

History Course: Germany 1945-91

From Occupation to Division, 1945-1949

The WW2 Legacy- Facts and Figures

- The war had brought death, misery and physical destruction throughout the nation
- Around 6.5 million Germans were killed/unaccounted for

Yalta Conference: February 1945-Stalin, Churchill & Roosevelt.

- Talked about plans for Germany once Hitler stopped being stupid
- Britain, America, and USSR agreed France could have a zone
- Zones; British, Soviet, American, French

Potsdam Conference: July 1945- Stalin, Atlee, Truman

- Aimed to deal with the major issues; Disarmament, denazification¹, territorial adjustments and reparations².
- Agreed \$20 billion should be the reparation figure
- All the allies were mad at each other, and Potsdam just made them even more mad

Nuremberg Trials: 20th November 1945- 1st October 1946

- The allies agreed to put leading Nazis on trial as war criminals
- Trials lasted 218 days- prisoners were tried on for four things;
 - Crimes against peace (instigation war of aggression)
 - War crimes (ill-treating civilians and prisoners of war)
 - Crimes against humanity (extremes of brutality against whole groups of nations)
 - Conspiracy (involvement in a plan to commit any of the above)
- 22 leading Nazis were put on trial

Territorial adjustments to Germany

- When it was Yalta, the Soviet's were chilled because by February 1945 the US forces on Germany's western borders were preparing to enter the Reich and it was pretty obvious they were going to get military success- so military strategy outweighed the political considerations.
- But in the following 2 months the Soviets had about 300,000 dead or wounded soldiers due to the Battle for Berlin³- so they were **aaaaaangry** by Potsdam.
- The division of Germany was tricky:

¹ Denazification: The process of ridding Germany of the conditions and individuals that were responsible for Nazism.

² Payments by Germany for the damaged caused by WW2

³ The name given to the final few months of WW2 in Europe which eventual led to Soviet forces finally occupying the city itself!

opposed to socialism and politically unreliable people. 'Soviet special camps' introduced. Special camp number 1- from 1948-1950, 60,000 prisoners were held there (25% died ☹)

- **Western Allies:** were less ruthless/effective. Asked Germans to complete questionnaires to declare involvement, "Persil Certificates". People lied on their questionnaires. British sect- 90% of population pardoned; French- 50%; America- 1/3 was pardoned. Allies became real concerned with the rebuilding of Germany. By 1950s, the whole process had wound down. Massive amount of people left in the civil service (doctors etc).
- Since WW2 there had been occasional trials, mainly due to individuals (Simon Wiesenthal- got 16 people to trials)
- Overall, denazification wasn't a missed opportunity it was just not physically possible.

Demilitarisation

- All allies agreed to demilitarise Germany.
- The munitions factories were dismantled and private businesses with potential to manufacture weapons were restricted.
- March 1946- 'Levels of industry plan': 50% reduction of heavy industry compared to 1938 levels.
- 1947- fear of militarisation was not as strong as the fear of communism in the west and therefore the levels and restrictions were adjusted so the economy could recover and be more immune to the threat of communism.
- **The failure in demilitarisation was a necessity rather than a missed opportunity**

Decentralisation

- Even the occupied zones were divided into Lander⁴
- By 9th July 1945, the Soviet zone had been split into 5 Lander
- The Banks were divided into smaller groups and businesses were broken into smaller groups to make them more efficient- e.g. Farlen
- As soon as Bizonia emerged- decentralisation COLLAPSED. Only a small number of businesses were actually restructured. Large USE firms benefitted from keeping the businesses strong in 1946 and co-determination was never achieved.
- This was an opportunity MISSED.

Democratisation:

- **Western Allies:**
 - Political parties re-founded later than in the soviet zone.
 - Suppressed all anti-Nazi parties as they feared all political activity.
 - Key conservative group= CDU/CSU (led by Adenauer, and Britain laaaved the conservative groups)
 - Politically very weak for ages, unstable and a bunch of little parties, but by the 50s things were better due to SPD/CDU growth.

⁴ Like a state

Political systems of the FRG and GDR

<u>FRG</u>	<u>GDR</u>
Federal states- Lander- had significant responsibilities and power	Federal state, but the 5 historical Lander were replaced by Bezirke
Formal head of state and a president with ceremonial and largely symbolic role	Formal head of state with a president- largely symbolic role. Role of president was taken over by the council of state when Pieck died in 1960
Two chambers of houses of parliament. Bundestag-main decision making sect. Members were representatives from each FRG region	Two chambers of houses of parliament. The Volkskammer was elected nationally, but had a predetermined amount of seats for the SED. Landerkammer was made of representatives from each GDR region
Elections were made by a complex system of proportional representation with a later clause adding that any political party with less than 5% of vote couldn't take seats in parliament. Political parties who didn't support democratic principles could be banned	The main political force was the General Secretary of the SED who increasingly controlled the other political parties and mass state organisations

Treatment of Jews

- FRG
 - The former Nazi concentration camps which were preserved as memorial sites within the FRG emphasized the extent of anti-Semitic persecution under Nazism
 - Scheme for compensation for Jewish survivors of the Holocaust (not made to homosexual or gypsies) hella lot of money was given
- GDR
 - Former Nazi concentration camps were preserved as memorials to 'anti-fascist freedom fighters' and emphasized the persecution of communists under Nazism
 - Jews got an additional pension allowance but it was less than that received by those classified as 'fascist-resistance' fighters

Trade between two Germanys

- 'Inter-German trade' between FRG and GDR was categorised as domestic trade and so did not incur any tariffs or taxes; in an economic sense, the GDR was actually an unofficial part of the EEC which the FRG joined as a founding member in 1951

- USSR watched every move the SED made

State control of agriculture and industry

- Followed policies made by mother fucking Stalin
- 1952- SED announced it would be taking industry & agriculture into state ownership
- Lander- replaced with 15 administrative districts
- By late 50s- collectivisation was a go go go
- The GDR reached end of 5 year plan in 1955, despite issues it faced it did succeed in doubling its industrial production
- HOWEVER, the scarcity of consumer goods and failure to raise living standards did not boost public support

Impact of collectivisation- early 50s

- Wanted to increase size of farms and exploit both machinery and agricultural labour to the full
- Many farmers didn't care about the modern methods
- Up to 15,000 GDR farmers left for the FRG in the 50s
- Second wave of collectivisation in 50s= food shortages grr
- Collectivisation and food shortages= heavy rationing, milk, eggs etc and didn't end until 1958

Economy

- 5 year plan (1950)
 - Promised to double 1956 output- heavy industry emphasis
 - GDR joined COMECON (1951)- 76% trade went to soviets
 - Success - because they'd started with nothing!
- 5 year plan (number 2) (1955)
 - More regional specialisation allowing GDR to fulfil position in relation to less developed countries of comecon- FAILED
 - 1959- abandoned. 7 year plan. Ambitious targets in energy, chemicals and engineering- plan brought initial success but abandoned- 1962
 - GDR econ growing at 3% a year- FDR was at 8% ☹
- Attempts to catch West failed
- By 1955- wealthiest country in soviet bloc
- People at the bottom definitely had a good outcome

Lack of overall popular support for the GDR

- Morale= LOW
- Turnout for parades was low
- Shortages of housing
- Resentment from small businesses
- SED continued to enforce control and influence
- Some Christian organisations were banned
- Even the USSR was like 'look bro, people are fucking terrified of you, just tone it down a bit, let people travel easy yeah?'

- Shooting of protester in Berlin
- Attempted assassination of student leader by right wing press
- 1968-70
 - Riots etc
 - League of German socialist students
 - Social unrest
 - Limited police threat

State's response

- 1972- decree concerning radicals
 - Restricted freedom of speech
 - Political censorship
- Anti-terror laws
 - No contact whilst in prison
 - Isolation & harsh conditions
 - Defined defence councils some times

Success

- Terror attacks dropped in 80s
- Groups driven out of GDR
- Allowed more dialogue with radical elements in 80s

Criticisms

- Terror sentences longer than Nazis
- Worse conditions
- Prison deaths=suspicious
- Undermining democratic system designed to protect

Honecker

Aims:

- Remove Ulbricht's NES
- Develop 'unity of social and economic policy'
- Boost industrial performance- crucial if he wanted to raise the living standards
- Greater efficiency/faster technological progress
- UNDERMINED BY THE COST OF SOCIAL REFORM PROGRAMMES
- By 1980- FRG 2nd largest trading partner
- No taxes/tariffs meant that trade/manufacturing was encouraged
- FRG gave GDR a shit load of loans for their agriculture
 - Basically were self-sufficient
 - Modern/mechanised in comparison to other east European states

Economic problems

- Labour shortage ☹

- Many disagreements over privatisation, uncompetitive industries, rising unemployment, and destasification (the opening of stasi files made people want justice)

Reunited Germany dealing with its past and future

Legacy of stasi

- Stasi officers destroyed a hell lot of documents
- In E.G there had been 1 informer to ever 7 people
- People were put into teams to retrieve information
- Estimated it'd take 400 years to complete task, but then went computers got good it was estimated that it'd take until 2013 (ah yay!)

Wessis & Ossis

- There'd been a rise of Ostalgie in east- nostalgia for life in GDR
- The Wessis generally said the Ossis were ungrateful, lazy and lacked initiative, and O saw W as materialistic etc
- Believe developed that anyone who had initiative had left the GDR prior to the building of the wall
- For west, freedom meant; freedom of speech, assembly and travel
- In East; security from threats of unemployment, crime & homelessness

Ostalgie

- Tv shows
- Museum in Berlin devoted to life in GDR

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