

RISE OF FASCISM AND NAZISM AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Nazism and the Rise of Hitler: An Introduction

The Second World War was the most destructive event of modern times and the first time when nuclear weapons were used. The warring countries were divided into two military alliances—the allied powers and the axis powers. The allied powers were led by the United States, the United Kingdom and France. The axis powers were led by Germany, Italy and Japan.

Germany was the reason for conflict led by Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist

German Workers' Party or the Nazi Party. Adolf Hitler was the leader of Germany from 1933 to 1945. During his government, Germany was called as Nazi Germany.

Nazi Germany followed the ideology called Nazism or National Socialism that promoted violent practices to restore German pride. In September 1939, to conquer more land and resources for Germany, Hitler invaded Poland, sparking off world war two.

In the end of World War in 1945, the Allied Powers demanded justice from the defeated Axis Powers, especially Germany. A Tribunal was set up in the German city of Nuremberg to prosecute Nazi leaders. Nazi Germany's efforts to eliminate the Jews and other communities

are referred to as genocidal crimes. The term Genocide was coined in 1944 to describe the act of destroying a community based on nationalism, racism, religion or ethnicity.

At the Nuremberg Trials Hitler and his Nazi government were accused of committing genocide against Jews. Hitler was not tried at Nuremberg because he committed suicide a month before world war two ended.

The genocide committed by Nazi Germany between 1933 and 1945 is referred to as the Holocaust.

Italy and Fascism

Italy during the war

In the First world war Italy joined the Anglo-French alliance against Germany and other allies. Italy had always wanted to unite the Italian speaking provinces of Europe and hoped that after the war it would be rewarded for supporting them.

Italy after the war

After the war the Treaty of Versailles offered very little to compensate for all the destruction and losses Italy had suffered due to the war. Italy felt deeply hurt and angered and realised that it had been cheated. Italy received only two islands in

the Adriatic and Aegean seas.

Italy suffered due to the heavy deaths and recession and rising unemployment. The people Italy started voicing their displeasure at the situation. Farmers, workers and the unemployed people joined hands to organise strikes all over the country. This led to the growth of an extreme nationalism called Fascism in Italy.

Meaning of Fascism.

The word fascism originated from the Latin word 'Fascio'. Fascio means a bundle of sticks, it was the royal symbol of the Roman emperors of the ancient times and significant strength of unity.

Mussolini

Banito Mussolini, established the Fascist party in 1919 at Milan. He started his career as a journalist and became Prime Minister of Italy. Members of this party were called Black shirts because of their uniform.

Features of Fascism

- . The Member of Fascism were opposed to democracy, socialism and liberalism.
- . They believed in having a powerful dictator with unlimited power.
- . The three main principles of them were state worship, Leader worship, and War worship.

Mussolini - Prime Minister

Banito Mussolini, promised to bring back the lost glory of the Roman empire to Italy

after the first world war. When Italian communists called a strike Mussolini prevented the strike and presented himself as a protector of law and order. Due to this King Victor Emmanuel III Offered the Prime Minister post to Mussolini.

Welfare measures of Mussolini

- He constructed hospitals, roads and bridges.
- Some progress was made Industries and agriculture.
- Brought a Labour court to improve relations between capitalists and labour.

Domestic policy of Mussolini

- Who opposed fascism were open to suspicion.
- Right to freedom of Speech was restricted.

- . Compulsory military and censored press
- . Recognised the pope as the sovereign head of the Vatican.

Foreign Policy of Mussolini

- . Mussolini compelled Greece to pay compensation.
- . He declared war on Abyssinia in 1935.
- . Captured Ethiopia.
- . Established colonies in East Africa and Libya.

Mussolini wanted to make Italy great, respected and feared. When he declared war on Abyssinia League of Nations stated Italy as an aggressive country. Imposed economic sanctions but Mussolini disregarded these sanctions and occupied Abyssinia. He also joined hands with

Germany , which finally led to the second world war.

Living in the Weimar Republic

The years 1918 and 1919 were a significant period in German history marking important events like the German revolution of 1918, defeat in world war one, abdication of Emperor Wilhelm and the birth of the Weimar republic.

The Weimar Republic, established in 1919, replaced the imperial government and formed a parliament called the Reichstag.

The Weimar signed a peace treaty of Versailles which made things very difficult for the budding republic making them struggle to meet the terms. Socialists,

Catholics and Democrats who supported the republic were ridiculed and called the November criminals.

Infighting began between different political groups most popular being the Spartacist League – a group of radical socialists. The Weimar Republic crushed the Spartacist uprising with the help of a group of war veterans called the Free Corps. The dejected Spartacist league then formed the Communist Party of Germany. The Weimar Republic faced an economic crisis in 1923 when they were unable to pay the war damages. To combat the situation, the Weimar printed extra currency notes. This resulted in hyperinflation causing a fall in the value of the German Mark.

The Americans aided Germany through the

Dawes plan but the support was withdrawn in 1929 when the Wall Street Exchange crashed.

On 24 October 1929, referred to as Black Thursday, 13 million shares were sold at the Wall Street Exchange.

The world had entered the Great Depression in 1929 and as Germany was dependent on US money it was severely hit with this economic crisis. In 1933, the Weimar Republic finally collapsed paving the way for Hitler's Nazi Party to take control of Germany.

Hitler Rises to Power

Adolf Hitler was born in 1889 in an Austrian village and was raised by an over

protective mother and a disciplinarian father.

He wanted to be a painter and enrolled in the German army in 1913 and won medals for his bravery in WWI. Germany after WWI elected a new Government called the Weimar Republic and signed the Versailles Peace Treaty in 1919. Many Germans, especially war heroes like Hitler were upset with this. Citizens and heroes became anti-government.

In 1919 Hitler got selected as the German Workers' Party leader owing to his excellent oratory skills, his devotion to German pride and his growing anti-Jewish sentiments two years later.

Hitler renamed the German Worker's Party, as the National Socialist German

Workers Party and used different propaganda to reach out to the German people. Hitler's powerful speeches and grand rallies were reinforced through colourful posters and flyers. The waving red flags further added to the aggressive energy of Nazi parades.

When Hitler got arrested after a failed coup to take over the Weimar in 1923, he wrote his famous autobiography "Mein Kampf" or my struggle.

In the 1930 and 1932 election the Nazi Party got a majority of the seats in the Reichstag. The Weimar Republic fell and was replaced with Hitler's Third Reich government. On 30th January 1933 Adolf Hitler was appointed chancellor of Germany.

Destruction of Democracy and reconstruction

On 30 January 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany by President Hindenburg. His Nazi government, called the Third Reich implemented many undemocratic policies like The Reichstag Fire Decree, The Enabling Act, the Gestapo and the Concentration Camps.

Communist leaders that opposed him were forcibly arrested and imprisoned and made to work free for the government. The Enabling Act was passed on 23rd March 1933 which gave Hitler the power to pass laws without consulting the Reichstag.

Nazi appointed secret state police called the Gestapo which roamed the streets.

They were supported by the Shield Squadron, an intelligence service and paramilitary stormtroopers. The extermination camps were purely meant for killing prisoners that were unable to work or undesirable to the Nazis.

In 1934, after President Hindenburg's death, Hitler combined the offices of the President and Chancellor and became the sole leader of Germany.

Advising Hitler on economic growth was Dr Hjalmar and Schacht Germany's Minister of Economics used innovative policies, to reduce the economic deficit by creating new trade agreements with South-east Europe. He started building highways called Autobahns Volkswagen to become a symbol of the German worker's newfound prosperity.

With the success of Volkswagen factory, the German economy became the quickest, among all world economies, to recover from the Great Depression. In order to spread his military might, Hitler ordered 32,000 soldiers to reoccupy the Rhineland on 7th March 1936.

After Hitler annexed Czechoslovakia and Austria, he invaded Poland in September 1939, sparking off World War Two. To gain support, Germany entered the Tripartite Pact or Three Power Pact in September 1940 with Italy and Japan, This agreement established the Axis Powers in World War Two. Initially Germany was winning the war but it invaded the Soviet Union on 22nd June 1941 it was pushed back by 1945 all the way to Berlin. Japan meanwhile on December 1941, attacked

the US base at Pearl Harbor, forcing the United States to enter World War Two.

The Americans dropped nuclear atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—on 6th and 9th August 1945.

Hitler's efforts to restructure Germany ended the world war in May 1945. His determination to revive the German economy was ultimately based on anti-democratic go-to-war ideologies.

Nazi Policies and Practices

Hitler was voted to power based on his ideology called Nazism. The party was partly influenced by Darwin's and Spencer's theory and promised to restore economic prosperity, global leadership and German

pride. Hitler believed that people existed in a racial hierarchy and that pure Nordic Aryans were the purest race.

He eliminated everyone who was not a racially pure Nordic Aryan German and created a pure German racial state.

However, Jews were one of the biggest groups he targeted. The persecution of the Jews was an act of genocide from 1933 to 1945 which is referred to as the Holocaust.

The persecution and genocide were carried out in three stages. Stage 1 was called Exclusion.

Between 1933 and 1939 Nazi German shops, restaurants and political rallies freely distributed anti-Semitic propaganda to ensure that Jewish business and services were boycotted and their properties were confiscated or sold off. Hitler withdrew all

the Civil rights of the Jews.

Stage 2 was called Ghettoisation. From 1940 to 1944, Jews were forced to live in Jew-only ghettos in the general government area, which comprised German-occupied parts of Poland. In other words, they were made to live in unhygienic conditions and isolated communities.

Stage 3 was called Annihilation. Prisoners were brought to the concentration and extermination camp which had gas chambers where people were drenched with cyanide pellets. Auschwitz, Poland was the biggest Nazi concentration and extermination camp. On 19th May 1943, Germany was declared clean of Jews.

The Second World War

Causes of the Second World War

The Treaty of Versailles

The peace treaties left the defeated countries humiliated. The people of these countries were jobless, hungry, poor, homeless and suffered for many years. Europe great economic depression people lost faith in their governments. This made dictators come to power and these dictators aimed at bringing back their glory. Germany was humiliated.

German aggression

Germans felt hurt , angered and humiliated by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles. Germany was forced to reduce its military. Germany borrowed heavily from other countries followed by inflation and unemployment. People blamed the leaders of Weimar republic.

Hitler sent Jews to concentration camps, where most of them died by deliberate extermination in gas chambers and shooting, or through starvation and overwork. Hitler occupied Rhine land that has been demilitarized by the Treaty of Versailles.

Italian Aggression

Banito Mussolini, promised to bring back the lost glory of the Roman empire to Italy after the first world war. He wanted to make Italy great, respected and feared. When he declared war on Abyssinia League of Nations stated Italy as an aggressive country. Mussolini disregarded the economic sanctions UNO and occupied Abyssinia.

He also joined hands with Germany , which finally led to the second world war. Mussolini compelled Greece to pay compensation. He declared war on Abyssinia in 1935. He Captured Ethiopia and Established colonies in East africa and Libya.

Failure of League of Nations

The rise of dictator ships frustrated all attempts to maintain peace. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria openly challenged the League's authority. The permanent members always opposed decisions which went against their own interests. The League of Nations lacked universal representation and it had no internal Army.

Rise of Fascism

The Members of Fascism were opposed to democracy, socialism and liberalism. They believed in having a powerful dictator with unlimited power. The three main principles of them were state worship, Leader worship, and War worship.

Immediate cause

Danzig, had been made a free city-state under Polish influence guaranteed by the League of Nations. The Nazi government made efforts to establish friendly relations with Poland. Hitler demanded the port of Danzig from Poland. Poland refused, fearing losing de facto access to the sea. Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939.

Failure of League of Nations

The League of Nations

To avoid repetition of a disaster like the First World War an international body was created. The League nations was an organisation formed after the First World

war to maintain peace and security in the world. The League formed to provide a forum for resolving international disputes.

The League of Nations was an international organization, headquartered in Geneva, as Switzerland was a neutral country and had not fought in the First World War. The League of Nations was formed in 1919. This was the first organisation to be set in an international level.

Many countries of the world joined believing that this organisation that work for mutual compromise among nations. It was a great task for league of nations to maintain peace and security in the world. 44 countries from all over the world had signed a covenant to establish this organisation. It failed due to inherent defects.

Causes of Failure

- Great powers are not in its members. The United States was not a member at all. Germany joined in 1925. Russia was allowed entry in 1934.
- Britain was given priority over other countries. The permanent members always opposed decisions which went against their own interests.
- Countries defeated in the first world war were burdened with large debts.
- Defeated countries left with some armies. Some territories of the defeated countries were taken away.
- Countries like Japan and Italy on the side of victors in the war were also unhappy with their share of the war spoils.
- The League of Nations lacked universal representation and it had no internal Army.

- . Economic instability is also another reason for failure of League.

Wars of Aggression

The rise of dictator ships frustrated all attempts to maintain peace. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria openly challenged its authority which encouraged Mussolini and Hitler.

Locarno Pact

Member countries started signing pacts which would benefit them. Britain, France , Belgium, Germany and Italy signed a pact called Locarno pact. According to this France, Belgium and Germany agreed that they do not wage war with one other.

Britain and Italy agreed to support the attacked countries.

Militarisation of Japan

Many years ago Japan was having caste system. The people were divided into different castes they are high and low.

- . The high class consisted of Samurai, warriors. The shogun was the head of the samurai class and ruled in the name of the emperor. Shogun were more powerful than the emperor.
- . The low class comprised common traders.

The Meiji restoration

When the caste ended the period between 1867 and 1868, The Meiji restoration took place. During this period the shogun and

samurai classes were dissolved and modern classless military force was emerged. This was the beginning of the modernisation and the militarisation of Japan.

Militarisation

To defend the country a strong military is needed. Developing and maintaining a military is called militarisation. Due to this militarisation Japan became an important factor of World War II.

In 1864, Japanese tribe, Choshu was defeated by the armies of America, Britain, Holland and France. This attack made Japan feel inferior to them in military. To overcome this Meiji central government introduced several military reforms to make Japan as strong as the western powers.

In Japan feudal army was replaced by

National army . Military education was made compulsory . Military academies were opened along with the navy training centre in Tokyo. Here discipline and sense of nationliasm was inculcated among the Japanese. The usage of modern weapons also taught in the academies. Japanese army was given access to railways, telegraph and other facilities.

Japan's attitude resulted in two wars:

- . The Sino-Japanese War -1894
- . The Russo – Japanese War – 1904

Sino-Japanese War -1894

Korea was on the Japanese boarder which had a weak government.Japan feared that the European powers would established control over Korea. So, Japan established military instalation close to its boarders because independence of Korea is essential for Japan's security.

Japan suggested Korea to introduce military reforms but Korea ignored due to this Japan Attacked Korea. Japan said to other countries that they were doing it to protect themselves.

China came to support Korea and declared war on Japan and the war ended with a treaty called Shimonoseki, Japan got some of China's territory including some parts of Manchuria with this victory Japan was considered as one of the great powers of the world.

Russo-Japanese War -1904

Russians supported China in Sino-Japanese war and in return Russia got the Chinese portion of Manchuria. Japan feared that it would be attacked by

Russia at any movement. This resulted into the war of 1904, which ended with the treaty of Portsmouth in 1905.

This victory made Japan gain special rights over Korea and Manchuria. After these victories Japan slowly started emerging as a military power and tried to increase its territory. Japan aided the allies in World War One as the war ended the Japanese realised that they were not given an equal share of the plunders as the western nations but they won back the whole of the Shantung region. Japan lost the Shantung peninsula after the 1921 Washington Conference.

Growing militarisation made army officials of Japan gain control over the government. In 1931 Japan attacked and occupied Manchuria. From 1937 Japan

started conquering main land of China. In 1940 it decided to join hands with Germany and Italy in the Second World War.

Advantages of Militarisation

It made the country an extremely powerful nation.

Its attitude of balancing attack with defence Japan became an important participant in the Second World War.

Disadvantages of Militarisation

Compulsory military education left hardly any one to work in the fields and factories.

Shortage of working hands resulted in to child labour in farms and factories.

Growing militarisation destroyed Japan's industries.

Effects of the Second World War

The Second World War brought economic, social and political transformations.

The Allied force

The allied forces comprised Britain, US, France, Russia and some other countries. The Axis powers included Japan, Italy and Germany. The Axis powers were defeated by the Allied countries in the Second World War.

Division of Germany

The aggressive states of Germany, Italy and Japan were defeated in the second World war. At the end of the Second

World War Germany was divided.
The federal Republic of Germany also known as west Germany was administered by UK, France and the US
The German Democratic Republic known as East Germany was administered by the Soviet Union.

Formation of United Nations

In 1945 the united nations charter was drawn up by representatives of 50 countries at united nations conference in San Francisco. The United Nations Organization was set up in 1945 after the Second World War to maintain peace across the world. The UNO officially came in to existence on 24th October 1945.

Economic Rehabilitation

Britain spent 2000 cores on the war and its resources were almost exhausted. Most of the countries involved in the war were badly effected America and Russia were the only countries who were not completely ruined by the war. This made them emerge into powerful nations with two different ides of government and economic policy.

Marshall Plan

It was formed by US Secretary George C Marshall. Purpose of this was to fight out poverty and economic crisis. The US undertook the European Recovery Program on a grand scale where as the east European countries suffered to recover. It was the economic counter part of the

Truman Doctrine.

The two Super Powers

After the Second world war Britain lost its territories and lost its status as world leader. The United States took part in the war and rose to become a super power. The Soviet Union also emerged as a super power which helped to spread communism.

The Cold War

The two super power with different ideas of government led to a cold war between them . The whole world except some countries like India was divided into two blocks. The cold war came to an end with the Paris treaty when the Soviet Union collapsed.

The Truman Doctrine

the US president Truman introduced a doctrine. This is to render military, oral and economic aid to countries threatened by Communism. The US took up on the responsibility of preventing the spread of communism.

Technology

Research for nuclear energy and modern techniques for peaceful purposes like agriculture , medicine communications etc became popular.

Colonies

After the Second world war many European countries lost their colonies of

Africa and Asia as they were not having sufficient resources to maintain them.

Role of the UN in Preserving World Peace

The Second World War occurred due to the failure of League of Nations. The nations of the world wanted to form a better international organization to prevent future wars. As a result the United Nations Organization was set up in 1945 to maintain peace across the world.

Origin of United Nations

London Declaration

The representatives of Britain, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa met in London and proposed for the first time to establish a world organization. This

is called as London Declaration.

Atlantic Charter

The US president, Franklin Roosevelt and the British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill issued a declaration, called the Atlantic charter. All nations who had signed had to follow the principles of this charter.

The Washinton Declaration

In 1942, met in Washinton and declared United Nations. The term United Nations was first used by the US president Franklin D Roosevelt.

The Moscow Declaration

In 1943, The foreifn ministers of the USA , USSR Great Britain and China declared the necessity of establishing an

international organisation as early as possible. This declaration led to the foundation of UN.

Dumbarton Oaks Conference

A plan was discussed about the formation of an international organisation. Dumberton Oaks proposals were discussed again in a conferwance held at Yalta.

The United Nations organisation
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Purpose

In the Preamble to the UN Charter the objectives of United Nations are outlined. The purposes are divided into four groups they are :

- To maintain international peace and security by suppressing the acts of aggression.
- To develop friendly relations among nations basing on the principal of equal rights and self determination of people.
- To cooperate internationally by solving inter national problems and promoting respect for human rights and freedom.
- To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining disarm, decolonize and develop.

Scientific and Technological Progress

There were many new inventions took place in 20th century. They were the mobile phones, Television sets, Jet planes and computer. This period of inventions can be classified into Atomic Age, Space Age, and Computer Age.

Atomic Age:

Basing on Albert Einstein's theory of energy matter and speed of light formed the atomic age. Scientists found splitting of atom, which generated enormous amount of energy. This formed the basis of the highly destructive atomic bombs. The disasteric effects of atomic

energy was clearly understood by the incidents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The atom bombs dropped in these two places caused the death of at least two lakh people and led to the total devastation of two towns. Organisations all over the world realised the importance of using atomic energy limited only for peaceful purposes.

Space Age

In the 20th century the major advancements were space studies. Many countries developed satellites which could orbit the earth. These are successfully used to gather information about the weather, water resources, oil resources and natural calamities.

Space ships were launched to carry people

into space which made man to reach the moon.

Disadvantages of Space study

Threat of international spying .

Important to be cautious of Star wars.
Space studies are meant for peaceful purposes.

Computer Age

Computer was introduced first by Charles Babbage , which was extremely huge, slow and could perform only few basic tasks like addition and subtraction . At present computers are very small in size and can perform various tasks in fraction of seconds . Computers are used in industries, healthcare, railways and in operating machinery like planes and space ships.