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Adolf Hitler had no  
accomplishments. He was  
a rootless loner, a  
corporal in a shattered  
army, without money or  
prospects. A little more

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than twenty years later,  
in autumn 1941, he  
directed his dynamic  
forces against the  
Soviet Union, and in  
December, the Germans  
were at the gates of

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Moscow and Leningrad. At  
that moment, Hitler  
appeared--however  
briefly--to be the most  
powerful ruler on the  
planet. Given this  
dramatic turn of events,

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it is little wonder that  
since 1945 generations  
of historians keep  
trying to explain how it  
all happened. This  
richly illustrated  
history provides a

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to power of the Nazis in  
1933 to the final  
collapse in 1945. Using



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photographs, paintings,  
propaganda images, and a  
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the photography of  
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foreigners, and the  
Allied armies, it  
distills our ideas about  
the period and provides  
a balanced and

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accessible account of  
the whole era.

The Reformation was a  
seismic event in  
history, whose  
consequences are still  
working themselves out

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in Europe and across the  
world. The protests  
against the marketing of  
indulgences staged by  
the German monk Martin  
Luther in 1517 belonged  
to a long-standing

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pattern of calls for  
internal reform and

renewal in the Christian  
Church. But they rapidly  
took a radical and  
unexpected turn,  
engulfing first Germany

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and then Europe as a  
whole in furious  
arguments about how  
God's will was to be  
discerned, and how  
humans were to be  
'saved'. However, these

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debates did not remain  
confined to a narrow  
sphere of theology. They  
came to reshape politics  
and international  
relations; social,  
cultural, and artistic

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developments; relations  
between the sexes; and  
the patterns and  
performances of everyday  
life. They were also the  
stimulus for  
Christianity's



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transformation into a  
truly global religion,  
as agents of the Roman  
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to compensate for losses  
in Europe with new  
conversions in Asia and

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consequences and legacy  
for the modern world.

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The story is not one of  
an inevitable triumph of  
liberty over oppression,  
enlightenment over  
ignorance. Rather, it  
tells how a multitude of  
rival groups and

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individuals, with or  
without the support of  
political power, strove  
after visions of  
'reform'. And how, in  
spite of themselves,  
they laid the

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plural and conflicted  
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*devastating conflict in recorded  
human history. It was both global in  
extent and total in character. It has  
understandably left a long and dark  
shadow across the decades. Yet it is  
three generations since hostilities  
formally ended in 1945 and the*



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*conflict is now a lived memory for only a few. And this growing distance in time has allowed historians to think differently about how to describe it, how to explain its course, and what subjects to focus on when considering the wartime*

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*experience. For instance, as World  
War Two recedes ever further into  
the past, even a question as  
apparently basic as when it began  
and ended becomes less certain.*

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Europe began? Or the summer of*

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*1941, with the beginning of Hitler's  
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did it become truly global only when  
the Japanese brought the USA into  
the war at the end of 1941? And  
what of the long conflict in East  
Asia, beginning with the Japanese*

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