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1-27-19

Rise and Fall: Nazi Germany

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“How did Hitler establish the ideology of Anti-Semitism?”

Abstract

With Judaism being my religion, studying the Holocaust has become a huge impact on me. I have been able to learn about the challenges of World War II in multiple ways. One day, I had the pleasure to meet a Holocaust survivor in Los Angeles named Regina Hirsch. She told her story about what happened to her family while she was in France, and how she was able to escape the war, migrate to America, and create a good life. Throughout my adventures in Israel, The Netherlands, France, Germany, and Poland, I have visited several holocaust memorials that depict Adolf Hitler's life and what guided him to become a cruel, mischievous, and presumptuous man after having a very difficult childhood. I have also done a presentation explaining Hitler's path to power after fighting in World War I. Having learned about what happened to Jews and Communists in the 1920s to mid 1940s motivated me to enhance my knowledge on Hitler's racist beliefs. Being an advocate for anti-semitism with some of my fellow Jewish friends, I have established a question regarding Hitler's ideology. It is not possible to find a straightforward answer to this question. However, it can be discussed in several ways by doing a good amount of research, obtaining answers from experts, exploring history museums, and concentration camps.

Introduction

Why did Adolf Hitler develop an ideology of being cruel towards Jews and Communists?

For someone who is considered to be a complete evil doer, Adolf Hitler's story is still unclear regarding his own downfall. His plan to kill certain people because of one religion and opposing political parties was a form of self loathing and hatred. There were a good amount of Germans supporting his intentions to exterminate Jews, which I think is extremely depressing, and humiliating. I have researched five useful factors that partially contribute to Hitler's opposition for Jews:

Religious Conflict – Conflicts between Christianity and Judaism perpetuated, and it created an atmosphere of anti-semitism in Europe. ¹ **Anti-semitism in Vienna** – Hitler spent most of his childhood in Vienna, Austria, where citizens were advocating for anti-semitism. He was intrigued by some of the ideological ideas that were discussed. ² **“Jewish Economic Power** – By the time when World War 1 ended, most of the financial institutions, banks and large companies were managed by Jewish people. Hitler was fed up with the loss of the war, the collapse of the German economy and the poor decisions of the Weimar Republic on Jewish capitalism.” ³ **Conspiracy theory** – Hitler believed that the Jews had some plan to become rulers of the world, and that they would hurt Germans in the back whenever they thought it was the time to. ⁴ **Biological differences** – Hitler and many Nazis believed that Jews were inferior and that the Aryan German race was superior. He felt that he would be saving the world by destroying the Jewish race. ⁵

Yet again, there is still no clear answer as to why Hitler could develop such a cruel, racist, ideological plan. As I continue to think about how terribly the Jews were treated during the Holocaust, I think about the camps and museums I explored during my travels. When I visited the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in the suburbs of Berlin, I went through an exhibition that depicts the names of the Jews who were prisoned in the camp during WWII. To

¹ “Hitler’s Antisemitism,” January 23rd, 2019 <https://www.historyonthenet.com/adolph-hitler>

² “Hitler’s Antisemitism,” January 23rd, 2019 <https://www.historyonthenet.com/adolph-hitler>

³ “Hitler’s Antisemitism,” January 23rd, 2019 <https://www.historyonthenet.com/adolph-hitler>

⁴ “Hitler’s Antisemitism,” January 23rd, 2019 <https://www.historyonthenet.com/adolph-hitler>

⁵ “Hitler’s Antisemitism,” January 23rd, 2019 <https://www.historyonthenet.com/adolph-hitler>

continue finding more results, I have also expanded my research focusing on Hitler's interest in politics and his book Mein Kampf.

Hitler's interest in politics

According to the Holocaust Encyclopedia, "Hitler had personal and business relationships with Jews in Vienna."⁶ During his time in Vienna, he relied on Jews to help him for his living. Now that there is an idea of why Hitler began disliking Jews, there is another piece of evidence that also affected Hitler's ideology in anti-semitism. There were two movements that occurred in Vienna, Austria. The first one was the "German racist nationalism propagated by the Upper Austrian Pan-German politician Georg von Schonerer." The second one was the establishment of an anti-Semitism that was done by Karl Lueger, who was the mayor of Vienna more than a century ago.⁷ It was a more practical and organization anti-Semitism that reinforced Jews as enemies of the German middle and lower classes.⁸ Unlike Schonerer, who was used to the elitist nationalism of the student fraternities, Lueger was able to adapt to crowds in urban areas and knew how to channel their protest into political gain.⁹ Hitler mostly outlined his ideology from Schonerer, but developed his strategy and tactics from Lueger.¹⁰

Hitler migrated to Munich, Germany in 1913. One year later, he fought in World War I as a strong, and brave soldier. He won multiple medals after feeling wounded twice, and still managing to survive during the battle. Within the last two years, Hitler's plan towards anti-semitism was carried. According to Hitler's point of view, "he believed Germany lost the war because of enemy propaganda, not defeat on the battlefield."¹¹ Even if his ideological beliefs lead him to change his feelings about Jews, his antisemitic ideology was not established until

⁶ "Vienna," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler-early-years-1889-1913>

⁷ "Influences upon Hitler in Vienna," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler-early-years-1889-1913>

⁸ "Influences upon Hitler in Vienna," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler-early-years-1889-1913>

⁹ "Influences upon Hitler in Vienna," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler-early-years-1889-1913>

¹⁰ "Influences upon Hitler in Vienna," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler-early-years-1889-1913>

¹¹ "Military Service," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/adolf-hitler-and-world-war-i-1913-1919>

World War I was over. The events that happened in Vienna after World War I also made a huge impact on his racist ideology. He earned a position with the German Army. On September 12, 1919, he attended a meeting with the German Worker's Party. Four days later, he drafted his plan, which was to eliminate the Jews all over Western and Eastern Europe. By the time Hitler begins writing his book, he starts to reflect on what he experienced with religious differences and the conflicts that he encountered.

Mein Kampf his book

During class at Humboldt University, I did a presentation on Hitler's path to power, where I discussed two volumes of how Hitler wrote the book *Mein Kampf* during and after his time in prison. The first volume discusses Hitler's childhood, what he did during World War I, and the collapse of Germany in 1918. It also clarifies Hitler's plan to kill all the Jews from Germany and other European countries. In the book, Hitler stated the "sacred mission of the German people to assemble and preserve the most valuable racial elements and raise them to the dominant position."¹² The second volume explains the National Socialist Movement, which occurs after Hitler is released from prison. The National Socialist Movement is the political situation that emphasizes the terrorist plans in order to earn new power. Now that we know how Hitler's book *Mein Kampf* was published, a lot of people are asking for other reasons as to why Hitler wrote it. One reason was to present a variety of public calls, like "the annexation of Austria to Germany, occupation of more "space to live" (*Lebensraum*) for the German people at the expense of other countries, and, as stated, "exposing" the plans of the Jews to take control of the world."¹³

Another reason was so he could earn enough money and afford to capitalize the lawyers he selected before he became the Chancellor of Germany. His book became more popular in 1933. More than 11 million copies were sold close to the end of the Nazi period. *Mein Kampf* was his most powerful resource when discussing the plans for the New Germany. Even though his book was successful, the impact of it was limited. According to the Weimar Republic, "the

¹² "Encyclopedia Britannica," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Mein-Kampf>

¹³ "From Ideology to Racism: Hitler's *Mein Kampf*," Jan. 23rd, 2019 <http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/collections/personalsites/Israel-Germany/Weimar-Republic/Pages/Mein-Kampf.aspx>

book was not taken seriously by the critics of political books, with the exception of those who were a part of the Fascist movement in Germany.”¹⁴ Several of his words in the book were copied and pasted from other books. Considering the fact that Hitler was very dependent with the help he could receive from others when preparing new materials, it showed that Hitler did not have the capabilities to write consistent or reasonable texts. If others were to read it, they would have trouble understanding what he is proposing. That is also why numerous copies of his book were disseminated. To me, it is surprising that there were some people interested in Hitler’s ideas after having read Mein Kampf.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I have been able to find supporting answers to my question, but there is still more discovery that has to be done because more questions are being asked. With the difficult life and history Hitler was living with, I am certain that there was not a single piece of guidance that would have helped him become a more professional leader throughout the political realm. It is very difficult to imagine how pure evil an individual can become after losing their parents, and siblings at a young age. Even if there are unpredictable outcomes for the Jews, I still believe that anti-semitism can be abolished.

¹⁴ “From Ideology to Racism,” January 23rd, 2019
<http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/collections/personalsites/Israel-Germany/Weimar-Republic/Pages/Mein-Kampf.aspx>

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