

L20 & 21: How and Why Hitler Rose to Power

Agenda

Objectives:

To understand...

1. The means through which the Nazi party rose to power in 1933
2. Why the Nazi party was able to come to power.

Schedule:

1. Lecture & Discussion

Homework:

1. Continue to work on pre-writing (1&2): Rolling Deadline...Remember:

- Last Day to Turn in Working Paper: Fri 4/11 (New Date)

2. Unit Test & HW: Mon 4/14

Adolph Hitler: Early Life

Early Life and World War One

- 1889-1945
- Born in Austria-Hungary, lived in Germany & Austria-Hungary throughout childhood.
- Father died when he was 14, mother died when he was 21. Following the death of his mother, he was broke and living in a house for poor working men.
- Was rejected twice by the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna because of “unfitness for painting.”





Hitler and World War One

- Enlisted in World War One on behalf of Germany.
 - Served as a runner.
- In 1918 was admitted to a hospital for temporary blindness following mustard gas attack.
- Found the war to be the greatest experience of his life.
- He was shocked by Germany's request for armistice.
 - He believed that Germany was still in a position to win the war as they still held enemy territory.



*Hitler Joins the Nazi Party
&
Rises to Leader
1921*

Joining the Nazi Party & Rise to Nazi Leader

- After the war, Hitler was appointed to the position of police spy in the intelligence wing of the German Army.
- One of his first jobs was to infiltrate a small political party, the German Worker's Party (DAP) (*Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*).
- While spying on the group, was impressed by the ideas and members of the group and he joined the party.
- To increase the party's appeal the party changed its name to the National Socialist German Workers Party (NSDAP, *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*) Nazi Party.
- Impressed with his oratory skills, Hitler was made leader of the Nazi Party in 1921.



Who Were the Nazis?

- Lower-middle class
- Spotty employment history
 - Failed businesses
 - Frequent job changes
 - Long-term unemployment
- WWI vets
- Trends?
 - What would the Nazis do for these types of individuals?



Who Were the Nazis?

- Worldview:
 - Saw that ‘order’ had begun to waver and that there could be no prospect of a return to normality unless there was a radical break from existing social conditions
- Nazism gave them a sense of purpose and something productive to do:
 - “A never-ending succession of Party missions and campaigns filled up the empty hours, members could prove their usefulness as small cogs in the larger machine; and even guard-of honour duty at parades and office work for the Party could take on higher significance as self-sacrifice for the Fuhrer and a contribution to the eventual victory of the ‘movement.’ ”
 - Peukert, Detlev J. K. *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987.



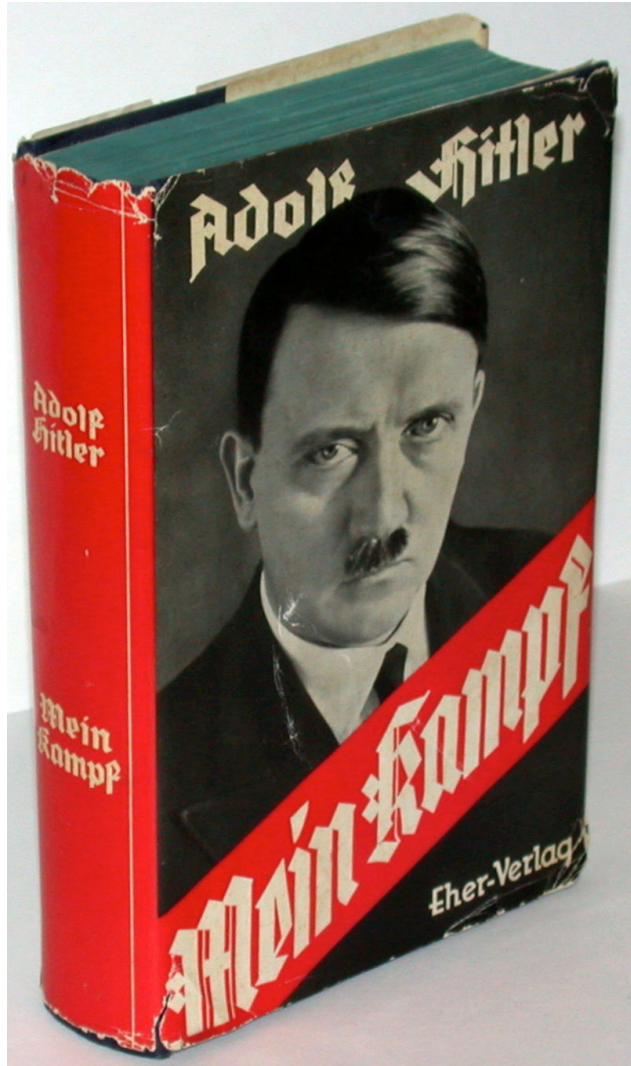
The Nazis Attempt a Coup
1923

Beer Hall Putsch

- In 1923, Hitler and other members of the Nazi Party decided they would attempt to take over the Weimar government in a coup.
- They armed themselves and stormed a political meeting in a beer hall in Munich.
- Declared that they had set up a new government and demanded the support of the military.
- The next day Hitler and his followers began to march to Berlin to take over the government, however they were arrested by the police.



Hitler Decides to Change Strategy



- During his trial he was given almost unlimited time to speak. A gifted orator, he used that time to voice nationalistic sentiments and plead his defense. This gave him a lot of publicity.
- While in prison Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* which was part autobiography and part exposition of ideology.
- Having failed to overthrow the Republic by a coup, Hitler now opted to try to pursue power legally.
- He would use the structure of the Weimar Republic to destroy it and establish himself as dictator.

*The Nazis Begin to Rise to
Power Legally:
Nazis and Weimar Elections
1924 - 1933*

The Nazis Between 1924 and 1933

- Following the failed Beer Hall Putsch, the Nazis shift their strategy for government takeover
 - They will be voted into office, rather than take it with force.
- 1924 to 1933 are the years whereby the Nazis begin to increase their electoral support and thus are voted into office in increasing numbers.
- Need to study this time in two distinct periods:
 - 1924 to 1928
 - 1928 to 1933



1924-1928

- In 1924, Germany entered a period of economic and political stability
- Economic Stability
 - Dawes Plan (1924)
 - Renegotiated a payment plan for the reparations bill
 - New Currency Adopted (1924)
 - “Reset” on inflation
- Political Stability
 - Locarno Treaties (1925)
 - Germany, France, and Belgium promise not to attack each other
 - Improves relationship with France
 - Germany allowed to join the League of Nations (1926)



1924-1928

- As a result, support for the Nazis (which was never large) dwindled
- In 1924 the Nazis had 5% of seats in the Reichstag, by 1928 they had less than 2%
- Party lost members
- Hitler was regarded as a charlatan, and the Nazis as a fringe group.



1928-1933

- In 1928-1929 the world-wide Great Depression hits Germany
 - Foreign loans ceased
 - Factories closed
 - 6 million were unemployed
 - Inflation returned
- Economic disaster struck again, just as the middle-class was starting to rebuild.
 - Middle class lost all faith in the economic system.



1928-1933

- Many Germans blamed a variety of “sources” for their economic problems
 - The new and inefficient Weimar democracy
 - The Treaty of Versailles
 - Reparations, Loss of Land & Colonies, Demilitarization
 - The British, French, and Americans
 - The pro-labor, anti-business communists
 - The Jews



1928-1933

- The Nazis responded to this growing dissatisfaction in three ways:
 - New Propaganda
 - Increased Public Appearances
 - Party Platform

Nazi Propaganda 1928-1933



A Nazi sword kills a snake, the blade passing through a red Star of David. The red words coming from the snake are: usury, Versailles, unemployment, war guilt lie, Marxism, Bolshevism, lies and betrayal, inflation, Locarno, Dawes Pact, Young Plan, corruption, Barmat, Kutistker, Sklarek [the last three Jews involved in major financial scandals], prostitution, terror, civil war.

Nazi Propaganda 1928-1933



- The Red War.
Mother or Comrade?
Man or Machine?
God or the Devil?
Blood or Gold? Race
or Bastard? Folk
music (people's
music) or jazz?
National Socialism or
Bolshevism?

Hitler Increases his Public Appearances and Speeches

- Hitler Campaign Speech 1932
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqBEJweLV5s>

Nazi Party Platform

- Nazis issue a 25 point party platform
- What do you notice?

Nazi Party Platform

- “The fact that the NSDAP had no firm, consistent political programme enabled it all the more easily to entice a wide range of groups in the population with a variety of promises, so long as it could conjure up the prospect that, once armed with the dignity of power...it would effect a fundamental break with the old Weimar ‘system’ and a general national ‘awakening.’

- Peukert, Detlev J. K. *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987.

Reichstag Elections 1928-1933

- Seats in the Reichstag:

- 1928: 12 (2.4%)
- 1930: 107 (18.5%)
- 1932: 230 (37.8%)

- Popular Vote:

- 1928: 800,000
- 1930: 6.5 million
- 1932: 13.7 million

- By 1932...

- Nazis were the largest party in the Reichstag
- Nazis still DID NOT have a majority of the support of the German people

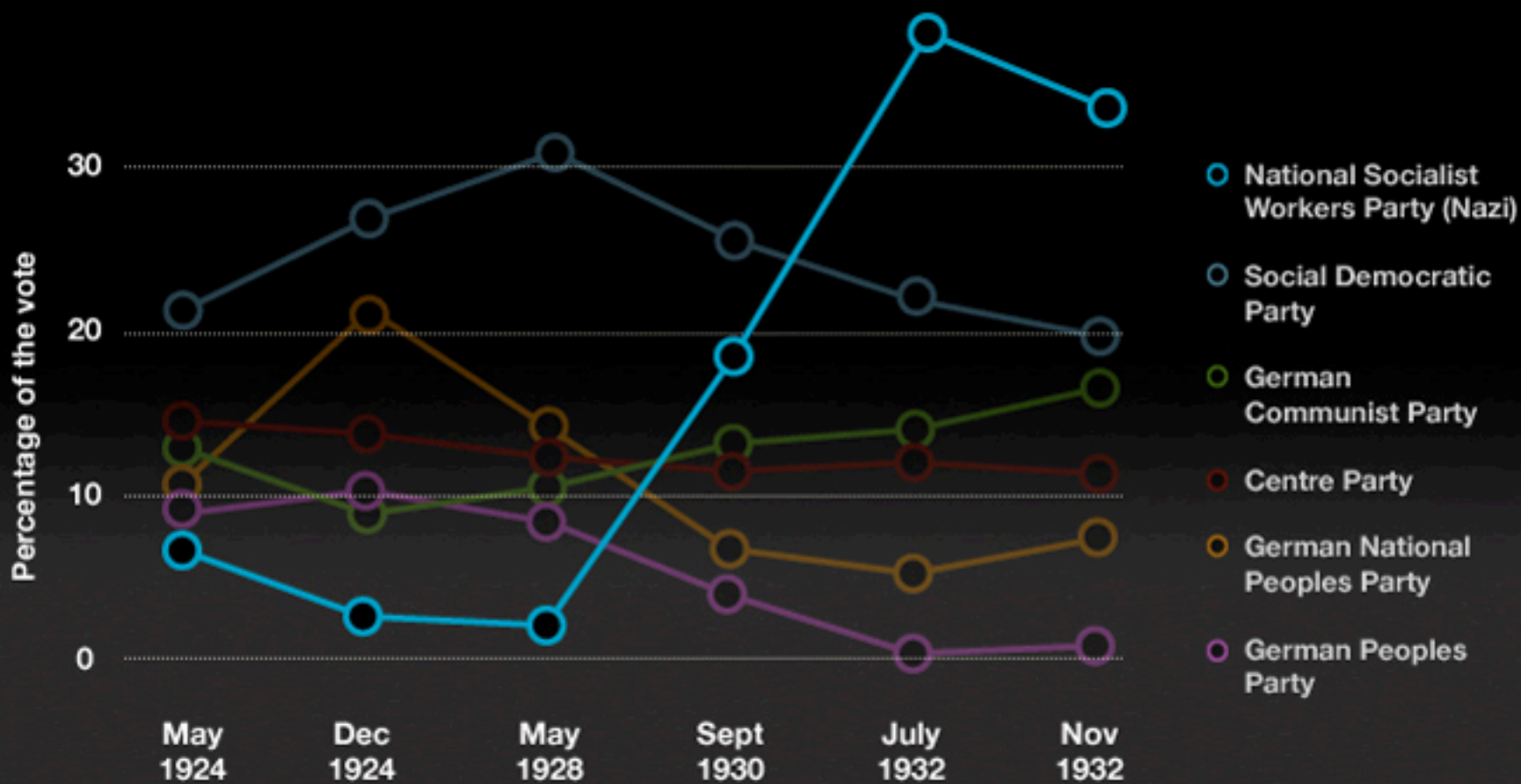


Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-13744
Foto: o. Ang. | 11. August 1932

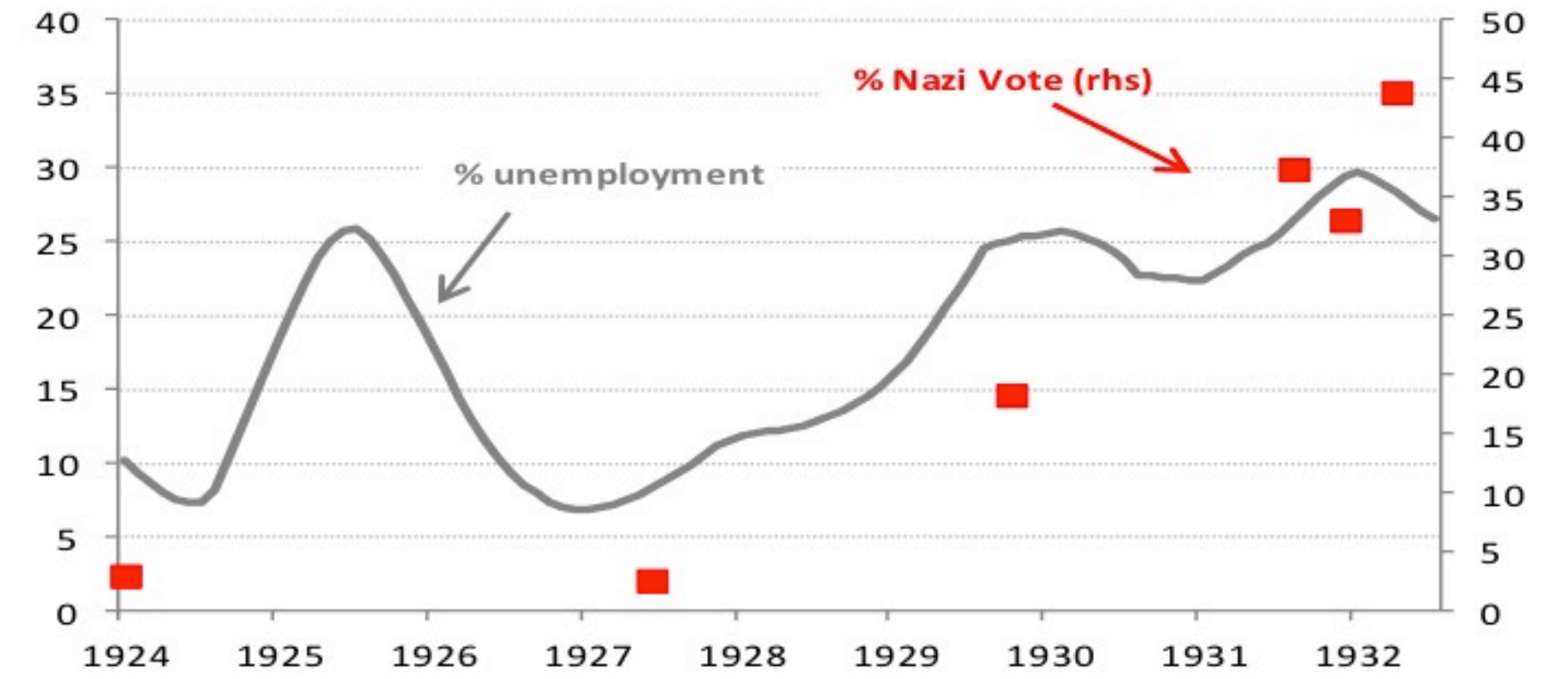
German Election Results 1924-1933.

Political parties in the German Reichstag	May 1924	Dec 1924	Sept 1928	July 1930	Mar 1932	Nov 1932	May 1933
Communist Party (KPD)	62	45	54	77	89	100	81
Social Democratic Party (SDP).	100	131	153	143	133	121	120
Centre Party (BVP)	81	88	78	87	97	90	93
Nationalist Party (DVNP)	95	103	73	41	37	52	52
Nazi Party (NSDAP)	32 (6.7%)	14 (2.8%)	12 (2.4%)	107 (18.5%)	230 (37.82%)	196 (32.99%)	288 (43.83%)
Other parties	102	112	121	122	22	35	23

Note: The Nazi Party never receive a majority of the vote.



German unemployment and the Nazi vote



Source: SG Cross Asset Research, GFD

Supporters

- Middle-Class (mostly middle-aged men)
 - White-collar employees
 - Tradesmen
 - Small businessmen
 - Farmers
- “Conservative” war generation (mostly young men)
 - Ex-soldiers who had failed to reintegrate themselves into the new society
 - People who couldn't accept that the war had denied them heroism



Hitler Runs for President 1932

- In 1932, Hitler ran for President, but lost to famed World War One general Paul von Hindenburg
- Hitler came in second with 35% of the vote.



*Hitler Appointed Chancellor
1933*

Hitler Becomes Chancellor

- After coming to office a group of influential businessmen and members of the conservative Nationalist party, approach Hindenburg.
- They tell Hindenburg that in order for them to get power in the Reichstag they need to form a coalition government with the Nazis.
- They ask Hindenburg to appoint Hitler as Chancellor so that he will be willing to work with them. They also believe that because Hitler will rely on their support for a coalition, they will be able to control Hitler and the Nazi Party.
- Hindenburg appoints Hitler to the vacant Chancellor seat in 1933.



*The Reichstag Fire and the
Activation of Article 48
1933*

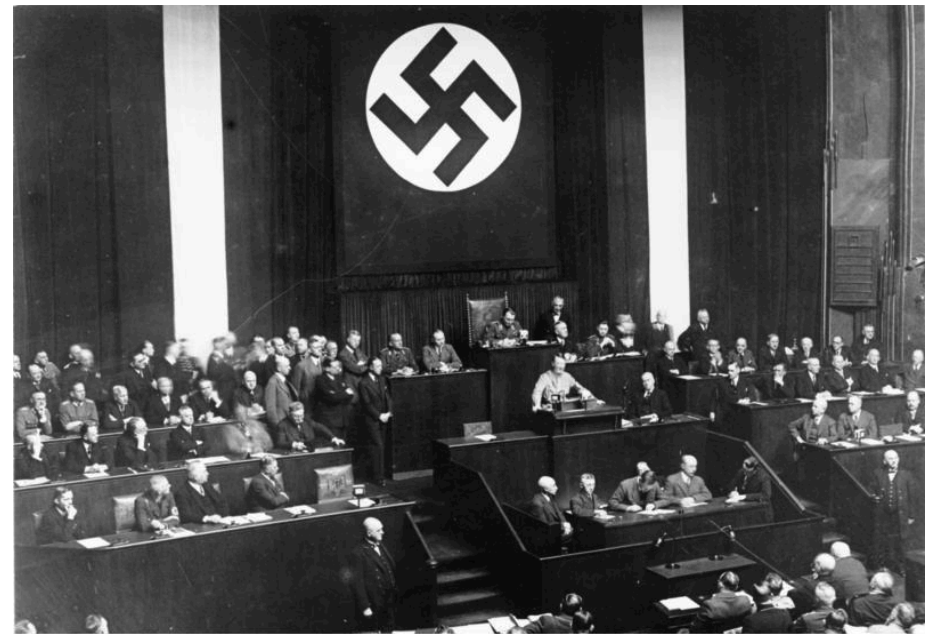
Reichstag Fire

- In February 1933, the Reichstag building was set on fire.
- The fire was blamed on a communist plot to overthrow the government.
- The government reacted by using Article 48 to suspend basic rights arguing that the fire created a political emergency in Germany.
 - No freedom of speech
 - No freedom of press
 - Suspension of due process
 - Trade unions abolished
 - Communist Party banned



Enabling Act 1933

- To further deal with this emergency, in March 1933 the Reichstag passes the Enabling Act.
 - The law gave the chancellor and his cabinet the power to ignore the constitution for four years while it issued laws to deal with the country's problems.
 - Passed by a margin of 441-84 with all parties supporting (except the Social Democrats, and the Communists--who were banned)



Bundesarchiv, Bild 102-14439
Foto: o. Ang. / 23. März 1933

Hitler Becomes Fuhrer
1934

Hitler Becomes Dictator

- The Enabling Act transformed Hitler's government into a legal dictatorship.
- Banned all other political parties.
- Night of Long Knives
 - Members of the Nazi party kill members of opposing parties or put political opponents in concentration camps.
 - First time concentration camps are used in Germany!



Hitler Becomes Dictator

- In 1934 Hindenburg dies. Rather than call new elections, Hitler's cabinet created a new position: Fuhrer.
- In 1934 Hitler becomes dictator of Germany.
 - 90% of the German public approved of this in a plebiscite.



Why Did Hitler Rise to Power?

Why Did Hitler Rise to Power?

- Working in small groups...
 - Develop a thesis statement for why Hitler and the Nazi party were able to rise to power with the support of the German people.
 - Support with 2-3 pieces of evidence