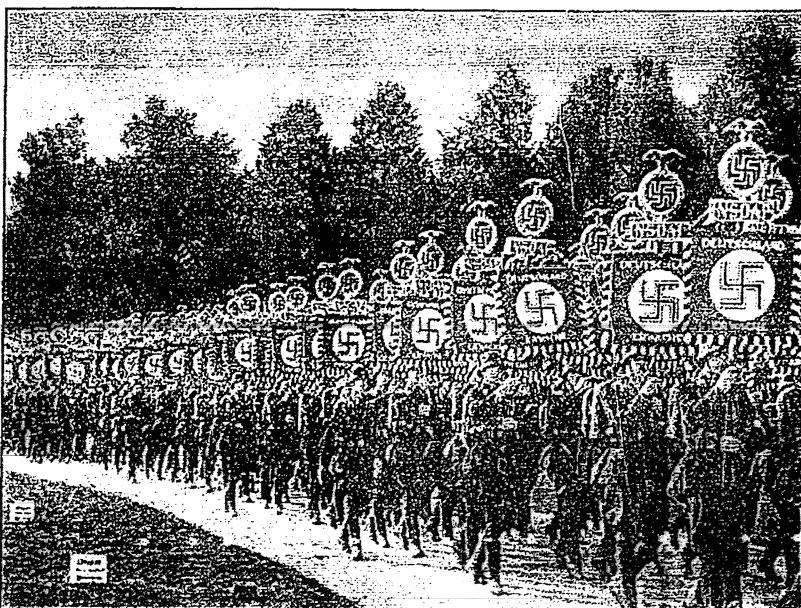


Nazism and the Rise of Hitler



"Adolf Hitler's rise to power began in Germany in September 1919 when Hitler joined the political party known as the Deutsche Arbeiterpartei. The name was changed in 1920 to the 'National Socialist German Workers' Party,' commonly known as the Nazi Party."

Many of you will know something about the Nazis and Hitler. You probably know Hitler's determination to make Germany into a mighty power and his ambition of conquering all of Europe. You may have heard that he killed Jews. But Nazism was not one or two isolated acts. It was a system, a structure of ideas about the world and politics. Let us try and understand what Nazism was all about.

May 1945, Germany surrendered to the Allies. Anticipating what was coming, Hitler committed suicide in his Berlin bunker in April. At the end of the war, an International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg was set up to prosecute Nazi war criminals for crimes against peace, for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Germany's conduct during the war, especially those actions which came to be called 'Crimes Against Humanity', raised serious moral and ethical questions and invited worldwide condemnation.

Under the shadow of the Second World War, Germany had waged a genocidal war, which resulted in the mass murder of selected groups of innocent civilians of Europe. 6 million Jews, 200000 Gypsies, 1 million Polish civilians, 70000 Germans who considered mentally and physically disabled, besides innumerable political opponents were killed. The Nuremberg Tribunal sentenced only eleven leading Nazis to death. Many others were imprisoned for life. The retribution did come, yet the punishment of the Nazis was far short of the brutality and extent of their crimes. The Allies did not want to be as harsh on defeated Germany as they had been after the First World War. Everyone came to feel that the rise of Nazi Germany could be partly traced back to the German experience at the end of the First World War.

3.1 Birth Of the Weimar Republic

(a) First World War and its outcomes

Two Groups of First World war: Allies - England, France, Russia (withdrew in 1917) later on joined by U.S.A and Central Powers - Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy. The war ended with the defeat of Central powers.



Fig.1 Adolf Hitler

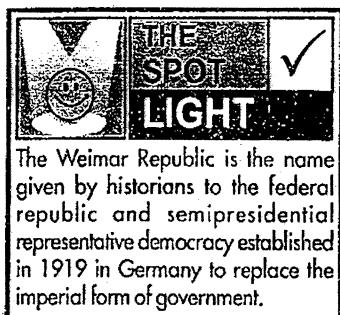
Throughout his youth, Hitler dreamed of becoming an artist. He applied twice to the Vienna Academy of Art (once in 1907 and again in 1908) but was denied entrance both times.

(b) Establishment of Weimar Republic

After the defeat of Imperial Germany, A National Assembly met at Weimar and established a democratic constitution with a federal structure. Deputies were now elected to the German Parliament or Reichstag, on the basis of equal and universal votes cast by all adults including women.

(c) Peace Treaty of Versailles

The Peace Treaty at Versailles with the Allies was a harsh and humiliating peace, Germany lost its overseas colonies, a tenth of its population, 13% of its territories, 75% of its iron and 26% of its coal. The Allied powers demilitarised Germany and forced Germany to pay 6 billion pounds as war compensation. Allied armies occupied resource - rich Rhineland.



The Weimar Republic is the name given by historians to the federal republic and semipresidential representative democracy established in 1919 in Germany to replace the imperial form of government.



Fig.3 A cartoon depicting the Peace Treaty of Versailles

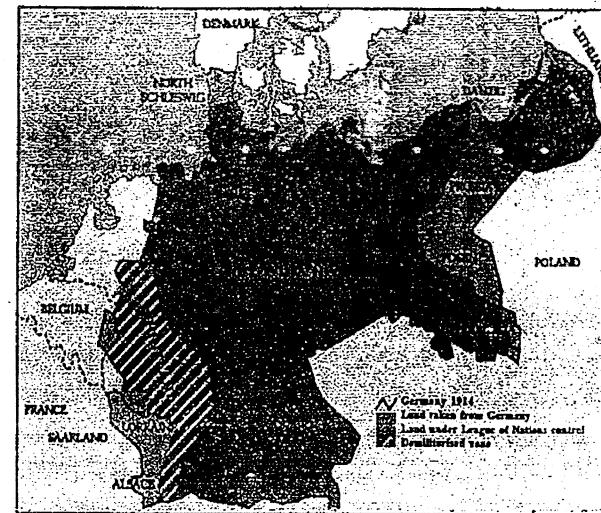


Fig.2 Germany after the Versailles Treaty

3.2 The effects of the war

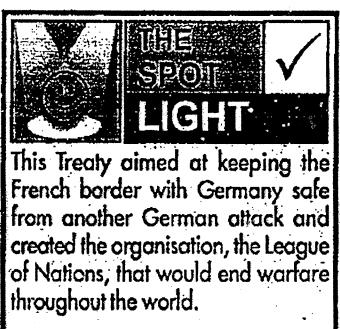
The war had a devastating impact – both psychologically and financially. From a continent of creditors, Europe turned into one of debtors.

(a) November criminals

The infant Weimar Republic was being made to pay for the sins of the old empire. The republic carried the burden of war guilt and national humiliation and was financially crippled by being forced to pay compensation. Those who supported the Weimar Republic, mainly Socialists, Catholics and Democrats were mockingly called the 'November Criminals'.

(b) Soldiers given more importance

The war left a deep imprint on European society and polity. Soldiers came to be placed above civilians. Politicians and publicists laid great stress on the need for men to be aggressive, strong and masculine. Media glorified trench life. But in reality soldiers lived miserable lives in these trenches, trapped with rats feeding on corpses. They faced poison gas and enemy shelling and witnessed their ranks reduce rapidly. Aggressive war propaganda and national honour occupied centre stage. Popular support grew for conservative dictatorships.



This Treaty aimed at keeping the French border with Germany safe from another German attack and created the organisation, the League of Nations, that would end warfare throughout the world.

3.3 Political radicalism & economic crisis

The political atmosphere in Berlin was charged with demands for Soviet-style governance. Those opposed to this - such as the Socialists, Democrats and Catholics - met in Weimar to give shape to the democratic republic. The Weimar Republic crushed the uprising with the help of a war veterans organisation called Free Corps. The anguished Spartacists later founded the Communist Party of Germany. Communists and Socialists henceforth became irreconcilable enemies and could not make common cause against Hitler.

Situation of hyperinflation

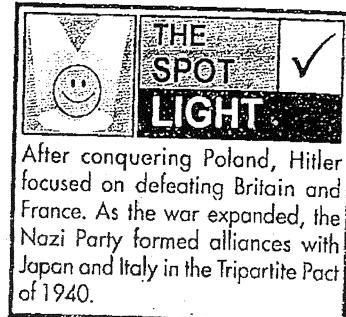
Germany had fought the war largely on loans and had to pay war reparations in Gold. In 1923 Germany refused to pay, and the French occupied its leading industrial area, Ruhr, to claim their coal. Germany retaliated with passive resistance and printed paper currency recklessly. With too much printed money in circulation, the value of the German mark fell. In April the US \$ was equal to 24000 marks, by December, the figure had run into trillions. As the value of the mark collapsed, prices of goods soared. This crisis came to be known as hyperinflation, a situation when prices rise phenomenally high. The Americans intervened and bailed Germany out by introducing the Dawes Plan, which reworked the terms of reparation to ease the financial burden on Germans.

3.4 The Years of depression

German investments and industrial recovery were totally dependent on short term-loans, largely from the USA. This support was withdrawn when the Wall Street Exchange crashed in 1929. On one single day, 24 October, 13 million shares were sold. This was the start of the Great Economic Depression. The national income of the USA fell by half. The effects of this recession in the US economy were felt worldwide.

The German economy was the worst hit by the economic crisis. Workers lost their jobs or were paid reduced wages. Industrial production reduced to 40% of the 1929 level. 6 million people became unemployed. As jobs disappeared, the youth took to criminal activities and total despair became a common place. The economic crisis created deep anxieties and fears in people. The currency lost its value. Sections of society were filled with the fear of Proletarianisation, an anxiety of being reduced to the ranks of the working class, or worse still, the unemployed. The large mass of peasantry was affected by a sharp fall in agricultural prices and women, unable to fill their children's stomachs, were filled with a sense of deep despair.

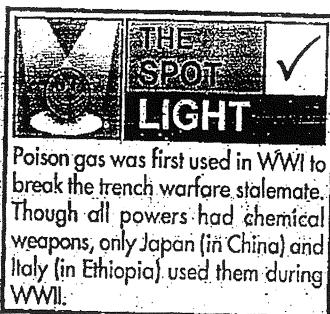
Politically too the Weimer Republic was fragile. The Weimer constitution had some inherent defects, which made it unstable and vulnerable to dictatorship. Proportional representation and Article 48 gave the President the powers to impose emergency, suspend civil rights and rule by decree were its major shortcomings. People lost confidence in the democratic parliamentary system, which seemed to offer no solutions.



After conquering Poland, Hitler focused on defeating Britain and France. As the war expanded, the Nazi Party formed alliances with Japan and Italy in the Tripartite Pact of 1940.



Fig.4 Adolf Hitler



Poison gas was first used in WWI to break the trench warfare stalemate. Though all powers had chemical weapons, only Japan (in China) and Italy (in Ethiopia) used them during WWII.

3.5 Hitler's rise to power

Born in Austria in 1889, Hitler spent his youth in poverty. During the First World War, he enrolled in the German army, acted as a messenger at the front, became a corporal and earned medals for bravery. The German defeat horrified him and the Versailles Treaty made him furious. In 1919, he joined a small group called the German Workers' Party; subsequently took control of this party, renamed it as the National Socialist German Workers' Party. This party came to be known as the Nazi Party.

In 1923, Hitler planned to seize control of Bavaria, march to Berlin and capture power. He failed, was arrested and tried for treason, and later released. The Nazis could not effectively mobilize popular support till the early 1930s. It was during the Great Depression that Nazism became a mass movement. In 1928, the Nazi Party got no more than 2.6 percent votes in the Reichstag -the German parliament. By 1932, the Nazi Party had become the largest party with 37percent votes.

Hitler as a Messiah, a Saviour

Hitler was a powerful speaker. His passion and his words moved people. He promised them a strong nation, employment, secure future for the youth and to restore the dignity of the German people. He promised employment for those looking for work, and a secure future for the youth. He promised to weed out all foreign influences and resist all foreign 'conspiracies' against Germany.

Nazis held massive rallies and public meetings to demonstrate the support for Hitler and instill a sense of unity among the people. The Red banners with the Swastika, the Nazi salute, and the ritualized rounds of applause after the speeches were all part of this spectacle of power. Nazi propaganda skillfully projected Hitler as a messiah, a savior, as someone who had arrived to deliver people from their distress. It is an image that captured the imagination of a people whose sense of dignity and pride had been shattered, and who were living in a time of acute economic and political crises.

3.6 Destruction of democracy

On 30 January 1933, President Hindenburg offered the chancellorship, the highest position in the cabinet of ministers, to Hitler.

(a) Fire Decree, 1933

A mysterious fire that broke out in the German Parliament building in February facilitated his move to dismantle the structures of democratic rule. The Fire Decree of 28th February 1933 indefinitely suspended civic rights like freedom of speech, press and assembly that had been guaranteed by the Weimer constitution. The Communists were hurriedly packed off to the newly established concentration camps.

(b) Enabling Act

On 3 March 1933, the famous Enabling Act was passed, which established dictatorship in Germany. It gave Hitler all powers to sideline Parliament and rule by decree. All political parties and trade unions were banned except for the Nazi Party and its affiliates. The state established complete control over the economy, media, army and judiciary.

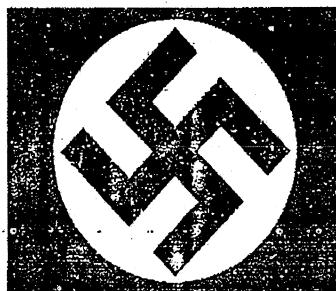
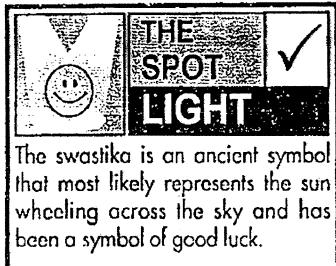
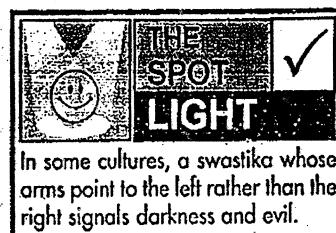


Fig.5 Symbol of Nazi Party



(c) Forces that made Nazi state, the most dreaded criminal state

Special surveillance and security forces like, Gestapo(secret state police), the SS(the protection squads), criminal police and the Security Service(SD) were created to control and order society in ways that the Nazis wanted. People could now be detained in Gestapo torture chambers, rounded up, sent to concentration camps, deported at will or arrested without any legal procedure. The police forces acquired powers to rule with impunity.

3.7 Reconstruction

Hitler assigned the responsibility of economic recovery to the economist Hjalmar Schacht, who aimed at full production and full employment through a state-funded work-creation programme. This project produced the famous German superhighways and the people's car, the Volkswagen.

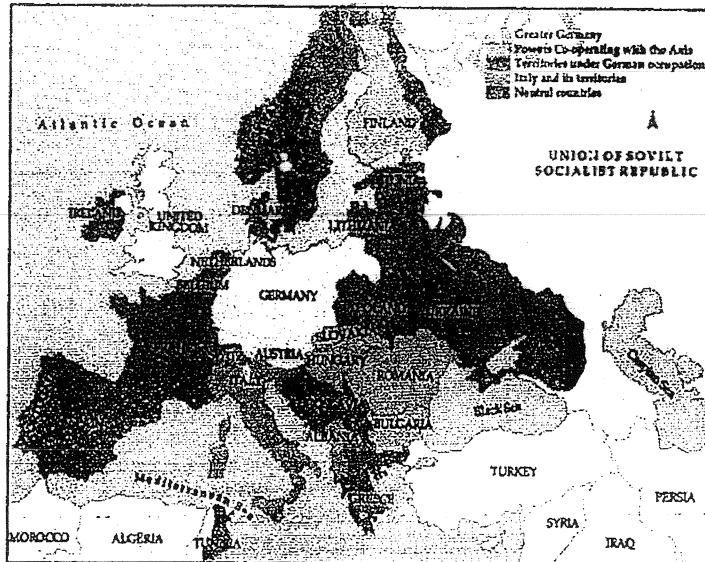


Fig.6 Expansion of Nazi power: Europe 1942.

(a) Hitler's foreign policy

In foreign policy also Hitler acquired quick successes. He pulled out of the League of Nations in 1933, reoccupied the Rhineland in 1936, and integrated Austria and Germany in 1938 under the slogan, 'One people, One empire, and One leader'. He then went on to wrest German-speaking Sudentenland from Czechoslovakia, and gobbled up the entire country.

(b) Second World War - Hitler's rise and fall

Hitler chose war as the way out of the approaching economic crisis. In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. This started a war with France and England. In September 1940, a Tripartite Pact was signed between Germany, Italy and Japan, strengthening Hitler's claim to international power. By the end of 1940, Hitler was at the pinnacle of his power.

Hitler wanted to ensure food supplies and living space for Germans. He attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941. In this historic blunder Hitler exposed the German westernfront to British aerial bombing and the eastern front to the powerful Soviet armies. The Soviet Red Army inflicted a crushing and humiliating defeat on Germany at Stalingrad. After this the Soviet Red Army hounded out the retreating German soldiers until they reached the heart of Berlin.

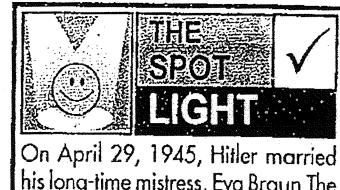
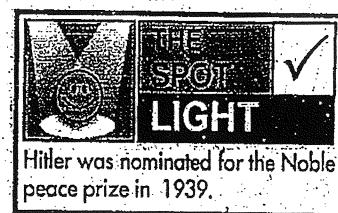


Fig.7 Hitler's suicide



(c) **America's entry and dropping of atom bombs**

So far the USA has resisted involvement in the war. But it could not stay out of the war for long. Japan was expanding its power in the east. It had occupied French Indo-China and was planning attacks on US naval bases in the Pacific. When Japan extended its support to Hitler and bombed the US base at Pearl Harbour, the US entered the Second World War. The War ended in May 1945 with Hitler's defeat and the US dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima & Nagasaki in Japan.

3.8 The Nazi worldview

Nazi ideology was synonymous with Hitler's worldview. According to this there was no equality between people, but only a racial hierarchy. Blond, blue eyed, Nordic German Aryans were at the top, while Jews (regarded as anti-race, the arch enemies of the Aryans) were located at the lowest rung. Hitler's racism borrowed from thinkers like Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. Darwin explained the creation of plants and animals through the concept of evolution and natural selection. Herbert Spencer later added the idea of survival of the fittest. The Nazi argument was simple : the strongest race would survive and the weak ones would perish. The Aryan race was the finest. It had to retain its purity, become stronger and dominate the world.

CHECK YOUR LEARNING 3.1

1. Name the car envisioned by Hitler while in prison.
2. Also explain the meaning of the name of the car.

Geopolitical concept of lebensraum

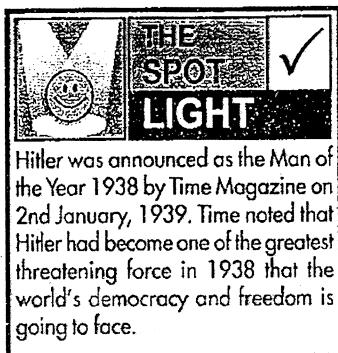
The Hitler's ideology related to the geopolitical concept of Lebensraum, or living space. He believed that new territories had to be acquired for settlement. This would enhance the area of the mother country, while enabling the settlers on new lands to retain an intimate link with the place of their origin. It would also enhance the material resources and power of the German nation. Hitler intended to extend German boundaries by moving eastwards, to concentrate all Germans geographically in one place. Poland became the laboratory for this experimentation.

3.9 Establishment of the racial state

Nazis quickly began to implement their dream of creating an exclusive racial community of pure Germans by physically eliminating all those who were seen as 'undesirable' in the extended empire. Nazis wanted only a society of 'pure and healthy Nordic Aryans'. They alone were considered 'desirable'. All others were classed as 'undesirable'. Even those Germans who were seen as impure or abnormal had no right to exist: Jews, Gypsies and blacks living in Nazi Germany were considered as racial 'inferiors' who threatened the biological purity of the superior Aryan race. Russians and Poles all were considered subhuman, and hence undeserving of any humanity.

(a) **Why Nazis hated Jews ?**

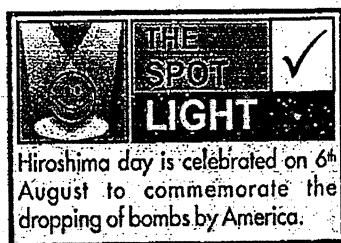
Nazi hatred of Jews had a precursor in the traditional Christian hostility towards Jews. They had been stereotyped as 'Killers of Christ' and usurers (moneylenders charging excessive interest; often used as a term of abuse). Hitler's hatred of Jews was based on pseudoscientific theories of race, which held that conversion was no solution to 'the Jewish problem'. It could be solved only through their total elimination.



Hitler was announced as the Man of the Year 1938 by Time Magazine on 2nd January, 1939. Time noted that Hitler had become one of the greatest threatening force in 1938 that the world's democracy and freedom is going to face.



Fig.8 Hitler on the cover page of Time magazine



Hiroshima day is celebrated on 6th August to commemorate the dropping of bombs by America.

(b) The racial utopia

Genocide and war became two sides of the same coin. Occupied Poland was divided up. Poles were forced to leave their homes and properties behind to be occupied by ethnic Germans brought in from occupied Europe. Poles were herded like cattle in the other part called the General Government, the destination of all 'undesirables' of the empire. Polish children who looked like Aryans were forcibly snatched and examined by 'race experts'. If they passed the race tests they were raised in German families and if not, they were deposited in orphanages where most perished. With some of the largest ghettos and gas chambers, the General Government also served as the killing fields for the Jews.

3.10 Youth in Nazi Germany

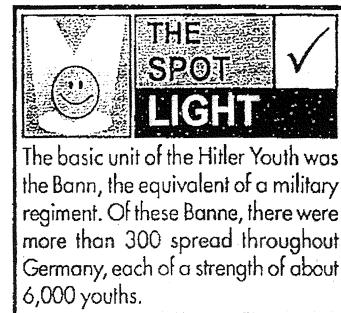
Hitler was fanatically interested in the youth of the country. He felt that a strong Nazi society could be established only by teaching children Nazi ideology. All schools under Nazism were 'cleansed' and 'purified'. Teachers who were Jews or seen as 'politically unreliable' were dismissed. Children were first segregated : Germans and Jews could not sit together or play together. Subsequently, 'undesirable children' were thrown out of schools. 'Good German' children were subjected to a process of Nazi schooling, a prolonged period of ideological training. School textbooks were rewritten. Racial science was introduced to justify Nazi ideas of race. Stereotypes about Jews were popularized even through maths classes. Children were taught to be loyal and submissive, hate Jews, and worship Hitler. Even the function of sports was to nurture a spirit of violence and aggression among children. Hitler believed that boxing could make children iron hearted, strong and masculine.

Youth Organisations

Youth organizations were made responsible for educating German youth. Ten-year-olds had to enter Jungvolk. At 14, all boys had to join the Nazi youth organization - Hitler Youth. After a period of rigorous ideological and physical training they joined the Labour service, usually at the age of 18. Then they had to serve in the armed forces and enter one of the Nazi organizations. The Youth League of the Nazis was founded in 1922. Four years later it was renamed Hitler Youth. All other youth organizations were systematically dissolved and finally banned.

3.11 The Nazi cult of motherhood

Children in Nazi Germany were repeatedly told that women were radically different from men. The fight for equal rights for men and women was wrong and it would destroy society. Girls were told that they had to become good mothers and rear pure-blooded Aryan children. Girls had to maintain the purity of the race, distance themselves from Jews, look after the home, and teach their children Nazi values. They had to be the bearers of the Aryan culture and race.



The basic unit of the Hitler Youth was the Bann, the equivalent of a military regiment. Of these Banne, there were more than 300 spread throughout Germany, each of a strength of about 6,000 youths.

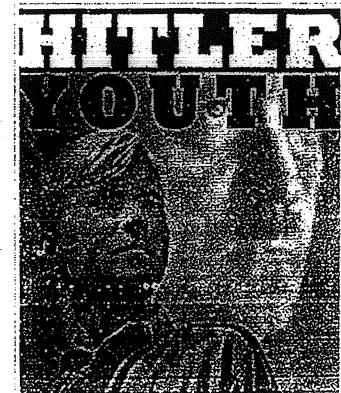
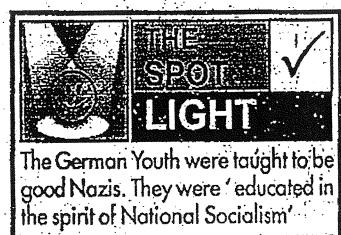


Fig. 9 Hitler Youth

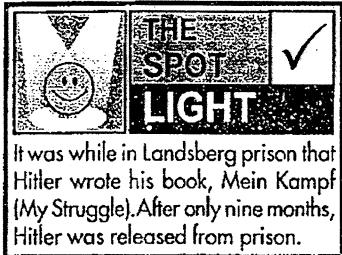


The German Youth were taught to be good Nazis. They were 'educated in the spirit of National Socialism'

- Those who maintained contact with Jews, Poles and
- Women, the promoter of Aryan race**

Women who bore racially undesirable children were punished and those who produced racially desirable children were awarded. To encourage women to produce many children, Honour Crosses were awarded. A bronze cross was given for four children, silver for six and gold for eight or more.

All 'Aryan' women who deviated from the prescribed code of conduct were publicly condemned and severely punished were paraded through the town with shaved heads, blackened faces and placards hanging around their necks announcing 'I have sullied the honour of the nation'. Many received jail sentences and lost civic honour as well as their husbands and families for this 'criminal offence'.



CHECK YOUR ANSWERS [3]

1. Volkswagen.
2. 'Volks' means people and 'Wagen' means car.

3.12 The art of propaganda

The Nazi regime used language and media with care, and often to great effect. The terms they coined to describe their various practices are not only deceptive, they are chilling. Mass killing were termed special treatment, final solution (for the Jews), euthanasia (for the disabled), selection and disinfections. Gas chambers were labeled 'disinfection-area'.

Media was carefully used to win support for the regime and popularize its worldview. The most infamous film was 'The Eternal Jew'. Orthodox Jews were stereotyped and marked. They were referred to as vermin, rats and pests. Their movements was compared to those of rodents. Nazism worked on the minds of the people, tapped their emotions, and turned their hatred and anger at those marked as 'undesirable'.

3.13 Ordinary people and the crimes against humanity

Many common people saw the world through Nazi eyes, and spoke their mind in Nazi language. They felt hatred and anger surged inside them when they saw someone who looked like a Jew.

But not every German was a Nazi. Many organised active resistance to Nazism, braving police repression and death. The large majority of Germans however, were passive onlookers and apathetic witnesses. They were too scared to act, to differ, to protest. They preferred to look away.

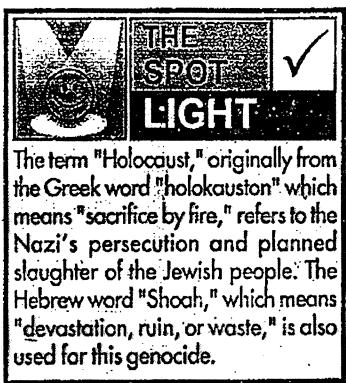
What Jews felt in Nazi Germany is a different story altogether. They began believing in the Nazi stereotypes about them. Jews died many deaths even before they reached the gas chamber.

Knowledge about the Holocaust

The Jews wanted the world to remember the atrocities and sufferings they had endured during the Nazi killing operations – also called the Holocaust. At its height, a ghetto inhabitant had said to another that he wanted to outlive the war just for half an hour, to tell the world about what had happened in Nazi Germany. On the other hand when the war seemed lost, the Nazi leadership distributed petrol to its functionaries to destroy all incriminating evidence available in offices. Yet the History and the memory of the Holocaust lives on in memoirs, fiction, documentaries, poetry, memorials and museums in many parts of the world today.



Fig.10 Hitler's autobiography



IMPORTANT TERMS

1. EUTHANASIA

Mercy killing. Under Nazi rule, Euthanasia Programme was applied to eliminate mentally or physically unfit Germans.

2. GENOCIDE

Killing on large scale leading to destruction of large sections of people.

3. GESTAPO

Name of secret police during Nazi rule.

4. GHETTOISATION

To confine a segregated group to a particular area.

5. HOLOCAUST

It comes from the Greek words 'holos' and 'kautos' which literally means 'completely burn't. It is used to describe the persecution and mass murder of Jews by German Nazis between 1933 and 1945.

6. JUNGVOLK

Nazi youth groups for children below 14 years of age.

7. NAZIS

Short form of National Socialist German Workers party.

8. PROPAGANDA

Specific type of message directly aimed at influencing the opinion of people through the use of posters, films speeches, etc.

9. THE GREAT DEPRESSION

A worldwide economic slump lasting from 1929 to 1935. During these years, trade between nations dropped and around 25 million people lost their jobs.

10. WALL STREET EXCHANGE

The name of world's biggest stock exchange located in the USA.

EXERCISE # 1

Multiple choice questions

1. What was the response of the Germans to the new Weimar Republic?
 - (1) They held the new Weimar Republic responsible for Germany's defeat and the disgrace at Versailles
 - (2) The republic carried the burden of war guilt and national humiliation
 - (3) It became the target of attacks in the conservative national circles
 - (4) All of the above
2. In what ways did the First World War leave a deep imprint on European society and polity?
 - (1) Soldiers were put above civilians, trench-life was glorified
 - (2) Politicians and publicists laid stress on men to be aggressive and masculine
 - (3) Aggressive war propaganda and national honour were given the most support and Conservative dictatorships were welcomed
 - (4) All of the above
3. What was the most important result of the Spartacist League uprising in Germany in 1918-19?
 - (1) The Weimar Republic crushed the rebellion
 - (2) The Spartacists founded the Communist Party of Germany
 - (3) The Weimar government accepted the demands of the Spartacus League
 - (4) Both (1) and (2)
4. Which of the following statements is true about the economic crisis in Germany in 1923?
 - (1) The value of 'Mark' (German currency) collapsed
 - (2) Prices of goods soared high
 - (3) Weimer Republic brought economic prosperity
 - (4) Both (1) and (2)
5. Which article of the Weimar Constitution gave the President the powers to impose emergency, suspend civil rights and rule by decree in Germany?
 - (1) 46
 - (2) 47
 - (3) 48
 - (4) None of these

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

6. The following statements are about Hitler's early life. Which of them is incorrect?
 - (1) Hitler was born in 1889 in Austria and spent his youth in poverty
 - (2) He joined the army during World War I and earned accolades for bravery
 - (3) He was totally unaffected by German defeat in the war and only thought of improving his career
 - (4) In 1919 he joined a small group called the German Workers' Party, which later was known as the Nazi Party.
7. Which of the following was a special surveillance and security force created by Hitler?
 - (1) Regular police force in green uniform and stormtroopers
 - (2) Gestapo (secret state police), the SS (the protection squads)
 - (3) Criminal police (SD), the security service
 - (4) Both (2) and (3)
8. Who was the propaganda minister of Hitler?
 - (1) Hjalmar Schacht
 - (2) Hindenburg
 - (3) Joseph Goebbels
 - (4) Helmut
9. Which of the following was a feature of Hitler's foreign policy?
 - (1) He pulled out of the League of Nations in 1933
 - (2) He decided not to attack any country
 - (3) He thanked the Allied Powers for having put Germany on the right track
 - (4) All the above
10. Which incident persuaded the USA to join the war?
 - (1) Hitler's attack on Eastern Europe
 - (2) Hitler's policy of genocide of the Jews
 - (3) Helplessness of England and France
 - (4) Japan's attack on the US base at Pearl Harbour
11. Hitler's world view, which was also the Nazi ideology, was
 - (1) There was no equality between people; only a racial hierarchy
 - (2) The blond, blue-eyed, Nordic German Aryans were at the top and Jews at the bottom. The coloured people were placed in between
 - (3) Jews were the anti-race, the arch enemies of the Aryans
 - (4) All the above

- 12.** According to the Nazis, which people were to be regarded as desirable?
- Pure and healthy Nordic Aryans
 - German soldiers who helped in territorial expansion
 - German police of different types
 - All those who were willing to consider Hitler as God
- 13.** Which of these were the reasons of Nazi hatred of the Jews?
- Jews had been stereotyped as killers of Christ
 - They were 'usurers', i.e. moneylenders
 - The Jews had always cheated the Nazis
 - Both (1) and (2)
- 14.** What was the destination of all 'undesirables' of the German Empire called?
- Land of 'undesirables'
 - Cursed land
 - General government
 - Land for the abnormals
- 15.** What was Nazi Ideology with regard to school children?
- He believed that education of children was not necessary
 - A control should be kept over children both inside and outside school
 - All children should be regarded as equal
 - None of the above
- 16.** What was 'Jungvolk' in Nazi Germany?
- Magazine
 - Holocaust camp
 - Youth organisation
 - Schools
- 17.** What was the thinking of Nazi Germany about women?
- The fight for equality between men and women was wrong
 - Girls had to maintain the purity of the race and teach their children Nazi values
 - Their role was to be of mothers who had to be bearers of the Aryan culture and race
 - All the above
- 18.** What did the term 'Evacuation' mean?
- Living in separately marked areas called ghettos
 - Deporting people to gas chambers
 - Arrested without any legal procedures
 - Detained without due process of law

- 19.** Name the book written by Charlotte Beredit about dreams of Jews :
- Fearfull Dreams
 - Third Reich of Dreams
 - Dreams of Death
 - Dreams of Reich
- 20.** In context of Germany what was 'Holocaust'?
- Nazi propaganda
 - Nazi Honour Crosses
 - Nazi killing operations
 - A Nazi School

Match the columns

	Column I		Column II
(A)	Special Treatment	(i)	Mass killing for the disabled
(B)	Final Solution	(ii)	Charlotte Beradt
(C)	Euthanasia	(iii)	Mass killings
(D)	Evacuation	(iv)	The most infamous film
(E)	The Eternal Jew	(v)	Mass killing for the Jews
(F)	Third Reich of Dreams	(vi)	Deporting people to gas chambers

True or false

- The defeat of Imperial Germany and the abdication of the emperor gave an opportunity to parliamentary parties to recast German polity.
- Those who opposed the Weimar Republic, mainly Socialists, Catholics and Democrats, became easy targets of attack in the conservative nationalist circles.
- In 1923, Hitler planned to seize control of Berlin, march to Bavaria and capture power.
- The Fire Decree of 28 February 1933 indefinitely suspended civic rights like freedom of speech, press and assembly that had been guaranteed by the Weimar Constitution.
- The Chinese Red Army inflicted a crushing and humiliating defeat on Germany at Stalingrad.
- Hitler intended to extend German boundaries by moving eastwards, to concentrate all Germans geographically at one place. Austria became the laboratory for this experimentation.
- After a period of rigorous ideological and physical training the youth joined the Labour Service, usually at the age of 18.
- The Gas Chambers were labelled 'Evacuation areas', and looked like bathrooms equipped with fake showerheads.

Fill in the blanks

1. Deputies were now elected to the German Parliament or _____, on the basis of equal and universal votes cast by all adults including women.
2. Aggressive war propaganda and national honour occupied centre stage in the public sphere, while popular support grew for _____ dictatorships that had recently come into being.
3. _____ was a powerful speaker. His passion and his words moved people.
4. _____ had advised Hitler against investing hugely in rearmament as the state still ran on deficit financing.
5. Hitler's racism borrowed from thinkers like _____ and Herbert Spencer.
6. Nazi hatred of Jews had a precursor in the traditional _____ hostility towards Jews.
7. According to the Nazis, the fight for equal rights for men and women that had become part of _____ struggles everywhere was wrong and it would destroy the society.
8. The Jews wanted the world to remember the atrocities and sufferings they had endured during the Nazi killing operations - also called the _____.

ANSWER KEY

Multiple choice questions

Ques.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Ans.	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	1	4
Ques.	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Ans.	4	1	4	3	2	3	4	2	2	3

Match the column

1. A → iii ; B → v ; C → i ; D → vi ; E → iv ; F → ii

True or false

1. True 2. False 3. False 4. True 5. False 6. False 7. True 8. False

Fill in the blanks

- | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. Reichstag | 2. Conservative | 3. Hitler | 4. Hjalmar Schacht |
| 5. Charles Darwin | 6. Christian | 7. Democratic | 8. Holocaust |

EXERCISE # 2

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Short answer type questions	
1. Describe what happened to Germany after its defeat in the First World War.	3. Describe the steps taken by Hitler which brought destruction of democracy in Germany.
2. Explain how the fragility of Weimar Republic led to the rise of Hitler.	4. Explain why the attack on Soviet Union by Hitler is termed as a Historic Blunder ?
3. Why did Germany suffer from "Hyperinflation" in 1923? Who bailed her out from this situation?	5. From where Hitler brought his ideas of racism ? Was it justified ?
4. What were the promises made by Hitler to people of Germany?	6. With the example of Poland, explain how 'Genocide and war became two sides of the same coin' ?
5. Why did USA enter into the Second World War?	7. 'Hitler was fanatically interested in the youth of the country.' Justify the statement, do you think, Hitler was really interested in Youth or was he interested just in Nazi or Aryan youth ?
6. 'Nazi ideology was synonymous with Hitler's world view.' Explain.	8. In 1933 Hitler said: 'In my state the mother is the most important citizen.' Do you agree with his statement.
7. What was the concept Lebensraum ?	9. 'Media was carefully used to win support for the regime and popularise its worldview.' Explain with appropriate example.
8. What happened in schools under Nazism?	10. What do you mean by Holocaust ? How the world came to know about it ?
9. "Jews died many deaths even before they reached the gas chambers." Elaborate.	
Long answer type questions	
1. Can we say that the 'Treaty of Versailles' was a harsh and humiliating peace ? Explain giving the conditions laid in this treaty .	
2. Describe the conditions prevailing in Germany, which led to the situation of Hyperinflation.	

NCERT QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

- 1.** Describe the problems faced by the Weimar Republic.

OR

How was the Weimar Republic born in Germany? Explain.

Ans. A National Assembly met at Weimar and established a democratic constitution with a federal structure. The republic was, however, not received well by its own people largely because of the terms it was forced to accept after Germany's defeat at the end of the First World War. Many Germans held the new Weimar Republic responsible for not only the defeat in the war but the disgrace at Versailles. This republic was finally crippled by being forced to pay compensation.

There was another problem which the Weimar Republic faced just at its inception. Its birth coincided with the revolutionary uprising of the Spartacist League. The political atmosphere in Berlin was charged with demands for Soviet-style governance. Though the uprising was crushed by the Republic, the Spartacists founded the Communist Party of Germany. Both parties now became enemies and could not combine together with Hitler.

This was followed by the economic crisis of 1923. The value of the German mark fell considerably. The Weimar Republic had to face hyperinflation. Then came the Wall Street Exchange crash in 1929. America had bailed Germany out of the hyperinflation but with this crash it was evident that the stability was just temporary. The USA withdrew its support with the crash. The situation in Germany became worse. The currency lost its value, business was ruined and deep anxiety and fears haunted the people. Unemployment created an atmosphere of crime and total despair.

The Weimar Republic within its span of power saw 20 different cabinets, lasting for an average 239 days and a liberal use of Article 48.

- 2.** Discuss why Nazism became popular in Germany by 1930.

Ans. The Nazis could not effectively mobilise popular support till the early 1930s. Nazism became a mass movement only during the Great Depression. After 1929, banks collapsed and businesses shut down, workers lost their jobs and the middle classes were threatened with destitution. The Nazi propaganda stirred hopes of a better future at this time. In 1928, the Nazi Party got no more than 2.6 per cent votes in the Reichstag - the German Parliament. By 1932, it had become the largest party with 37 per cent votes.

Hitler was a powerful speaker. He promised to build a strong nation, undo the injustice of the Versailles Treaty and restore the dignity of the German people. He promised employment for the unemployed, and a secure future for the youth. He promised to weed out all foreign influences and resist all foreign conspiracies against Germany. Hitler understood the importance of rituals and spectacle in mobilising people. Nazis held massive rallies and public meetings to demonstrate the support for Hitler and instil a sense of unity among the people. The red banners with the Swastika, the Nazi salute, and the ritualized rounds of applause after the speeches were all part of this spectacle of power. The people whose sense of dignity and pride had been shattered, and who were living in a time of acute economic and political crises, saw in Hitler a messiah and a saviour who would deliver them from their difficulties. This was projected by the Nazi propaganda.

- 3.** What are the peculiar features of Nazi thinking?

Ans. Nazi ideology was synonymous with Hitler worldwide. According to this there was no equality between people, but only a racial hierarchy. In this view, blond, blue-eyed, Nordic German Aryans were at the top, while Jews were located at the lowest rung. They came to be regarded as an anti-race, as arch enemies of the Aryans. All other coloured people were placed in between, depending upon their external features. Hitler's racism was borrowed from thinkers like Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. The Nazi argument was simple: the strongest race would survive and the weak ones would perish. The Aryan race was the finest. It had to retain its purity, become stronger and dominate the world.

The other aspect of Hitler's ideology related to the geopolitical concept of Lebensraum, or living space. He believed that new territories had to be acquired for settlement. This would enhance the area of the mother country, while enabling the settlers on new lands to retain an intimate link with the place of their origin. It would also enhance the material resources and power of the German nation.

Their dream was to create an exclusive racial community of pure Germans by physically eliminating all those who were seen as 'undesirable' in the extended empire. Nazis wanted only a society of 'pure and healthy Nordic Aryans'. They alone were considered 'desirable'. Only they were seen as worthy of prospering and multiplying, others had no such right.

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

Ans. The Nazi regime used language and media with care; and often to great effect. Media was used to gain support for the regime and to make it popular all over the world. They spread their ideas through visual images, radio, posters, slogans, speeches, films, etc. All enemies of Germans, especially the Jews were mocked, abused and called as evil. They were termed as bad-meaning foreign agents.

The most infamous film "Eternal Jew" was shown all over to the people. All orthodox Jews were stereotyped and shown as supporting long beards and wearing loose clothes. But in reality, it was not so. These Jews were called names such as rats, pests and vermins. Nazi propaganda completely brainwashed the people who began to believe that Jews are to be hated and despised. The Nazi propaganda worked on all sections of the society and sought to win their support by glorifying Nazism and suggesting that Nazis alone could solve their problem. Most people began to see Jews through the Nazi vision, they even spoke in the Nazi language. Whenever they sighted a Jew, hatred and anger welled up inside them. Jews were looked upon with suspicion and even their living areas marked.

5. Explain what role women had 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.

Ans. It was made obvious that women were radically different from men. Boys were taught to be aggressive, masculine and steel-hearted, girls were told that they had to become good mothers and rear pure-blooded Aryan children. They had to be the bearers of the Aryan culture and race. They had to look after the homes and teach children Nazi values. They were encouraged to bear many children. But the children had to be 'desirable children'. Honour crosses were awarded to them. If the Aryan women deviated from the prescribed code of conduct they were publicly condemned and severely punished.

In other parts of Europe, women were actively participating in democratic struggles. In countries like France women formed clubs for protest and were ever involved in violent uprisings. They were politically more aware of their rights and were brave enough to demand them.

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

Ans. The Nazis established control over its people by various means. Propaganda popularising and glorifying Nazism was one. Media was carefully used to win support for the regime and popularise it. Nazism worked on the minds of the people, tapped their emotions and turned their hatred and anger against those marked as 'undesirable'.

Special surveillance and security forces to control and order society in ways that the Nazis wanted, was created. It was the extra-constitutional powers of these newly organised forces that gave the Nazi state its reputation as the most dreaded criminal state. The police forces had powers to rule with impunity.

Genocide also created an atmosphere of fear and repression which helped them to establish total control over its people. Hitler played on the bitterness of the German people for the defeat in World War I. He promised to restore Germany's military power and told Germans that they were the greatest people in the world. Secondly, he and his party promised to carry out radical changes in Germany and get rid of the leaders who had failed to provide jobs to the German people.

Important Notes