

Chapter 17 Section 3 Notes “Hitler and Nazi Germany”

I. Hitler and His Views (pages 548–549)

- A. **Adolf Hitler** was born in Austria, failed secondary school, and was rejected by the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. It was in Vienna that he developed his ideas. Racism, particularly against the Jewish people, was at the core of Hitler’s ideas. He was an extreme nationalist and understood the use of propaganda and terror.
- B. Hitler served on the Western Front for four years during World War I. Then he entered politics in Germany. In 1919, he joined an extreme right-wing nationalist party in **Munich**. By 1921, Hitler controlled the party and renamed it the **National Socialist German Workers’ Party**, or Nazi Party for short.
- C. Within two years, the Nazi Party had grown to 55,000 people with 15,000 in the militia. In 1923, Hitler staged an uprising in Munich—called the Beer Hall Putsch—which was quickly crushed. Hitler was sent to prison.
- D. While in prison, Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf*, in which he outlined his basic ideas and plans. His ideas combined German nationalism, anti-Semitism, and anticommunism. He also embraced the notion that stronger nations should expand to obtain living space (**Lebensraum**) and that superior leaders should rule over the masses.

Discussion Question

What happened when Hitler tried to stage an uprising in Munich?

II. Rise of Nazism (pages 549–550)

- A. Hitler realized that the way to power was through legal means, not through violent overthrow of the government. When he got out of prison, he worked to expand the Nazi Party throughout Germany. By 1929, the Nazis had a national party organization, and by 1931 it was the largest political party in the **Reichstag**, or parliament.
- B. Germany’s economic problems helped the rise of the Nazi Party. Many people were in desperate situations, which made extreme political parties far more attractive. Hitler appealed to national pride and militarism to gain the support of the German people.

III. Victory of Nazism (page 550)

- A. After 1930, the Reichstag had little power. As Hitler’s power grew, more and more right-wing industrial leaders, aristocrats, military officers, and high-level bureaucrats wanted him to lead the country. In 1933, the Nazis pressured President Hindenburg to allow Hitler to become chancellor and create a new government.
- B. Within two months, Hitler had set up the government. The Nazis were in complete control. In March 1933, the Reichstag passed the **Enabling Act**, which gave the government the power to ignore the constitution and pass laws to deal with the nation’s problems. The act gave Hitler a legal basis for his actions. He had become a dictator, appointed by the Reichstag.
- C. Once in power, the Nazis established control over all aspects of government. Jews were purged from the civil service, and trade unions were dissolved. **Concentration camps** were set up for Nazi opponents. All political parties except the Nazis were abolished. The Nazis had set up the basis for a totalitarian state. When Hindenburg died, the Nazis abolished the presidency and Hitler became Germany’s only leader. He was known to the German people as their *Führer* (leader).

Discussion Question

Who looked to Hitler for leadership and why?

IV. The Nazi State, 1933–1939 (pages 551–553)

- A. Hitler had a goal in creating a total state. He wanted to develop an **Aryan** racial state to dominate Europe and possibly the world. Nazis wanted the Germans to create a new empire as the Romans had done. Hitler thought there had been two previous German empires (Reichs): the Holy Roman Empire and the German Empire of 1871 to 1918. Hitler called his empire the Third Reich.
- B. Hitler demanded active involvement from the German people. The Nazis used economic policies, mass rallies, organizations, and terror to control the country and further their goals.
- C. While Hitler ruled absolutely over the Nazi Party, there were internal struggles within the party. To control the nation, the Nazis used the SS or “Guard Squadrons.” Under the direction of **Heinrich Himmler**, the SS controlled all the police forces. Terror and ideology drove the SS. Terror included repression, murder, and death camps. Himmler’s goal was to further the Aryan race.
- D. Hitler put people back to work through public works projects and grants to private construction companies. He also embarked on a massive rearmament program to stimulate the economy. Unemployment dropped and the depression seemed to be ending.
- E. The Nazis staged mass demonstrations and spectacles. Some of the largest were held in **Nuremberg**. The Nazis also controlled both the Catholic and Protestant churches as well as all schools.
- F. Women played a special role in the Aryan state as the bearers of Aryan children. The Nazis said that women were to be wives and mothers, while men were to be warriors and political leaders. The Nazis also controlled the types of work that women could do and strongly encouraged them to stay home.
- G. Once in power, the Nazi Party enacted programs against Jewish people. In 1935, the Nazis passed the “**Nuremberg laws**,” which prevented Jews from being German citizens, forbade marriages between Jews and German citizens, and required Jews to wear yellow Stars of David and to carry identification cards saying they were Jewish.
- H. On the night of November 9, 1938, Nazis burned Jewish synagogues and destroyed thousands of Jewish businesses. They killed at least 100 people and sent thirty thousand Jewish men to concentration camps. This night was called **Kristallnacht** (“night of shattered glass”). After *Kristallnacht*, Jews were barred from all public transportation, schools, and hospitals. They could not own, manage, or work in a retail store. Jews were encouraged to leave Germany.