

Nazi Theory

What is Nazism?

Nazism is defined as socialism featuring racism and obedience to a strong leader. Nazism is known as National Socialism, which means that Nazis are socialists like Hitler himself was a socialist. It was called Nazi Socialism and referred primarily to ideology that developed under Adolf Hitler. The goal of National Socialism thought was not to overthrow these various governments but to purge them of all their anti-Aryan elements and redirect them to the fundamental purpose each shared in common, the protection and preservation of the Aryan race. It was dictatorship of the German people and became socialism under Hitler. Hitler believed in good art and artists should use colour in their paintings and he wanted to display "the true German spirit". He had a strong devotion to art. He was able to use art in Nazi Germany as one of the strongest means of propaganda. He also believed the old idea that a super race could be created if a strong leader acted ruthlessly and selfishly.

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Themes in Nazi Art

Theme 1: The Aryan Figure:

The Aryan figure was a huge part of Nazi ideology' they believed that the Aryan people with blue-eyed and blonde hair were the master race. The German man and woman was an example of the superiority of the Aryan figure such as people of Northern Europe descent that represented a superior and pure race. The ideal member of the master race was referred to as *Übermensch* or Superman. The figure of the *Übermensch* was people with blue eyes and blonde hair and was a member of the superior. Nazis considered people with dark skinned colour to be mentally and physically inferior to the European races. The artwork of Males and females of Aryan figure were often portrayed nude in sculptures which they had no shame because it does not represent sexuality. The Males was seen as godlike creatures with strength and powerful heroic, this was linked back to ancient Greece and the Greek god Zeus. This showed an epic image of the males to show the Aryan male figure as muscled and heroic because males were the guard and protector of the Germans. The ideal of strength and beauty are used to emphasise the superiority of the Aryan race. They believed that they were responsible for protecting their homeland and families.

Art work: Arno Brekker: *The Guard* 1930's



This is a sculpture of an Aryan figure. His sword is half out that shows he is ready for battle and to protect people. The nude figure links to ancient Greek sculptures like Zeus and is used to emphasise the superiority of the Aryan race and the nudity is a symbol of martial art but he sex organ is small because attention is on the powerful body not sex. His body figure is a perfect description as superman with iron-hard muscles, so seen as great warrior athlete. The title "The Guard" implies that the man is the protector and the guardian of Germany

Theme 2: Family

The theme family was vital to Nazi Germany. Art was used to advertise the role of the family, It was used as role models to show unity. Family artwork showed a healthy lifestyle, fertile and bond to nature. Adolf Wissel was one of the artists of German painters who was official artist of Nazism. His idea of painting showed the simple and natural life of farming families and he idealised farming life for predominantly urban viewers. The phrase 'union with the soil' best describes the subject of his art.

Nazis idealised the role of woman as child bearer to create family and there was a constant theme of "women as mothers to create the future of the Aryan race". This links to the Nazi ideology that the Aryan race was the ideal and natural race. Posters and magazines were used to target women so that they were trained to be happy wives and mothers and leave running the country to men. Men were made to think of themselves as honest hard-working heroes who took on the hard jobs of protecting the family and country for the ideal German family.

Art work:

Adolf Wissel, Volksgemeinschaft, poster 1930's



The Nazis used poster art to spread their ideas and get support from the German people. This poster of the Aryan family shows the importance of the strong man with his arms around his wife and son to show his protection and strength. The mother's face is all about the child and being a mother. The simple clothes and the woman's scarf show they are simple country people and they look like hard workers. The eagle at the back is a symbol of the German state that Nazi artists used and it is protecting the family and looking out for them