

Germany and I

History says that there are two men, who have had a great effect on Germany; Bismarck, who ruled Germany with an iron fist, and Adolf Hitler, the Nazi leader who brought on World War II.

It is said that Bismarck made Germany great and the Germans smaller, and Hitler made Germany small and the Germans greater.

Bismarck, who ruled his country with an iron fist, adopted a vision that overwhelmed him yet it was not void of wisdom, even though the violet aspect of it was apparent.

He urged small countries, kingdoms and principalities, on which big economic feudalisms were based, to unify under the umbrella of a major country, with each principality or small country enjoying autonomy under the previous entity. His call was met with an opposing majority and accepting minority.

This forced him to unify Germany by force. The man was wise enough that he left the rule of Germany provinces to their previous rulers to undertake their internal affairs in accordance with the federal laws applicable to all.

By so doing he made Germany a big country including provinces, but he restricted the authority of kings and princes and cut them down to size after he had made victory over them. That is why he made the Germans smaller.

The German federal system provided two significant objectives.

First, it was based on self-sufficient provinces, which maintained this advantage later on. Every one of the sixteen provinces has had its own

resources and credentials of industry, agriculture, technology and food processing, especially beer and sugar industries as well as other industries that are essential in a self-sufficient policy. So, it could provide self-sufficiency independently and, therefore, compete with other provinces.

The result was competition to achieve success. The second was the German capability to achieve sovereignty. This was based on a central linkage among federal institutions to manage their affairs in a central manner without infringing upon local institutions or bring contradictions.

The process included, for example, federal army, police, railways, telephone authority, research and development departments in the fields of aviation and weaponry development.

These departments were distributed to different provinces, so that the revenue made a value-added distributed among major provinces, with the federal government retaining full authority over them.

According to the distinguished local governance system of such provinces, these provinces used to retain their own tax revenues, so that each one could spend on its own budget and internal investments. However, there were some kinds of taxes paid to the federal treasury, such as the sales tax.

The second man in this comparison was the Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, the founder of Nazi movement that increasingly grew and overwhelmed the thought and feelings of the Germans so much so that it became a fanatic giant representing the German nationalism, thus making Germany over all other peoples.

He called for the right of the German people to have a share in the colonies divided among Britain and France. This ignited World War II, which claimed the

lives of over 10 million peoples and ended in dividing Germany to be smaller than it had been before the war.

However, the process of preparing the country for war, which was efficiently run as a main goal by Hitler fifteen years before the war, has had a significant subsidiary outcome – building the German citizen on the bases of work loving, loyalty to the country, sticking to instructions, and professional dignity.

These qualities were formulated by the war, sufferings and honesty for the nation and professional principles. Every individual has become a controller over himself and others in terms of order, discipline and loving of collective work.

The exorbitant failure war has had a positive product in building the German personality based on loving work and maximizing its role. This made the German people feel their recognized distinguished status, even in the post-war era, the time of defeat and dishonor.

Therefore, it is true that Hitler made Germany a smaller country and made the Germans greater.

My experience with Germany started when I was 18 years old, having nothing but an ability to make comparisons between the Egyptian and German realities, my love for education, curiosity, etc.

I was astonished by discipline, individual management of time in light of the arrival and departure times shown at every underground and bus stops, in addition to mutual respect among individuals, even if they do not know each other, a disciplined traffic system and drivers' proud of carrying a driving license that is a highly qualification document.

An individual is always keen to hold a successful dialogue with others, even in case of disagreement.

I was also impressed as the Germans used to deal with me according to logical rules; never paused a while before illusionary barriers, such as the age group, color or religion, the things which the Germans feel embarrassed to talk about without having strong relations with the one they talk to .

Since I have been in Germany, my relations have been severed during the years of illness, treatment, education, training and working. I met great men and women, who added many things to my concepts and boosted my admiration for this creative people.

I have never stopped making comparisons between aspects of beauty and supremacy in Germany and that in Egypt, my homeland and destination of aspirations.

I have always been admired for the Egyptian people and their love for life, sensing the others' needs, gallantry and helping others.

This is manifest both in the countryside and urban communities. The warm social life in Egypt actually alleviates most of the people's sufferings in life, but it has never discouraged individuals from pursuing the type education suitable for achieving their goals.

These comparisons have always been useful for me and I have never got bored of them. They meant to make use of the aspects of success and supremacy in Germany and remedy the negative ones in Egypt.

The Egyptian citizen has the ability to infer the suitable satisfying solutions, even if sometimes temporarily.

On the other hand, the German citizen is concerned about devising institutional solutions, which are often costly. In fact, this has been always urging me to pursue means of quality, permanent solutions and minute details.

I also learnt that the practical and functional life should not discourage man from assuming voluntary and service activities both at home and abroad in Germany. This is exactly what qualified me to get the first-class appreciation decoration by German President Johannes Rau in 2002.

I am really proud of this decoration and my children will boast of it, as an indisputable international honor .