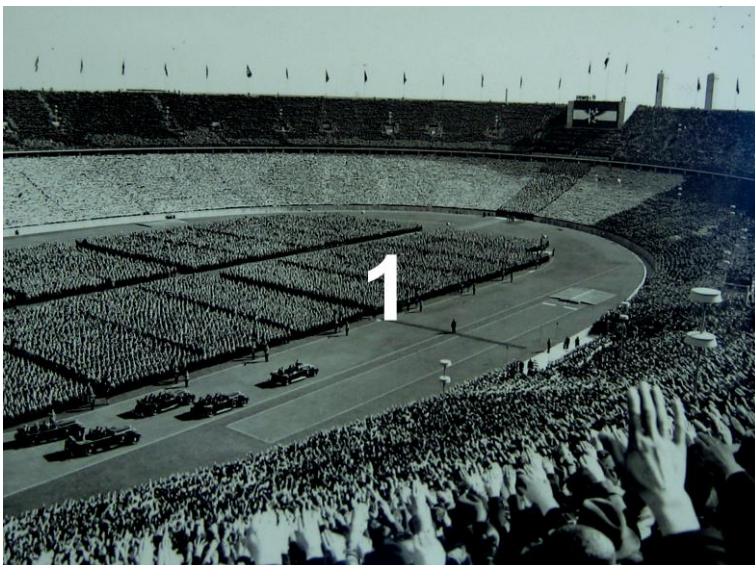


Chart. 30 | The German “Volksgemeinschaft” (People’s Community)

The „German Volksgemeinschaft“ (“People’s Community”) in National Socialism was an ideological construct. It was meant to incorporate all “pure” Germans and build up a classless community between the workers and intellectuals.

The population was meant to subordinate itself under this aim. The “People’s Community” did not, however, mean equal rights for everybody but the strict subordination under the principle of leadership. The refusal of the “People’s Community” resulted in strong sanctions. An individual “Volksgenosse” didn’t mean anything; the National Socialists aimed at the pliable masses. The construction “People’s Community” was tightly connected towards the military perspectives. It was supposed to guarantee external defences and to save and conserve the power inwards. The term “People’s Community” was not invented by the National Socialists but was – like many other terms – perverted by the Nazis.



1. Youth Rally in Olympia Stadion Berlin the 1st of May 1939

German Historical Museum, photo: Gerhard Gronefeld

Chart. 31 | The Model of the “Volksgemeinschaft” (Peoples’ Community)

In order to demonstrate a community of equals, the National Socialist’s “German Volksgemeinschaft” was meant to incorporate all Germans within the home country and abroad.

Rank privileges and snobbishness were ideologically excluded. Class barriers and ownership structure, however, stayed untouched during the time of National Socialism. The society was organised hierarchically according to the principle of the “Führer” and his following. All social groups were directed by National Socialist leaders. The following was expected to show obedience, subordination, faith towards the “Führer”, fealty and the active commitment to the “Volksgemeinschaft”. All this was taught in numerous educational institutions. The ideals were strength, health and readiness to subordinate. Independent thinking and acting was shunned.

The biddable “People’s Community” was based on the illusion of the powerful “Aryan” race. People of Jewish decent, Sinti and Roma, Jehovah’s Witnesses, disabled people, antisocial people, criminals and other social groups, were excluded and could be eliminated. The “Volksgenosse” was meant to feel elevated just by his belonging to the community. The “People’s Community” was a sworn in military community that was meant to lead the social Darwinist war for “Lebensraum” (“necessary living space”) in the east. The final goal was to gain world supremacy. It didn’t offer the “Volksgenossen” a future in peace, wealth and openness towards the world but only one of martial perspectives, which included absolute subordination and the “heroic death” in faraway countries.



1. Mass event as a manifestation of the „People’s Community“. Central event of the Reich’s Ministry for Education and Propaganda, on the Bückeberg by Hameln, 6th of October 1935.

Chart. 32 | Propaganda and Coercion

The “People’s Community” – as it was understood by the National Socialists – was a compulsory community. Coercion and duress to the “community” were omnipresent. Ones haircut, clothing, suspicious behaviour, language, physiognomy could be indices to reveal somebody as not belonging. It was possible to get a beating for not hailing the marching columns with an uplifted arm. Beside the latent threat, propaganda was omnipresent. The “ordinary man” - deprived of civil rights – was at the mercy of the regime seeing as democratic structures to exert influence were completely lacking. One was supposed to join the “People’s Community” and to unconditionally serve the “Führer” and his targets. The workers – as “the following” – were deprived of all their rights and committed to obedience and faith towards the “Führer. They were the main target group for the propaganda of the “People’s Community”. With its organisation “Strength through Joy” the regime had a “sharp weapon” against any kind of opposition. The main element of propaganda were mass events. The masses were considered ductile and, in the end, lacking their own will.



1. Frequently spread Tin Poster.

Federal Archive Koblenz

2. Publicized blurb of the „People’s Community“.

Archive Documentation Center Prora

3. The swaying Masses transform into the „People’s Community“.

Under the Sun Wheel, 1938

4. Parole 1945 – the last array of the „People’s Community“.

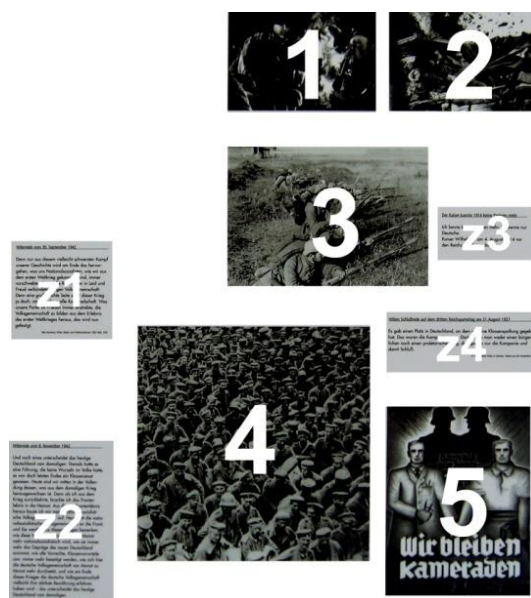
Arbeitertum, 1945

5. Hitler speaks to the SA, SS and the Motorized Corps at the Nuremberg Rally, 1938.

from: Friedrich Heiss, By Us in Germany, 1938

Chart. 33 | The “Hardship Community” of the World War

The “People’s Community” was a common term in Germany since the middle of the 19th century. The youth movement around 1900 used the term in order to express its longing for justness and fraternalism. The crucial imprint to the term was made in the First World War, which led to a special form of “national awakening”, through the collective suffering experienced by the soldiers at the front and in the static warfare. But the intimate front community couldn’t be carried on in civil life and many combatants didn’t find their way in civil life. They followed illegal military associations. The longing for a “People’s Community” and revenge for the defeat remained a latent part of the public consciousness during the Weimar Republic. A military and aggressive lineament was henceforth inherent in the term “People’s Community”. This hatred was not just directed against the former war time enemies but also against pacifists within the home country, who were said to have “thrust the dagger” against the front.



1. From the Front to National Socialism- publicized attunement of the “People’s Community” during the war. Picture from the film, “Combat Patrol 1917”.

Arbeitertum 1934

2. The lower class under fire. Picture from the film „Combat Patrol 1917“. The fight is belittled as a “community experience”.

Arbeitertum 1934

3. Marne Battle 1914, German soldiers at the frontline.

Pictures from the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

4. The birth of the People’s Community? During the Autumn of 1918, ten thousand German soldiers voluntarily become prisoners of war.

Klaus Dorst, Wolfgang Wünsche, The First World War, Berlin 1989

5. A poster by the DAF makes reference to the 1st World War.

Federal Archive Coblenz

z1 Hitler, 30th of September 1942

„For only in this darkest hour of our history will the end result be realized as has been predicted by the National Socialist’s from the First World War: A Great Reich brought together by Joy and Suffering. One positive attribute that this will generate is a great comradeship. What our party always strived for during peace times, namely to build a People’s community from the experiences of the First World War, will soon be realized.”

Max Domarus, Hitler Speeches and Proclamations, 1932-1945, 1973

z2 Hitler, 8th of November 1942

„Another difference from the Germany of the past and Germany now is that then, the past regime had no roots within the Folk. It was a class state. Now we are in the middle of completing what grew out of that war. As I returned from the war, I brought back the experience of the front lines. Based, on my experiences at the Frontline I built up my National Socialist Volksgemeinschaft.

Today, the National Socialist People’s Community is heading to the Front and from month to month, we will see how this new Wehrmacht will become more national socialist. It will assimilate the character of the new Germany and slowly dismiss all the old prejudices and class differences. By the end of the war the German Volk Community will experience its greatest reward- the difference between the Germany of then and the Germany of now.”

Max Domarus, Hitler Speeches and Proclamations, 1932-1945, 1973

z3 In 1914, the Kaiser no longer acknowledged any political Parties.

„I no longer acknowledge any political parties, I only recognize Germans“.

Kaiser Wilhelms II, 4th of August 1914 in front of the Reichstag Delegates.

z4 Hitler’s Final Speech during the third Nuremberg Rally, 21st of August 1927

There was one place in Germany where there were no class differences. This was with the companies at the front. There the concepts of ‘civilians’ and the ‘proletariat’ were not known. The only thing that mattered was the company.

H.Preiß, Adolf Hitler in Franken. A Speech from the Kampfzeit, 1938

Chart. 34 | The “Aryan Race”

Hitler’s views on human races which were realised during the “Third Reich”, were an expression of the scientific racism of the 18th and 19th century in Europe. This already contributed to the justification of colonial policy. The central assumptions were very simple: The Germans and the people from the northern countries, from England and Northern America were supposed to build the “Aryan Race”. The Germanic races, particularly the German race, were considered “Aryan races” per se. These groups of people – as “culture bearers” and “master people” – would be called to leadership of other people and races. All the other races had to serve the Aryans as pack animals. Hitler spoke out on Africans in “Mein Kampf”: “From time to time the German bourgeois realises that here and there for the first time, a nigger has become an advocate, teacher, priest or tenor (...) it hasn’t begun to dawn on this depraved bourgeois world that this is a sin towards reason, that this is criminal lunacy to train a born pro simian until one gets the feeling to have changed him into an advocate.”

The pureness of the “master race” would have to be the highest bid and task for the German state. By targeted demographic measurements and breeding programmes, a re-nordification of the enfeebled “German race” was started. From an experts’ point of view, the biggest danger was to spare the “lower races”, to treat them humanely and to “mix up” with them. Particularly mixed marriages seemed to peril the existence of the “master race”.

The Jews had a unique position. They were considered as intelligent seducers trying to stop the “master race” from its quasi-natural world supremacy by ideas of equality, empathy and human solidarity. The “Jewish bacillus” that seemed to foil the selection of the best and strongest “race”, was meant to be eradicated and with him the tradition of humanism based on the Jewish prophets, the Greek philosophers and Christianity that had helped shape the European culture. Beside humanism liberalism, Marxism, pacifism and consistently practiced Christianity, were considered deadly enemies that had to be persecuted and exterminated.



1. “Aryan Girl”, children’s charm is racially manipulated.

German Historical Museum

2. The ideal of the “Aryan” German girl. Spear thrower from the Federation of German Girls, 1940.

Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

3. The “Aryan Family” is considered the perfect embodiment of the racial and population politics of the Regime

Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

4. Skiing instructor on Fatigue Duty in Mittenwalk around 1937

Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

5. Race research via skull analysis. Measurement of the morphological face height using a circular measuring device, 1937.

Federal Archive Koblenz

6. These propaganda pictures, as found on posters or magazines like “Der Stürmer”, emphasized and spread the latent anti Semitic atmosphere in Germany.

Federal Archive Koblenz

7. Anti communist propaganda was meant to justify Hitler`s war for living space in Eastern Europe, leaving deep scars in the national psyche.

German Historical Museum

8. Pictures of the German Races. The „Race Science“ believes that even within the Germanic races there are differences.

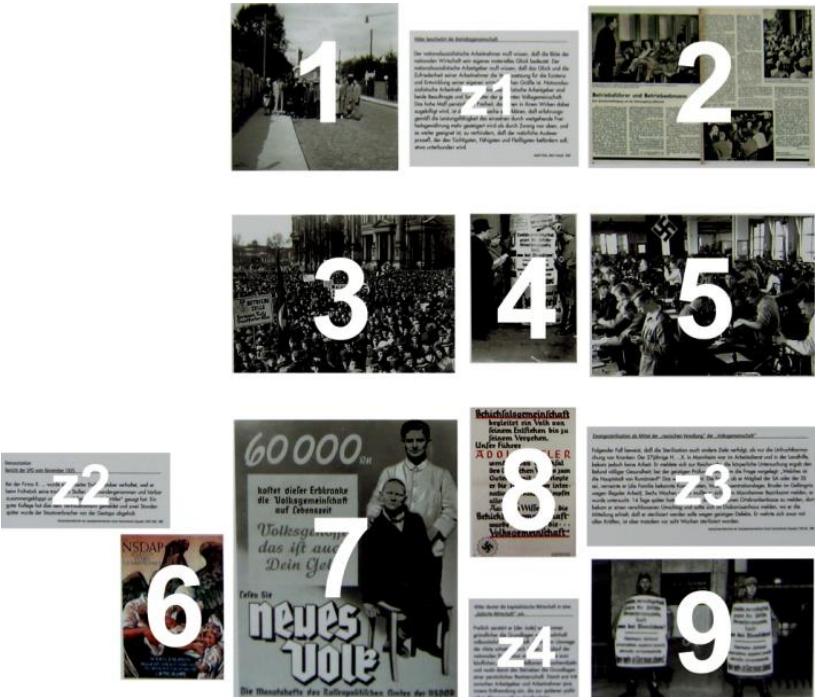
German Historical Museum

Chart. 35 | Operating Community – People’s Community – Community of Destiny

The National Socialist conception of a “People’s Community” set up the propagandistic opposite to the bourgeois society of the Weimar republic, characterized by a clash of interests. With this ideology the National Socialists denied all social differences like origin, profession, wealth or education. In fact, these differences continued existing. The idea of the “people’s community” was boosted by the longing for harmony and authoritarian leadership in a society that was marked by inflation, unemployment and social conflicts. The National Socialists knew how to benefit from these conditions.

The Nuremberg laws “for the protection of German blood and the German honour” declared in 1935 that the “People’s Community” as a “community of blood and destiny”. Marginalization, expulsion and extermination were the extremes of this community, which exclusively consisted of healthy, work and achievement orientated, Aryan Germans. Marginalization and exterminations were performed according to racial, political, religious or social criteria or in refusal to participate in the “People’s Community”.

The companies in the “Third Reich” were supposed to be places where social differences were evened out. In reality the head of the company could boundlessly push through his interests against the following. The National Socialist regime nationalized the class conflict and declared itself directly in charge of the procedures in the companies. The relationship between employer and employee was regulated by “fiduciary duty” and “duty of good faith”. The rights of the employees were strongly restricted. Strikes were strictly prohibited.



1.. A trip by the Siemens Group „Nature and Folk“ from Berlin. Goal of this trip the communitive sharing off one’s leisure time, around 1938.

State Archive Berlin

2. Article from the magazine „Arbeitertum“, regarding the relationship „Work Manager“ and „Employees“.

Arbeitertum, 1937

3. Mass demonstration at the Berlin Lustgarten, in support of the boycott against Jewish Shops, 1st of April 1933.

State Archive Berlin

4. Poster encouraging people to boycott Jewish shops, 1st April 1933.

State Archive Berlin

5. „Reich's Career Competition“ for apprentices at the Siemens Factory in Berlin, o.J.

State Archive Berlin

6. Propaganda Poster that portrays the „survival“ of the People's Community while under the „protection“ of the Party and the State.

German Historical Museum Berlin

7. Advertising poster for the magazine „New Folk“ from the „NSDAP Department of Racial Politics“, regarding the legitimacy of Euthanasia.

German Historical Museum Berlin

8. NS-Propaganda for defining the „Common Destiny“, 1933.

German Historical Museum Berlin

9. SA-Members posted in front of a Jewish shop, to stop people from entering, 1st of April 1933.

State Archive Berlin

z1 Hitler Evokes the Labour Community

The national socialist employee must know that his own material happiness is based on the growth of the national socialist economy. National Socialist workers and employers are both representatives and advocates of the whole People's Community. Experience shows that a high level of personal freedom increases the productivity of a worker more so than orders from above. This is meant to quell the natural "selection" that advocates the more fortunate, hardworking and capable.

Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, 1936

z2 Denunciation

A Report from the SPD from November 1935

At the end of October, a worker at company X was arrested, because after slapping together two dry pieces of bread he muttered, „Heil Hitler“ under his breath. A good colleague reported this to a delegate and two hours later the political offender was picked up by the Gestapo.

Germany Reports by the Social Democratic Party Germany (SoPaDe), November 1935

z3 Forced Sterilization as a means for „Racial Improvement“ of the „People's Community“.

The following case is an example of how sterilization is used to follow other goals besides the sterilization of the sick: the 27 year old „H“ in Mannheim was active in the fatigue duty and within agriculture, however, did not become any work. He registered with the armed forces and the physical inspection revealed that he is completely healthy. During the test for mental health, he was asked the question, „What is the capitol city of Romania?“ He did not know. The question of whether he was a member of the SA or SS, he answered in the negative (his family were communists; his father sent to a concentration camp and his brother was sent to prison due to illegal work).

Six weeks later, he had to register at the Mannheim District Office where he was examined. 14 days later he had to go to the regional hospital where he was given a closed envelope and had to go to the deaconesses' home, where he was informed that he was to be sterilized due to „mental defects“. He resisted with all his strength but was nevertheless sterilized eight weeks ago.

„Germany Reports“ by the Social Democratic Party Germany (SoPaDe), 1935

z4 Hitler Relabels the capitalist Economy as a „Jewish Economy“.

Indeed he [the Jew] continues to destroy with increasing efficiency, the foundations of a functioning economy. Via the stockmarket, he undermines the national production of the economy, transforms this into a haggling tool and robs the undertakings of their personal ownerships. With this an internal split between the employer and employees occurs, which lays the ground work for a political class division.

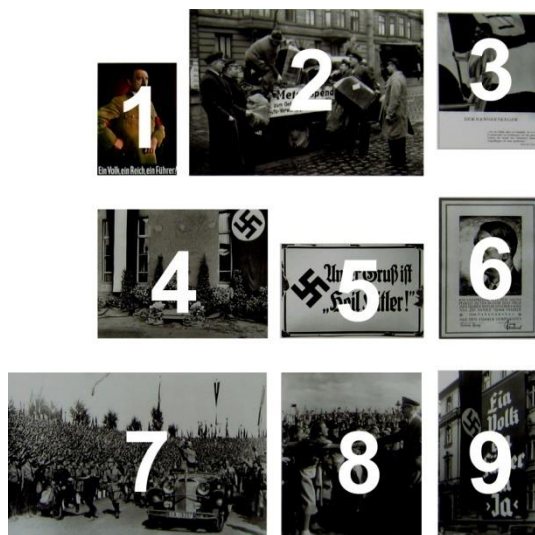
Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, 1936

Chart. 36 | The Myth of the “Führer”

After the pluralistic democracy in Germany seemed to be discredited by people, the desire for “simple solutions” and a “strong man on top of the state” began to be established. This desire became stronger in view of increasing economic and social problems and political instability.

The “Führer” cult had been existing within the National Socialist movement since the middle of the twenties and then developed into a politico-ideological guiding concept. First within the National Socialist party and later on in the “Reich”, the Persona Hitler became the central political man. Within Hitler’s following the opinion prevailed that he had the historical commission to re-establish Germany’s national magnitude and - after the revision of the “disgraceful Peace Treaty of Versaille” – to create for the German people, its destined outstanding place in the world and history.

The unlimited power of the “Führer” in the “Third Reich” replaced a bureaucratically structured and regulative government, via National Socialist laws that overruled the Weimar constitution. The dictatorship of Adolf Hitler could develop freely with the death of Hindenburg in 1934 and the German Armed Forces swearing allegiance to Adolf Hitler. According to the maxim „divide et impera“ Hitler’s regime followed the principle of keeping the different party authorities and the synchronised state authorities in a „rivalling balance“. The formal rights of the cabinet, that never convened again after February 1938, were gradually replaced by the “Führer’s Will“. His position increasingly referred to his “charismatic personality” instead of his function as head of state and government. The “myth of the Führer” was boosted by the daily personality cult about Hitler, by the Hitler salute or the staging of his public appearances. The military successes seemed to proof his impeccability. Only with the beginning of military failures, did widespread doubts about the “Führer’s” wisdom start to occur.



1. One Folk, One Reich, One Führer”: One of the most famous propaganda portraits of Hitler, displayed in many reception areas within institutes throughout the “Third Reich”. This symbolized the all-pervading presence of the Führer, 1938

German Historical Museum Berlin

2. Donate metal: Metal donation in honor of Hitler’s Birthday, April 1934

German Historical Museum Berlin

3. Standard Bearer Hitler: "Standard Bearer Hitler" by Hubertus Langzinger. A picture that is displayed in the House of German Art in Munich, at the „Great German Art Exhibition“. Depicted is a picture of Hitler as a mystified medieval White Knight, 1938.

German Historical Museum Berlin

4. Memorial Plaque: "Führer Memorial Plaque" regarding Hitler's visit to the Berliner Siemens Factory on the 10.11.1933

Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

5. Sign: Email sign propagating a uniform salute.

German Historical Museum Berlin

6. Declaration of Commitment: „Declaration of Commitment" to the Führer, by a Hitler Youth member.

Certificate 1944.

German Historical Museum Berlin

7. Hitler in a car: "Nuremburg Rally for Strength and Unity". Hitler is driven in a car through the esplanade of cheering Hitler Youths, in a stadium in Nuremburg, 8th of September 1934

Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

8. Hitler greets supporters: Hitler during the Thanksgiving Festival, Bückeberg/Lower Saxony

Federal Archive Berlin

9. District Administration: NSDAP District Administration Greater Berlin, Voßstrasse 11, Berlin Center, 1934.

State Archive Berlin

Chart. 37 | The Expansion towards East – "People without Living Space"

The expansion of the German "living space" was already propagandized by the "Alldeutscher Verband" (The All German League) in the early 20th century. Later the National Socialists argued that the Germans were a people without space. Germany needed to gain living space, in order to open up settlement area for the permanently growing German people and to facilitate an autarkic economy. With this perspective the National Socialists tied in with the widely spread opinion that Germany had too little living space at its disposal and that's why they had to conquer new living space in an "intransigent battle" against other people. In this sense the "conception of living space" was not originally a National Socialist idea but referred to the founder of the Geopolitics, Friedrich Ratzel. However, Ratzel didn't primarily mean European expansion but overseas expansion. It was a widely spread view that the governing of the Eurasian area would inevitably lead to world supremacy. It is not clear how much Hitler was influenced by these ideas or whether he wanted to continue the idea of extending towards the East, like the Deutscher Orden in the Medieval Times, as he programmatically announced in "Mein Kampf". According to Hitler, a war against Russia would be a relatively easy undertaking, because "the Giant Empire was ready for the down fall". He considered the Russian people as a low-grade Jewish Slavonic race that was not capable of building a sustainable state. He concluded: "We are destined to be witnesses of a catastrophe, it being the most powerful confirmation for the folkish race theory." In this quote the two central elements of the fascist foreign policy become very obvious: conquest and racism. Heinrich Himmler, SS "Reichs" leader and head of the German police, broached the issue of these two aspects in 1939, in a treatise on "The dealing with the "Fremdvölkischen" in the East", concretising these ideas in 1941, within the framework of the "General Plan East". Supported by a new land law, the plan envisaged the Germanisation via population transfers in five year steps. Generally, the resettlement of "unwanted" people to Siberia was envisaged, or alternatively their enslavement or extermination.



1. The „Becoming of the New Europe“, a propaganda poster concerning the march of the German Army towards the Eastern Front, September 1941.

German Historical Museum

2. Propaganda poster justifying the Second World War, 1942.

German Historical Museum

3 . The danger from the East was exaggerated, in order to justify the attack on the Soviet Union. Anti Bolshevik propaganda poster from the south German Volunteer Corps, 1919. Reprinted 1939.

German Historical Museum

4 . The regime wanted to involve the rest of Europe against the fight against the Soviet Union. Anti Soviet poster, around 1942.

German Historical Museum

5 . Poster, suggesting a European war conflict against the Soviet Union, 1941.

German Historical Museum

6. NS Colonial propaganda. A camel from the Leipzig Zoo is used for propaganda reason, making claims of entitlement. October 1934.

German Historical Museum

z1 Drive to the East- „People without Living Room”

1. *Now, the open land is closing in and the soil is too hard. There, the morning stands like a fire in full drive. To the East, blows the wind! Therefore, woman and child and peasant, to the wagons, to the horses! We hunger for fresh soil and to feel the good wind!*

2. *Our homeland burns bright and strong in our blood. We will build a new home to cherish. To the East blows the wind! Therefore, woman and child and peasant, to the wagons, to the horses! We hunger for fresh soil and to feel the good wind!*

3. *The strange Wilderness does not shock us with deception and deceit; we will give her a German face, with sword and plow. To the East, blows the wind! Therefore, woman and child and peasant, to the wagons, to the horses! We hunger for fresh soil and to feel the good wind!*

(from: Hans Baumann (Text), August Kremser (Music): Nun wird es zu eng, 1935)

z2 Quote: *On the 30th of December, during a convention of the NSDAP in Marienberg (Saxony), the district leader Bergmann discussed ‘the colonial question’. His often confused statement can be summed up as follows.*

Germany requires Colonies, in order to survive, and the most important resources are found in the colonies. Germany is also ordained to bring the European culture to the colonial people. Out of prestige reasons, Germany wishes to regain its former colonies, and beyond that to state claims over the Ukraine, which is wrongly under Russian rule. First of all, the majority of people living there are German. Sooner or later there will be a disintegration and a splitting of Russia...

German Reports of the Social Democratic Party Germany (Sopade) from October 1936

Chart. 38 | The Forming of the “People’s Community”

The idea of a class-independent “People’s Community” became popular not only during the “Third Reich”. Its success was not only caused by coercion and terror. The longing for equality, harmony and integration had been entrenched in the cultural consciousness of the German population for centuries. The promise of the “People’s Community” – one of the most efficient National Socialist propaganda instruments – matched this longing. The National Socialist “People’s Community” did not, however, correspond to the idea of equality, seeing as it was based on a clear separation of “Führer” and “following”. Nevertheless, the National Socialists aimed at establishing an internal closeness by an extensive ideological education. Nearly all Nazi-organisations and public institutions of the “Third Reich” were in charge of education and training.

The Germans were supposed to be infiltrated in every sphere of life and work and educated in the National Socialist sense. The German Labour Front particularly propagandised the idea of the “People’s Community”: The promise was to reconcile the intellectuals and the workers and to integrate them in an “operational community”. The conflicts between different social layers and groups were ideologically turned into “production battles” in which the “soldiers of work” had to prove themselves. In this connection the public media staging is to be considered: Political mass events with a festive character, ritualised anniversaries and holidays contributed to the entrenchment of a collective identity. Collections for the “Winter Relief Programme” and the “Eintopfsonntage” (Sunday Stews) were meant to portray the existence of an egalitarian society. KdF (Strength through Joy) fulfilled the task to direct and control the leisure time activities – the seaside resort Prora was supposed to make its contribution to this. With regard to the requirements of National Socialist education art, culture, science and sports were exploited and used in a propagandistic way. Those considered “eccentric”, “strange” and “different” were defined as such, within the content of the “People’s Community”. Exclusion, displacement, persecution and extermination for racist or political reasons, were part of the National Socialist ideology and practice. “Social” practises such as spying and denunciation were meant to contribute to the forming of the “People’s Community” which was to consist of dedicated “Aryan” people.



1 . The transformation of Germany into a „People’s Community“

Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co

Chart. 39 | “Gleichschaltung” (“Forcible coordination”) – the Destruction of Public, Intellectual and Political Life

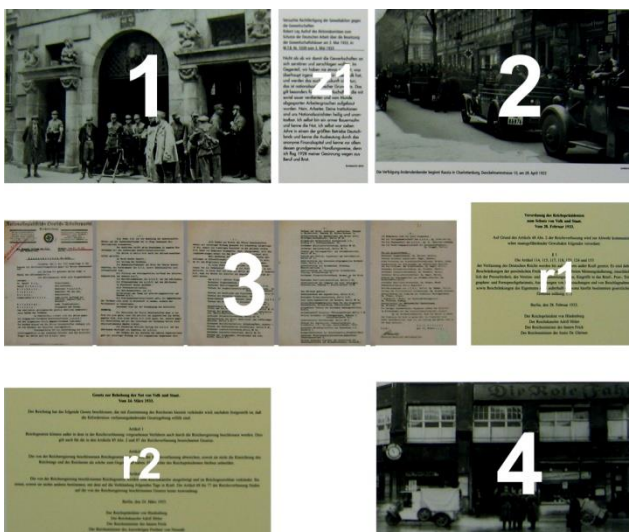
The term “forcible coordination” is one of the original terms the National Socialist created. The term appeared officially in 1933 in the laws for the “regions’ forcible coordination the with the Reich”. Later the term was transferred to all sorts of National Socialist takeovers, to the process of institutional and staff restructuring in parties, organisations and authorities.

After the transfer of power Hitler’s government used the weeks until the re-elections on 5th May 1933, in order to strengthen their position by terror and violence. Already in the night of the Reichstag fire, the persecution of communists who were considered to be guilty began. Like the social democrats, they counted to the first victims of the new regime. In the last free elections, the NSDAP would only receive 43,9 percent of the votes, despite the exclusion of the KPD and the intimidation of the other parties. Together with the German-National People’s Party the coalition achieved a narrow majority. Meanwhile Hitler aimed at dictatorial powers. With promises and coercion, the National Socialists succeeded to achieve a two third majority for their “Ermächtigungsgesetz” (“Enabling Act”).

The Act granted the cabinet under Chancellor Adolf Hitler the authority to enact laws without the participation of the *Reichstag*. In rapid succession the government enacted laws that served the “Gleichschaltung” of the parties, associations and the state apparatus. In June the SPD was forbidden, the bourgeois parties forestalled this fate by self solution. The NSDAP advanced to the only state party on these legal foundations.

The boycott of Jewish shops in April, the banishment of disliked scientists and artists, and the book burning on May 10th 1933 balefully announced the upcoming monopolisation of state and society though the National Socialists.

The German Union Association being the largest union, largely conformed to the course of the new government. The Union loosened its connections to the SPD and welcomed the introduction of the 1st May as “Day of National Labour”. On the 2nd of May 1933, the divestiture of the trade unions was performed as long prepared. The trade unions property was confiscated and the members coercively integrated in the German Labour Front (DAF), founded on the 10th of May.



1 . The Union Headquarters were occupied, 2nd of May 1933. The SA occupied the Munich Union office on the 2nd of May, 1933.

Federal Archive Koblenz

2. The persecution of those who think differently begins. Razzia in Charlottenburg, Danckelmannstreet 10, 28th of April 1933.

State Archive Berlin

3. The shattering of the Unions was planned in great detail. Newsletter from the NSDAP, to highest levels of political leadership, Robert Ley, 21st April 1933.

Federal Archive Berlin

4 . Shortly after taking power, Hitler ordered attacks against Communists. Police invasion of the Karl Liebknecht House in Berlin, 24th of February 1933.

Federal Archive Koblenz

r1 Radical restriction of personal freedom.

Reich's Law Gazette, Part 1, Nr.17 from the 28th of February 1933, Page. 83

r2 The „Empowerment Law“ allowed the government to create its own laws.

Reich's Law Gazette; Part I, 1933, Nr. 25 from the 24th of March 1933, page. 141

z1 An Attempt at trying to justify violent actions against the Unions by Robert Ley. Appeal to the action committee emphasizing the protection of German Labour against the occupation of Union Houses. 2nd of May 1933 in: WTB Nr. 1039 from 2nd of May 1933.

It is not as if we are destroying and splitting the Union completely. On the contrary, we have never destroyed anything that has value to our people, and we will not do anything as such in the future. This goes against the fundamentals of the National Socialist principles. This applies in particular to the Unions which have built up their wealth based on the hard work and toil of the working class. No, dear worker, your institutions are holy to us National Socialist and will not be soiled. I myself am the son of a poor farmer and understand the dilemma. I myself worked seven years within a big company in Germany and understand the exploitation by anonymous Financial Capital and know the manipulative methods used by them, seeing as I was fired in 1928 due to my criticism.

Federal Archive Berlin

Chart. 40 | The NSDAP – Keeper of the “People’s Community”

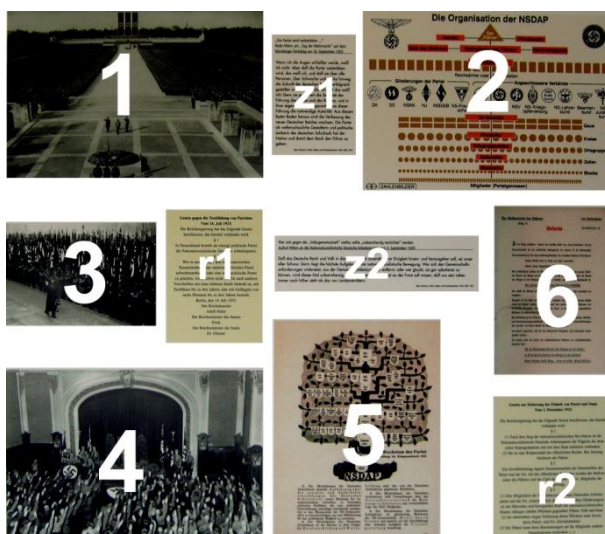
In January 1919 the metal worker Anton Drexler and the journalist Karl Harrer founded the German Labour Party in Munich which – under the influence of their advertiser Adolf Hitler – was renamed the National Socialist Labour Party (NSAP). In July 1921, the party members elected Hitler as the chairman; a position that provided him with dictatorial powers. The “movement” with its “Führer” succeeded to unify dissatisfied and despaired people with simple paroles and an ideology based on concepts of the enemy. The social Darwinist, racist, anti-Semitic, anti-Marxist and nationalist elements would remain ideological and political. The anti-capitalist constituents of the party ideology were accessory parts activated only in specific political situations and for propaganda purposes. The “leader cult” corresponded to the typical desire of the time for a, “strong man on top of the state”.

Even though the attitude towards parliamentary systems was generally negative, the NSDAP – after the disastrous putsch of 1923 – aimed, for tactical reasons, at coming into power based on the legal means. Only in the Reichstag elections of 1930 did the party achieve an of vote of 18,3 Percent. In the July elections it became the strongest parliamentary party – though in free elections it never achieved a majority of votes.

The appointment of Hitler as “Reichs”-Chancellor was built up as the “takeover”. From July 1933 onwards the NSDAP was – after “forcible coordination”, self-solution and prohibition of all other parties – the central political organisation in Germany. With the law for the “Safety of the Unity of Party and State” from December 1933, the power position of the NSDAP was consolidated.

When the war started the NSDAP participated in the “construction of the “home front” and organized the aerial defence. At the end of the war the so called “Volkssturm” (people’s storm troop) was organized under the lead management of the party. It was the last array of young men and elderly people who could be called up for military purposes.

The amount of NSDAP-members in 1945 was about 8,5 million people. The party constitution was based on the “Führerprinzip” (Principle of Leadership). The influence on the life of the German people was guaranteed by a small-meshed net (grid) of regional leaders. Particularly the block wardens advanced from the symbol of control and spying, to keepers of the “People’s Community”.



1. The initiation of the NSDAP during the Nuremberg Rallies. Hitler, Himmler and Lutze the Chief of Staff of the SA, during a memorial for the fallen in Luitpoldhain in Nuremberg, 9th of September 1934.

German Historical Museum

2. The organizational structure of the NSDAP.

Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co

3. The swearing into office of NSDAP functionaries. The swearing in of the NSDAP at the Berlin Lustgarten, 25th of February 1934. Goebbels inspects the front row.

Federal Archive Berlin

4. Schooling and „orientation“ of the NSDAP functionaries. School celebration in Pankow, 12th of February 1934.

Federal Archive Berlin

5. Party growth. The face of the party, Munich 1939.

Federal Archive Berlin

6 . The NSDAP, regarded as the „honorably social spine of morality for the Home Front. Secret Newsletter sent to the Representative of the Führer, no date.

Federal Archive Berlin

r1 There was only one Party left in Germany.

Reich's Law Gazette, Part 1, 1933.

r2 The State and the NSDAP would emerge into each other.

Reich's Law Gazette, Part 1, 1933.

z1 „The Party Will Live on...“

Speech by Hitler on “The Anniversary of the Wehrmacht” at the Nurnberg Rally, 16th of September 1935.

“When I will close my eyes, I do not know. However, that the Party will survive, this I know. That it will be able to lead our people through times of weakness and strength, this I know and believe! For it will guarantee the stability of leadership and in securing this stability it will ensure that the leadership possesses the necessary authority. From this solid ground the constitution of the new German Reich will grow. The Party in its role as ideological architect and political guide of German Destiny, must submit the Nation and the Reich to the Führer.

Max Domarus, Hitler. Speeches and Proclamation 1932-1945, 1973

z2 Whoever opposes the “People’s Community” should be ruthlessly exterminated. That the German Reich and its Folk should go in and out the war with the utmost of unity should be our only oath. This is the highest goal of the National Socialist Movement. Whoever opposes the community requirements, or distances themselves from the social goals or even considers sabotaging them will be mercilessly destroyed. The soldiers at the front need to know that his life is worth more to us than the life of a traitor.

Max Domarus, Hitler. Speeches and Proclamation 1932- 1945, 1973