

Berlin

Imperial Germany to
the end of the Cold War
1871-1989



ANGLIA
TOURS





Key

- 1 Duchy of Anhalt
- 2 Brunswick
- 3 Grand Duchy of Hessen
- 4 Lippe-Detmold
- 5 Mecklenburg-Schwerin
- 6 Mecklenburg-Strelitz
- 7 Part of the Grand Duchy Oldenburg
- 8 Part of the Kingdom of Bayern
- 9 Principality of Schaumburg-Lippe
- 10 Principality of Waldeck
- 11 Principality of Reuß older Linie
- 12 Principality of Reuß younger Linie
- 13 Duchy of Sachsen-Altenburg
- 14 Duchy of Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha
- 15 Duchy of Sachsen-Meiningen
- 16 Principality of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt
- 17 Grand Duchy of Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach
- 18 Principality of Waldeck and Pymont

Imperial Germany Post 1871

- Kingdom of Prussia, 1866
- German Empire, 1817-1918



Unification of Germany



Siegessäule (Victory Column).

The new nation state of Germany was forged by warfare: victories over Denmark (1864), Austria (1866) and France (1870) allowed the dominant Kingdom of Prussia to unite the disparate kingdoms, principalities and duchies of the former Holy Roman Empire into a powerful new entity. The crucial aspect of its inception was Prussian militarism, which would shape the character of this new state.

1871

Democracy and Foreign Policy under Bismarck and Wilhelm II

Bismarck, first and foremost a soldier, distrusted democracy. Despite giving the German people a parliament, 'the Iron Chancellor' ruled through a strong, well-trained bureaucracy with power in the hands of the traditional landed nobility.

Kaiser Wilhelm II was different: his Germany was run as a functioning monarchy with power concentrated in the hands of one man, claiming legitimacy by Divine Right one hundred years after the French Revolution. This was in direct conflict with the growth of socialism at the very same time.

Wilhelm's Foreign Policy also differed from that of Bismarck: gone was the pragmatic policy of isolating France whilst maintaining good relations with Austria and Russia. The Kaiser's Weltpolitik sought to increase Germany's influence in the world, and was aggressive and reckless – for example the Naval Laws from 1898. It was this approach that would lead eventually to war.



Reichstag building 1884-1894.

1880s

The First World War



1914

June 28th
Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated at Sarajevo

July 5th
Kaiser Wilhelm II promised German support for Austria against Serbia

July 28th
Austria declared war on Serbia

August 1st
Germany declared war on Russia

August 3rd
Germany declared war on France

August 4th
Britain declared war on Germany

1914



1918

October 4th
Germany asked the Allies for an armistice

October 29th
Germany's navy mutinied

October 30th
Turkey made peace

November 3rd
Austria made peace

November 9th
Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated. Declaration of the Republic

November 11th
Germany signed an armistice with the Allies – War ends

Versailles Treaty

No study of modern Germany makes sense without an understanding of German attitudes towards the hated peace settlement. The sense of humiliation, betrayal and unfairness would create an atmosphere in which radical views could find an audience and an angry people would follow extremists who appeared to offer them salvation.

The Versailles Treaty set out 440 Articles detailing Germany's punishment. These are ones relating to Germany's military power:

B Blame



R Reparations

Article 231:
War Guilt Clause – pay reparations

6,600 Million



A Army

Article 160:
Army restricted to 100,000 men

100,000



Article 171:
No tanks

0



Article 181:
Navy restricted to 6 battleships and no submarines

6



0



Article 198:
No air force

0



T Territory



1919

Imperial Germany

Use of Terror by NSDAP

SAMPLE

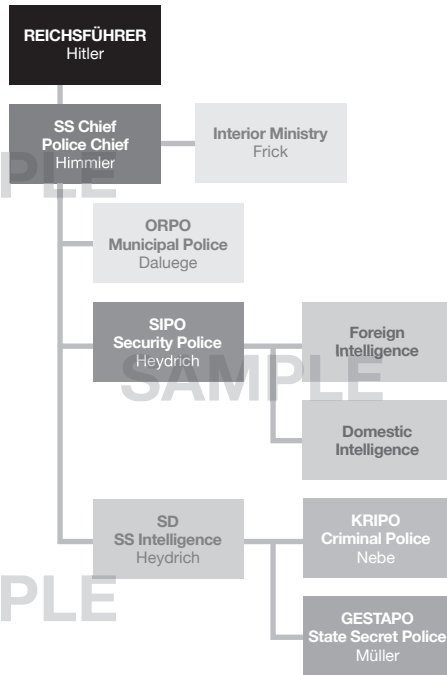
A common theme of the totalitarian regimes of the mid-twentieth century was their use of terror and oppressive organisations to maintain control over their people. The use of these by the Nazis essentially had two objectives: to eliminate any opposition or resistance to the regime and to marginalise and then remove those elements of the German population the Nazis deemed undesirable, antisocial or subhuman.

Soon after gaining power the Nazis' thuggish Stormtroopers, the Brownshirts of the SA, were replaced as the main weapon of terror in Germany by the black-clad elite, the SS. SS and Police leader Heinrich Himmler's tentacles of fearsome control spread across Germany, giving him and his deputies the power of life and death over every single German citizen.

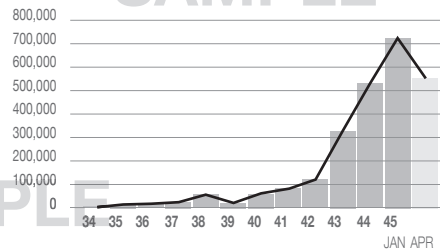
Alongside civil courts and criminal prisons, Himmler and Göring introduced a new feature to 1930s Germany, one that would become synonymous with the regime: the concentration camp. In twelve years perhaps as many as 2.3 million people were sent to Nazi concentration camps.

In 1933, most inmates were political prisoners, above all German Communists. Abuse and violence were normal – the objective of the Nazis was to break the inmates, mentally and physically, before their release back into society as 'reformed citizens'. Deaths were still rare, however, and most prisoners were released after a few weeks or months. Fear of the camps helped to break resistance to the Nazis, to the extent that by late 1934 there were only around 2,400 inmates in the existing camps. Despite this, Hitler and Himmler wanted to keep the camps: they saw the benefits of lawless terror, without courts and judges. By the outbreak of war in 1939 this SS system included six purpose-built camps holding 21,400 prisoners. The SS ruled the concentration camps with an iron fist.

(Source: Birkbeck College, University of London)



Daily Inmate numbers in the SS Concentration Camps, 1934-45.

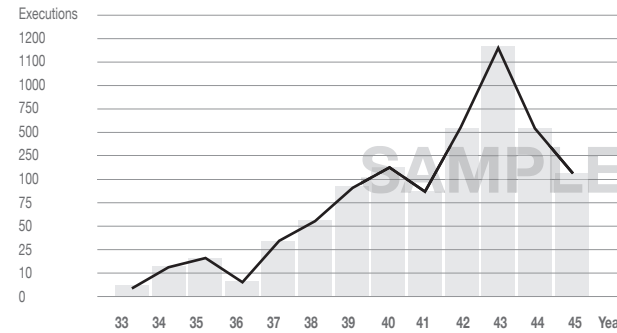


1933-36

SAMPLE

Resistance to the regime

SAMPLE



Number of executions at Plotensee 1933-39.

It is very difficult to judge the level of resistance to the Nazis, especially in the pre-war years, since by necessity such resistance very quickly had to be conducted in secret. Such was the Nazis' ruthlessness in dealing with opposition that open criticism or resistance soon disappeared.

Organised resistance prior to 1939 tended to concentrate around the churches – in particular the Confessing Church – and the political left. After the outbreak of war resistance to the Nazis appeared to grow significantly. Small cells of resistance continued to exist. Groups such as the Red Orchestra, White Rose, Edelweiss Pirates and European Union all posed a threat and were dealt with ruthlessly, as were individuals such as Georg Elser and Otto and Elise Hampel.

Only once the course of the war had turned against Germany did significant numbers of the armed forces turn against Hitler, and the number of plots against his life rose dramatically. This culminated in the most famous act of resistance of all, the July 20 1944 Plot. The failed attempt to assassinate Hitler with a bomb was intended to be the trigger for a coup to overthrow the Nazi leadership and reach a settlement with the Western Allies: the appalling reprisals, leading to nearly 5,000 deaths, merely forced subsequent resistance even further underground.

1933

Berlin Olympics

SAMPLE

The 1936 Summer Olympic Games are probably the most notorious of all: an event inherited by the Nazis when they came to power in 1933 was soon transformed into an extraordinary propaganda spectacle, displaying to a watching world the 'achievements' of National Socialism. In a sinister foretelling of racial policies to emerge over the next decade, the Games also provided Hitler and Goebbels with a platform on which to demonstrate 'Aryan Supremacy'.

These hopes were undone, however, by the unprecedented achievements of a small group of black American athletes: led by the legendary Jesse Owens they won back the Olympics from Hitler and ensured the Games would be remembered for the right reasons.

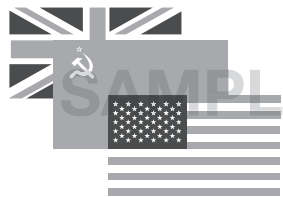


Jesse Owens winning gold for the USA.

1936

Potsdam Conference

The fate of post-war Europe was determined through a series of meetings between the leaders of the Allied Powers – the Big Three – culminating with a two-week summit held at the Cecilienhof Palace in Potsdam, 30 km from Berlin. Following meetings at Tehran and Yalta the division of Germany – and Berlin – the spheres of influence and the rights of European peoples were finally agreed and a new political map drawn. Perhaps more importantly, here too were the first visible divisions between the victorious allies, as suspicion, distrust and rivalry replaced the common goal of defeating Hitler's Germany. The revelation of the first successful atomic test by the United States might be regarded as the beginning of what would become known as the Cold War.



1945

Berlin Blockade



Flights arrived in Berlin approximately every ninety seconds.

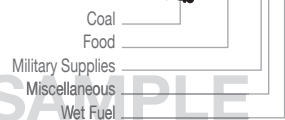
Stalin's determination to force the Western Allies out of Berlin – deep within his sphere of influence – led to the Blockade of West Berlin from May 1948. Road, rail and canal links were cut, and power switched off. Refusing to give up their toehold behind the Iron Curtain, the Americans and British launched the Airlift. Over the next 15 months, supplies were flown in to keep West Berlin free.

Total Tonnage by Commodity

US 1,783,573



Britain 542,236



1948-49

Berlin Uprising



Communist era mural at the former 'House of the Ministries' in Berlin.

In the summer of 1953 things were not calm in the recently-formed GDR. A catastrophic economic situation led the ruling SED party to increase work quotas by 10% - 'more work for the same salary'. As a result, 300 construction workers in East Berlin went on strike. By the following day over 40,000 workers had joined a general strike and marched to the House of Ministries in Leipziger Strasse to protest. The government decided to end the uprising by force. 20,000 Soviet troops and 8,000 Volkspolizei were sent onto the streets. Dozens of workers were killed, many more arrested and imprisoned.

1953

Berlin Wall

1961

Aug 13th
Border between East and West Berlin closed

Aug 14th
Brandenburg Gate closed

Aug 15th
East German Guard Conrad Schumann escapes

Aug 16th
Barbed wire replaced with concrete blocks

Aug 26th
All crossing points closed for West Berliners

1962

June
A second wall is built to prevent escape to the West

Aug 17th
East German Peter Fechter, 18, is shot and left to bleed to death whilst trying to escape in full view of the Western media

June 26th
President JF Kennedy gives his "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech

Dec 17
Agreement signed allowing West Berliners to visit their relatives in East Berlin on a limited basis

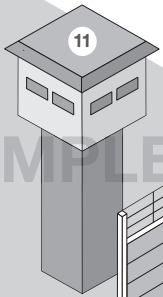
1964

Oct 3-4
Tunnel 57 – the most successful mass escape sees 57 people reach the West through a tunnel dug under the Wall

1961-64

Cold War Crisis in Berlin

4th



3rd

2nd

1st

Berlin Wall 1961-1989

Key

1st Generation Wall – 1961
Between 12 and 13 August 1961 the East German army began construction of the 156km long wall around the Western sector with barbed wire

2nd Generation Wall – 1962-1965
In June 1962, a second parallel fence was built 100 metres farther into Eastern German territory, creating the so called 'death strip'

3rd Generation Wall – 1966-1974
In June 1966 a new generation wall was introduced replacing the previous wall

4th Generation Wall – 1975-1989
The 'fourth generation wall' was the final, most sophisticated and expensive version of the wall. It was started in 1975 and was completed in 1980

- 1 Wire fence
- 2 GDR Border Guards
- 3 Sand Strip
- 4 Wall topped with wire
- 5 Anti-vehicle obstacles
- 6 Concrete wall with anti grip top
- 7 Lamppost
- 8 Anti-vehicle ditch
- 9 Guard dogs
- 10 Bunker
- 11 Watch tower