**Third Reich, part 1:**

**The Nazi Revolution, 1919-1934**

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Span the abundance of articles and books, as well as the legion of lectures and television documentaries, and you will find that most attempts to chronicle the Third Reich seem wedded to the period of 1933-1945. Most assuredly, the twelve year existence of the Thousand Year Reich is one of the most fascinating in history. But a broader perspective for understanding Hitler’s Germany is hardly possible unless one engages in the formative years of the Nazi Movement, 1919-1934.

From the demise of Imperial Germany to the Night of the Long Knives, this course will chronicle the Nazi Revolution. Covered will be the Versailles Treaty or as it was known in Germany, the Diktat; the January 1919 Spartacist League uprising in Berlin, led by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg; General Hans von Seeckt and the roots of Blitzkrieg; the Freikorps; the inimitable Ernst Rohm and the S.A.; the 1923 Munich Putsch; *Mein Kampf*; origins and organization of the Nazi Party; Adolf Hitler; the Night of the Long Knives. . .

**Week 1: Dualism to the Reich**

With the destruction of the Holy Roman Empire, Napoleon created the Confederation of the Rhine; thereby laying the framework for the modern German State. The growth of Germany will be traced, from 1805, through the Congress of Vienna; the Prussian and Austrian division of the German states or German Dualism; Bismarckian Germany; the belligerence of Kaiser Wilhelm II, concluding with, “Some Damned Thing in the Balkans.”

**Week 2: Military Coup**

August 29, 1916, the German General Staff, in the guise of Generals Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff, “assumed” control of the German State. This phenomenon will be explored from the position of the effect of modern industrialized war on domestic politics, in particular, with regards to Germany and the weakness of Royalty as a viable form of government in the 20th century. In addition, to the effect that military dictatorship had on fostering authoritarianism in Germany.

**Week 3:** **The Stab in the Back**

Begins with Armistice Day, followed by the descent of the German State into chaos: Aftermath of the Kiel Mutiny; “Bloody Week” in Berlin; the Diktat; Weimar Constitution; the rise of the Right; the Freikorps; origins of the Nazi Party; Hans von Seeckt and the Reichswehr; Reparations; French occupation of the Ruhr; Treaty of Rapallo, 1922;

**Week 4: The Munich Putsch**

Hitler’s failed attempt at revolution, November 1923; Landsburg Prison and *Mein Kampf;* spotlight on Ernst Rohm and the Sturmabteilung (Storm Troopers) or SA; Hitler’s release from prison and his rebuilding of the Nazi Party; the Communists; Depression.

**Week 5: Mein Kampf**

Adolf Hitler’s testament; the National Socialists bible of bigotry, oppression, despotism and conquest. This session will dissect Hitler’s blueprint for the subjugation of not only a nation, but a continent. Session will include the influence of such early German philosophers as Georg Hegel, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Heinrich von Treitschke, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, as well as the Englishman, Huston Stewart Chamberlain. Included, too, Fascism.

**Week 6: Armies of the Uprooted and Disinherited**

The Freikorps, the SA, the Red Fighting Front . . . these are among the formations of freebooters, cashiered soldiers and, from the ranks of the unemployed, men desperate to find some sort of work, even if it comes to serving with the armies of the uprooted and disinherited. Political formations at the command of the extreme Right and the extreme Left, engaged in combat for control of the streets against a backdrop of a shattered economy and failed political structure. Comparisons will be made to such collections as the Awakening Groups in Iraq, Hezbollah and the Azov Battalion in Ukraine.

**Week 7:** **The Weimar Republic**

German attempt at Representative Government. The structure and process of the Weimar Republic will be covered. Major personalities. The German Worker and Society. The Junker Class. The idea of Representative Government in Germany.

**Week 8: The Night of the Long Knives**

Hitler assumes the chancellorship, January 30, 1933. But tensions run high: The Reichstag Fire; the trial of Marinus Van Der Lubbe; the Strasser Brothers, Ernst Rohm, the SA and the Liberal Wing of the Nazi Party; Black Guard of the Right, Heinrich Himmler’s SS; threat of the Communists; the Deutschland cruise; Hitler makes his decision: bloody climax—Night of the Long Knives. . .