingly called the **November Criminals**.
 - **Glorification of trench life:** Soldiers came to be placed above civilians. The media glorified trench life. However, the reality was that the soldiers led very miserable lives in these trenches.
 - **Aggressive war propaganda and honor became central:** Politicians and publicists laid great stress on the need for men to be aggressive, strong and masculine.
 - **Popular support for conservative dictatorship:** Instabilities in Europe was a setback to the young and fragile idea of Democracy.

Political Radicalism and Economic Crisis:

Weimar Republic's Birth and Challenges:

- Weimar Republic began when **Spartacist League** revolted, like Russia's Bolshevik Revolution.
- People formed worker and sailor groups called Soviets in many cities.
- In **Berlin**, some people wanted a government like the Soviets had. But others, like **socialists, Democrats, and Catholics**, gathered in Weimar to talk about having a democracy.
- Weimar Republic stopped revolt using **Free Corps** (war veterans).
- Spartacists later made **Communist Party**.

Rising Ideas and Money Trouble:

- Spartacists and patriots wanted big changes.
- 1923: Economic crisis got worse from **WWI** debts and low gold.
- Germany printed more paper money, made money worth less.

- Prices went up a lot; **hyperinflation** made people need lots of money for bread.

Help and Stability:

- Americans helped with [Dawes Plan](#).
 - **Note: Charles G. Dawes**, an American banker, played a key role in creating and promoting the Dawes Plan to help Germany's economic recovery.
- Dawes Plan changed how Germany paid debts, made things easier.
- Things got better, economy stabilized.

The Years of Depression:

- **Fragile Stability (1924-1928):**
 - From 1924 to 1928, things seemed calm, but the foundation was weak.
 - Germany's growth relied on short loans from the **US**, which was risky.
- **Big Crash Triggers Troubles (1929):**
- In 1929, the US experienced a major crash known as the **Wall Street Exchange crash**, which had a significant impact.
- This sudden event caused panic selling and marked the **beginning of the Great Economic Depression**.
- **Challenges for Germany:**
 - This trouble spread all around the world, and Germany hit hard by the great depression.
 - By 1932, the factories started making only 40% of what they used to.
- **Common Challenges for Everyone:**
 - People who were middle class had less money as the money was worth less.
 - Small business owners and self-employed people lost money too.
 - Many people were scared of becoming poor, and even workers had a hard time.
- **Government Vulnerability and Major Issues:**
 - The government of the Weimar Republic wasn't strong and had problems.
 - For Example: It saw twenty different cabinets lasting an average of 239 days.
 - The Weimar Republic's government had to collaborate because winning votes was difficult due to the [proportional representation system](#).
 - The president had unique powers with [Article 48](#), but using them brought uncertainty.
 - Since the crisis persisted, people lost confidence in the democratic parliamentary system.

Hitler's Rise to Power:

- **Background of Crisis:**
 - The economy, politics, and society in crisis set the stage for **Hitler's** rise to power.
 - Hitler, born in 1889 in Austria, experienced poverty during his youth.
- **World War I and Transformation:**
 - During World War I, Hitler enlisted, served as a messenger, and became a corporal.
 - German defeat and **Versailles Treaty** angered him, leading to his involvement with the German Workers' Party.
- **Formation of Nazi Party:**

- Hitler transformed the **German Workers's Party** into the **National Socialist German Workers's Party** (Nazi Party).
- An attempt to seize power in 1923 failed, leading to his arrest and subsequent release.
- **Nazism's Growth Amid Crisis:**
 - The Great Depression turned Nazism into a mass movement.
 - After 1929, the economic collapse caused banks and businesses to shut down, leading to unemployment and a threat to the middle class.
- **Nazi Propaganda and Hope:**
 - Nazi propaganda generated optimism for a better future in dire circumstances.
 - In 1928, Nazi Party had just **2.6%** of votes, but by 1932, it became the largest party with **37%** of votes.
- **Hitler's Pledges and Charisma:**
 - Hitler's compelling speeches promised *to rebuild the nation, undo the Versailles Treaty's injustice, and restore German dignity.*
 - He assured *employment, a secure future, and resistance against foreign influences and conspiracies.*
- **New Politics and Spectacle:**
 - Hitler introduced innovative political tactics, understanding the power of rituals and spectacle.
 - **Nazi rallies, meetings, Red banners, Swastika, Nazi salute, and applause** created a spectacle (something that is very impressive) of power.
- **Hitler's Messiah Image:**
 - Nazi propaganda portrayed **Hitler as a savior** who arrived to relieve people from their hardships.
 - This image resonated with those whose dignity was shattered due to acute economic and political crises.

The Destruction of Democracy:

- **Rise of Hitler:**
 - January 30, 1933: Hitler became **Chancellor** chosen by **President Hindenburg**.
 - The Nazi Party gained support from *conservative groups*.
 - Aimed to **dismantle democracy** (destroy democracy).
- **Challenges to Democracy:**
 - *A mysterious fire in the German Parliament building* provided the opportunity for Hitler's actions in February.
 - February 28, 1933: **Fire Decree** suspended rights like freedom of speech and press.
- **Crackdown on Communists and Repression:**
 - Hitler turned his attention towards the Communists, leading to *the establishment of new concentration camps*.
 - Harsh treatment could be seen in records from **Dachau**.
- **Enabling Act and Dictatorship:**
 - March 3, 1933: **Enabling Act** passed, creating a dictatorship.
 - Hitler acquired the authority to *bypass the Parliament* and *prohibit all parties* except the Nazis.
- **Total Control and Surveillance:**

- *State-controlled economy, media, military, judiciary.*
- New forces like *Gestapo* (secret state police), *SS* (protection squads), and more emerged for societal control.
- **Infamous Nazi Reputation:**
 - The unchecked authority of these groups *created a sense of fear.*
 - *Arrests, camps, and deportations* happened without proper process.
- **Policing with Authority:**
 - Police could use power without being punished for their actions in order to control society.

Reconstruction:

- **Economic Recovery Efforts:**
 - Hitler entrusted economist *Hjalmar Schacht* to oversee economic recovery.
 - Aimed for full production and employment through *a state-funded work-creation program.*
 - Notable achievements included *German superhighways* and *the Volkswagen car.*
- **Foreign Policy Successes:**
 - Hitler's foreign policy achieved swift triumphs.
 - He *withdrew* from the *League of Nations* in 1933, *reclaimed the Rhineland* in 1936.
 - *Integrated Austria and Germany* in 1938 under the *“One people, One empire, and One leader”* slogan.
 - *Obtained German-speaking Sudetenland* from *Czechoslovakia* and extended control over the entire country.
- **Support and Expansion:**
 - *England* *silently backed Hitler's actions* due to perceived harshness of the Versailles Treaty.
 - Quick successes boosted Germany's prospects.
- **Path to War and Eastern Expansion:**
 - Schacht's cautious approach to rearmament led to him leaving his position.
 - Hitler pursued war as a solution to approaching economic crisis.
 - *Invasion of Poland* in 1939 led to war with *France* and *England.*
 - *Tripartite Pact* in 1940 with *Germany, Italy, and Japan* enhanced Hitler's international standing.
 - Puppet regimes aligned with Nazi Germany established across Europe.
- **Soviet Invasion and Setbacks:**
 - Hitler aimed to conquer Eastern Europe, *invaded the Soviet Union* in 1941.
 - The invasion faced significant challenges due to strong resistance from the Soviet Red Army.
 - Germany faced defeat at *Stalingrad* and Soviet forces advanced towards *Berlin.*
- **US Entry and War's End:**
 - *USA* initially avoided involvement in the war due to past economic troubles.
 - Japan's expansion and aggression led to *US involvement after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.*
 - The war concluded in May 1945 with Hitler's defeat and the *atomic bombing of Hiroshima.*

The Nazi World View:

- **Foundation of Crimes:**
 - Nazi crimes were rooted in a belief system and certain actions.
 - Nazi ideology closely aligned with Hitler's perspective.
- **Hierarchy and Racism:**
 - Nazi ideology rejected equality, emphasizing *a racial hierarchy*.
 - *German Aryans were considered superior*, while Jews were vilified.
 - Other groups ranked based on physical features.
 - Nazi racism drew inspiration from *Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer's* ideas of evolution and survival of the fittest.
 - Hitler misused Darwin's theories to justify imperial control.
- **Survival of the Fittest:**
 - Hitler's belief: strongest race survives, weak perish.
 - Aryan race perceived as superior and pure.
 - Aryan race had to dominate the world through strength.
- **Geopolitical Vision:**
 - **Lebensraum:**
 - Hitler's ideology included *the concept of Lebensraum* (living space).
 - New territories sought for settlement, to expand mother country's area.
 - Settlers would maintain ties with their place of origin.
 - Acquisition of new lands aimed to boost resources and power.
- **Eastern Expansion:**
 - Hitler planned to extend German boundaries towards the east.
 - Goal: *consolidate Germans in one area*.
 - *Poland* served as a *testing ground* for this strategy.

Establishment of the Racial State:

- **Nazi Agenda for Racial State:**
 - Nazis aimed to create an exclusive community of pure Germans.
 - *Elimination of those considered 'undesirable'* from society.
- **Desired 'Aryan' Population:**
 - Nazis favored *'healthy Nordic Aryans'* as the ideal population.
 - And excluded *'Undesirable'* groups from prosperity and growth.
- **Extermination of 'Undesirables':**
 - Germans who seemed as impure or abnormal also targeted for elimination.
 - *Euthanasia Programme* led to deaths of those deemed unfit.
- **Persecution of Other Groups:**
 - *Gypsies, blacks, Russians, Poles* labeled as racial *'inferiors'*.
 - *Widespread persecution* and *forced labor* for occupied populations.
- **Focus on Jews:**
 - *Jews* suffered the most.
 - Hitler's *anti-Semitic* beliefs rooted in *pseudoscientific* (false science) *racial theories*.
 - Hatred beyond religious stereotypes.
- **Steps Against Jews:**
 - Nazis terrorized, impoverished, and isolated Jews.
 - Forced them to leave the country (1933-1938).

- **Extreme Phase (1939-1945):**

- Concentrated Jews in specific areas.
- Established gas chambers in Poland for mass killings.

The Racial Utopia:

- Germany divided Poland and took over the northwest.
- Poles had to leave their homes for ethnic Germans.
- Polish intellectuals were killed to control the people.
- Kids who looked Aryan were taken from Polish mothers and tested.
- Those passing the test were raised in German families, others in orphanages.
- The General Government was a killing zone with **ghettos** and **gas chambers**, especially for Jews.

Youth in Nazi Germany:

- **Hitler's Focus on Youth:**

- Hitler believed in molding a strong Nazi society by shaping young minds.
- He insisted on controlling children's beliefs in and out of school.

- **School Transformation:**

- Schools were "purified" and "cleansed" by Nazi authorities.
- Teachers considered unreliable or Jewish were removed.
- German and Jewish children were kept apart, and "undesirable children" were expelled.
- Some of these children tragically met their fate in gas chambers.

- **Nazi Schooling Tactics:**

- Children considered "good Germans" underwent Nazi schooling.
- They were given prolonged ideological training.
- Textbooks were rewritten to match Nazi ideas.
- **Racial science** was introduced to justify Nazi beliefs.
- Even in math class, harmful stereotypes about Jews were taught.

- **Teaching and Sports:**

- Children were taught loyalty, submission, and to hate Jews while venerating Hitler.
- Aggressive sports were used to develop violence and aggression.
- Boxing was thought to make children strong and resolute.

- **Hitler Youth and More:**

- Youth groups played a role in spreading "National Socialist spirit."
- Entry to **Jungvolk** at 10 and **Hitler Youth** at 14.
- Training emphasized "war worship", "aggression glorification", and "democracy rejection".
- Rigorous training followed by **Labor Service** at 18.
- Service in armed forces or Nazi groups followed.

- **Formation and Control:**

- In 1922, **Nazi Youth League** formed, later named **Hitler Youth**.
- Other youth groups were systematically dissolved for unified Nazi control.

The Nazi Cult of Motherhood:

- **Distinct Gender Roles:**
 - Nazi Germany instilled firm gender distinctions in children's minds.
 - Equal rights, a principle of democratic struggles, rejected as harmful.
 - While boys trained in aggression and masculinity, girls primed for motherhood.
- **Motherhood Ideals:**
 - Girls indoctrinated to become Aryan mothers of pure-blooded offspring.
 - Priority placed on upholding racial purity and distancing from Jews.
 - Their duties encompassed homemaking, instilling Nazi values, and nurturing Aryan culture.
- **Hitler's View on Mothers:**
 - Hitler's 1933 declaration: Mothers hold utmost importance.
 - Within Nazi Germany, varying treatment of mothers was observed.
- **Differential Treatment:**
 - Punishment aimed at mothers of racially undesirable children.
 - Contrarily, mothers of racially desirable children enjoyed favorable treatment.
 - This included privileges in hospitals, shops, theatre, and railway concessions.
- **Encouraging Childbirth: Honour Crosses:**
 - Incentives for childbirth introduced via Honour Crosses.
 - These distinctions existed in bronze, silver, and gold, corresponding to the number of children.
- **Consequences for Deviation:**
 - Deviation from prescribed norms led to public condemnation of Aryan women.
 - Those with connections to Jews, Poles, Russians paraded with shaven heads and placards.
 - Consequences extended to imprisonment, loss of civic honor, and family disintegration.

The Art of Propaganda:

- **Deceptive or Misleading Terminology:**
 - Nazi regime used language and media carefully and effectively.
 - Coined terms that were not just misleading but also chilling.
 - Avoided terms like kill or murder in official communications.
 - Mass killings disguised as special treatment, final solution, euthanasia, selection, disinfections.
 - Evacuation referred to deporting people to gas chambers.
 - Gas chambers were labeled disinfection-areas with fake showerheads.
- **Media for Regime Support:**
 - Media harnessed for regime's popularity and ideology.
 - Nazi concepts spread through visual images, films, radio, slogans, posters, and leaflets.
 - Posters stereotyped and vilified groups labeled as enemies.
 - Socialists, liberals depicted as weak, degenerate, malicious foreign agents.
 - Hatred for Jews promoted through propaganda films like The Eternal Jew.
- **Stereotyping and Dehumanization:**
 - Orthodox Jews portrayed with flowing beards, kaftans, and stereotypes.
 - Reality: German Jews were well assimilated and not distinct in appearance.
 - Jews labeled as vermin, rats, pests; likened to rodents in propaganda.
 - Nazism manipulated emotions, fueled hatred against those deemed undesirable.
- **Wide Audience Reach:**

- Nazi propaganda targeted diverse sections of the population.
- Sought support by claiming Nazis could solve all problems.
- Aimed to unify public sentiment under Nazi rule.

Ordinary People and the Crimes Against Humanity:

- **Adoption of Nazi Perspective:**
 - Many common people adopted Nazi viewpoints and language.
 - Felt hatred and anger when encountering individuals resembling Jews.
 - Identified Jewish homes and reported suspicious neighbors.
 - Believed Nazism would lead to prosperity and better well-being.
- **Diverse Reactions to Nazism:**
 - Not all Germans adhered to Nazi ideology; active resistance existed.
 - Resistance fighters faced risks of police oppression and death.
 - Majority of Germans acted as passive bystanders or indifferent observers.
 - Fear and reluctance prevented many from acting, differing, or protesting.
 - Many chose to avert their gaze and remain passive.
- **Echoes of Silence: Pastor Niemöller's Reflection:**
 - [Pastor Niemöller](#), a resistance member, noted a disconcerting silence.
 - Ordinary Germans displayed an absence of protest despite organized atrocities.
 - Brutal crimes committed within the Nazi empire met with eerie quietness.
 - He movingly expressed this silence through the poignant analogy: "First they came for me, then they came for you, then they came for him, and finally they came for everyone."
- **Jewish Experience in Dreams:**
 - [Charlotte Beradt](#) recorded people's dreams covertly, published in *The Third Reich of Dreams*.
 - Jews internalized Nazi stereotypes about themselves.
 - Dreams depicted *hooked noses, dark hair, Jewish features, and body movements*.
 - Persistent stereotypical images from Nazi media plagued the subconscious.
- **Impact of Stereotyping:**
 - Constant exposure to stereotypes led to psychological turmoil for Jews.
 - The haunting images infiltrated even their dreamscapes.
 - Jews encountered various forms of suffering prior to reaching gas chambers.

Knowledge about the Holocaust:

- **Revelation of Nazi Actions:**
 - Nazi practices became known outside Germany in the regime's final years.
 - World grasped the extent of horrors post-war and after Germany's defeat.
- **Holocaust's Call to Remember:**
 - Post-war, Jews sought global recognition of Nazi atrocities.
 - Holocaust victims aimed to have their stories acknowledged.
- **Surviving for Testimony:**
 - Ghetto inhabitants wish to outlive war to share Nazi truth.
 - Many ghetto and camp residents had the same determination.

- **Documentation and Resistance:**

- Inhabitants documented experiences in diaries, notebooks, and archives.
- Counteracted attempts to erase Holocaust history.

- **Efforts to Hide Evidence:**

- Nazis distributed petrol to destroy incriminating evidence.
- Aimed to eliminate traces of their crimes as defeat neared.

- **Legacy of Holocaust:**

- Holocaust history lives through various forms worldwide.
- Memoirs, fiction, documentaries, memorials, and more honor victims.
- Reminders of resistance, collaboration, and silence teach important lessons.

The chapter is now complete! I hope each concept was easy for you to understand and you feel confident about the material. Feel free to share your feedback and comments on the notes posted. Your thoughts are always welcome!

Category

1. Class 9th

Date

2025/09/24

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