

Nazism



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Nazi Ambitions The horrific actions of the Third Reich were a culmination of centuries of German cultural bonding through nationalistic ideas. By the 1930's nationalism or 'Volkism' had come to imply much more than its initial concepts of culture, heritage and value of a race to the German populous. The anti-Semitism and subsequent deeds that typifies Hitler's reign had been building up among the German people for decades. Though the Nazi's capitalized on growing nationalistic emotions that were originally derived from nationalism, the emotional aftermath of WWI combined with an already unstable social environment served as the catalysts that led to Hitler's ascension. The acceptance of the German public of Hitler and his government though irrational, was not unexplainable. The horrific actions of the Third Reich are well documented. The end result of the Nazi's evil ideologies included the occupation of most European nations and the 'final solution,' the annihilation of over six million Jews. During this the rise of Nazism, the ethnic and romantic ideals of 'Blood and Fatherland' gained impetus. According to this notion, German blood and the German fatherland were holy and those ethnic minorities within the country that did not belong to the German race were seen as contaminating German blood and tarnishing the German fatherland. This stream of thought brought to bear an enormous influence on the Nazi ideology, which viewed "the spilling of blood as part of a holy crusade" (Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln, 1991: 189). In his rise to power, Hitler garnered support by holding rallies but his oratories were hardly credible or persuasive on an intellectual level. Usually, his speeches were predictable, repetitious and lacked substantive arguments. The influence of minds was spawned by the delivery of the speeches which possessed energy and a hypnotic, rhythmic pulse to them. This, combined

with the in-place infection of mass nationalistic emotions built up over decades, produced a mass hysteria within the thousands of people packed together in a confined area. " What one witnesses at Hitler's rallies is an ' alteration of consciousnesses' such as psychologists generally associate with a mystical experience" (Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln, 1991: 199). Throughout history, many nations have conquered others for various reasons while oppressing its people but why was a particular race of people systematically killed? How could such a fervent hatred of Jews infect an entire national conscience causing such unconscionable acts to be perpetrated? In spite of popular opinion, it didn't happen because the people of Germany fell into a hypnotic trance and all of a sudden felt compelled to murder innocents simply from hearing Hitler's speeches. (Dawidowicz, 1986: 3). Many citizens of Germany were unaware of the Concentration Camps, including the residents of the towns where the camps were located. The executions were carried out by the German army with SS troops in charge of the operations. Though the average German citizen was not aware of the Holocaust, many shared the opinion that Jews were an inferior race and viewed the invasions of neighboring sovereign nations as patriotic conquests. It is impossible to know if the average German citizen had aspirations of global domination. Given the prevailing ' superior race' ideology, it doesn't seem a far step that Germans might consider themselves to be both biologically and theologically predestined to dominate over all other cultures and races of the world. The Nazi's spread mass fear and destruction by blitzkrieg tactics, confiscated thousands of priceless artworks that had been an important part of a country's history for hundreds or thousands of years, confiscated property and eradicated or enslaved the local population. The total cultural, economic

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and military domination of surrounding countries was a cleverly calculated multi-pronged scheme that experienced early successes but did not achieve the intended eventual outcome of global dominion. Nazi propaganda fanned the flames of deep-rooted existing feelings of nationalism evoking strong emotions amongst the majority of German citizens. The unknowing German people and the most fervent of Nazi's did have a nationalistic idealism in common, however, which was the underlying reason for the extermination of the Jewish race. This common idealism was developed from the culmination of centuries of German cultural bonding through the ideas of nationalism, with roots that had begun the century before. Works Cited Baigent, Michael; Leigh, Richard & Lincoln, Henry. (1991). *The Messianic Legacy*. London: Corgi Books. Dawidowicz, Lucy S. (1986). *The War Against the Jews: 1933-1945*. New York: Bantam Books.