

Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

Final Essay: "*Rise of Nazism and the early years of the Third Reich.*"

To understand the complexities of the Nazi Party and the atrocities they had committed, it is crucial to gain the knowledge of the rise of the party, the history in which they rose to power and took control of the state of Germany. Not only is the party's history important, but the key figures of the inner circle, the men of cruel ideology that built the foundation on which the party mission lie.

Starting with the central figure of the party himself, Adolf Hitler. Young Adolf grew up in Linz, Austria, with his father Alois and mother Klara, mentally and physically abused by Alois, yet still devoted to his mother. Adolf would survive his father by thirty-eight years and continue to care for his mother up until his departure for his aspiring art career in Vienna. After denial from the Academy of Fine arts twice, Hitler would live an isolated life before going on to Munich to join the military at the time of the Great War, joining the 16th Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment. Adolf Hitler continued to serve through several injuries, up until the German defeat, blaming the Jews for the loss. Hitler would go on from the war to take up political work, finding community in the Beer Hall of Munich, Bavaria. Germany.

Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

Hitler would take interest to the German Workers' Party, entranced by the ideologies and antisemitic rhetoric, quickly becoming one of the party's early leaders in 1919. Taking mentorship from Dietrich Eckart, Hitler would grow as an orator, performing speeches to the German people in local beer halls, stirring up a hatred for Jews and giving others inspiration in scapegoating the Jewish. As the gatherings grew and more people flocked to the speeches, the party began to take its form, renaming themselves the "National German Socialist Workers' Party," more commonly referred to as the Nazi party. Hitler becoming leader not soon after, having cast Eckart as not truly standing for the party.

As the party grew in agitation and restlessness, a plan had been formed to hold a putsch. A humiliated Germany facing the consequences of the Treaty of Versailles, inflation sky rocketing, a government that could barely support itself, The Nazi party would attempt to take control of the government. Deeming action, the only means for control of the country, a move inspired by Benito Mussolini.

The Beer Hall Putsch, November 1923. Proposed by Hitler, the party would use political figures such as Erich Ludendorff and (by force) Gustav Von Kahr to promote the image of Germany's leaders supporting the political movement. Steel Helmets and pistols would quickly overtake the beer hall, Hitler walking amongst them and taking stage on a chair, shouting out to the people theatrically, claiming the movement would all be over soon and to continue enjoying their beers. Taking Von Khar, Lossow and Seisser to a back room, the Nazis would strong arm the leaders into making a statement of approval for the party, giving into the march on Berlin. After a brief speech by Von Khar, Hitler would make the mistake of departing to deal with crisis in the city, giving Von Khar the opportunity for escape.

Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

Von Khar would call for the Weimar police and military troops, whom of which swiftly came in and crushed the attempted putsch. Hitler being sent to trial and imprisonment, Rudolf Hess being taken to jail, Hermann Göring barely escaping to Austria with a morphine addiction, Heinrich Himmler seeking refuge in his parents' home. The party was in shambles, distraught and leaderless.

Within the confines of his jailcell Hitler would develop a new ideology to the rise of power, a more systematic approach, one carefully plotted that focused on the long run outcome. Using the trial against him as a publicity stunt to air out his beliefs and ideas, claiming the Jew's to blame and the German Government in Berlin for the failure of the war. "Our prisons will open, and a time will come when today's accused become the accusers!" (Adolf Hitler, 1924 testimony). Gaining a platform from the trial and a lighter sentence as an outcome, serving eight months of his five-year sentence alongside Rudolf Hess.

During Hitler's sentence he would have a manifesto published, *Mein Kampf*, detailing depraved ideologies and beliefs of the party, claiming himself a hero and the messiah of the German people. "While the Zionists try to make the rest of the World believe that the national consciousness of the Jew finds its satisfaction in the creation of a Palestinian state, the Jews again slyly dupe the dumb Goyim. It doesn't even enter their heads to build up a Jewish state in Palestine for the purpose of living there; all they want is a central organization for their international world swindler, endowed with its own sovereign rights and removed from the intervention of other states: a haven for convicted scoundrels and a university for budding crooks. It is a sign of their rising confidence and sense of security that at a time when one section is still playing the German, Frenchman, or Englishman, the other with open effrontery

Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

comes out as the Jewish race.” (Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*). A work of never-ending rambling, run on speeches and complaints, and narcissistic rabble.

After Adolf’s release from Landsberg prison he would continue to gain traction with the German people through civil means, assuring in a *Völkischer Beobachter* editorial his demand of peace and obedience to him and the party. Moving away from the figures in the previous party’s representation and gradually separating himself from his once right-hand man, Ernst Röhm. Hitler would whip up crowds and form a sense of German country honor and pride within people, giving them someone to blame for all their hardships after the Great War, building a tolerance for hateful ideologies as means to salvation in the German people’s mind.

After his release from jail, Hitler had taken a focus in growing the party’s political campaign, with help from figures such as Joseph Goebbels, taking on speeches and spreading propaganda for the party. The Nazi party would gain 107 seats in the Reichstag by 1930, gaining the majority of 230 representatives by 1932. Goebbels having been elected in 1928 to represent the Nazi party from Berlin. Paul Von Hindenburg’s hand being forced by the mass support of the Nazis’, he was pushed to declare Hitler chancellor of Germany. Hitler would eventually merge the Chancellorship with the Presidency and become the ultimate Führer of Germany, using any means necessary to introduce his depraved morals into the system.

Hitler began the execution and arrest of his political opponents, removing any threat to his place of power, making political acts such as Nuremberg laws, Reich Citizenship Laws, Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor. Each law containing racial theories and giving more control of racial and ethnic identity to the German Government.

Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

Over the course of the Nazi control of government, Germany would see a major change in ethics of their leaders and the course of German History, new senior figures in the Nazi party would continue the cruelty that would come to be the final solution and the party members would continue to compete in the depths of the evil human psyche.

The SS would take hold of the country, wearing all-black uniforms and heavy, clunking black boots. The SS coming into control of concentration camps and demonstrating the terrifying power of the Nazi regime. A secret state police, named the Gestapo, would work under guise and run a current of paranoia and fear through those against Hitler's party. The Gestapo taking down any adversary to the Nazi party, unjustly committing them to execution or concentration camps.

The Nazi's in a party cleansing would commit violent acts against people once in Hitler's favor, acts such as the "Night of Long Knives." (Nacht der langen Messer). A purge of Ernst Röhm's SA, or brown shirts, who were seen as mudding the party's reputation and as traitors to the ideologies Hitler embodied. The murder of the Nazi paramilitary organization would serve as a rattling demonstration of Hitler's power, if a Nazi member was not constantly fighting for Hitler's approval in the rat race of politics, they would be consumed.

As Chancellor, and under the Nazi control of the government, Hitler would abuse his power to create a police state. Events such as the book burning, taking away resources that defied his personal beliefs and that of the party, limiting the freedoms of citizens and breeding the next generation of Nazi's. Kristallnacht (1938), the destruction and murder of Jewish businesses and their owners, the burning of synagogues and vandalization of Jewish homes and schools. The ghettos that were created to segregate Jewish peoples from the rest of society, draining each into the concentration camps. Hitler would continue to break the Treaty of Versailles and its clauses,

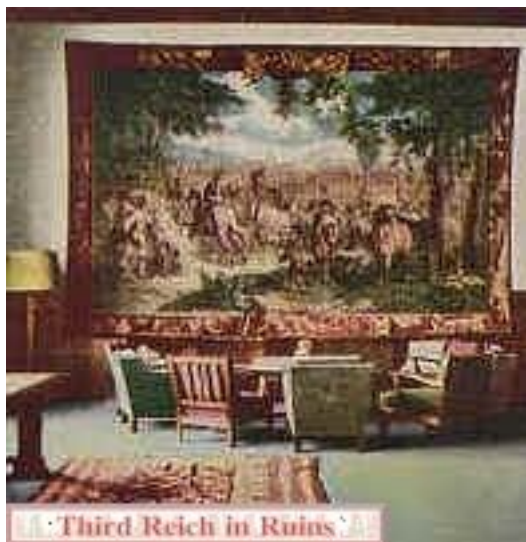
Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

annexing Austria and Czechoslovakia and the invasion of Poland. Remilitarizing the Rhineland and building back Germany's forces. Implementing the Final Solution as a means to Aryanization.

Hitler held a terrifying grasp over the country of Germany, a psychological hold over the citizens and members of the German peoples and a deadly force of influence and power that amassed to genocide and attempted extinction of an ethnic group. The crimes against humanity the Nazi's committed are unforgivable, but without understanding how Hitler rose to power and created a party of such depraved ideologies, history will repeat itself. Educating oneself on the events that led up to the war allows countries today to prevent another Holocaust as the one of WW2. Yet, even with the knowledge of the Nazi party's history, it will be hard to ever understand how a groups depraved ideologies manifested into such heinous acts against that of human life- how the darkest psyches could plan such atrocities on ginseng sofas¹.

¹A reference to Hitler's Mountain home, the "Berghof" and its furniture.



Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

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Dr. Harvey

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Dr. Harvey

Holocaust as History and Memory

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