



class 9th notes



# NAZISM AND THE RISE OF HITLER



# ✦ Disclaimer

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# ✦ Introduction

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Germany, a powerful empire in the early 20th century, fought in World War I alongside Austria against the Allies (Britain, France, and Russia). Although Germany initially gained ground by occupying parts of France and Belgium, the entry of the United States in 1917 strengthened the Allies, leading to Germany's defeat in November 1918.

After the war, the German emperor abdicated, and a democratic government was established through the Weimar Republic. A new constitution introduced a federal structure and granted universal voting rights, including to women.

However, the new republic was unpopular among Germans because of the harsh terms imposed on Germany after its defeat in the war.



- ✦ The Treaty of Versailles was extremely harsh on Germany. It forced Germany to lose its colonies, large parts of its population and territory, and significant industrial resources like iron and coal. The Allies also demilitarised Germany to weaken it. Under the War Guilt Clause, Germany was held responsible for World War I and had to pay huge reparations of £6 billion. Additionally, Allied forces occupied the resource-rich Rhineland. Because of these humiliating terms, many Germans blamed the Weimar Republic for the country's defeat and suffering.





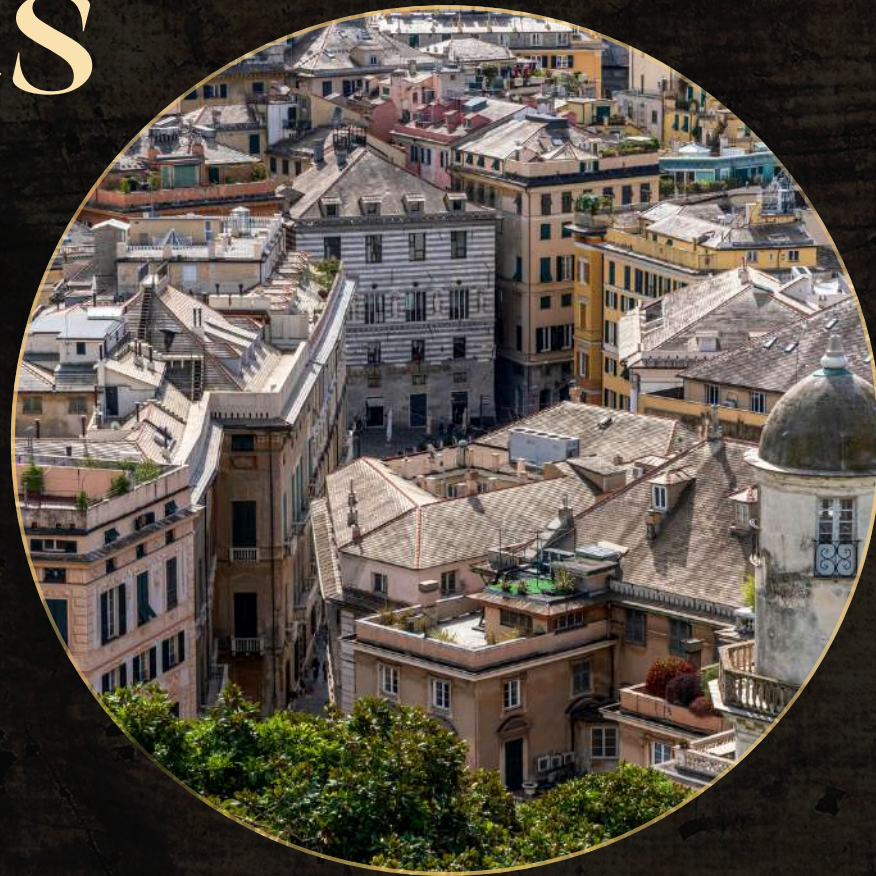
# ✦ The Effects of the War

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World War I had a devastating impact on Europe both psychologically and financially, turning it from a continent of creditors into debtors. The Weimar Republic was burdened with war guilt, national humiliation, and heavy reparations, making it financially weak. Its supporters, like Socialists, Catholics, and Democrats, were criticized and called "November criminals" by nationalist groups.

The war also changed European society by glorifying soldiers and promoting aggressive, masculine values. While propaganda praised trench life, the reality was harsh and miserable. This environment increased support for authoritarian rule, and democracy remained weak and unstable in the interwar period.

# ✦ Political Radicalism and Economic Crises



1.

The Weimar Republic was established during a time of political unrest. Inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution, the Spartacist League led a revolutionary uprising demanding Soviet-style governance. However, the republic suppressed this revolt with the help of the Free Corps. This led to a deep division between Communists and Socialists, weakening opposition to future threats like Hitler.

2.

Germany also faced a severe economic crisis in 1923. Due to war reparations from the Treaty of Versailles, the country's financial condition worsened. When Germany failed to pay, France occupied the Ruhr region.

3.

In response, Germany printed excessive paper money, causing hyperinflation—where the value of money collapsed and prices rose extremely high.

4.

The crisis was eventually controlled with the help of the United States through the Dawes Plan, which reduced Germany's financial burden.

# ✦ The Years of Depression



Between 1924 and 1928, the Weimar Republic experienced temporary stability, but it depended heavily on short-term loans from the USA. This stability collapsed after the Wall Street Crash, which triggered the Great Depression.

The German economy was severely affected—industrial production fell sharply, businesses collapsed, and unemployment rose to around 6 million. People faced poverty, hunger, and desperation, with many turning to crime or losing hope. The middle class suffered as their savings lost value, while farmers and small businessmen were badly hit.

Politically, the Weimar Republic was weak and unstable. Its system of proportional representation led to frequent coalition governments, and Article 48 allowed the President to rule by emergency powers. Due to constant political instability and economic crisis, people lost faith in democracy, making the system vulnerable to dictatorship.

# ✦ Hitler's Rise to Power

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The economic, political, and social crises in Germany created the conditions for the rise of Adolf Hitler. Born in Austria in 1889, Hitler served in World War I and was deeply affected by Germany's defeat and the harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles. In 1919, he joined the German Workers' Party, later transforming it into the Nazi Party. Although his early attempt to seize power in 1923 failed, the party gained massive support during the Great Depression, when people were facing unemployment and economic hardship.



Hitler became popular due to his powerful speeches and promises to restore Germany's strength, provide jobs, and reverse the humiliation of Versailles. The Nazis used propaganda, mass rallies, and symbols to influence people and create a sense of unity. Hitler was projected as a saviour, which appealed to a population suffering from crisis and loss of national pride.

# ✦ The Destruction of Democracy

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On 30 January 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor by President Paul von Hindenburg. After gaining power, Hitler quickly began dismantling democracy in Germany.

Following the Reichstag fire in February 1933, the Fire Decree suspended key civil rights like freedom of speech, press, and assembly. Hitler then targeted his main opponents, especially Communists, many of whom were arrested and sent to concentration camps.

The passing of the Enabling Act in March 1933 established Hitler's dictatorship, allowing him to rule without parliamentary approval. All political parties and trade unions were banned except the Nazi Party, and the state took full control over major institutions.

To maintain control, the Nazis created powerful security forces like the Gestapo, SS, and other agencies. These forces had extreme powers, allowing arrests, detention, and punishment without legal procedures, turning Germany into a highly repressive and authoritarian state.

Concentration camp – A camp where people were isolated and detained without due process of law. Typically, it was surrounded by electrified barbed wire fences

# ✦ Reconstruction

- Adolf Hitler focused on economic recovery by appointing economist Hjalmar Schacht, who introduced state-funded programs to achieve full employment and production. This led to major projects like highways and the Volkswagen.
- In foreign policy, Hitler achieved early successes by leaving the League of Nations, reoccupying the Rhineland, and uniting Austria with Germany. He also expanded into Czechoslovakia, gaining support from countries like Britain. These actions boosted Germany's power and confidence.
- However, Hitler aimed for further expansion and chose war as a solution to economic problems. In 1939, Germany invaded Poland, starting World War II. Germany initially expanded rapidly, forming alliances with Italy and Japan.
- Hitler later attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, which proved to be a major mistake. The Soviet forces defeated Germany at the Battle of Stalingrad, leading to a major decline in Nazi power. Meanwhile, the United States entered the war after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.
- The war ended in 1945 with Germany's defeat and the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan, marking the end of Nazi rule.



# ✦ The Nazi Worldview

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Nazi ideology, based on the views of Adolf Hitler, promoted a racial hierarchy where Aryan Germans (blond, blue-eyed) were considered superior, while Jews were placed at the lowest level and treated as enemies. Other races were ranked in between based on physical features.

These ideas were influenced by thinkers like Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. Although Darwin's theory of evolution was scientific, it was misused by the Nazis to justify racism and the belief that only the strongest race should survive and dominate.

Another key idea was Lebensraum (living space), which meant expanding German territory to provide land and resources for its people. Hitler aimed to expand eastwards, especially into Poland, to unite Germans and strengthen the nation.



# ✦ Establishment of the Racial State

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After coming to power, Adolf Hitler and the Nazis aimed to create a racially “pure” society of Nordic Aryans by eliminating all those considered “undesirable.” This included not only Jews but also groups like Gypsies, Blacks, Poles, and Russians, who were seen as racially inferior.

The Nazis implemented policies like the Euthanasia Programme, under which people with physical or mental disabilities were killed. In occupied regions like Poland and Russia, many civilians were forced into slave labour and died due to harsh conditions.

Jews were the worst affected. Nazi ideology, based on racist and pseudoscientific beliefs, viewed them as the main enemies. Between 1933 and 1938, Jews were persecuted, segregated, and forced to leave Germany. From 1939 to 1945, they were systematically confined and ultimately killed in large numbers, especially in extermination camps.



# ✦ The Racial Utopia

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- During the war, the Nazis intensified their policy of racial domination, making genocide a central part of their rule. Under Adolf Hitler, occupied Poland was divided, with large areas annexed to Germany and populated by ethnic Germans.
- Polish people were forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to segregated areas, where they lived under harsh and inhumane conditions. Many members of the educated class were killed to weaken resistance, while children who appeared racially “fit” were taken away and raised as Germans.
- Poland also became the main centre for Nazi atrocities, where ghettos and extermination camps were established. Jews and other “undesirables” were systematically confined and killed, making the region a major site of mass genocide.



# ✦ Youth in Nazi Germany



1.

Adolf Hitler placed great importance on controlling and shaping the youth to build a strong Nazi society. Education and upbringing were strictly controlled to spread Nazi ideology.

2.

Schools were “cleansed” by removing Jewish and politically unreliable teachers. Jewish and other “undesirable” children were segregated, expelled, and later even sent to death camps. For “pure” German children, education was redesigned to promote racism, loyalty to Hitler, hatred for Jews, and acceptance of violence and aggression.

3.

Textbooks were rewritten to justify Nazi racial theories, and even subjects like sports were used to build strength and a war-like mindset. Youth organisations like the Jungvolk and Hitler Youth trained children to follow Nazi beliefs, glorify war, and reject democracy.

4.

All other youth groups were banned, ensuring complete control over young minds and preparing them to serve the Nazi state in the future.

# ◆ The Nazi Cult of Motherhood

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- In Nazi Germany, Adolf Hitler promoted strict gender roles, believing that men and women had completely different responsibilities. Boys were trained to be aggressive, strong, and prepared for war, while girls were taught to become good mothers and raise “pure” Aryan children.
- Women were expected to maintain racial purity, take care of the home, and pass on Nazi values to their children. The regime encouraged Aryan women to have more children by giving rewards and honours, while those who did not follow these ideals or had “undesirable” children were punished.



Women who maintained relationships with Jews or other groups considered inferior were publicly humiliated and severely punished. Overall, women were valued mainly for their role in supporting Nazi racial policies and contributing to the growth of the Aryan population.

# ✦ The Art of Propaganda

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- The Nazi regime carefully used language and media to control people's thoughts and gain support. Under Adolf Hitler, harsh actions like mass killings were hidden behind misleading terms such as "final solution," "special treatment," and "euthanasia," making them sound less brutal.
- Media played a major role in spreading Nazi ideology. Through posters, films, radio, and slogans, the Nazis promoted their ideas and created hatred against groups they considered enemies, especially Jews. These groups were stereotyped, insulted, and portrayed as dangerous or inferior.



- Propaganda was used to influence emotions, spread fear and anger, and convince people that only the Nazi regime could solve their problems. This manipulation of language and media helped strengthen Nazi control over society.

# ✦ Ordinary People and the Crimes Against Humanity

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- The reaction of common people to Nazism was mixed. Many Germans supported Nazi ideas, adopting their language and showing hatred towards Jews, believing that Nazism would bring prosperity and improve their lives.
- However, not all Germans supported the regime. Some people actively resisted, risking their lives. But the majority remained passive and silent, often out of fear or indifference. As Martin Niemöller highlighted, this silence allowed Nazi crimes to continue without opposition.
- At the same time, some people viewed the Nazi period positively because of economic improvements and stability, even if they ignored its brutality. For Jews, however, life was filled with fear, persecution, and psychological trauma. Constant propaganda and discrimination deeply affected them, even shaping their thoughts and dreams.

# ✦ Knowledge about the Holocaust

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- The full extent of Nazi atrocities became clear to the world only after Germany's defeat in World War II. During the regime, information about these crimes was limited, but after the war, the horrors of the Holocaust were widely revealed.
- While Germans focused on rebuilding their country, Jewish survivors wanted the world to remember the suffering they had endured. Many victims documented their experiences through diaries and records to ensure that these events were not forgotten.
- Even though the Nazis tried to destroy evidence, the memory of the Holocaust survived through writings, memorials, museums, and documentaries. Today, it stands as a reminder of the dangers of hatred and silence, honouring victims and warning future generations.

# ✦ Gandhi Ji's Letter

As at Wardha  
C.P.  
India.  
23.7.'39.

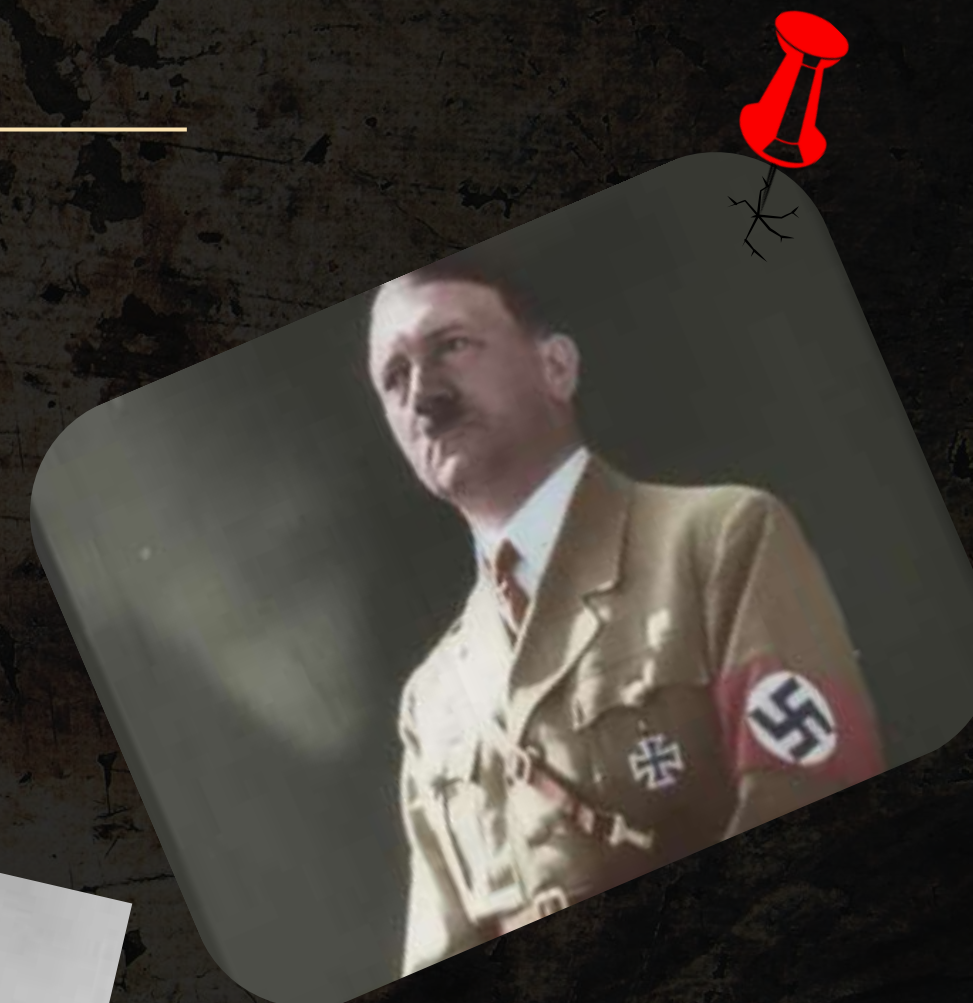
Dear friend,

Friends have been urging me to write to you for the sake of humanity. But I have resisted their request, because of the feeling that any letter from me would be an impertinence. Something tells me that I must not calculate and that I must make my appeal for whatever it may be worth.

It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state. Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has seliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Any way I anticipate your forgiveneas, if I have erred in writing to you.

Herr Hitler  
Berlin  
Germany.

I remain,  
Your sincere friend  
M.K. Gandhi





Class 9<sup>th</sup> Notes



THANK  
YOU