

Subject : Junior Cycle History
Teacher : Niall Lenehan

LESSON 17
Life in Nazi Germany

1. Understand life in a Fascist country: Nazi Germany

3.9 examine life in one fascist country and one communist country in the twentieth century

Key Words - define these

Democracy

Dictatorship

Racism

Anti-Semitism

Propaganda

Master Race

Nationalism

What was Fascism?

After WW1, both Germany and Italy became fascist countries. But what were the main ideas of fascism?

1. **Extreme Nationalism:** Glorifying their own nation, expanding its power over other nations.
2. **Racism:** Other races were inferior to theirs.
3. **Hatred of Communism:** Believed Communism was evil and wanted to conquer the world.
4. **Opposed democracy:** Believed democracy was weak.
5. **Cult of personality:** the belief that their leader is the greatest and most admired leader in the world.



Hitler and members of the SA

How did the Nazis get into power?

1. **Weakness of the Weimar Republic:** A parliamentary government in place after WWI & blamed for defeat in war & for accepting harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles.
2. **The Great Depression:** After Wall Street Crash of 1929, Great Depression spread to Germany. Unemployment rose to 6 million by 1932. Weimar Government could not solve economic problem.
3. **Hitler's Nazi Party:** Hitler intended to get power by democratic means & after that establish a dictatorship. The Nazi party won many seats in the elections & became largest party in the Reichstag.
4. **Hitler's policies:** Hitler made sure his policies appealed to as many people as possible; his opposition to the Treaty appealed to everybody; anti-communism policy to businessmen; he promised to revive the economy and end unemployment.
5. **Propaganda:** Hitler & the Nazis used clever propaganda techniques to get their message across to people; he blamed Germany's troubles on the Treaty of Versailles, the Jews & communists; he was an outstanding speaker.
6. **SA & SS:** SA (Brownshirts) & SS (Blackshirts) used violence to attack opposition parties. They intimidated all opposition political opponents.



The SA putting up signs outside Jewish owned businesses

Life in Nazi Germany

President Hindenburg made Hitler chancellor of Germany in January 1933. A Dutch Communist burned down the Reichstag building – Hitler used this as an excuse to ban Communism and pass the **Enabling Law**.

- All political parties and trade unions were banned.
- The **SS and Gestapo** spied on everybody and could arrest at will.
- All forms of media were tightly controlled.
- Opponents of Hitler were sent to concentration camps such as Dachau.



The Reichstag fire

The Night of the Long Knives

- The SA, one of Hitler paramilitary groups had become too large and threatened Hitler's power.
- The SS assassinate many of the **SA's leadership**, including its leader **Ernst Röhm**.
- Officially just under 100 members die. This wipes out opposition to Hitler within the Nazi Party. It also gives more power to the SS.



Cartoon depicting the night of the long knives

Nazi Propaganda

Censorship of the press

- All newspapers were controlled by the government and could only print stories favorable to the Nazi regime.

Control of radio broadcasts.

- Radios, called the '**People's Receiver**', were sold very cheaply so that most Germans could afford one and listen to Hitler's speeches.
- **Loudspeakers** were also placed by the Nazis in places like cafes, factories, town squares and street corners, so everyone could hear the Nazi message.



The people's receiver

Nazi Propaganda

Mass rallies

- These public displays of support for Nazism involved music, speeches and demonstrations of German strength. The biggest one was held each year in August at Nuremberg.



Nuremberg rallies

Recap exercise 17.1

- Q1. Explain three characteristics of fascism.
- Q2. Explain three things that helped the Nazis rise to power.
- Q3. What was the 'Night of the Long Knives?'
- Q4. Explain three ways the Nazis used propaganda.



Examples of anti-Jewish propaganda

Young people in Nazi Germany

- **In 1933, the Hitler Youth took over all youth movements in Germany. They aimed to:**
 1. Control and brainwash young people outside the classroom.
 2. Make them loyal to Hitler.
 3. Train boys to be soldiers.
- Girls joined the **League of German maidens** where they were thought to be good housewives and mothers.



A Hitler Youth member learning to shoot

Women in Nazi Germany

- He believed women's lives should revolve around the three '**Ks**': **Kinder, Küche, Kirche** (Children, Kitchen, Church).
- The Nazis expected women to stay at home, look after the family and produce children.

This was for two reasons:

1. He wanted them to raise more **Aryan** children who would become soldiers
 2. He needed their **jobs for the unemployed men**.
- To encourage women to have children, he gave them a **marriage loan** for women who left their jobs and had children.

Jews in Nazi Germany

- Hitler believed that the **German Aryan race (Herrenvolk)** was the superior race and all others were inferior.
- Hitler had a hatred of Jews (Anti-Semitism) and persecuted them.
- Hitler **banned Jews from many aspects of German life** – They could not work in certain jobs or even dine in cafes. Jewish businesses were boycotted.
- **The Nuremberg laws (1935)** brought many of these anti-Semitic ideas into law.



Jews wearing the star of David

The Night of Broken Glass

- On November 7, 1938, a Polish-Jewish student named Herschel Grynszpan shot the German diplomat Ernst von Rath, who died two days later.
- 3 days later, Nazis attacked Jewish persons and property throughout Germany and Austria.
- They attacked synagogues as well as Jewish shops and businesses. 90 Jews were killed, and many others were sent to concentration camps.
- By 1939, 300,000 Jews had emigrated from Germany.



Jewish businesses destroyed during the Night of Broken Glass

Workers in Nazi Germany

- Hitler wanted to eliminate unemployment when he came to power.
- The Nazis provided **public work schemes** to build motorways and infrastructure.
- Employment was provided through **rearmament** as military machinery needed to be built.
- **Strength through Joy** organised leisure activities for workers.
- Hitler expanded the motor industry and funded the development of the **Volkswagen** (peoples car) so all citizens could afford a car – Hitler failed to deliver on this promise.



German workers and the Volkswagen Beetle

17.2 Exam Prep

Q. Write an account of life in a fascist country you have studied. In your answer, refer to at least two of the following:

- How Fascists came to power
- Propaganda

- Use of terror
- The life of young people
- The Role of Women
- The economy
- Racial policies

17.3 Homework Correction

Q1. Where was De Valera when he wrote this letter?

He was in Kilmainham Prison

Q2. How was De Valera to be punished for his part in the Easter Rising?

He was to be shot for his part in the Easter Rising

Q3. What are two things De Valera asks Jack to do for him in this letter?

He asked Jack to help his wife by giving her advice as to what to do with the children. He also asks him to 'remember me' to your mother, Sherwin and others. He also asks Jack to pray for him.

Q4. How did the British government try to defeat the IRA during the war of Independence?

The British Government tried to defeat the IRA in a number of ways. They formed the Black and Tans who were ex-soldiers. They got their name as they wore a mixture of RIC and army uniforms. The Auxiliaries were also formed to boost the RIC. Both of these forces were given free reign to try and control the Irish population. They often carried out reprisals against the civilian population of Ireland in response to IRA attacks. For example, 14 innocent civilians were killed in Croke Park by the Auxiliaries and the Black and Tans on Bloody Sunday on 21st November 1920.

Q5. State two terms of the Anglo-Irish Treaty

Ireland would be a dominion of the United Kingdom
Irish TD's would swear an Oath of Allegiance to the British Crown.

Q6. Explain two impacts of the Civil War on Ireland

There was widespread death and destruction with 1000 deaths and 38-million-euro worth of property damage.

There was long lasting bitterness between both sides which would remain in Irish politics for years to come.