[Template:Redirect](/wiki/Template:Redirect" \o "Template:Redirect) [Template:Redirect](/wiki/Template:Redirect) [Template:Pp-semi-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi-indef) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Nazism sidebar](/wiki/Template:Nazism_sidebar) **National Socialism** ([Template:Lang-de](/wiki/Template:Lang-de)), more commonly known as **Nazism** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en)<ref name=Jones2003/>), is the [ideology](/wiki/Ideology) and practice associated with the 20th-century German [Nazi Party](/wiki/Nazi_Party) and [Nazi state](/wiki/Nazi_Germany) – and, by extension, other [far-right](/wiki/Far-right_politics) groups. Usually characterized as a form of [fascism](/wiki/Fascism) that incorporates [scientific racism](/wiki/Scientific_racism) and [antisemitism](/wiki/Antisemitism), Nazism developed out of the influences of [Pan-Germanism](/wiki/Pan-Germanism), the [Völkisch](/wiki/Völkisch) German nationalist movement, and the [anti-communist](/wiki/Anti-communist) [Freikorps](/wiki/Freikorps) paramilitary groups that emerged during the [Weimar Republic](/wiki/Weimar_Republic) after German defeat in [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I).

Nazism subscribed to theories of [racial hierarchy](/wiki/Racial_hierarchy) and [Social Darwinism](/wiki/Social_Darwinism), identifying Germans as part of what Nazis regarded as an [Aryan](/wiki/Aryan_race) or [Nordic](/wiki/Nordic_race) [master race](/wiki/Master_race).<ref name=Baum2006\_156/> It aimed to overcome social divisions and create a homogeneous society, or ["people's community"](/wiki/Volksgemeinschaft) based on national unity. The Nazis aimed to unite all Germans living in historically German territory, as well as gain additional lands for German expansion under the doctrine of [*Lebensraum*](/wiki/Lebensraum), while excluding those deemed either to be community aliens or foreign peoples. The term "National Socialism" arose out of attempts to create a nationalist redefinition of "socialism", as an alternative to both [internationalist](/wiki/Proletarian_internationalism) Marxist socialism and [free market](/wiki/Free_market) capitalism. Nazism rejected the Marxist concept of [class struggle](/wiki/Class_struggle), opposed [cosmopolitan](/wiki/Cosmopolitanism) [internationalism](/wiki/Internationalism), and sought to defend the private property and privately owned businesses of Aryans.

The Nazi Party was founded as the Pan-German nationalist and antisemitic [German Workers' Party](/wiki/German_Workers'_Party) on 5 January 1919. By the early 1920s, [Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) assumed control of the organization and renamed it the National Socialist German Workers' Party (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, NSDAP) to broaden its appeal. The [National Socialist Program](/wiki/National_Socialist_Program), adopted in 1920, called for a united [Greater Germany](/wiki/Greater_Germany) that would deny citizenship to [Jews](/wiki/Jews) or those of Jewish descent, while also supporting land reform and the [nationalization](/wiki/Nationalization) of some industries. In [*Mein Kampf*](/wiki/Mein_Kampf), written in 1924, Hitler outlined the antisemitism and anti-communism at the heart of his political philosophy, as well as his disdain for [parliamentary democracy](/wiki/Parliamentary_democracy) and his belief in Germany’s right to territorial expansion.

In 1933, with the support of traditional conservative nationalists, Hitler was appointed [Chancellor of Germany](/wiki/Chancellor_of_Germany) and the Nazis gradually established a [one-party state](/wiki/One-party_state), under which Jews, political opponents and other "undesirable" elements were marginalized, with several millions eventually imprisoned and killed. Hitler purged the party’s more socially and economically radical factions in the mid-1934 [Night of the Long Knives](/wiki/Night_of_the_Long_Knives) and, after the death of [President Hindenburg](/wiki/Paul_von_Hindenburg), political power was concentrated in his hands, as [Führer](/wiki/Führer) or "leader". Following the [Holocaust](/wiki/Holocaust) and German defeat in [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II), only a few fringe racist groups, usually referred to as [neo-Nazis](/wiki/Neo-Nazis), still describe themselves as following National Socialism.

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

[thumb|180px|Flag of the](/wiki/File:Flag_of_the_NSDAP_(1920–1945).svg) [National Socialist German Workers' Party](/wiki/National_Socialist_German_Workers'_Party) (alternative national [flag of Germany](/wiki/Flag_of_Germany), 1933-45) The full name of Adolf Hitler's party was *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (National-Socialist German Workers' Party; NSDAP). The shorthand *Nazi* was formed from the first two syllables of the German pronunciation of the word "national" ([Template:IPA-de](/wiki/Template:IPA-de)).<ref name=Lepage2009\_9/>

The term was in use before the rise of the NSDAP as a colloquial and derogatory word for a backwards [peasant](/wiki/Peasant), characterizing an awkward and clumsy person. It derived from *Ignaz*, being a shortened version of [Ignatius](/wiki/Ignatius),<ref name=GottliebMorgensen2007/><ref name=HarperOED/> a common name in [Bavaria](/wiki/Bavaria), the area from which the Nazis emerged. Opponents seized on this and shortened the first word of the party's name, *Nationalsozialistische*, to the dismissive "Nazi".<ref name=HarperOED/><ref name=Sourcebook/><ref name=DailyTelegraph23102011/><ref name=Seebold2002/>

The NSDAP briefly adopted the Nazi designation, attempting to [reappropriate](/wiki/Reappropriate) the term, but soon gave up this effort and generally avoided it while in power.<ref name=Sourcebook/><ref name=DailyTelegraph23102011/> The use of "[Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany)", "[Nazi regime](/wiki/Nazi_regime)", and so on was popularized by German exiles abroad. From them, the term spread into other languages and was eventually brought back to Germany after World War II.<ref name=Sourcebook/> In English, Nazism is a common name for the ideology the party advocated; a rarer alternative spelling, though representing a common pronunciation, is Naziism ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en)).<ref name=oxforddict/>

## Position in the political spectrum[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|Foreground, left to right: Führer](/wiki/File:WWII,_Europe,_Germany,_%22Nazi_Hierarchy,_Hitler,_Goering,_Goebbels,_Hess%22,_The_Desperate_Years_p143_-_NARA_-_196509.tif) [Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler); [Hermann Göring](/wiki/Hermann_Göring); Minister of Propaganda [Joseph Goebbels](/wiki/Joseph_Goebbels); [Rudolf Hess](/wiki/Rudolf_Hess) [thumb|Nazis alongside members of the far-right](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_102-02134,_Bad_Harzburg,_Gründung_der_Harzburger_Front.jpg) [reactionary](/wiki/Reactionary) and [monarchist](/wiki/Monarchism) [German National People's Party](/wiki/German_National_People's_Party) (DNVP), during the brief Nazi-DNVP alliance in the [Harzburg Front](/wiki/Harzburg_Front) from 1931 to 1932

The majority of scholars identify Nazism in practice as a form of [far-right politics](/wiki/Far-right_politics).<ref name=Fritzsche\_Eatwell\_Griffin/> Far-right themes in Nazism include the argument that superior people have a right to dominate over other people and purge society of supposed inferior elements.[[1]](#cite_note-1) Adolf Hitler and other proponents officially portrayed Nazism as being neither left- nor right-wing, but [syncretic](/wiki/Syncretic_politics).[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3) Hitler in *Mein Kampf* directly attacked both left-wing and right-wing politics in Germany, saying:

Today our left-wing politicians in particular are constantly insisting that their craven-hearted and obsequious foreign policy necessarily results from the disarmament of Germany, whereas the truth is that this is the policy of traitors [...] But the politicians of the Right deserve exactly the same reproach. It was through their miserable cowardice that those ruffians of Jews who came into power in 1918 were able to rob the nation of its arms.[[4]](#cite_note-4)

Hitler, when asked whether he supported the "bourgeois right-wing", claimed that Nazism was not exclusively for any class, and indicated that it favoured neither the left nor the right, but preserved "pure" elements from both "camps", stating: "From the camp of bourgeois [tradition](/wiki/Tradition), it takes national resolve, and from the [materialism](/wiki/Dialectical_materialism) of the [Marxist](/wiki/Marxism) dogma, living, creative Socialism".[[5]](#cite_note-5) The Nazis were strongly influenced by the post–[World War I](/wiki/World_War_I) far-right in Germany, which held common beliefs such as anti-Marxism, anti-liberalism, and antisemitism, along with nationalism, contempt towards the [Treaty of Versailles](/wiki/Treaty_of_Versailles), and condemnation of the Weimar Republic for signing the armistice in November 1918 that later led to their signing of the Treaty of Versailles.[[6]](#cite_note-6) A major inspiration for the Nazis were the far-right nationalist [*Freikorps*](/wiki/Freikorps#Post-World_War_I), paramilitary organisations that engaged in political violence after World War I.[[6]](#cite_note-6) Initially, the post-World War I German far right was dominated by [monarchists](/wiki/Monarchism), but the younger generation, who were associated with *Völkisch* nationalism, were more radical and did not express any emphasis on the restoration of the German monarchy.[[7]](#cite_note-7) This younger generation desired to dismantle the Weimar Republic and create a new radical and strong state based upon a martial ruling ethic that could revive the "Spirit of 1914" that was associated with German national unity ([*Volksgemeinschaft*](/wiki/Volksgemeinschaft)).[[7]](#cite_note-7) The Nazis, the far-right monarchist, [reactionary](/wiki/Reactionary) [German National People's Party](/wiki/German_National_People's_Party) (DNVP), and others, such as monarchist officers of the German Army and several prominent industrialists, formed an alliance in opposition to the Weimar Republic on 11 October 1931 in [Bad Harzburg](/wiki/Bad_Harzburg); officially known as the "National Front", but commonly referred to as the [Harzburg Front](/wiki/Harzburg_Front).[[8]](#cite_note-8) The Nazis stated the alliance was purely tactical and there remained substantial differences with the DNVP. The Nazis described the DNVP as a bourgeois party and called themselves an anti-bourgeois party.[[8]](#cite_note-8) After the elections in 1932, the alliance broke after the DNVP lost many of its seats in the Reichstag. The Nazis denounced them as "an insignificant heap of reactionaries".[[9]](#cite_note-9) The DNVP responded by denouncing the Nazis for their socialism, their street violence, and the "economic experiments" that would take place if the Nazis rose to power.[[10]](#cite_note-10) [Kaiser](/wiki/Kaiser) [Wilhelm II](/wiki/Wilhelm_II,_German_Emperor), who was pressured to abdicate the throne and flee into exile amidst an attempted communist revolution in Germany, initially supported the Nazi Party. His four sons, including Prince [Eitel Friedrich](/wiki/Prince_Eitel_Friedrich_of_Prussia) and Prince [Oskar](/wiki/Prince_Oskar_of_Prussia), became members of the Nazi Party, in hopes that in exchange for their support, the Nazis would permit the restoration of the monarchy.[[11]](#cite_note-11) There were factions in the Nazi Party, both conservative and radical.[[12]](#cite_note-12) The conservative Nazi [Hermann Göring](/wiki/Hermann_Göring) urged Hitler to conciliate with [capitalists](/wiki/Capitalism) and [reactionaries](/wiki/Reactionary).[[12]](#cite_note-12) Other prominent conservative Nazis included [Heinrich Himmler](/wiki/Heinrich_Himmler) and [Reinhard Heydrich](/wiki/Reinhard_Heydrich).[[13]](#cite_note-13) The radical Nazi [Joseph Goebbels](/wiki/Joseph_Goebbels) hated capitalism, viewing it as having Jews at its core, and he stressed the need for the party to emphasise both a [proletarian](/wiki/Proletariat) and national character. Those views were shared by [Otto Strasser](/wiki/Otto_Strasser), who later left the Nazi Party in the belief that Hitler had betrayed the party's socialist goals by allegedly endorsing capitalism.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Large segments of the Nazi Party staunchly supported its official socialist, revolutionary, and [anti-capitalist](/wiki/Anti-capitalism) positions and expected both a social and economic revolution upon the party's gaining power in 1933.[[14]](#cite_note-14) Many of the million members of the [*Sturmabteilung*](/wiki/Sturmabteilung) (SA) were committed to the party's official socialist program.[[14]](#cite_note-14) The leader of the SA, [Ernst Röhm](/wiki/Ernst_Röhm), pushed for a "second revolution" (the "first revolution" being the Nazis' seizure of power) that would entrench the party's official socialist program. Further, Röhm desired that the SA absorb the much smaller German Army into its ranks under his leadership.[[14]](#cite_note-14) Prior to becoming an antisemite and a Nazi, Hitler had lived a [Bohemian](/wiki/Bohemianism) lifestyle as a wandering watercolour artist in [Austria](/wiki/Austria) and southern Germany, though he maintained elements of it later in life.[[15]](#cite_note-15) Hitler served in World War I. After the war, his battalion was absorbed by the [Bavarian Soviet Republic](/wiki/Bavarian_Soviet_Republic) from 1918 to 1919, where he was elected Deputy Battalion Representative. According to the historian Thomas Weber, Hitler attended the funeral of communist [Kurt Eisner](/wiki/Kurt_Eisner) (a German Jew), wearing a black mourning armband on one arm and a red communist armband on the other,[[16]](#cite_note-16) which he took as evidence that Hitler's political beliefs had not yet solidified.[[16]](#cite_note-16) In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler never mentioned any service with the Bavarian Soviet Republic, and stated that he became an antisemite in 1913 in Vienna. This statement has been disputed with the contention he was not an antisemite at that time.[[17]](#cite_note-17) Hitler altered his political views in response to the Treaty of Versailles of June 1919, and it was then that he became an antisemitic, German nationalist.[[17]](#cite_note-17) As a Nazi, Hitler had expressed opposition to capitalism, having regarded capitalism as having Jewish origins. He accused capitalism of holding nations ransom in the interests of a parasitic [cosmopolitan](/wiki/Cosmopolitanism) [rentier](/wiki/Rentier_capitalism) class.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Hitler took a pragmatic position between the conservative and radical factions of the Nazi Party, in that he accepted private property and allowed capitalist private enterprises to exist so long as they adhered to the goals of the Nazi state. However, if a capitalist private enterprise resisted Nazi goals, he sought to destroy it.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Upon the Nazis achieving power, Röhm's SA began attacks against individuals deemed to be associated with conservative reaction, without Hitler's authorisation.<ref name=Nyomarkay1967/> Hitler considered Röhm's independent actions to be violating and threatening his leadership, as well as jeopardising the regime by alienating the conservative President [Paul von Hindenburg](/wiki/Paul_von_Hindenburg) and the conservative-oriented German Army.<ref name=Nyomarkay1967\_133/> This resulted in Hitler purging Röhm and other radical members of the SA in what came to be known as the [Night of the Long Knives](/wiki/Night_of_the_Long_Knives).<ref name=Nyomarkay1967\_133/>

Although he opposed communist ideology, Hitler on numerous occasions publicly praised the [Soviet Union's](/wiki/Soviet_Union) leader [Joseph Stalin](/wiki/Joseph_Stalin) and [Stalinism](/wiki/Stalinism).[[19]](#cite_note-19) Hitler commended Stalin for seeking to purify the [Communist Party of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Communist_Party_of_the_Soviet_Union) of Jewish influences, noting Stalin's purging of Jewish communists such as [Leon Trotsky](/wiki/Leon_Trotsky), [Grigory Zinoviev](/wiki/Grigory_Zinoviev), [Lev Kamenev](/wiki/Lev_Kamenev), and [Karl Radek](/wiki/Karl_Radek).[[20]](#cite_note-20) While Hitler always intended to bring Germany into conflict against the Soviet Union to gain [*Lebensraum*](/wiki/Lebensraum) (living space), he supported a temporary strategic alliance between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union to form a common anti-liberal front to crush liberal democracies, particularly [France](/wiki/France).[[19]](#cite_note-19)

## Origins[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

### Völkisch nationalism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[175px|thumb|](/wiki/File:Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte.jpg)[Johann Gottlieb Fichte](/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte), considered one of the fathers of German nationalism

One of the most significant ideological influences on the Nazis was the German nationalist [Johann Gottlieb Fichte](/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte), whose works had served as inspiration to Hitler and other Nazi members, including [Dietrich Eckart](/wiki/Dietrich_Eckart) and [Arnold Fanck](/wiki/Arnold_Fanck).<ref name=Ryback2010/> In *Speeches to the German Nation* (1808), written amid [Napoleonic](/wiki/Napoleon) France's occupation of Berlin, Fichte called for a German national revolution against the French occupiers, making passionate public speeches, arming his students for battle against the French, and stressing the need for action by the German nation to free itself.<ref name=Ryback2010\_129/> Fichte's nationalism was populist and opposed to traditional elites, spoke of the need of a "People's War" (*Volkskrieg*), and put forth concepts similar to those the Nazis adopted.<ref name=Ryback2010\_129/> Fichte promoted German [exceptionalism](/wiki/Exceptionalism) and stressed the need for the German nation to be purified (including purging the German language of French words, a policy that the Nazis undertook upon rising to power).<ref name=Ryback2010\_129/>

Another important figure in pre-Nazi *völkisch* thinking was [Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl](/wiki/Wilhelm_Heinrich_Riehl), whose work—*Land und Leute* (*Land and People*, written between 1857 and 1863)—collectively tied the organic German Volk to its native landscape and nature, a pairing which stood in stark opposition to the mechanical and materialistic civilization developing as a result of industrialization.[[21]](#cite_note-21) Geographers [Friedrich Ratzel](/wiki/Friedrich_Ratzel) and [Karl Haushofer](/wiki/Karl_Haushofer) borrowed from Riehl’s work as did Nazi ideologues Alfred Rosenberg and Paul Schultze-Naumburg; both of whom employed some of Riehl’s philosophy in arguing that "each nation-state was an organism that required a particular living space to survive".[[22]](#cite_note-22) Riehl’s influence is overtly discernible in the [*Blut und Boden*](/wiki/Blut_und_Boden) (*Blood and Soil*) philosophy introduced by [Oswald Spengler](/wiki/Oswald_Spengler), which the Nazi agriculturalist Walther Darré and other prominent Nazis adopted.[[23]](#cite_note-23)[[24]](#cite_note-24) *Völkisch* nationalism denounced soulless [materialism](/wiki/Materialism), [individualism](/wiki/Individualism), and [secularized](/wiki/Secularization) [urban](/wiki/Urban_area) industrial society, while advocating a "superior" society based on ethnic German "folk" culture and German "blood".[[25]](#cite_note-25) It denounced foreigners and foreign ideas, and declared that Jews, [Freemasons](/wiki/Freemasonry), and others were "traitors to the nation" and unworthy of inclusion.[[26]](#cite_note-26) *Völkisch* nationalism saw the world in terms of [natural law](/wiki/Natural_law) and [romanticism](/wiki/Romanticism); it viewed societies as organic, extolling the virtues of [rural](/wiki/Rural) life, condemning the neglect of tradition and decay of morals, denounced the destruction of the natural environment, and condemned "cosmopolitan" cultures such as Jews and Romani.[[27]](#cite_note-27) During the era of Imperial Germany, *Völkisch* nationalism was overshadowed by both Prussian patriotism and the federalist tradition of various states therein.[[28]](#cite_note-28) The events of World War I, including the end of the Prussian monarchy in Germany, resulted in a surge of revolutionary *Völkisch* nationalism.[[29]](#cite_note-29) The Nazis supported such revolutionary *Völkisch* nationalist policies[[28]](#cite_note-28) and claimed that their ideology was influenced by the leadership and policies of [German Chancellor](/wiki/Chancellor_of_Germany) [Otto von Bismarck](/wiki/Otto_von_Bismarck), the founder of the [German Empire](/wiki/German_Empire).<ref name=Gerwarth2007/> The Nazis declared that they were dedicated to continuing the process of creating a unified German [nation state](/wiki/Nation_state) that Bismarck had begun and desired to achieve.<ref name=Gerwarth2007\_149/> While Hitler was supportive of Bismarck's creation of the German Empire, he was critical of Bismarck's moderate domestic policies.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) On the issue of Bismarck's support of a [*Kleindeutschland*](/wiki/Kleindeutschland) ("Lesser Germany", excluding Austria) versus the Pan-German [*Großdeutschland*](/wiki/German_question#Later_influence) ("Greater Germany") of the Nazis, Hitler stated that Bismarck's attainment of *Kleindeutschland* was the "highest achievement" Bismarck could have achieved "within the limits possible of that time".<ref name=Gerwarth2007\_131/> In [*Mein Kampf*](/wiki/Mein_Kampf) (*My Struggle*), Hitler presented himself as a "second Bismarck".<ref name=Gerwarth2007\_131/>

[170px|thumb|](/wiki/File:VonSchoenerer.jpg)[Georg Ritter von Schönerer](/wiki/Georg_Ritter_von_Schönerer), a major exponent of Pan-Germanism During his youth in Austria, Hitler was politically influenced by Austrian Pan-Germanist proponent [Georg Ritter von Schönerer](/wiki/Georg_Ritter_von_Schönerer), who advocated radical [German nationalism](/wiki/German_nationalism_in_Austria), antisemitism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Slavism, and anti-Habsburg views.[[30]](#cite_note-30) From von Schönerer and his followers, Hitler adopted for the Nazi movement the *Heil* greeting, the *Führer* title, and the model of absolute party leadership.[[30]](#cite_note-30) Hitler was also impressed with the [populist](/wiki/Populism) antisemitism and anti-liberal bourgeois agitation of [Karl Lueger](/wiki/Karl_Lueger), who as the mayor of Vienna during Hitler's time in the city used a rabble-rousing oratory style that appealed to the wider masses.[[31]](#cite_note-31) Unlike von Schönerer, however, Lueger was not a German nationalist, but a pro-Catholic Habsburg supporter.[[31]](#cite_note-31)

### Racial theories and antisemitism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

The concept of the [Aryan race](/wiki/Aryan_race), which the Nazis promoted, stems from racial theories asserting that Europeans are the descendants of Indo-Iranian settlers, people of ancient India and ancient Persia.[[32]](#cite_note-32) Proponents of this theory based their assertion on the similarity of European words and their meaning to those of Indo-Iranian languages.[[32]](#cite_note-32) [Johann Gottfried Herder](/wiki/Johann_Gottfried_Herder) argued that the Germanic peoples held close racial connections with the ancient Indians and ancient Persians, who he claimed were advanced peoples possessing a great capacity for wisdom, nobility, restraint, and science.[[32]](#cite_note-32) Contemporaries of Herder used the concept of the Aryan race to draw a distinction between what they deemed "high and noble" Aryan culture versus that of "parasitic" Semitic culture.[[32]](#cite_note-32) Notions of [white supremacy](/wiki/White_supremacy) and Aryan racial superiority combined in the 19th century, with white supremacists maintaining that certain groups of [white people](/wiki/White_people) were members of an Aryan "master race" that is superior to other races, and particularly superior to the Semitic race, which they associated with "cultural sterility".[[32]](#cite_note-32) [Arthur de Gobineau](/wiki/Arthur_de_Gobineau), a French racial theorist and aristocrat, blamed the fall of the *ancien régime* in France on racial degeneracy caused by racial intermixing, which he argued destroyed the purity of the Aryan race, a term which he reserved only for Germanic people.[[33]](#cite_note-33)[[34]](#cite_note-34) Gobineau's theories, which attracted a strong following in Germany,[[33]](#cite_note-33) emphasised the existence of an irreconcilable [polarity](/wiki/Polarity_in_international_relations) between Aryan (Germanic) and Jewish cultures.[[32]](#cite_note-32)[thumb|170px|right|](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_119-1600-06,_Houston_Stewart_Chamberlain.jpg)[Houston Stewart Chamberlain](/wiki/Houston_Stewart_Chamberlain), whose book *The Foundations* would prove to be a seminal work in German nationalism Aryan [mysticism](/wiki/Mysticism) claimed that [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) originated in Aryan religious tradition and that Jews had usurped the legend from Aryans.[[32]](#cite_note-32) [Houston Stewart Chamberlain](/wiki/Houston_Stewart_Chamberlain), an English proponent of racial theory, supported notions of Germanic supremacy and antisemitism in Germany.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Chamberlain's work, [*The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*](/wiki/The_Foundations_of_the_Nineteenth_Century) (1899), praised Germanic peoples for their creativity and idealism while asserting that the Germanic spirit was threatened by a "Jewish" spirit of selfishness and [materialism](/wiki/Materialism).[[33]](#cite_note-33) Chamberlain used his thesis to promote [monarchical](/wiki/Monarchism) [conservatism](/wiki/Conservatism) while denouncing [democracy](/wiki/Democracy), [liberalism](/wiki/Liberalism), and [socialism](/wiki/Socialism).[[33]](#cite_note-33) The book became popular, especially in Germany.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Chamberlain stressed the need of a nation to maintain racial purity in order to prevent degeneration, and argued that racial intermingling with Jews should never be permitted.[[33]](#cite_note-33) In 1923, Chamberlain met Hitler, whom he admired as a leader of the rebirth of the free spirit.[[35]](#cite_note-35) [Madison Grant's](/wiki/Madison_Grant) work [*The Passing of the Great Race*](/wiki/The_Passing_of_the_Great_Race) (1916) advocated [Nordicism](/wiki/Nordicism) and proposed using a eugenic program to preserve the Nordic race. After reading the book, Hitler called it "my Bible".[[36]](#cite_note-36) In Germany, the idea of Jews economically exploiting Germans became prominent upon the foundation of Germany due to the ascendance of many wealthy Jews into prominent positions upon the unification of Germany in 1871.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Empirical evidence demonstrates that from 1871 to the early 20th century, German Jews were overrepresented in Germany's upper and middle classes while they were underrepresented in Germany's lower class, particularly in the fields of work of agricultural and industrial labour.[[38]](#cite_note-38) German Jewish financiers and bankers played a key role in fostering Germany's economic growth from the 1871 to 1913, and such Jewish financiers and bankers benefited enormously from this boom. In 1908, amongst the twenty-nine wealthiest German families with aggregate fortunes of up to 55 million marks at the time, five were Jewish, and the Rothschilds were the second wealthiest German family.[[39]](#cite_note-39) The predominance of Jews in Germany's banking, commerce, and industry sectors in this time period was very high with consideration to Jews being estimated to have accounted for 1 percent of the population of Germany.[[37]](#cite_note-37) This overrepresentation of Jews in these areas created resentment by non-Jewish Germans during periods of economic crisis.[[38]](#cite_note-38) The 1873 stock market crash and ensuing depression resulted in a spate of attacks on alleged Jewish economic dominance in Germany and increased antisemitism.[[38]](#cite_note-38) At this time period in the 1870s, German [*Völkisch* nationalism](/wiki/Völkisch_movement) began to adopt antisemitic and racist themes and was adopted by a number of radical right political movements.[[40]](#cite_note-40) [*The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*](/wiki/The_Protocols_of_the_Elders_of_Zion) (1912) was an antisemitic forgery created by the secret service of the Russian Empire, the [Okhrana](/wiki/Okhrana). Many antisemites believed it was real and the Protocol became widely popular after World War I.[[41]](#cite_note-41) *The Protocols* claimed that there was a secret international Jewish conspiracy to take over the world.[[42]](#cite_note-42) Hitler had been introduced to *The Protocols* by [Alfred Rosenberg](/wiki/Alfred_Rosenberg), and from 1920 onward, Hitler focused his attacks on claiming that Judaism and Marxism were directly connected, that Jews and [Bolsheviks](/wiki/Bolshevik) were one and the same, and that Marxism was a Jewish ideology.[[43]](#cite_note-43) Hitler believed that *The Protocols* were authentic.[[44]](#cite_note-44) Radical Antisemitism was promoted by prominent advocates of *Völkisch* nationalism, including [Eugen Diederichs](/wiki/Eugen_Diederichs), [Paul de Lagarde](/wiki/Paul_de_Lagarde), and [Julius Langbehn](/wiki/Julius_Langbehn).[[27]](#cite_note-27) De Lagarde called the Jews a "[bacillus](/wiki/Bacillus), the carrier of decay ... who pollute every national culture ... and destroy all faith with their materialistic liberalism", and he called for the extermination of the Jews.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Langbehn called for a war of annihilation of the Jews; his genocidal policies were published by the Nazis and given to soldiers on the front during [World War II](/wiki/World_War_II).[[45]](#cite_note-45) One antisemitic ideologue of the period, [Friedrich Lange](/wiki/Friedrich_Lange_(journalist)), even used the term "national socialism" to describe his own anti-capitalist take on the *Völkisch* nationalist template.[[46]](#cite_note-46) [Johann Gottlieb Fichte](/wiki/Johann_Gottlieb_Fichte) accused [Jews](/wiki/Jews) in Germany of having been, and inevitably continuing to be, a "state within a state" that threatened German national unity.<ref name=Ryback2010\_129/> Fichte promoted two options to address this: the first was the creation of a Jewish state in [Palestine](/wiki/Palestine_(region)) to impel the Jews to leave Europe.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The other option was violence against Jews, saying that the goal would be "... to cut off all their heads in one night, and set new ones on their shoulders, which should not contain a single Jewish idea".[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Prior to the Nazi ascension to power, Hitler often blamed moral degradation on [*Rassenschande*](/wiki/Rassenschande) (racial defilement), a way to assure his followers of his continuing antisemitism, which had been toned down for popular consumption.[[47]](#cite_note-47) Prior to the induction of the Nuremberg Race Laws in 1935 by the Nazis, many German nationalists such as [Roland Freisler](/wiki/Roland_Freisler) strongly supported laws to ban *Rassenschande* between Aryans and Jews as racial treason.[[47]](#cite_note-47) Even before the laws were officially passed, the Nazis banned sexual relations and marriages between party members and Jews.[[48]](#cite_note-48) Party members found guilty of *Rassenschande* were heavily punished; some members were even sentenced to death.[[49]](#cite_note-49) The Nazis claimed that Bismarck was unable to complete German national unification because of Jewish infiltration of the German parliament, and that their abolition of parliament ended the obstacle to unification.<ref name=Gerwarth2007/> Using the [stab-in-the-back myth](/wiki/Stab-in-the-back_myth), the Nazis accused Jews—and other populaces it considered non-German—of possessing extra-national loyalties, thereby exacerbating German [antisemitism](/wiki/Antisemitism) about the [*Judenfrage*](/wiki/Jewish_question) (the Jewish Question), the [far-right](/wiki/Far-right_politics) political [canard](/wiki/Antisemitic_canard) popular when the ethnic [Völkisch movement](/wiki/Völkisch_movement) and their politics of [Romantic nationalism](/wiki/Romantic_nationalism) for establishing a [*Großdeutschland*](/wiki/German_question#Later_influence) were strong.[[50]](#cite_note-50) Nazism's racial policy positions may have developed from the views of important biologists of the 19th century, including French [biologist](/wiki/Biologist) [Jean-Baptiste Lamarck](/wiki/Jean-Baptiste_Lamarck), through [Ernst Haeckel's](/wiki/Ernst_Haeckel) idealist version of [Lamarckism](/wiki/Lamarckism) and the father of [genetics](/wiki/Genetics), German [botanist](/wiki/Botanist) [Gregor Mendel](/wiki/Gregor_Mendel).[[51]](#cite_note-51) However, Haeckel's works were later condemned and banned from bookshops and libraries by the Nazis as inappropriate for "National-Socialist formation and education in the Third Reich". This may have been because of his "monist" atheistic, materialist philosophy, which the Nazis disliked.[[52]](#cite_note-52) Unlike Darwinian theory, Lamarckian theory officially ranked races in a hierarchy of evolution from [apes](/wiki/Ape) while Darwinian theory did not grade races in a hierarchy of higher or lower evolution from apes, simply categorising humans as a whole of all as having progressed in evolution from apes.[[51]](#cite_note-51) Many Lamarckians viewed "lower" races as having been exposed to debilitating conditions for too long for any significant "improvement" of their condition in the near future.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Haeckel utilised Lamarckian theory to describe the existence of interracial struggle and put races on a hierarchy of evolution, ranging from being wholly human to [subhuman](/wiki/Untermensch).[[51]](#cite_note-51) [Mendelian inheritance](/wiki/Mendelian_inheritance), or Mendelism, was supported by the Nazis, as well as by mainstream eugenics proponents at the time. The Mendelian theory of inheritance declared that genetic traits and attributes were passed from one generation to another.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Proponents of eugenics used Mendelian inheritance theory to demonstrate the transfer of biological illness and impairments from parents to children, including mental disability; others also utilised Mendelian theory to demonstrate the inheritance of social traits, with racialists claiming a racial nature of certain general traits such as inventiveness or criminal behaviour.[[55]](#cite_note-55)

### Response to World War I and fascism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

During World War I, German sociologist [Johann Plenge](/wiki/Johann_Plenge) spoke of the rise of a "National Socialism" in Germany within what he termed the "[ideas of 1914](/wiki/Spirit_of_1914)" that were a declaration of war against the "ideas of 1789" (the [French Revolution](/wiki/French_Revolution)).[[56]](#cite_note-56) According to Plenge, the "ideas of 1789" that included rights of man, democracy, individualism and liberalism were being rejected in favour of "the ideas of 1914" that included "German values" of duty, discipline, law, and order.[[56]](#cite_note-56) Plenge believed that ethnic solidarity ([*Volksgemeinschaft*](/wiki/Volksgemeinschaft)) would replace class division and that "racial comrades" would unite to create a socialist society in the struggle of "proletarian" Germany against "capitalist" Britain.[[56]](#cite_note-56) He believed that the "Spirit of 1914" manifested itself in the concept of the "People's League of National Socialism".[[57]](#cite_note-57) This National Socialism was a form of state socialism that rejected the "idea of boundless freedom" and promoted an economy that would serve the whole of Germany under the leadership of the state.[[57]](#cite_note-57) This National Socialism was opposed to capitalism due to the components that were against "the national interest" of Germany, but insisted that National Socialism would strive for greater efficiency in the economy.[[57]](#cite_note-57) Plenge advocated an authoritarian, rational ruling elite to develop National Socialism through a hierarchical [technocratic](/wiki/Technocracy) state.[[58]](#cite_note-58) Plenge's ideas formed the basis of Nazism.[[56]](#cite_note-56)[thumb|right|170px|](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-R06610,_Oswald_Spengler.jpg)[Oswald Spengler](/wiki/Oswald_Spengler), a philosopher of history [Oswald Spengler](/wiki/Oswald_Spengler), a German cultural philosopher, was a major influence on Nazism, although, after 1933, Spengler became alienated from Nazism and was later condemned by the Nazis for criticising Adolf Hitler.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Spengler's conception of national socialism and a number of his political views were shared by the Nazis and the [Conservative Revolutionary movement](/wiki/Conservative_Revolutionary_movement).[[60]](#cite_note-60) Spengler's views were also popular amongst [Italian Fascists](/wiki/Italian_fascism), including [Benito Mussolini](/wiki/Benito_Mussolini).[[61]](#cite_note-61) Spengler's book [*The Decline of the West*](/wiki/The_Decline_of_the_West) (1918) written during the final months of [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I), addressed the claim of [decadence](/wiki/Decadence) of modern European civilisation, which he claimed was caused by atomising and irreligious individualization and [cosmopolitanism](/wiki/Cosmopolitanism).[[59]](#cite_note-59) Spengler's major thesis was that a law of historical development of cultures existed involving a cycle of birth, maturity, ageing, and death when it reaches its final form of civilisation.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Upon reaching the point of civilisation, a culture will lose its creative capacity and succumb to [decadence](/wiki/Decadence) until the emergence of "[barbarians](/wiki/Barbarian)" creates a new epoch.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Spengler considered the [Western world](/wiki/Western_world) as having succumbed to decadence of intellect, money, [cosmopolitan](/wiki/Cosmopolitanism) urban life, irreligious life, [atomised](/wiki/Wiktionary:Atomization) [individualization](/wiki/Individualism), and was at the end of its biological and "spiritual" fertility.[[59]](#cite_note-59) He believed that the "young" German nation as an imperial power would inherit the legacy of [Ancient Rome](/wiki/Ancient_Rome), lead a restoration of value in "[blood](/wiki/Bloodline)" and instinct, while the ideals of rationalism would be revealed as absurd.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Spengler's notions of "Prussian socialism" as described in his book [*Preussentum und Sozialismus*](/wiki/Preussentum_und_Sozialismus) ("Prussiandom and Socialism", 1919), influenced Nazism and the [Conservative Revolutionary movement](/wiki/Conservative_Revolutionary_movement).[[60]](#cite_note-60) Spengler wrote: "The meaning of socialism is that life is controlled not by the opposition between rich and poor, but by the rank that achievement and talent bestow. That is *our* freedom, freedom from the economic despotism of the individual."[[60]](#cite_note-60) Spengler adopted the anti-English ideas addressed by Plenge and Sombart during World War I that condemned English liberalism and English parliamentarianism while advocating a national socialism that was free from [Marxism](/wiki/Marxism) and that would connect the individual to the state through [corporatist](/wiki/Corporatism) organisation.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Spengler claimed that socialistic Prussian characteristics existed across Germany, including creativity, discipline, concern for the greater good, productivity, and self-sacrifice.[[62]](#cite_note-62) He prescribed war as a necessity, saying "War is the eternal form of higher human existence and states exist for war: they are the expression of the will to war."[[63]](#cite_note-63) [185px|thumb|left|The](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_146-1971-091-20,_Kapp-Putsch,_Marine-Brigade_Erhardt.jpg) [Marinebrigade Erhardt](/wiki/Marinebrigade_Erhardt) during the [Kapp Putsch](/wiki/Kapp_Putsch) in Berlin, 1920.[[64]](#cite_note-64) The Marinebrigade Erhardt used the [swastika](/wiki/Swastika) as its symbol, as seen on their helmets and on the truck; it inspired the Nazi Party to adopt it as the movement's symbol. Spengler's definition of socialism did not advocate a change to property relations.[[60]](#cite_note-60) He denounced [Marxism](/wiki/Marxism) for seeking to train the proletariat to "expropriate the expropriator", the capitalist, and then to let them live a life of leisure on this expropriation.[[65]](#cite_note-65) He claimed that "Marxism is the capitalism of the working class" and not true socialism.[[65]](#cite_note-65) True socialism, according to Spengler, would be in the form of corporatism, stating that: "local corporate bodies organised according to the importance of each occupation to the people as a whole; higher representation in stages up to a supreme council of the state; mandates revocable at any time; no organised parties, no professional politicians, no periodic elections".[[66]](#cite_note-66)[130px|thumb|The book](/wiki/File:Das_Dritte_Reich.jpg) [*Das Dritte Reich*](/wiki/Das_Dritte_Reich) (1923), translated as "The Third Reich", by [Arthur Moeller van den Bruck](/wiki/Arthur_Moeller_van_den_Bruck)

Wilhelm Stapel, an antisemitic German intellectual, utilized Spengler's thesis on the cultural confrontation between Jews as whom Spengler described as a [Magian](/wiki/Magi) people versus [Europeans](/wiki/Europeans) as a [Faustian](/wiki/Faust) people.[[67]](#cite_note-67) Stapel described Jews as a landless nomadic people in pursuit of an international culture whereby they can integrate into Western civilisation.[[67]](#cite_note-67) As such, Stapel claims that Jews have been attracted to "international" versions of socialism, pacifism, or capitalism because as a landless people the Jews have transgressed various national cultural boundaries.[[67]](#cite_note-67) [Arthur Moeller van den Bruck](/wiki/Arthur_Moeller_van_den_Bruck) was initially the dominant figure of the Conservative Revolutionaries influenced Nazism.[[68]](#cite_note-68) He rejected [reactionary](/wiki/Reactionary) conservatism, while proposing a new state, that he coined the "Third Reich", which would unite all classes under [authoritarian](/wiki/Authoritarian) rule.[[69]](#cite_note-69) Van den Bruck advocated a combination of the nationalism of the right and the socialism of the left.[[70]](#cite_note-70) [Fascism](/wiki/Fascism) was a major influence on Nazism. The seizure of power by Italian Fascist leader Benito Mussolini in the [March on Rome](/wiki/March_on_Rome) in 1922 drew admiration by Hitler, who less than a month later had begun to model himself and the [Nazi Party](/wiki/Nazi_Party) upon Mussolini and the Fascists.[[71]](#cite_note-71) Hitler presented the Nazis as a form of German fascism.[[72]](#cite_note-72)[[73]](#cite_note-73)[thumb|right|200px|](/wiki/File:March_on_Rome.jpg)[Benito Mussolini](/wiki/Benito_Mussolini) (centre in suit with fists against body) along with other Fascist leader figures and [Blackshirts](/wiki/Blackshirts) during the [March on Rome](/wiki/March_on_Rome) In November 1923, the Nazis attempted a "March on Berlin", modelled after the March on Rome, which resulted in the failed [Beer Hall Putsch](/wiki/Beer_Hall_Putsch) in [Munich](/wiki/Munich).[[74]](#cite_note-74) Hitler spoke of Nazism being indebted to the success of Fascism's rise to power in Italy.[[75]](#cite_note-75) In a private conversation in 1941 he said "the brown shirt would probably not have existed without the black shirt", the "brown shirt" referring to the Nazi militia and the "black shirt" referring to the Fascist militia.[[75]](#cite_note-75) He also said in regards to the 1920s "If Mussolini had been outdistanced by Marxism, I don't know whether we could have succeeded in holding out. At that period National Socialism was a very fragile growth.".[[75]](#cite_note-75) Other Nazis—especially those at the time associated with the party's more radical wing such as [Gregor Strasser](/wiki/Gregor_Strasser), Joseph Goebbels, and Heinrich Himmler—rejected Italian Fascism, accusing it of being too conservative or capitalist.[[76]](#cite_note-76) [Alfred Rosenberg](/wiki/Alfred_Rosenberg) condemned Italian Fascism for being racially confused and having influences from [philosemitism](/wiki/Philo-Semitism).[[77]](#cite_note-77) Strasser criticised the policy of [*Führerprinzip*](/wiki/Führerprinzip) as being created by Mussolini, and considered its presence in Nazism as a foreign imported idea.[[78]](#cite_note-78) Throughout the relationship between Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, a number of lower-ranking Nazis scornfully viewed fascism as a conservative movement that lacked a full revolutionary potential.[[78]](#cite_note-78)

## Ideology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

### Nationalism and racialism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) German Nazism emphasised German nationalism, including both [irredentism](/wiki/Irredentism) and expansionism. Nazism held racial theories based upon the belief of the existence of an Aryan master race that was superior to all other races. The Nazis emphasised the existence of racial conflict between the Aryan race and others—particularly Jews, whom the Nazis viewed as a mixed race that had infiltrated multiple societies, and was responsible for exploitation and repression of the Aryan race. The Nazis also categorized Slavs as [Untermensch](/wiki/Untermensch).[[79]](#cite_note-79)

#### Irredentism and expansionism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[thumb|Beginning of *Lebensraum*, the](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_R_49_Bild-0131,_Aussiedlung_von_Polen_im_Wartheland.jpg) [Nazi German expulsion of Poles](/wiki/Expulsion_of_Poles_by_Nazi_Germany) from [central Poland](/wiki/Reichsgau_Wartheland), 1939 The German Nazi Party supported German irredentist claims to [Austria](/wiki/Austria), [Alsace-Lorraine](/wiki/Alsace-Lorraine), the region now known as the [Czech Republic](/wiki/Czech_Republic), and the territory known since 1919 as the [Polish Corridor](/wiki/Polish_Corridor). A major policy of the German Nazi Party was [*Lebensraum*](/wiki/Lebensraum) ("living space") for the German nation based on claims that Germany after World War I was facing an overpopulation crisis and that expansion was needed to end the country's overpopulation within existing confined territory, and provide resources necessary to its people's well-being.[[80]](#cite_note-80) Since the 1920s, the Nazi Party publicly promoted the expansion of Germany into territories held by the Soviet Union.[[81]](#cite_note-81) In his early years as the Nazi leader, Hitler had claimed that he would be willing to accept friendly relations with Russia on the tactical condition that Russia agree to return to the borders established by the German–Russian peace agreement of the [Treaty of Brest-Litovsk](/wiki/Treaty_of_Brest-Litovsk) signed by [Vladimir Lenin](/wiki/Vladimir_Lenin) of the [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic](/wiki/Russian_Soviet_Federated_Socialist_Republic) in 1918 which gave large territories held by Russia to German control in exchange for peace.[[81]](#cite_note-81) Hitler in 1921 had commended the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as opening the possibility for restoration of relations between Germany and Russia, saying:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

[thumb|right|Topographical map of Europe with present-day borders. The Nazi Party declared support for](/wiki/File:Europe_topography_map.png) [*Drang nach Osten*](/wiki/Drang_nach_Osten) (expansion of Germany east to the Ural Mountains), that is shown on the upper right side of the map as a brown diagonal line. Hitler from 1921 to 1922 evoked rhetoric of both the achievement of *Lebensraum* involving the acceptance of a territorially reduced Russia as well as supporting Russian nationals in overthrowing the Bolshevik government and establishing a new Russian government.[[81]](#cite_note-81) Hitler's attitudes changed by the end of 1922, in which he then supported an alliance of Germany with Britain to destroy Russia.[[81]](#cite_note-81) Later Hitler declared how far he intended to expand Germany into Russia:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Policy for *Lebensraum* planned mass expansion of Germany eastwards to the [Ural Mountains](/wiki/Ural_Mountains).[[82]](#cite_note-82)[[83]](#cite_note-83) Hitler planned for the "surplus" Russian population living west of the Urals to be deported to the east of the Urals.[[84]](#cite_note-84)

#### Racial theories[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

Nazism viewed what it called the Aryan race as the master race of the world - a race that was superior to all other races. The Nazi regarded the Aryan race as the same as the Nordic race.[[85]](#cite_note-85) A Nazi era school textbook for German students entitled *Heredity and Racial Biology for Students* written by Jakob Graf described to students the Nazi conception of the Aryan race in a section titled "The Aryan: The Creative Force in Human History".[[85]](#cite_note-85) Graf claimed that the original Aryans developed from Nordic peoples who invaded ancient India that resulted in the initial development of Aryan culture there that later spread to ancient Persia and claimed that the Aryan presence in Persia was what was responsible for its development into an empire.[[85]](#cite_note-85) He claimed that ancient Greek culture was developed by Nordics due to paintings of the time showing Greeks who were tall, light-skinned, light-eyed, blond-haired people.[[85]](#cite_note-85) He said that the Roman Empire was having been developed by the [Italics](/wiki/Italic_peoples) who were related to the [Celts](/wiki/Celts) who were a Nordic people.[[85]](#cite_note-85) He regarded the vanishing of the Nordic component of the populations in Greece and Rome led to their downfall.[[85]](#cite_note-85) The [Renaissance](/wiki/Renaissance) was claimed to have developed in the [Western Roman Empire](/wiki/Western_Roman_Empire) because of the Germanic invasions that brought new Nordic blood to the Empire's lands, such as presence of Nordic blood in the [Lombards](/wiki/Lombards) (referred to as Longobards in the book); that remnants of the western Goths were responsible for the creation of the [Spanish Empire](/wiki/Spanish_Empire); and that heritage of Franks, Goths, and Germanic peoples in [France](/wiki/France) was what was responsible for its rise to be a major power.[[85]](#cite_note-85) He claimed that the rise of the [Russian Empire](/wiki/Russian_Empire) was due to its leadership by people of [Norman](/wiki/Normans) descent.[[85]](#cite_note-85) He described the rise of Anglo-Saxon societies in [North America](/wiki/North_America), [South Africa](/wiki/South_Africa), and [Australia](/wiki/Australia), as being the result of the Nordic heritage of Anglo-Saxons.[[85]](#cite_note-85) He concluded these points by saying that "Everywhere Nordic creative power has built mighty empires with high-minded ideas, and to this very day [Aryan languages](/wiki/Indo-European_languages) and cultural values are spread over a large part of the world, though the creative Nordic blood has long since vanished in many places.".[[85]](#cite_note-85) In its racial categorisation, Nazism viewed what it called the Aryan race as the [master race](/wiki/Master_race) of the world—a race that was superior to all other races. It viewed Aryans as being in racial conflict with a mixed race people, the Jews, whom Nazis identified as a dangerous enemy of the Aryans. It also viewed a number of other peoples as dangerous to the well-being of the Aryan race. In order to preserve the perceived racial purity of the Aryan race, a set of race laws were introduced in 1935 which came to be known as the [Nuremberg Laws](/wiki/Nuremberg_Laws). At first these laws only prevented sexual relations and marriages between Germans and Jews, but were later extended to the "Gypsies, Negroes, and their bastard offspring", who were described by the Nazis as people of "alien blood".<ref name=RGallately>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref>[[86]](#cite_note-86) Such relations between Aryans (cf. [Aryan certificate](/wiki/Aryan_certificate)) and non-Aryans were now punishable under the race laws as [*Rassenschande*](/wiki/Rassenschande) or "race defilement".[[87]](#cite_note-87) After the war began, the race defilement law was extended to include all foreigners (non-Germans).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) At the bottom of the racial scale of non-Aryans were [Jews](/wiki/Jews), [Romani](/wiki/Romani_people),[Slavs](/wiki/Slavic_people)[[88]](#cite_note-88) and [blacks](/wiki/Black_people).[[89]](#cite_note-89) To maintain the "purity and strength" of the Aryan race, the Nazis eventually sought to [exterminate](/wiki/Genocide) Jews, Romani, Slavs, and the [physically](/wiki/Physical_disability) and [mentally disabled](/wiki/Developmental_disability).[[88]](#cite_note-88)[[90]](#cite_note-90) Other groups deemed "[degenerate](/wiki/Degeneration)" and "[asocial](/wiki/Asociality)" who were not targeted for extermination, but received [exclusionary treatment](/wiki/Social_exclusion) by the Nazi state, included [homosexuals](/wiki/Homosexuality), [blacks](/wiki/Black_people_in_Nazi_Germany), [Jehovah's Witnesses](/wiki/Jehovah's_Witnesses), and political opponents.[[90]](#cite_note-90) One of Hitler's ambitions at the start of the war was to [exterminate, expel, or enslave](/wiki/Generalplan_Ost) most or all [Slavs](/wiki/Slavs) from central and eastern Europe in order to make [living space](/wiki/Lebensraum) for German settlers.[[91]](#cite_note-91)[thumb|220px|A wagon piled high with corpses outside the crematorium in](/wiki/File:Buchenwald_Corpses_60623.jpg) [Buchenwald concentration camp](/wiki/Buchenwald_concentration_camp) [thumb|220px|Sketch plan of](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_183-F0918-0201-001,_KZ_Treblinka,_Lageplan_(Zeichnung)_II.jpg) [Treblinka extermination camp](/wiki/Treblinka_extermination_camp). Between the years 1942 and 1943, more than 850,000 Jews were murdered there and only 54 survived.

[thumb|A "poster information" from the exhibition *miracle of life* in Berlin in 1935.](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_102-16748,_Ausstellung_%22Wunder_des_Lebens%22.jpg)

In Nazi Germany, the idea of creating a master race resulted in efforts to "purify" the *Deutsche Volk* through [eugenics](/wiki/Nazi_eugenics); its culmination was [compulsory sterilization](/wiki/Compulsory_sterilization) or [involuntary euthanasia](/wiki/Involuntary_euthanasia) of physically or mentally disabled people. The name given after World War II for the euthanasia programme is [Action T4](/wiki/Action_T4).[[92]](#cite_note-92) The ideological justification was [Adolf Hitler's](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler) view of [Sparta](/wiki/Sparta) (11th century – 195 BC) as the original *Völkisch* state; he praised their dispassionate destruction of congenitally deformed infants in maintaining racial purity.[[93]](#cite_note-93)[[94]](#cite_note-94) Some non-Aryans enlisted in Nazi organisations like the [Hitler Youth](/wiki/Hitler_Youth) and the *Wehrmacht*, including Germans of African descent[[95]](#cite_note-95) and Jewish descent.[[96]](#cite_note-96) The Nazis began to implement "racial hygiene" policies as soon as they came to power. The July 1933 "Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring" prescribed compulsory sterilisation for people with a range of conditions thought to be hereditary, such as schizophrenia, epilepsy, Huntington's chorea, and "[imbecility](/wiki/Intellectual_disability)". Sterilisation was also mandated for chronic alcoholism and other forms of social deviance.[[97]](#cite_note-97) An estimated 360,000 people were sterilised under this `law between 1933 and 1939. Although some Nazis suggested that the programme should be extended to people with physical disabilities, such ideas had to be expressed carefully, given that some Nazis had physical disabilities, one example being one of the most powerful figures of the regime, Joseph Goebbels, who had a deformed right leg.[[98]](#cite_note-98) Nazi racial theorist [Hans F. K. Günther](/wiki/Hans_F._K._Günther) argued that European peoples were divided into five races: [Nordic](/wiki/Nordic_race), [Mediterranean](/wiki/Mediterranean_race), [Dinaric](/wiki/Dinaric_race), [Alpine](/wiki/Alpine_race), and [East Baltic](/wiki/East_Baltic_race).<ref name=Baum2006\_156/> Günther applied a [Nordicist](/wiki/Nordicism) conception that Nordics were the highest in the racial hierarchy.<ref name=Baum2006\_156/> In his book [*Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes*](/wiki/Rassenkunde_des_deutschen_Volkes) (1922) ("Racial Science of the German People"), Günther recognised Germans as being composed of all five races, but emphasised the strong Nordic heritage among them.[[99]](#cite_note-99) Hitler read *Rassenkunde des deutschen Volkes*, which influenced his racial policy.[[100]](#cite_note-100) Gunther believed Slavs belonged to an "East race" and warned against Germans mixing with them [[101]](#cite_note-101) The Nazis described Jews as being racially mixed group of primarily [Near Eastern](/wiki/Armenoid_race) and [Oriental](/wiki/Arabid_race) racial types.[[102]](#cite_note-102) As such racial groups were concentrated outside of Europe, the Nazis claimed that Jews were "racially alien" to all European peoples and did not have deep racial roots in Europe.[[102]](#cite_note-102) Günther empathised Jews' Near Eastern racial heritage.[[103]](#cite_note-103) Günther identified the mass conversion of the [Khazars](/wiki/Khazars) to Judaism in the 8th century as creating the two major branches of the Jewish people, those of primarily Near Eastern racial heritage became the [Ashkenazi](/wiki/Ashkenazi) Jews (that he called Eastern Jews) while those of primarily Oriental racial heritage became the [Sephardic](/wiki/Sephardic) Jews (that he called Southern Jews).[[104]](#cite_note-104) Günther claimed the Near Eastern type were commercially spirited and artful traders, that the type held strong [psychological manipulation](/wiki/Psychological_manipulation) skills that aided them in trade.[[103]](#cite_note-103) He claimed that the Near Eastern race had been "bred not so much for the conquest and exploitation of nature as it was for the conquest and exploitation of people".[[103]](#cite_note-103) Günther described that European peoples had a racially motivated aversion to peoples of Near Eastern racial origin and their traits, and showed as evidence of this multiple examples of depictions of satanic figures with Near Eastern physiognomies in European art.[[105]](#cite_note-105) Hitler's conception of the Aryan [*Herrenvolk*](/wiki/Herrenvolk) ("Aryan master race") excluded the vast majority of [Slavs](/wiki/Slavs) from central and eastern Europe (i.e., [Poles](/wiki/Nazi_crimes_against_ethnic_Poles), Russians, Ukrainians, etc.). They were regarded as a race of men not inclined to a higher form of civilization, which were under an instinctive force that reverted them back to nature. They also regarding the Slavs as having dangerous Jewish and Asiatic, that being Mongol, influences.[[106]](#cite_note-106) The Nazis because of this declared Slavs to be [*Untermenschen*](/wiki/Untermenschen) (subhumans).[[107]](#cite_note-107) Nazi anthropologists attempted to prove scientifically the historical admixture of the Slavs further East. Leading Nazi racial theorist, [Hans Günther](/wiki/Hans_F._K._Günther), regarded the Slavs as being primarily Nordic centuries ago but over time had mixed with non-Nordic types.[[108]](#cite_note-108) There were exceptions for a small percentage of Slavs who were seen to be descended from German settlers and therefore fit to be Germanised and be considered part of the Aryan master race.[[109]](#cite_note-109) Hitler described Slavs as "a mass of born slaves who feel the need of a master".[[110]](#cite_note-110) The Nazi notion of Slavs being inferior served as legitimising their goal for creating *Lebensraum* for Germans and other Germanic people in eastern Europe, where millions of Germans and other Germanic settlers would be moved into conquered territories of Eastern Europe, while the original Slavic inhabitants were to be [annihilated, removed, or enslaved](/wiki/Generalplan_Ost).<ref name= Bendersky>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> Nazi Germany's policy changed towards Slavs in response to military manpower shortages, in which it accepted Slavs to serve in its armed forces within occupied territories, in spite of them being considered subhuman.[[111]](#cite_note-111) Hitler declared that racial conflict against Jews was necessary to save Germany from suffering under them and dismissed concerns about such conflict being inhumane or an injustice:

We may be inhumane, but if we rescue Germany we have achieved the greatest deed in the world. We may work injustice, but if we rescue Germany then we have removed the greatest injustice in the world. We may be immoral, but if our people is rescued we have opened the way for morality.[[112]](#cite_note-112)

Nazi propagandist [Joseph Goebbels](/wiki/Joseph_Goebbels) frequently employed antisemitic rhetoric to underline this view: "The Jew is the enemy and destroyer of the purity of blood, the conscious destroyer of our race ... As socialists, we are opponents of the Jews, because we see, in the Hebrews, the incarnation of [capitalism](/wiki/Capitalism), of the misuse of the nation's goods."[[113]](#cite_note-113) [Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

### Social class[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

Nazism rejected the Marxist concept of internationalist class struggle, but supported "class struggle between nations", and sought to resolve internal class struggle in the nation while it identified Germany as a proletarian nation fighting against plutocratic nations.[[114]](#cite_note-114) In 1922, Adolf Hitler discredited other nationalist and racialist political parties as disconnected from the mass populace, especially lower and [working-class](/wiki/Working_class) young people:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

The Nazi Party had many working-class supporters and members, and a strong appeal to the [middle class](/wiki/Middle_class). The financial collapse of the [white collar](/wiki/White-collar_worker) middle-class of the 1920s figures much in their strong support of Nazism.[[115]](#cite_note-115) In the poor country that was the [Weimar Republic](/wiki/Weimar_Republic) of the early 1930s, the Nazi Party realised their socialist policies with food and shelter for the unemployed and the homeless—later recruited to the Brownshirt [*Sturmabteilung*](/wiki/Sturmabteilung) (SA – Storm Detachment).[[115]](#cite_note-115)

### Sex and gender[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|200px|Obligations of Polish workers in Germany, warning the death penalty for any sexual relations between Germans and Poles.](/wiki/File:Pflichten_der_polen.jpg) Nazi ideology advocated excluding women from political involvement and confining them to the spheres of "[Kinder, Küche, Kirche](/wiki/Kinder,_Küche,_Kirche)" (Children, Kitchen, Church).[[116]](#cite_note-116) Many women enthusiastically supported the regime but formed their own internal hierarchies.[[117]](#cite_note-117) Hitler's own opinion on the matter of women in Nazi Germany was that while other eras of German history experienced the development and liberation of the female mind, the National Socialist goal was essentially singular in that they wished for them to produce a child.[[118]](#cite_note-118) Along this theme, Hitler once remarked of women, "with every child that she brings into the world, she fights her battle for the nation. The man stands up for the *Volk*, exactly as the woman stands up for the family."[[119]](#cite_note-119) Proto-natalist programs in Nazi Germany offered favourable loans and grants to encourage newlyweds with additional incentives for the birth of offspring.[[120]](#cite_note-120) Contraception was discouraged for racially valuable women in Nazi Germany and abortion was forbidden through strict legal mandates, including prison sentences for those seeking them and for doctors performing them; whereas abortion for racially "undesirable" persons was encouraged.[[121]](#cite_note-121)[[122]](#cite_note-122) While unmarried until the very end of the regime, Hitler often made excuses about his busy life hindering any chance for marriage.[[123]](#cite_note-123) Among National Socialist ideologues, marriage was valued not from moral considerations but because it provided an optimal breeding environment. [*Reichsführer-SS*](/wiki/Reichsführer-SS) Heinrich Himmler, reportedly told a confidant that when he established the [*Lebensborn*](/wiki/Lebensborn) program, an organization to dramatically increase the birth rate of "Aryan" children through extramarital relations between women classified as racially pure and their male equals, he had only the purest male "conception assistants" in mind.[[124]](#cite_note-124) Since the Nazis at the beginning of the war extended the [*Rassenschande*](/wiki/Rassenschande) (race defilement) law to all foreigners,[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) pamphlets were issued to German women to avoid sexual relations with foreign workers brought to Germany and to view them as a danger to their blood.[[125]](#cite_note-125) Although the law was punishable to both genders, German women were targeted more for having sexual relations with foreign [forced labourers](/wiki/Forced_labour_under_German_rule_during_World_War_II) in Germany.[[126]](#cite_note-126) The Nazis issued the [Polish decrees](/wiki/Polish_decrees) on 8 March 1940 which set out regulations concerning the Polish forced labourers ([Zivilarbeiter](/wiki/Zivilarbeiter)) brought to Germany during World War II. One of the regulations stated that any Pole "who has sexual relations with a German man or woman, or approaches them in any other improper manner, will be punished by death".[[127]](#cite_note-127) After the decrees were enacted, Himmler stated:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

The Nazis later issued similar regulations against the Eastern Workers *(*[*Ost-Arbeiters*](/wiki/Ost-Arbeiter)*)*, including the death penalty for sexual relations with a German person.[[128]](#cite_note-128) Heydrich issued a decree on 20 February 1942 that declared sexual intercourse between a German woman and a Russian worker or prisoner of war would result in the Russian man being punished by the death penalty.[[129]](#cite_note-129) A further decree issued by Himmler on 7 December 1942 stated any "unauthorized sexual intercourse" would result in the death penalty.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) As the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour did not permit capital punishment for race defilement, special courts were convened to allow the death penalty for some cases.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) German women accused of race defilement were marched through the streets with her head shaven and a placard around her neck detailing her crime,[[130]](#cite_note-130) those convicted were sent to a concentration camp.[[125]](#cite_note-125) When Himmler reportedly asked Hitler what the punishment should be for German girls and German women who have been found guilty of race defilement with prisoners of war (POWs) he ordered "every POW who has relations with a German girl or a German would be shot" and the German woman should be publicly humiliated by "having her hair shorn and being sent to a concentration camp".[[131]](#cite_note-131) The [League of German Girls](/wiki/League_of_German_Girls) was particularly regarded as instructing girls to avoid race defilement, which was treated with particular importance for young females.[[132]](#cite_note-132)

#### Opposition to homosexuality[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|125px|Homophobia: Berlin memorial to homosexual victims of the Holocaust: *Totgeschlagen—Totgeschwiegen* (Struck Dead—Hushed Up)](/wiki/File:Berlin_Pink_Triangle.JPG) After the Night of the Long Knives, Hitler promoted Himmler and the [SS](/wiki/SS), who then zealously suppressed [homosexuality](/wiki/Homosexuality), saying: "We must exterminate these people root and branch ... the homosexual must be eliminated."[[133]](#cite_note-133) In 1936, Himmler established the "[Reichszentrale zur Bekämpfung der Homosexualität und Abtreibung](/wiki/Reichszentrale_zur_Bekämpfung_der_Homosexualität_und_Abtreibung)" ("Reich Central Office for the Combating of Homosexuality and Abortion").[[134]](#cite_note-134) The Nazi régime incarcerated some 100,000 homosexuals during the 1930s.[[135]](#cite_note-135) As concentration camp prisoners, homosexual men were forced to wear [pink triangle](/wiki/Pink_triangle) badges.[[136]](#cite_note-136)[[137]](#cite_note-137) Nazi ideology still viewed German gay men as part of the Aryan [master race](/wiki/Master_race) but attempted to force them into sexual and social conformity. Gay men who would not change or feign a change in their [sexual orientation](/wiki/Sexual_orientation) were sent to concentration camps under the "Extermination Through Work" campaign.[[138]](#cite_note-138)

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|Members of the](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_102-15234,_Berlin,_Luthertag.jpg) [German Christians](/wiki/German_Christians) organization celebrating Luther Day in Berlin in 1933, speech by Bishop Hossenfelder [thumb|Hitler with](/wiki/File:Orsen.jpg) [Cesare Orsenigo](/wiki/Cesare_Orsenigo), the [Catholic Church's](/wiki/Catholic_Church) [nuncio to Germany](/wiki/Nuncio_to_Germany), in 1935

The [Nazi Party Programme](/wiki/National_Socialist_Program) of 1920 guaranteed freedom for all religious denominations not hostile to the State and endorsed [Positive Christianity](/wiki/Positive_Christianity) to combat “the Jewish-materialist spirit”.[[139]](#cite_note-139) It was a modified version of Christianity which emphasised racial purity and nationalism.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The Nazis were aided by theologians such as [Ernst Bergmann](/wiki/Ernst_Bergmann_(philosopher)). Bergmann, in his work, *Die 25 Thesen der Deutschreligion* (Twenty-five Points of the German Religion), held that the Old Testament and portions of the New Testament of the Bible were inaccurate. He claimed that Jesus was not a Jew but of Aryan origin, and that Adolf Hitler was the new messiah.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn)

Hitler denounced the Old Testament as "Satan's Bible", and utilising components of the New Testament attempted to demonstrate that Jesus was Aryan and antisemitic, such as in John 8:44 where Hitler noted that Jesus is yelling at "the Jews", as well as Jesus saying to the Jews that "your father is the devil", and describing Jesus' whipping of the "Children of the Devil".[[140]](#cite_note-140) Hitler claimed that the New Testament included distortions by [Paul the Apostle](/wiki/Paul_the_Apostle), whom Hitler described as a "mass-murderer turned saint".[[140]](#cite_note-140) The Nazis utilised Protestant [Martin Luther](/wiki/Martin_Luther) in their propaganda. They publicly displayed an original of Luther's [*On the Jews and their Lies*](/wiki/On_the_Jews_and_their_Lies) during the annual Nuremberg rallies.[[141]](#cite_note-141)[[142]](#cite_note-142) The Nazis endorsed the pro-Nazi Protestant [German Christians](/wiki/German_Christians) organisation.

The Nazis were initially highly hostile to Catholics because most Catholics supported the [German Centre Party](/wiki/German_Centre_Party). Catholics opposed the Nazis' promotion of sterilisation of those deemed inferior, and the Catholic Church forbade its members to vote for the Nazis. In 1933, extensive Nazi violence occurred against Catholics due to their association with the Centre Party and their opposition to the Nazi regime's sterilisation laws.[[143]](#cite_note-143) The Nazis demanded that Catholics declare their loyalty to the German state.[[144]](#cite_note-144) In propaganda, the Nazis used elements of Germany's Catholic history, in particular the German Catholic [Teutonic Knights](/wiki/Teutonic_Knights) and their campaigns in Eastern Europe. The Nazis identified them as "sentinels" in the East against "Slavic chaos", though beyond that symbolism the influence of the Teutonic Knights on Nazism was limited.[[145]](#cite_note-145) Hitler also admitted that the Nazis' night rallies were inspired by the Catholic rituals he witnessed during his Catholic upbringing.[[146]](#cite_note-146) The Nazis did seek official reconciliation with the Catholic Church and endorsed the creation of the pro-Nazi Catholic [*Kreuz und Adler*](/wiki/Kreuz_und_Adler) organisation that supported a [national Catholicism](/wiki/National_Catholicism).[[144]](#cite_note-144) On 20 July 1933, a concordat ([*Reichskonkordat*](/wiki/Reichskonkordat)) was signed between Nazi Germany and the Catholic Church; in exchange for acceptance of the Catholic Church in Germany, it required German Catholics to be loyal to the German state. The Catholic Church then ended its ban on members supporting the Nazi Party.[[144]](#cite_note-144) Historian [Michael Burleigh](/wiki/Michael_Burleigh) claims that Nazism used Christianity for political purposes, but such use required that "fundamental tenets were stripped out, but the remaining diffuse religious emotionality had its uses".[[146]](#cite_note-146) Burleigh claims that Nazism's conception of spirituality was "self-consciously pagan and primitive".[[146]](#cite_note-146) However, historian [Roger Griffin](/wiki/Roger_Griffin) rejects the claim that Nazism was primarily pagan, noting that although there were some influential neo-paganists in the Nazi Party, such as [Heinrich Himmler](/wiki/Heinrich_Himmler) and [Alfred Rosenberg](/wiki/Alfred_Rosenberg), they represented a minority and their views did not influence Nazi ideology beyond its use for symbolism; it is noted that Hitler denounced Germanic paganism in *Mein Kampf* and condemned Rosenberg's and Himmler's paganism as "nonsense".[[147]](#cite_note-147)

### Economics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

[Template:Further](/wiki/Template:Further) [thumb|*Deutsches Volk–Deutsche Arbeit:* German People, German Work, the alliance of worker and work (1934)](/wiki/File:Bundesarchiv_Bild_102-15750,_Ausstellung_%22Deutsches_Volk-Deutsche_Arbeit%22.jpg)

Generally speaking, Nazi theorists and politicians blamed Germany’s previous economic failures on political causes like the influence of Marxism on the workforce, the sinister and exploitative machinations of what they called international Jewry, and the vindictiveness of the western political leaders ‘war reparation’ demands. Instead of traditional economic incentives, the Nazis offered solutions of a political nature, such as the elimination of organized labour groups, rearmament (in contravention of the Versailles Treaty), and biological politics.[[148]](#cite_note-148) Various work programs designed to establish full-employment for the German population were instituted once the Nazis seized full national power. Hitler encouraged nationally supported projects like the construction of the *Autobahn*, the introduction of an affordable people’s car (*Volkswagen*) and later, the Nazis bolstered the economy through the business and employment generated by military rearmament.[[149]](#cite_note-149) Not only did the Nazis benefit early in the regime's existence from the first post-Depression economic upswing, their public works projects, job-procurement program, and subsidized home repair program reduced unemployment by as much as 40 percent in one year, a development which tempered the unfavourable psychological climate caused by the earlier economic crisis and encouraged Germans to march in step with the regime.[[150]](#cite_note-150) To protect the German people and currency from volatile market forces, the Nazis also promised social policies like a national labour service, state-provided health care, guaranteed pensions, and an agrarian settlement program.[[151]](#cite_note-151) Agrarian policies were particularly important to the Nazis since they corresponded not just to the economy but to their geopolitical conception of [*Lebensraum*](/wiki/Lebensraum) as well. For Hitler, the acquisition of land and soil was requisite in moulding the German economy.[[152]](#cite_note-152) To tie farmers to their land, selling agricultural land was prohibited.[[153]](#cite_note-153) Farm ownership was nominally private, but business monopoly rights were granted to marketing boards to control production and prices with a quota system.[[154]](#cite_note-154) The Nazis sought to gain support of workers by declaring [May Day](/wiki/May_Day), a day celebrated by [organised labour](/wiki/Labour_movement), to be a paid holiday and held celebrations on 1 May 1933 to honour German workers.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The Nazis stressed that Germany must honour its workers.<ref name=FR46>Fritzsche 1998, p. 46.</ref> The regime believed that the only way to avoid a repeat of the disaster of 1918 was to secure workers' support for the German government.[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) The Nazis wanted all Germans take part in the May Day celebrations in the hope that this would help break down class hostility between workers and [burghers](/wiki/Bourgeois).<ref name=FR46/> Songs in praise of labour and workers were played by state radio throughout May Day as well as fireworks and an air show in Berlin.<ref name=FR46/> Hitler spoke of workers as patriots who had built Germany's industrial strength, had honourably served in the war and claimed that they had been oppressed under [economic liberalism](/wiki/Economic_liberalism).<ref name=FR47>Fritzsche 1998, p. 47.</ref> *Berliner Morgenpost* that had been strongly associated with the political left in the past praised the regime's May Day celebrations.<ref name=FR47/>

The Nazis continued [social welfare](/wiki/Social_welfare) policies initiated by the governments of the Weimar Republic and mobilised volunteers to assist those impoverished, "racially-worthy" Germans through the National Socialist People's Welfare organisation.<ref name=FR51>Fritzsche 1998, p. 51.</ref> This organisation oversaw charitable activities, and became the largest [civic organization](/wiki/Civic_organization) in [Nazi Germany](/wiki/Nazi_Germany).<ref name=FR51/> Successful efforts were made to get middle-class women involved in social work assisting large families.[[155]](#cite_note-155) The [Winter Relief](/wiki/Winter_Relief) campaigns acted as a ritual to generate public sympathy.[[156]](#cite_note-156) Bonfires were made of school children's differently coloured caps as symbolic of the abolition of class differences.[[155]](#cite_note-155) Large celebrations and symbolism were used extensively to encourage those engaged in physical labour on behalf of Germany, with leading National Socialists often praising the 'honour of labour', which fostered a sense of community (*Gemeinschaft*) for the German people and promoted solidarity towards the Nazi cause.[[157]](#cite_note-157) Hitler believed that private ownership was useful in that it encouraged creative competition and technical innovation, but insisted that it had to conform to national interests and be "productive" rather than "parasitical".[[158]](#cite_note-158) Private property rights were conditional upon the economic mode of use; if it did not advance Nazi economic goals then the state could nationalise it.<ref name=economic573/> Although the Nazis [privatised](/wiki/Privatisation) public properties and public services, they also increased economic state control.[[159]](#cite_note-159) Under Nazi economics, free competition and self-regulating markets diminished; nevertheless, Hitler's [social Darwinist](/wiki/Social_Darwinism) beliefs made him reluctant to entirely disregard business competition and private property as economic engines.[[160]](#cite_note-160)[[161]](#cite_note-161) Hitler primarily viewed the German economy as an instrument of power. Hitler believed the economy was not just about creating wealth and technical progress so as to improve the quality of life for a nation’s citizenry; economic success was paramount in that, it provided the means and material foundations necessary for military conquest.[[162]](#cite_note-162) While economic progress generated by National Socialist programs had its role in appeasing the German people, the Nazis and Hitler in particular, did not believe that economic solutions alone were sufficient to thrust Germany onto the stage as a world power. Therefore, the Nazis sought first to secure a command economy through general economic revival accompanied by massive military spending for rearmament, especially later through the implementation of the [Four Year Plan](/wiki/Four_Year_Plan), which consolidated their rule and firmly secured a command relationship between the German arms industry and the National Socialist government.[[163]](#cite_note-163) Between 1933 and 1939, military expenditures were upwards of 82 billion Reichsmarks and represented 23 percent of Germany's gross national product as the Nazis mobilized their people and economy for war.[[164]](#cite_note-164)

#### Anti-communism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

Historians [Ian Kershaw](/wiki/Ian_Kershaw) and [Joachim Fest](/wiki/Joachim_Fest) argue that in post-[World War I](/wiki/World_War_I) Germany, the Nazis were one of many nationalist and fascist political parties contending for the leadership of Germany's [anti-communist](/wiki/Anti-communism) movement. The Nazis claimed that communism was dangerous to the well-being of nations because of its intention to dissolve [private property](/wiki/Private_property), its support of [class conflict](/wiki/Class_conflict), its aggression against the [middle class](/wiki/Middle-class), its hostility towards small business, and its [atheism](/wiki/Atheism).[[165]](#cite_note-165) Nazism rejected class conflict-based socialism and economic [egalitarianism](/wiki/Egalitarianism), favouring instead a [stratified](/wiki/Social_stratification) economy with [social classes](/wiki/Social_class) based on merit and talent, retaining [private property](/wiki/Private_property), and the creation of national solidarity that transcends class distinction.[[166]](#cite_note-166) During the 1920s, Hitler urged disparate Nazi factions to unite in opposition to [Jewish Bolshevism](/wiki/Jewish_Bolshevism).[[167]](#cite_note-167) Hitler asserted that the "three vices" of "Jewish Marxism" were democracy, [pacifism](/wiki/Pacifism), and [internationalism](/wiki/Internationalism_(politics)).[[168]](#cite_note-168) In 1930, Hitler said: "Our adopted term 'Socialist' has nothing to do with Marxist Socialism. Marxism is anti-property; true Socialism is not."[[169]](#cite_note-169) In 1942, Hitler privately said: "I absolutely insist on protecting private property ... we must encourage private initiative".<ref name=HTableTalk\_162/>

During the late 1930s and the 1940s, anti-communist regimes and groups that supported Nazism included the [Falange](/wiki/Falange) in [Spain](/wiki/Spain); the [Vichy regime](/wiki/Vichy_France) and the [33rd Waffen Grenadier Division of the SS Charlemagne (1st French)](/wiki/33rd_Waffen_Grenadier_Division_of_the_SS_Charlemagne_(1st_French)) in France; and in Britain the [Cliveden Set](/wiki/Cliveden_Set), [Lord Halifax](/wiki/Lord_Halifax), the [British Union of Fascists](/wiki/British_Union_of_Fascists) under [Sir Oswald Mosley](/wiki/Oswald_Mosley), and associates of [Neville Chamberlain](/wiki/Neville_Chamberlain).[[170]](#cite_note-170)

#### Anti-capitalism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

The Nazis argued that [capitalism](/wiki/Capitalism) damages nations due to [international finance](/wiki/International_finance), the economic dominance of [big business](/wiki/Big_business), and Jewish influences.[[165]](#cite_note-165) Nazi propaganda posters in [working class](/wiki/Working_class) districts emphasised anti-capitalism, such as one that said: "The maintenance of a rotten industrial system has nothing to do with nationalism. I can love Germany and hate capitalism."[[171]](#cite_note-171) [Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Adolf_Hitler), both in public and in private, expressed disdain for capitalism, arguing that it holds nations ransom in the interests of a parasitic [cosmopolitan](/wiki/Cosmopolitanism) [rentier](/wiki/Rentier_capitalism) class.[[172]](#cite_note-172) He opposed [free market](/wiki/Free_market) capitalism's profit-seeking impulses and desired an economy in which community interests would be upheld.[[158]](#cite_note-158) Hitler distrusted capitalism for being unreliable due to its [egotism](/wiki/Egotism), and he preferred a state-directed economy that is subordinated to the interests of the [Volk](/wiki/Volk).[[172]](#cite_note-172) Hitler told a party leader in 1934, "The economic system of our day is the creation of the Jews."[[172]](#cite_note-172) Hitler said to [Benito Mussolini](/wiki/Benito_Mussolini) that capitalism had "run its course".[[172]](#cite_note-172) Hitler also said that the business [bourgeoisie](/wiki/Bourgeoisie) "know nothing except their profit. 'Fatherland' is only a word for them."[[173]](#cite_note-173) Hitler was personally disgusted with the ruling bourgeois elites of Germany during the period of the Weimar Republic, who he referred to as "cowardly shits".[[174]](#cite_note-174) In [*Mein Kampf*](/wiki/Mein_Kampf), Hitler effectively supported [mercantilism](/wiki/Mercantilism), in the belief that economic resources from their respective territories should be seized by force; he believed that the policy of [*Lebensraum*](/wiki/Lebensraum) would provide Germany with such economically valuable territories.[[175]](#cite_note-175) He argued that the only means to maintain economic security was to have direct control over resources rather than being forced to rely on world trade.[[175]](#cite_note-175) He claimed that war to gain such resources was the only means to surpass the failing capitalist economic system.[[175]](#cite_note-175) A number of other Nazis held strong revolutionary socialist and anti-capitalist beliefs, most prominently [Ernst Röhm](/wiki/Ernst_Röhm), the leader of the [Sturmabteilung](/wiki/Sturmabteilung) (SA).[Template:Sfn](/wiki/Template:Sfn) Röhm claimed that the Nazis' rise to power constituted a national revolution, but insisted that a socialist "second revolution" was required for Nazi ideology to be fulfilled.<ref name=Nyomarkay1967/> Röhm's SA began attacks against individuals deemed to be associated with conservative reaction.<ref name=Nyomarkay1967/> Hitler saw Röhm's independent actions as violating and possibly threatening his leadership, as well as jeopardising the regime by alienating the conservative President [Paul von Hindenburg](/wiki/Paul_von_Hindenburg) and the conservative-oriented German Army.<ref name=Nyomarkay1967\_133/> This resulted in Hitler purging Röhm and other radical members of the SA.<ref name=Nyomarkay1967\_133/>

Another radical Nazi, Propaganda Minister [Joseph Goebbels](/wiki/Joseph_Goebbels) had stressed the socialist character of Nazism, and claimed in his diary in the 1920s that if he were to pick between [Bolshevism](/wiki/Bolshevism) and capitalism, he said "in final analysis", "it would be better for us to go down with Bolshevism than live in eternal slavery under capitalism."[[176]](#cite_note-176)

### Totalitarianism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) Under Nazism, with its emphasis on the nation, individual needs were subordinate to those of the wider community.[[177]](#cite_note-177) [Hitler](/wiki/Hitler) declared that "every activity and every need of every individual will be regulated by the collectivity represented by the party" and that "there are no longer any free realms in which the individual belongs to himself".[[178]](#cite_note-178) [Himmler](/wiki/Himmler) justified the establishment of a repressive police state, in which the security forces could exercise power arbitrarily, as national security and order should take precedence over the needs of the individual.[[179]](#cite_note-179) According to the famous philosopher and political theorist, Hannah Arendt, the allure of Nazism as a totalitarian ideology (with its attendant mobilization of the German population), resided within the construct of helping that society deal with the cognitive dissonance resultant from the tragic interruption of the First World War, the economic and material suffering consequent the Depression, and brought to order the revolutionary unrest occurring all around them. Instead of the plurality that existed in democratic or parliamentary states, Nazism as a totalitarian system promulgated 'clear' solutions to the historical problems faced by Germany, levied support by de-legitimizing the former government of Weimar, and provided a politico-biological pathway to a better future, one free from the uncertainty of the past. It was the atomized and disaffected masses that Hitler and the party elite pointed in a particular direction, and using clever propaganda to make them into ideological adherents, exploited in bringing Nazism to life.[[180]](#cite_note-180) While the ideologues of Nazism, [much like those of Stalinism](/wiki/Comparison_of_Nazism_and_Stalinism), abhorred democratic or parliamentary governance as practiced in the U.S. or Britain, their differences are substantial. An epistemic crisis occurs when one tries to synthesize and contrast Nazism and Stalinism as two-sides of the same coin with their similarly tyrannical leaders, state-controlled economies, and repressive police structures; namely, since while they share a common thematic political construction, they are entirely inimical to one another in their worldviews and when more carefully analyzed against one another on a one-to-one level, an "irreconcilable asymmetry" results.[[181]](#cite_note-181)

## Post-war Nazism[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Following Nazi Germany's defeat in World War II and the end of [the Holocaust](/wiki/The_Holocaust), overt expressions of support for Nazi ideas were prohibited in Germany and other European countries. Nonetheless, movements that self-identify as National Socialist or are described as adhering to National Socialism continue to exist on the fringes of politics in many western societies. Usually espousing a white supremacist ideology, many deliberately adopt the symbols of Nazi Germany.[[182]](#cite_note-182)

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

* [Consequences of German Nazism](/wiki/Consequences_of_German_Nazism)
* [Functionalism versus intentionalism](/wiki/Functionalism_versus_intentionalism)
* [List of books about Nazi Germany](/wiki/List_of_books_about_Nazi_Germany)
* [Nazi occultism](/wiki/Nazi_occultism)
* [Political views of Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Political_views_of_Adolf_Hitler)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

### Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

* [Template:Commons category-inline](/wiki/Template:Commons_category-inline)
* [Template:Wiktionary-inline](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary-inline)
* [Template:Wiktionary-inline](/wiki/Template:Wiktionary-inline)
* [Hitler's National Socialist Party platform](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/subject_menus/nca_v4menu.asp)
* [NS-Archiv](http://www.ns-archiv.de/index.php), a large collection of scanned original Nazi documents.
* [Exhibit on Hitler and the Germans](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2010/10/16/world/20101016_HITLER.html) – slideshow by [*The New York Times*](/wiki/The_New_York_Times)
* Jonathan Meades (1994): [Template:YouTube](/wiki/Template:YouTube) (in 4 parts)

[Template:Subject bar](/wiki/Template:Subject_bar) [Template:Subject bar](/wiki/Template:Subject_bar)

[Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[01](/wiki/Category:Nazism) [Category:Adolf Hitler](/wiki/Category:Adolf_Hitler) [Category:Anti-communism](/wiki/Category:Anti-communism) [Category:Antisemitism](/wiki/Category:Antisemitism) [Category:Fascism](/wiki/Category:Fascism) [Category:Far-right politics](/wiki/Category:Far-right_politics) [Category:Ideologies](/wiki/Category:Ideologies) [Category:Jewish German history](/wiki/Category:Jewish_German_history) [Category:Nationalism](/wiki/Category:Nationalism) [Category:Politics of Nazi Germany](/wiki/Category:Politics_of_Nazi_Germany) [Category:Racism](/wiki/Category:Racism) [Category:The Holocaust](/wiki/Category:The_Holocaust) [Category:Totalitarianism](/wiki/Category:Totalitarianism)