Hitler’s Rise to Power
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Hitler’s Rise to Power

Countless people were wounded and killed throughout the course of World War II. It was a tragic event that the world will remember forever. Never before was there an event that involved so many deaths and extensive use of weapons. One prominent figure from that tragedy was Adolf Hitler, also known as der Führer, who led Germany through World War II. Despite being in power for about a decade, Hitler had a rough time in his early years and had to accomplish a number of things before becoming Germany’s chancellor and president. His rise to power includes one of the most intriguing ways a figure overcame such a task.

Early Life

Adolf Hitler was born as the fourth child out of six to Alois Hitler and Klara Polzl on 20 April 1889 in Braunau, Austria-Hungary. After first attending school at the age of six, Hitler and his family migrated to Linz, the upper Austrian capital, in 1898. In 1903, Alois passed away when Adolf was thirteen, and two years later, his mother allowed him to drop out of school. Unfortunately, his mother tragically passed away in the fall of 1907 after being diagnosed with breast cancer. With lack of financial support, Hitler moved to Vienna, Austria, in February 1908, hoping that he would eventually receive a job and be able to financially support himself (“Adolf Hitler”).

When Hitler arrived in Vienna, he worked as a laborer and a painter while living in a men’s hostel for the next four years. In that four-year period, he constantly struggled to live with limited supplies. He applied twice to the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, but was rejected both times. Surprisingly, Hitler was deeply influenced by the kind of propaganda he noticed.
while living in Vienna. He was fascinated by the way the government operated, which would eventually shape the rest of his future. From then on, Hitler would go on to be a political figure, soon engaging in political activities after the end of World War I (“Adolf Hitler”).

Introduction to Politics

Hitler moved to Munich, Germany, to escape military conscription after living in Vienna for four years. After arriving, he temporarily escaped conscription for the German army for World War I, but in August 1904, he was enrolled, even though he still retained Austrian citizenship. As Germany surrendered in 1918, Hitler was deeply shocked at the war effort Germany put as a nation. Consequently, this lead him to have extreme hatred to the ones he thought were to blame for the loss, which included civilian leaders and Marxists, who were communist politicians (“Adolf Hitler”). The Treaty of Versailles was put into place and handed very harsh penalties on Germany, including a compensation amount equivalent to ten trillion dollars. Penalties like these, Hitler believed, humiliated Germany as a nation, and was destined to fight back to regain its lost pride (Freeman 13, 15).

Hitler enrolled into the intelligence and propaganda section for the German army as a spy after World War I ended. He then joined the German Workers’ Party in 1920, which he would later change to the National Socialist German Workers’ Party, or Nazi Party. The Nazi Party was an extreme anti-communist and anti-Semitic party, meaning that it was against communism and Jews. In 1921, Hitler became the leader of the Nazi Party after defeating Anton Draxler. No one expected this to happen because no one thought that an Austrian-born could become the leader of the second biggest political party in Germany (“Hitler’s Rise”).

Several months later, Hitler led two thousand other Nazis with him to the Beer Hall in Munich where a meeting of the three most important politicians of Bavarian politics was taking place. The following day, when Hitler and the Nazis marched on the streets, the police used force and opened up fire after the government thought he was a threat. He managed to
escape the riot, but later was captured and put in Landsberg prison for nine months for treason. In those nine months, he wrote a book, Mein Kampf (My Struggle), in which he talks about his struggles in life and his future ideologies regarding German politics. For the next two years, the Nazi Party’s popularity would decrease drastically, until Hitler re-found it in 1925 (“Hitler’s Rise”).

**Chancellor of Germany**

Germany entered economic depression in 1929. Hitler and the Nazis took full advantage of this and blamed the current government for it. They thought the Nazi Party could win the Reichstag (German Parliament) and take control over Germany (“Nazi Party”).

In 1932, after becoming an official German citizen, Hitler defeated President Hindenburg and thus became the Chancellor of Germany. The Enabling Act was passed in 1933, in which all the legislative power was given to Hitler’s cabinet. All of the political parties, except for the Nazi Party, were eradicated (“Adolf Hitler”). Later on in the months to follow, Hitler tripled the size of the Germany army and became its supreme commander, which was a violation of one of the sanctions put on Germany in the Treaty of Versailles. Several meetings were held between Germany, Britain and France, but no final decision could be made regarding Hitler’s actions. In the same year, Heinrich Himmler announced the opening first concentration camp, Dachau, which included prisoners of war, artists, intellectuals, gypsies and physically disabled people (“Hitler’s Rise”).

Despite known for being a relatively cruel and ruthless person, Hitler was also a speech-giving specialist. With only a few speeches he had gained the respect, trust and admiration of most of the Germans. One way how he became a hero in the eyes of the Germans was by treating them as a group, rather than individuals. “Hitler and the Nazi Party treated the German people as if they were one entity, because individuals are rational, think for themselves, and are concerned about their own well-being; whereas groups are
unintelligent and easily persuaded” (“How Was”). His speech-giving ability would be the backbone of his success as the Chancellor of Germany.

In June 1934 Hitler eliminated all of his political rivals so he could ensure full control over Germany. This event became known as the Night of Long Knives (“Hitler’s Rise”). This was a major turning point in German politics, because as soon as Hitler became chancellor, drastic changes were taking place. Some people viewed him as a dictator, while some viewed him as a hero that would regain German nationalism and transform it into a world superpower. Albert Einstein viewed Hitler as a threat, and as a result, fled Germany and settled in America. He thought he might use his scientific intelligence to his advantage and seek his help to make the first atomic bomb (“Hitler’s Rise”).

Hitler’s main foreign policy for Germany for the next few years would be to undo the Treaty of Versailles. In the mid 1930s, he initiated military conscription, which would exponentially increase the size of the Germany army. A number of European countries started to pay attention to what was happening in Germany. In 1938, Austria’s new chancellor wants to unite with Germany, and succeeded in doing so. After accomplishing that, Hitler met British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in Germany. Later, France, Britain and Italy agree for Germany to occupy Sudetenland, a piece of land located in Czechoslovakia, which included a German population. It was occupied by Germany in October 1938 (“Hitler’s Rise”).

The Holocaust

A very tragic event took place in November of 1938, known as Kristallnacht. It was the main turning point regarding concentration camps because the number of people being sent there increased after this event. This was the response to the Jews from the Germans after a Jew boy in France killed a German officer. In total, around one hundred German Jews were murdered; the whole Jewish community was fined one billion German marks; at least
three hundred synagogues were burned down and around thirty thousand Jews were sent to concentration camps. This was one of the first major actions against the Jews, thus claiming to be the beginning of the Holocaust ("Kristallnacht").

To conclude, it wasn’t easy for Hitler to rise to power. He had a difficult childhood and didn’t have the required support and motivation needed to move on. However, he tried very hard and where he was at the end was only because of him. Nonetheless, what he did was completely ridiculous. Killing millions of Jews and using force against any one of his rivals wasn’t the right thing to do. Eventually, Germany lost World War II and Hitler committed suicide, so none of his rivals or enemies could seize his corpses. He wouldn’t let anyone to take his If he had used his ability to change people’s mentalities in a good way, the history of the world would’ve been very different as to what it is today.
Bibliography


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