

Nazism and the Rise of Hitler

Q1. Describe the problems faced by the Weimar Republic

Answer: The defeat of Imperial Germany in the First World War at the hands of the Allied Powers led to Emperor Wilhelm II. This gave parliamentary parties an opportunity to revisit the German Raj. Thus, a National Assembly met in the city of Weimar to form a republic with a democratic constitution and federal structure. But this newly born republic was not well received by its own people for the following reasons:

Versailles Treaty: The Versailles Peace Treaty at the end of World War I gave Germany its territories, its resources, and its pride as a nation. He had to pay 6 Billion pounds as war compensation. Despite harsh words, the Weimar Republic accepted the abusive treaty, making it unpopular among the German public.

Economic Crisis: The German state was financially crippled due to debt-ridden debts that had to be repaid in gold. Subsequently, the Deviser reserves ran out and the value of the German symbol fell. The prices of essential commodities increased dramatically.

Political defect: Weimar Republic was weak due to proportional representation and inherent constitutional irregularities like Article 48. The democratic parliamentary system did not provide any solution or benefit to the people in times of severe economic crisis.

Q2. Discuss why Nazism became popular in Germany by 1930.

Answer: Nazism became popular in Germany by 1930 due to several reasons such as, The most obvious is the Great Depression. The Weimar Republic did little to mitigate the country's economic decline, and Hitler was presented as a protector for the disgraced Germans living in economic and political crises.

Hitler's powerful speeches in which he sought to create a great nation, overcome the injustice of the Treaty of Versailles, restore the dignity of the German people and provide employment for all the rising hopes in the people.

Nazi propaganda was unique. Swastikas, red banners with Nazi salutes and round of applause attracted people who popularized Nazism.

Q3. What are the peculiar features of Nazi thinking?

Answer: There were strange signs of Nazi thinking are as follows:

There was no equality in mankind, only a racial hierarchy - blonde, blue-eyed, Nordic Germans were placed at the top of the Aryans and Jews at the bottom. All other colored people were placed somewhere in the middle based on their external characteristics.

The second aspect of Nazi ideology was the concept of Lebensraum or living space. It was believed that new territories had to be acquired at the expense of local resources to increase the material resources and power of the German nation.

In his version, he believed that the strongest caste would survive, while the weak would be weak.

Nazi thinking placed more emphasis on 'racial purity'. This meant that anyone born physically and mentally handicapped was considered 'undesirable' and impure

The Nazis believed in war and invasion. Any notion of peace or related ideologies was considered weak by their standards.

Q4. Explain why Nazi propaganda was effective in creating a hatred for Jews.

Answer: The Nazis carefully used language and media effectively. Racist doctrine was put forward by the Nazis that Jews were of lesser ethnicity and thus undesirable.

Traditional Christian hatred for the Jews, as they were accused of having killed Christ, was fully exploited by the Nazis to pre-judge the Germans against the Jews.

The Nazis hated the Jews, even during their school days from the very beginning, they created hatred in the minds of children. Teachers who were Jewish were dismissed and Jewish children were expelled from schools. Such methods and new ideological training for the new generation of children made Nazi propaganda quite effective in generating hatred for the Jews.

Propaganda films were made to incite hatred for Jews. Orthodox Jews were stereotyped and marked. For example, such a film was 'The Eternal Jew'.

Q5. Explain the role of women in Nazi society. Return to Chapter 1 on the French Revolution. Write a paragraph comparing and contrasting the role of women in the two periods.

Answer: The role of women in Nazi society largely follows the rules of patriarchal or male-dominated society. Hitler distinguished women in Germany as "the most important citizens", but this was only true of Aryan women who gave birth to pure-blooded, "desirable" Aryans. Apart from performing the conservative tasks of managing the household and being good wives, motherhood was the only goal for which they were taught. This was in contrast to the role of women in the French Revolution, where women-led movements and the right to education and equal wages were fought. They were allowed to form French clubs and schooling was made compulsory for them after the French Revolution.

Q6. In what ways did the Nazi state seek to establish total control over its people?

Answer: The Nazis established control over their people in various ways such as,

- The media was carefully used to win support for the regime and popularize it.
- They campaigned differently through posters or films to glorify his behaviour.
- Nazism worked on people's minds, exploiting their feelings and turning their hatred and anger against those marked as 'undesirable'.
- Special surveillance and security forces to control and order society in the ways that the Nazis created.
- Police forces had powers to govern with impotence. The massacre also created an atmosphere of fear and repression that enabled them to exercise complete control over their people.