

# BUILDING NAZI GERMANY

Place, Space, Architecture, and Ideology



JOSHUA HAGEN AND ROBERT C. OSTERGREN

# Building Nazi Germany

Place, Space, Architecture,  
and Ideology

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and  
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ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD  
*Lanham • Boulder • New York • London*

Published by Rowman & Littlefield

An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.  
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706  
www.rowman.com

6 Tinworth Street, London SE11 5AL, United Kingdom

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Names: Hagen, Joshua, 1974– author. | Ostergren, Robert Clifford, author.

Title: Building Nazi Germany : place, space, architecture, and ideology / Joshua Hagen and Robert C. Ostergren.


Description: Lanham, Maryland : Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019014920 (print) | LCCN 2019015891 (ebook) | ISBN 9780742567993 (ebook) | ISBN 9780742567979 (cloth : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: National socialism and architecture.

Classification: LCC NA1068.5.N37 (ebook) | LCC NA1068.5.N37 H34 2019 (print) | DDC 720.943—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019014920>

 The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992.

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# Preface

The idea for this book originated in summer 2001 on a research trip that took us to the Nuremberg City Archives and the Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds. We were working at the time on a study of the use of architecture, space, and place in staging the Nuremberg rallies of the 1930s and, in particular, on the relationship between the old city center and the spacious rally ground complex under construction just outside the city. In addition to archival research, we spent considerable time walking around Nuremberg, seeking out physical remnants, such as public works, buildings, and housing estates, of its Nazi-era past. We also toured the former rally grounds, gazed across the Luitpold Grove, walked the Great Road, searched for the preliminary excavations of the German Stadium, circled and peered inside the unfinished Congress Hall, and explored the Zeppelin Field.

We were amazed at how much remained, saved as it was by the American military's use of the area as a base after the war. Nazi symbols had been chiseled away from edifices, and the columned superstructure of the Zeppelin Field grandstands had been dynamited, but much remained. Built in stone, and intended to last for ages in order to meet the ideal of Albert Speer's oft-quoted Theory of Ruin Value, the style and gargantuan scaling of Nazi public building was there for all to see. We noted with keen interest its well-worn and partially crumbling appearance—how some of the fine stone facing on the Zeppelin Field grandstands had fallen away to reveal the ordinary brickwork behind—and how that did much to stir the imagination about the excitement and fervor that the regime invested in the construction of the rally grounds and so many other building projects. We began to talk about a book that explored the politically and ideologically motivated use of architecture, place, and space embodied in Nazi-era building programs and projects across all of Germany and beyond.

There is certainly no shortage of research on the Nazi movement, including its various architectural endeavors. Nonetheless, we believed the time was right for a broad-based reappraisal of the regime and its building programs for a number of reasons. First, although several books about architecture in Nazi Germany have appeared in recent years, they tended to reduce the Nazi building program to a select number of high-profile projects, mostly Berlin, Munich, and Nuremberg, such as Frederic Spotts's *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* (2003) or Michael Ellenbogen's *Gigantische Visionen* (2006). Other authors have focused on one particular individual, such as in Léon Krier's *Albert Speer* (2013). Similar biographies and catalogues exist for most of the other principal architects involved with the regime's high-profile projects. Alternatively, some scholars have focused on a specific aspect of the regime's building program, such as Paul Jaskot's *The Architecture of Oppression* (2000), which examines the role of the SS in the Nazi building economy. There are also excellent studies that examine the regime's architectural programs for the Autobahn, housing, schools, and churches, for example. Yet these works can leave the impression of the Nazi building program as a series of more or less discrete endeavors. One notable exception is the excellent work of Dieter Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes im Nationalsozialismus* (1993), which offers an expansive view of residential, urban, and industrial planning although omitting important aspects of Nazi building endeavors. In contrast, this project goes beyond any particular place, person, or style to provide a comprehensive overview of the surprising, and often overlooked extent, variety, and cumulative effects of the Nazi building program. Every project, from the gargantuan Great Hall and Triumphal Arch in Berlin to the smallest single family home, was intended to help realize the regime's visionary and practical goals through a comprehensive spatial reordering of Germany's economy, society, demography, and politics.

Second, although a number of overviews of Nazi-era architecture and construction exist, they have become quite dated. The two principal works in English are Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918–1945* (1968) and Robert Taylor, *The Word in Stone* (1974). In German, one can find Anna Teut, *Architektur im Dritten Reich* (1967), Joachim Petsch, *Baukunst und Stadtplanung im Dritten Reich* (1976), and Jochen Thies, *Architektur der Weltherrschaft* (1976), recently updated and translated as *Hitler's Plans for Global Domination* (2012). Collectively, these works spawned a surge of interest in the Nazi building program resulting in several attempts to inventory and catalog Nazi buildings. The most notable of these are Helmut Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz* (1998) and Winfried Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus* (1993), which provided much of the initial inspiration for this book. Both works provide extensive documentation of Nazi-sponsored buildings, but Weihsmann is limited to around sixty larger cities, while Nerdinger only covers Bavaria. Additionally, numerous local-scale case studies and inventories have since appeared, offering detailed examinations

of planning and building activity in major cities, such as Berlin, Cologne, Hamburg, and Munich, as well as many medium-sized cities, such as Augsburg, Braunschweig, Regensburg, and Wilhelmshaven. Given this volume of new material since the “classic” works in the field appeared in the 1960s and 1970s, we felt the time was particularly suited for a fresh reappraisal of this topic, especially one that ties architecture to space- and place-based concerns; and that seeks to position, as few others attempt to, the experience of Nazi Germany within the broader context of Western political, cultural, and architectural discourse of the interwar and World War II periods.

Third, considering the public’s continuing fascination with the Nazi regime and its architectural ambitions, we find it surprising that a major geographical treatment of this topic has yet to appear. Aside from a few journal articles, relatively few geographers have explored the ways in which the Nazi regime expressed and realized its most fundamental ideologies and objectives through a calculated use of place, space, and architecture. Cultural and historical geographers have been noted in recent years for their attention to the cultural politics of monumental structures and spaces, the making and remaking of places and landscapes, and the role of place and space in shaping community and identity. This book fits into that tradition but also combines these more recent perspectives with traditional geographic concerns about spatial systems and structures to produce a unique and fresh appraisal of the Nazi building program. In short, we hope this book begins to fill these voids and makes an important contribution to scholarship in the field.

The book’s main narrative is largely drawn from professional journals, as well as books, magazines, and other assorted publications, which appeared from the late 1920s to 1945. Instead of trying to build comprehensive citations for the myriad projects covered in this book, our aim is to point readers to the more useful and accessible publications for further reading. We hope this will preserve the readability of the text for the broadest readership. A full list of the journals and magazines consulted appears in the bibliography, although space prevents citing every individual article. We conducted some archival work during the early stages of this project, mostly in Bavaria. We decided to forego additional archival work for two reasons. First, it was clear that the volume of documents available for possible inspection was enormous for a project that aimed to cover all aspects of the Nazi building program across Germany and the occupied territories. Second, as noted earlier, a variety of detailed case studies and inventories have already been published. These scholars have already sifted through the archival sources and brought their key findings to light. A number of key primary documents have also been reproduced in the works of Heinrich Breloer and Rainer Zimmer; Jost Dülffer, Jochen Thies, and Josef Henke; Tilman Harlander and Gerhard Fehl; Anna Teut; and Christiane Wolf, among others. A number of primary documents are also becoming available online, most notably the

Reich Law Gazette (*Reichsgesetzblatt*), which includes the official laws and regulations promulgated by the Nazi regime.

Two names appear on this book's cover, but numerous people have helped us along the way. You would not be reading this book without their contributions. We would like to thank the universities, libraries, and archives that hosted us during our visits to Germany for patiently answering our questions and retrieving materials, including the Bavarian State Library, Berlin State Library, Humboldt University of Berlin, Free University Berlin, University of Cologne, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz University Hannover, Institute for Contemporary History Munich-Berlin, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Technical University of Munich, Nuremberg City Archives, City Archive Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Documentation Center Prora, and the Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds.

Also deserving our sincere thanks are the organizations that provided financial support for our research, including the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the German Academic Exchange Service, the Fulbright Scholar Program, Marshall University, Northern State University, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Several scholars offered helpful criticisms, suggestions, insights, and support at various stages of this long journey, including Hermann Kreutzmann, Julia Lossau, Winfried Nerdinger, Wolfram Siemann, Winfried Speitkamp, Hasso Spode, Hans-Peter Ullmann, and many others through informal conversations. Special thanks are due to James Leonard for producing the wonderful cartography and Daae An for creating figure 7.16.

We also thank all the students of the Building Nazi Germany seminar held during the 2015 spring semester at Marshall University. The seminar's lively discussion provided excellent feedback on an early draft of this book. We owe special thanks to Susan McEachern for her patience and steadfast belief in this project as various deadlines came and went with little apparent progress, as well as her colleagues at Rowman & Littlefield for pushing this through those last steps toward publication. Finally, we would like to thank our families: Rachel, Sabina, and Oliver Hagen; and Carol Ostergren. This book would not have been possible without their consistent support, encouragement, and understanding.





# Statism, Totalitarianism, and National Socialism

Upon witnessing the official cornerstone-laying ceremony in September 1937 for the construction of the grandiosely proportioned German Stadium in Nuremberg, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels entered into his diary the exultant words: “Build, build!”<sup>1</sup> Goebbels’s simple but ardent exclamation is a fitting way to begin this book, because it so nicely encapsulates one of the most visible expressions of Germany’s Nazi regime as it seized power during the 1930s. Indeed, in the space of just a few years, Germany was engulfed in a wave of new construction. As the introduction to a 1937 celebratory book proudly proclaimed: “We live in the conviction that we have entered into a new architectural age. Everywhere in Germany, new buildings. It is as though an omnipresent will to build has seized the whole people. Can the beginning of a new architectural age reveal itself more urgently?”<sup>2</sup>

This imperative to build served several purposes: celebrating the accomplishments and power of a resurgent Nazi Germany; providing construction work to help revive a depression-ridden economy; and reordering communities to better control the cultural, social, and economic life of Germans and other peoples. To those ends, the regime launched a variety of construction programs intended to transform Germany’s places, spaces, and landscapes to create geographies and spatialities of National Socialism. In what Adolf Hitler’s chief architect Albert Speer would later characterize as architectural megalomania, the Nazi regime sponsored countless construction projects ranging from monumental spaces and buildings at the centers of German cities, to the laying down of a national system of Autobahn freeways, to the design and construction of new residential developments, blocks of standardized flats, schools, offices, churches, youth centers, sports and leisure complexes, and all manner of public buildings. Thousands of such structures—spread across the country, distinctive in their architecture, and marked with the insignia and regalia of the regime—worked to ingrain the



Party and its vision of national life, values, and greatness into the landscape. Many of these projects prepared the country for war, while others set the stage for the systematic imprisonment, enslavement, and eventually murder of political opponents and other “undesirable” groups. In a postwar interview, Speer summed up the political purpose of the regime’s use of architecture, space, and place as “to order the people, to subordinate, to eliminate their personalities, so that they order themselves in the totality”<sup>3</sup> (figure 1.1).

This book explores the building programs of the Nazi regime, not so much from a political, architectural, or aesthetic standpoint as others have done in the past,<sup>4</sup> but from a geographical perspective that focuses on the regime’s production and manipulation of Germany’s spaces, places, and landscapes to reorder and inscribe new purposes, meanings, actions, and attitudes through them.<sup>5</sup> To that end, this book connects traditional geographical attention to space, place, networks, and movement with more recent scholarship on the spatiality of semiotics, performativity, and affect. Viewed from this perspective, the building of Nazi Germany engaged architecture in a double sense. First and most obviously, architecture encompasses the processes and prac-



**Figure 1.1. The Zeppelin Field at the Party Rally Grounds**

The Zeppelin Field provided a venue for massive choreographed spectacles during the annual Nazi Party rallies in Nuremberg. In this photo, thousands of members of the League of German Girls perform folk dances during the 1938 rallies. The “Tribune” grandstands, centered on Hitler’s speaking rostrum, is in the background.

*Source:* Nuremberg City Archives.

tices involved in planning, designing, and building an assortment of physical structures. In this sense, architecture is about the style, size, proportion, orientation, and other tangible characteristics of the buildings and other structures built under the auspices of the Nazi regime. Second and less obvious, architecture entails the complex, systematic, and purposeful design or structure of something. In this case, architecture involves the processes and practices embedded in the design and structure of space. This architecture of space—as structured by the Nazi regime—entailed the production of a series of overlapping, hierarchical, and nested geographies composed of “a series of conditioning environments” designed for “engineering affective atmospheres.”<sup>6</sup>

This “calculative architecture of affective control” constituted a series of interrelated efforts, although at times they conflicted due to divergent and competing strategies and priorities within the Party’s leadership and between governmental agencies.<sup>7</sup> Despite such contradictions, the Nazi building programs aimed at a thorough reorganization of Germany’s economic, cultural, political, and demographic geographies. The following chapters scrutinize and explicate the main components of this spatial reordering, including the monumental redevelopment and cleansing of cities; the establishment of new neighborhoods and domestic practices; the construction of new civic landscapes for education, athletics, and leisure; the improvement of transportation, industrial, and military infrastructures; and finally the creation of networked landscapes of fear, slavery, and mass murder.

This broad perspective draws out the ways in which combinations of place, space, and architecture were produced as a cumulative means of undergirding the regime and its objectives, as well as how ordinary Germans and non-Germans experienced and perceived these endeavors.<sup>8</sup> The goal is a comprehensive and geographically nuanced treatment of the intriguing range of forms and functions, causes and effects, and accomplishments and catastrophes associated with the building of Nazi Germany and the concomitant reorganization of the *Lebensraum*, or living space, of the German nation. Before turning to the Nazi building program directly, it is useful here to provide some background information on the circumstances and character of the Nazi regime as it established itself during the 1920s and 1930s, the culture wars arising out of the Weimar years that provided the professional and ideological backdrop to the Nazi building programs, and the individuals who played key roles in “building” Nazi Germany.

### LEVIATHAN UNBOUND; OR, STATISM AND TOTALITARIANISM IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

The Leviathan is a monster described in the Hebrew Book of Job, among other places, but the name owes its contemporary meaning to the philosopher Thomas Hobbes, who published a book by the same name in 1651.

Hobbes's *Leviathan* promoted the idea of a state founded on a social contract between people who voluntarily transferred their individual sovereignty to an absolutist government, preferably a divine right monarchy obligated to provide peace and security for its subjects. The notion of a social contract has carried over to today, but whereas Hobbes saw the Leviathan as a benevolent and consensual state protecting against the inherent evils of humanity, in contemporary usage the term *leviathan* has come to be associated with the bureaucratic machinery of an oppressive, predatory, and intrusive state. The origins of this shift are partially traceable to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the unprecedented speed of industrialization, urbanization, and technological change spawned various reformist, progressive, revolutionary, and reactionary movements.

These movements commonly looked to states, which at the time remained relatively limited, to assume more activist and interventionist roles. This rise of statist ideologies, or those favoring the concentration of policy planning, implementation, and enforcement within a highly centralized government, was plainly evident across Western societies by the 1920s and 1930s. Many contemporaries concluded that only a strong, central authority could successfully navigate the deep political, social, and economic challenges of the day, especially the Great Depression. Already in 1933, top Nazi official Robert Ley outlined the Party's vision for an all-encompassing state-party apparatus:

while the old state was a non-interventionist state, ours is an education state, a teacher, a fatherly friend. This state keeps hold of you from the cradle to the grave . . . and in this way we get started with children as young as three years old; as soon as the child begins to think, he gets a flag. Thereafter one goes on to school, the Hitler Youth, the SA, military duty. We never let you go, even if you try to stop us!<sup>9</sup>

Such rhetoric was hardly unique to the Nazi movement. As historian Wolfgang Schivelbusch has noted, proponents of activist states carefully cultivated and "profited from the illusion of the nation as an egalitarian community whose members looked out for one another's welfare under the watchful eyes of a strong leader."<sup>10</sup> This shift toward central planning and interventionist government was most vividly illustrated by the forced collectivization and industrialization in the communist Soviet Union and the rise of corporatist economic policy in Fascist Italy, as well as the assorted right-wing regimes that gradually assumed power throughout Eastern Europe. Even in the shrinking number of liberal democracies, the growth of vertically integrated, industrial conglomerates and government-owned enterprises contributed to a sense that the era of unbridled liberal capitalism of the pre-World War I years was waning.

The rise of statist ideologies led to calls for expansive state-sponsored building projects. Whether undertaken under the auspices of democratic

or totalitarian governments, politicians and much of the public turned to centrally planned public works projects as popular Depression-era tools for combating unemployment, expanding infrastructure, and fostering economic growth. Ambitious infrastructure projects, such as dams, canals, and highways, were common and often noteworthy for their gigantism, as well as their technological innovations. Building projects and regional planning initiatives also provided mechanisms for expansive social engineering. Animated by abstracted and undifferentiated notions of society and space, the experts directing these programs were fully confident in their ability to achieve desirable social, political, economic, and demographic outcomes through the calculated arrangement of specific places, networks, and architecture.<sup>11</sup>

To varying degrees, these types of schemes multiplied across Europe and North America. One can certainly point, for example, to state-sponsored building programs undertaken by Fascist Italy, the Soviet Union, and other European states, and even the United States, as the construction of public buildings and monuments of all kinds proliferated. In many places, architects favored modified neoclassicist styles, not unlike those that would typify many Nazi-era government buildings, for example, the Federal Reserve Board Building in Washington, DC; the Palais de Chaillot in Paris; Rome's EUR district; Helsinki's Parliament House; the Palace of Nations in Geneva; or the unrealized plans for the Palace of the Soviets skyscraper in Moscow.<sup>12</sup> However, it was Nazi Germany that undertook perhaps the most comprehensive and expansive coupling of the deliberate reshaping of built landscapes and spaces to rapidly expanding state involvement in managing economic exchange, public opinion, civil society, and even familial relations. As Rudolf Wolters, Speer's top deputy, proclaimed: "Spatial planning is not only a concept of our time; it is characteristic for our time and unparalleled. Everything that is built in a great manner subordinates itself to the totality of spatial planning."<sup>13</sup> Wolters went on to describe a networked hierarchy of monumental urban ensembles, schools, and other civic centers integrated through efficient transportation corridors.

In a very palpable sense, then, Hitler's Germany aspired to become a totalitarian state. Totalitarianism differs from more general forms of authoritarian governance in that totalitarian movements seek to monopolize and exercise control over the economy, civil society, and even interpersonal and familial relations, in addition to the typical mechanisms of politics and government. The Nazi regime differed somewhat from commonplace understandings of totalitarian movements in that it did not seek full state control but rather at times purposefully exercised its will through nongovernmental institutions, most commonly the Party and its affiliated organizations but also including a range of quasi-independent public-private partnerships, commercial ventures, and civic groups. Moreover, Nazi Germany is noteworthy for its extraordinary degree of ideological and political

intensity. Indeed, it is important to emphasize the exceptionality of this overtly political Nazi reorganization and reconstruction of national spaces and landscapes within an era of generally expanded state interventionist activity worldwide.<sup>14</sup> Although not referencing Nazi Germany specifically, sociologist Michael Mann's characterization of fascism as "the pursuit of a transcendent and cleansing nation-statism through paramilitarism" nicely captures the essence of Hitler's movement.<sup>15</sup>

The Nazi regime naturally sought to apply its totalitarian impulses to architecture and spatial planning. Again, this desire was not unique to the Nazi movement but attaching political significance to architecture and the creation of new or the redefinition of old public spaces reached exceptional intensity in Nazi Germany. The regime invested an extraordinary amount of time and resources in propaganda drawing public attention to construction projects. Progress reports, architectural drawings, and scale models were repeatedly and lavishly featured in newsreels, newspapers and magazines, Party publications, professional journals, and glossy picture books. Ground breaking, corner-stone laying, and dedication ceremonies routinely featured Hitler and other prominent Nazis along with considerable fanfare and media attention (figure 1.2). Amid this frenzy of activity, as historian Barbara Miller Lane asserts in her classic treatment of architecture and politics during the Weimar and Nazi periods, the Nazi building program consisted of three distinct components: ideological motivations, political propaganda, and the actual construction activities.<sup>16</sup> Each component entailed its own unique sets of spatial assumptions and practices but still shared many features and themes.

Foremost among these was the primacy of political or ideological utility. Official buildings, construction projects, and the broader reordering of Germany's living space undertaken by the new regime aimed to assert the power and greatness of the Nazi movement as the political manifestation of the German people. Hitler acknowledged this publicly on numerous occasions. For example, during his culture speech at the 1937 Party rallies, Hitler posited:

The greater the demands of today's state are of its citizens, the more powerful the state must also appear to its citizens . . . our buildings arise to strengthen this authority! . . . Therefore, these buildings should not be thought of for the year 1940, also not for the year 2000, but rather like the cathedrals of our past project into the millennia of the future. . . . So precisely they will help politically to unite and strengthen our Volk more than ever; they become communally an element of the feeling of proud togetherness for Germans; they will demonstrate socially the ridiculousness of other worldly differences compared to these powerful and gigantic witnesses of our community; and they will fill psychologically the citizens of our Volk with an endless self-awareness, namely this: to be German! These powerful works will also simultaneously constitute the most exalted justifications for the political strength of the German nation.<sup>17</sup>



**Figure 1.2. Hitler Appearing in Propaganda for the Autobahn Motorways**

Building projects featured prominently in Nazi propaganda and helped portray Hitler as a man of action. The new Autobahn motorways were one of the regime's highest-profile projects. Here, Hitler participates in a ground-breaking ceremony for a stretch of Autobahn near Frankfurt in September 1933. Directly behind and to the upper right of Hitler is Fritz Todt, general inspector of German roadways and head of Organization Todt, the regime's civil and military building organization.

*Source: Reismann, *Deutschlands Autobahnen*, 97.*

Germans were expected to feel a deep sense of pride over each newly constructed addition to the built fabric of their nation and to associate these highly visible achievements with the formidable power and greatness of the Nazi movement. Of course, such appeals also entailed the exclusion of those deemed outside this racial national community, especially Jews.

The regime's building programs also buttressed claims that the Nazi Party had put Germany on a progressive, modernizing trajectory. The regime eagerly publicized monumentally impressive construction and engineering marvels, in particular, so as to inspire and assert national confidence and pride. The frenetic construction of the nation's Autobahn network between 1935 and 1938 was a case in point. One of the most publicized of the regime's building programs, the Autobahn served as testament to the Nazi will to construct and to a resurgent Germany's technological prowess (figure 1.3). Germans could feel smug about the international attention and admiration bestowed upon the nation's new motorway system and revel in the new freedom of mobility promised by the advent of a German automobile age destined to bring the nation together as never before.

Modernity, although at times in conflict with other more rustic and backward-looking strands of Nazi ideology, was commonly at the forefront when it came to the larger showcase construction projects and comprehensive planning campaigns. Through them, the regime sought to demonstrate the virtues of German efficiency, resourcefulness, discipline, and technical prowess. As historian James C. Scott has noted, the Nazi state is "surely the diagnostic example" of a conservative, even reactionary, perspective of the ideology of "high modernism," defined as a "strong, one might even say muscle-bound, version of self-confidence about scientific and technological progress, the expansion of production, the growing satisfaction of human needs, the mastery of nature (including human nature), and, above all, the rational design of the social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws."<sup>18</sup>

The Nazi regime's building projects commonly featured massive, expansive, and monotonous structures and spaces engendering mixtures of wonder and intimidation that diminished the individual (figure 1.4). Gigantism was the order of the day, often alluded to in propaganda that emphasized the comparative size of state-sponsored projects relative to well-known structures elsewhere in the world. The Great Hall with its domed space planned for the center of Berlin, for example, was touted as capable of easily engulfing St. Peter's in Rome or St. Paul's in London. The Triumphal Arch, intended to grace Berlin's new grand north-south boulevard, would be exactly two and a half times larger than the Arc de Triomphe in Paris; the boulevard itself was to be twice the length of the Champs Élysées, and so on. Hitler purposely intended his architecture to be overbearingly outsized, grand, and theatrical. Hitler viewed his buildings as political weapons to impress the world, as well as to remind Germans of their relative unimportance

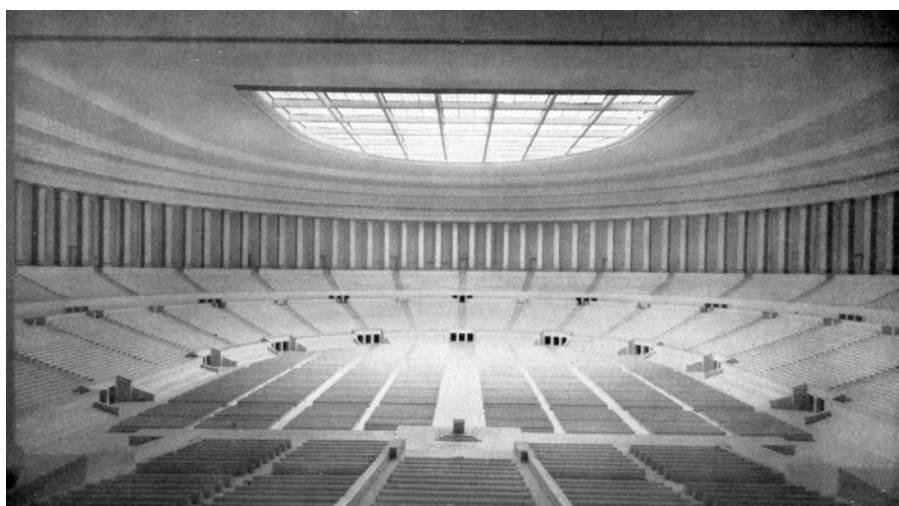
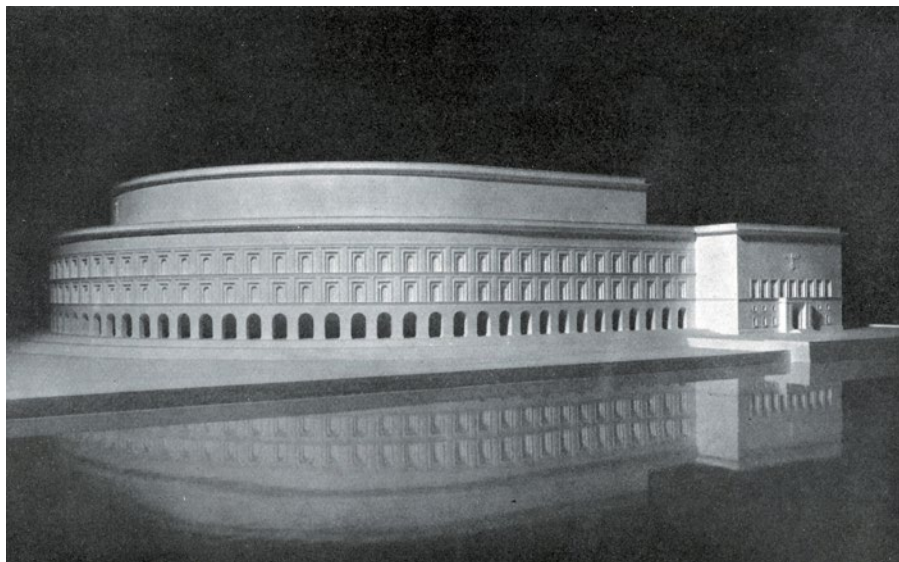


**Figure 1.3. A Stretch of Autobahn in the Foothills of the Bavarian Alps**

Nazi propaganda touted the Autobahn as emblematic of a uniquely German talent for harmonizing technology and nature. This stretch of motorway through the foothills of the Bavarian Alps was one of the first sections completed. Few Germans owned cars, so Autobahn traffic was often light.

*Source: Troost, Das Bauen im Neuen Reich, 1:118.*





**Figure 1.4. The Congress Hall at the Party Rally Grounds**

Like the other megastructures of the Nuremberg rally grounds, Hitler planned the Congress Hall's voluminous interior to overwhelm rally-goers with the greatness of his leadership. Hitler had the exterior altered to more closely resemble the Colosseum in Rome after he visited Italy in 1938. Much of the hall's exterior shell was finished, but construction never began on the ceiling or interior seating.

*Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:30–31.*

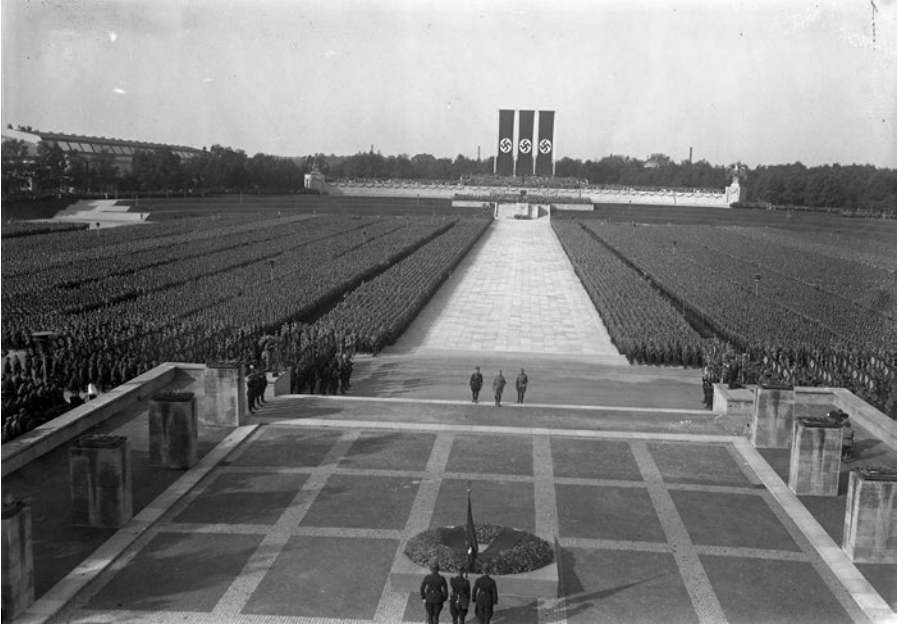
before the authority of the Party and state. They were also intended to be timeless—a testimony in stone and steel, space and place—that would recall for future generations the greatness of Hitler's movement.

The regime's building programs were also vehicles to instill within Germans the totality of Nazi community, will, and purpose. The idea that the Autobahn could act as a unifying force, as well as a symbol of national greatness, was an oft-repeated theme. A song written to commemorate the new motorways took careful aim, for example, at the core values of the Nazi regime through its worshipful emphases on the virtues of working together, spatially connecting towns and people, and building a way toward the future. The lyrics concluded: "He [Hitler] paved the way for Germans into the Reich—So he built the road from house to house—From heart to heart—From ear to ear—The road in the Reich."<sup>19</sup> An important goal for all state-sponsored building projects was to convey and foster the idea of national community, of a people united by culture and race and pulling together to advance the country. As Wolters explained in 1944: "Public buildings again stand in the middle point, more than ever before, the art of building is the expression of state will that builds on a unified national community as the only possible basis for architectural greatness."<sup>20</sup> The spatial layout and architecture of public squares, government buildings, stadiums, schools, neighborhoods, and youth centers would teach ordinary Germans that they belonged, acted, and thought, not as individuals, but as a unified racial whole tied to a broadly imagined national territory.

This drive to create community spaces and experiences factored heavily into Nazi visions for the renewal of Germany's cities and towns. Hitler and his retinue generally ascribed to the prevailing conservative views of the time, which saw Germany's rapid industrialization and urbanization as corrosive forces debasing culture, community, morality, and family life. This antiurban ideology called for a return to the virtues of rural living, but the regime soon turned to more interventionist solutions. Foremost among these was a desire to alleviate what Hitler deplored in his manifesto *Mein Kampf* as the lack of dominating public monuments and spaces in German cities that could provide a focal point for community life:

Thus, our cities of the present lack the outstanding symbol of national community which, we must therefore not be surprised to find, sees no symbol of itself in the cities. The inevitable result is a desolation whose practical effect is the total indifference of the big-city dweller to the destiny of his city. This, too, is a sign of our declining culture and our general collapse. The epoch is stifling in the pettiest utilitarianism or better expressed in the service of money. And we have no call for surprise if under such a deity little sense of heroism remains.<sup>21</sup>

Hitler's builders rapidly mimicked their leader's language. As one prominent Nazi author declared: "Each building must be so constructed that the groups assembled therein will always face the Führer; the architecture of



**Figure 1.5. The Luitpold Arena at the Party Rally Grounds**

Hitler craved grand, sensually overwhelming spaces, in which masses of people were organized into rigid quadrangular formations. The redesigned Luitpold Arena provided Hitler a platform to address his followers from the center of the grandstands beneath the swastika flags. As seen here during the 1934 annual Party rallies, Hitler would climax the gathering in the arena by marching across the densely packed field to pay tribute to the movement's martyrs before the arena's Hall of Honor, built as a memorial in 1930 to Nuremberg's fallen in the Great War.

Source: German Federal Archives.

each must express the relationship between Führer and people and carry the national emblem and the Swastika [*sic*] Flag,—the symbols under which the Party militant became a national movement"<sup>22</sup> (figure 1.5).

To accomplish these far-reaching objectives, Hitler and his followers needed to expand the reach of the state and Party into every aspect of society and daily life. And nearly every intervention necessitated a vast building program to experience the largeness and pervasiveness of Nazism and its charismatic leader. "If someone says to me, 'Why do you build more than earlier?'" Hitler explained, "all I can reply is: 'We build more because we are more than we were earlier.'"<sup>23</sup> Hitler's statement highlights another key feature of his regime's building programs—namely, the importance of developing programs that would be comprehensive and hierarchical in their approach to structuring and restructuring German living space. Only then would Germans be integrated into the type of disciplined and ordered racial community demanded by Hitler and his cronies.

## BEHEMOTH UNBOUND, OR THE NAZI STATE

Thomas Hobbes published *Behemoth* a few years after *Leviathan*. The original Behemoth was also a monstrous beast from the Hebrew Bible. Hobbes intended *Behemoth* to illustrate the perils inherent in circumstances in which the structures and practices of government broke down, resulting in lawlessness, or what he described as the unrelenting war of all against all. The word *behemoth* has carried this connotation into modern usage and now commonly suggests something so large and powerful that its appearance is confounding, intimidating, or threatening. At its inception, as a gathering of a few dozen men in a Munich beer hall, there was little to associate the nascent Nazi Party with a behemoth, but the movement would eventually become a Hobbesian Behemoth, figuratively and literally.<sup>24</sup>

The Nazi Party emerged within the turbulent milieu of postwar Munich. There were amorphous groups, factions, and splinter cells, as well as ample violence, across the political spectrum. Hitler reached Munich in November 1918, like countless other soldiers returning from the front. He joined the fledgling German Workers' Party in fall 1919 and quickly established himself as its most charismatic personality. In February 1920, Hitler organized the Party's first mass assembly in a local beer hall where he announced the Party's new name, the National Socialist German Workers' Party (abbreviated NSDAP or simply NS in German, or alternatively Nazis to their detractors), and unveiled the Party's original platform—a jumble of rightist and leftist slogans circulating at the time.

It is unclear how Hitler and his cronies came to their beliefs. The most likely origins are their experiences of violence and upheaval surrounding World War I and Germany's eventual defeat combined with contemporary "scientific" perspectives, such as situating Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection within the social sciences and international relations, the acceptance of categories of racial superiority/inferiority, and the promise of large-scale social engineering through state-sponsored population, public health, and eugenics policies. These various strands of social Darwinism readily fed into broader cultural anxieties and popular prejudices, especially chauvinistic nationalism, paranoid anti-Semitism, and virulent anti-Bolshevism.<sup>25</sup>

The early Nazi Party's shifting factions fit into two broad, overlapping groups. First, there were some factions that envisioned the Party as a radical, revolutionary force bent on overturning the capitalist, military, urban, religious, and socioeconomic establishment. Some within these revolutionary factions pushed for the re-agrarianization of Germany. Most prominently associated with Richard Walther Darré, Heinrich Himmler, and Alfred Rosenberg, this "folkish" wing emphasized an extreme brand of reactionary conservatism that favored dispersing populations from large urban-industrial centers and returning them to small farming communities and traditional

artisanal labor. A second group of factions consisted of those who wanted the Party to pursue more conventional, nationalist positions that worked with and through existing structures. The main proponent of this more conservative approach, and the determining factor, was Hitler, who decided against the more radical impulses of some of his lieutenants to curry favor with Germany's mainstream centrist and conservative senior officer corps, capitalists, aristocrats, and faithful. In many respects, National Socialism came to resemble a political religion that demanded absolute belief, unquestioning obedience, and unyielding loyalty to Hitler, rather than any specific program of set policies or beliefs.<sup>26</sup>

The Nazi propaganda machine made effective use of the punitive conditions imposed by the Treaty of Versailles in its bid for power, exploiting German suffering and resentment over the consequences of defeat, particularly the hyperinflation of the early 1920s that spread financial ruin across Germany. The Great Depression following the American stock market crash of 1929 wreaked havoc globally but was especially disastrous for a German economy that relied heavily on exports. Millions became unemployed as businesses fired workers or closed. By 1933, just over one-third of the labor force was unemployed. Millions more had dropped out of the labor statistics by ceasing to look for work. The efforts of the Weimar government, led by Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, to remedy the situation by raising taxes while cutting spending and wages to hold down inflation and eliminate budget deficits were largely ineffective.

The Nazis deftly exploited the Depression to first garner double-digit support in the 1930 parliamentary elections. The Nazi Party eventually peaked at 37 percent in the July 1932 elections, becoming the most popular in Germany. Somewhat unexpectedly as a workers' movement founded in predominantly Catholic Bavaria, the Party performed best in relatively rural areas with Protestant populations. This popularity accounts for the strident folkish "blood-and-soil" rhetoric that permeated the Party's lexicon from 1930. The Party also performed reasonably well among middle-class households and small business owners, some of whom regarded the Nazis as vulgar thugs but viewed the prospect of communism or anarchy as greater threats. Just as its political program reflected a jumble of nationalist and socialist ideologies, the Nazi electoral coalition was also a jumble of different and contradictory constituencies.

Returning to Hobbes, the frontispiece of the *Leviathan* centered on a towering figure wearing a crown and clutching a sword and scepter to represent the combined power of state and church. The figure's body was composed of faceless subjects, literally the body politic. A Latin inscription quoting the Book of Job ran above this colossus, reading: "There is no power on earth that can be compared to him." It is questionable whether Hitler read Hobbes, but Nazi propaganda cast the movement as a type of Leviathan with Hitler as its charismatic and messianic leader. Nazism was to be the great protector

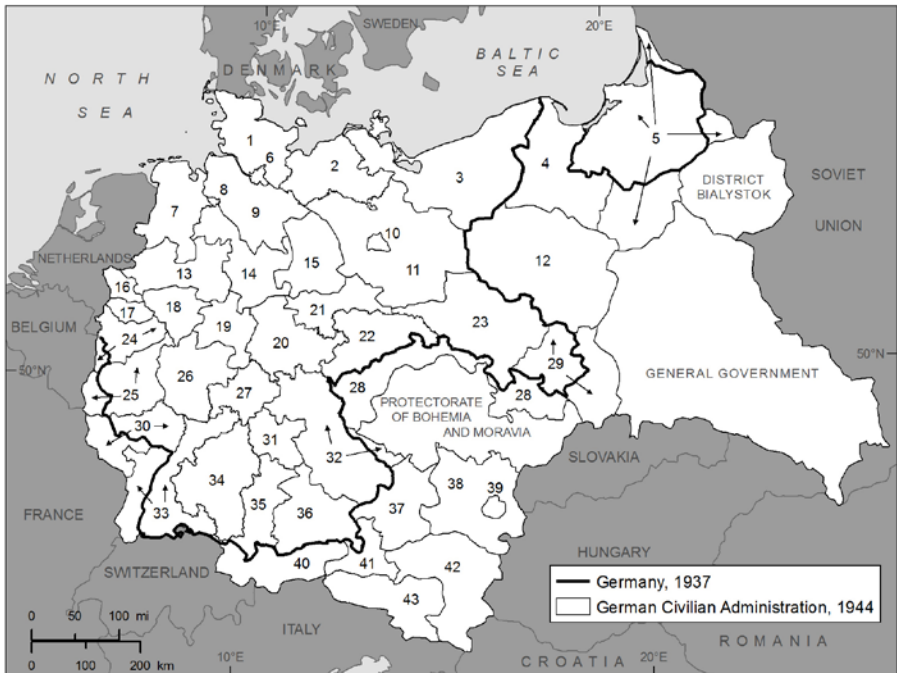
and redeemer of the German race, Western civilization, and to a certain extent all of humanity, at least as defined by Nazi ideology. All the Nazi movement required to fulfill its world historic mission was the absolute loyalty, obedience, and dedication of the German people to their Führer.

In practice, the Nazi movement better resembled that other Hobbesian beast, the Behemoth. One of the first outsiders to pierce through the totalitarian leviathan veneer was Franz Leopold Neumann, a Marxist labor lawyer of Jewish German parentage. Fleeing Germany in 1933, Neumann studied in the United Kingdom before moving to the United States in 1936. From this vantage point, Neumann published his 1942 analysis of the Nazi regime, titled *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*, in which he argued that the Nazi movement and its various constituencies operated like a mafia network with shifting constellations of power, authority, and violence, as ambitious gangster chiefs jostled with and against each other to curry Hitler's favor. Nazi governance was basically rule without law, at least as the concept of law is normally understood. The law was what Hitler said it was, but Hitler instinctively avoided making definitive judgments whenever possible. This led to a Nazi regime with a totalitarian facade encasing polycentric and lawless organizations. Hitler's lieutenants recognized this dynamic very rapidly as their fortunes and even survival depended on it.

From its original platform through its Weimar-era electioneering, the Nazi movement was consistent in its demands for a Greater German Empire, or *Reich*, that included all ethnic Germans, or the *Volk*, and sufficient territory to sustain that population. The idea that Germany lacked sufficient land stretched back to the nineteenth century, but the territorial losses following World War I radicalized and racialized the concept of *Lebensraum* and of the German people as a "nation without space."<sup>27</sup> It is unlikely that Hitler and his subordinates devoted much time to thinking through the structure of their coveted state, focusing instead on rousing public support and gaining power. In practice, two sets of Party offices developed reporting directly to Hitler. The first were the *Reichsleiters* (Reich leaders), which functioned like an executive committee with each leader carrying specific responsibilities, such as Himmler for security, Goebbels for propaganda, and others for treasury, personnel, and such. The movement's paramilitary (Schutzstaffel [SS], Sturmabteilung [SA], Hitler Youth) and auxiliary (German Labor Front, Reich Food Corporation, various professional associations) organizations were nominally independent of the official Party hierarchy. This allowed them to own property and maintain separate budgets, among other things. Himmler, in charge of the SS, and Ley, as head of the German Labor Front, would use these positions to launch expansive building programs.

The other set of Party leaders appointed by and reporting to Hitler directly were the *Gauleiters* (regional leaders), who served as regional Party bosses responsible for maintaining public support and implementing Party policy in their regions. The number of Gauleiters fluctuated over time due

to bureaucratic reorganizations but generally stayed in the low thirties before rising to forty-three to accommodate new territories annexed into Germany (figure 1.6). Most Gauleiters were longtime Party members from lower-middle-class backgrounds. Once in power, the Gauleiters formed an ambitious cadre responsible for implementing much of Party policy.<sup>28</sup> Hitler allowed his Gauleiters a certain degree of independence. As a result, Gauleiters basically ran their regions as personal fiefdoms. Their interest in building projects and architecture varied. Some were eager to build, likely viewing construction as a means toward prestige, power, and resources, while others seemed ambivalent. The Gauleiters typically had rocky relationships with the other Party bosses, who resented the Gauleiters' constant interference in governmental matters.



**Figure 1.6. Main Administrative Regions of the Nazi Party**

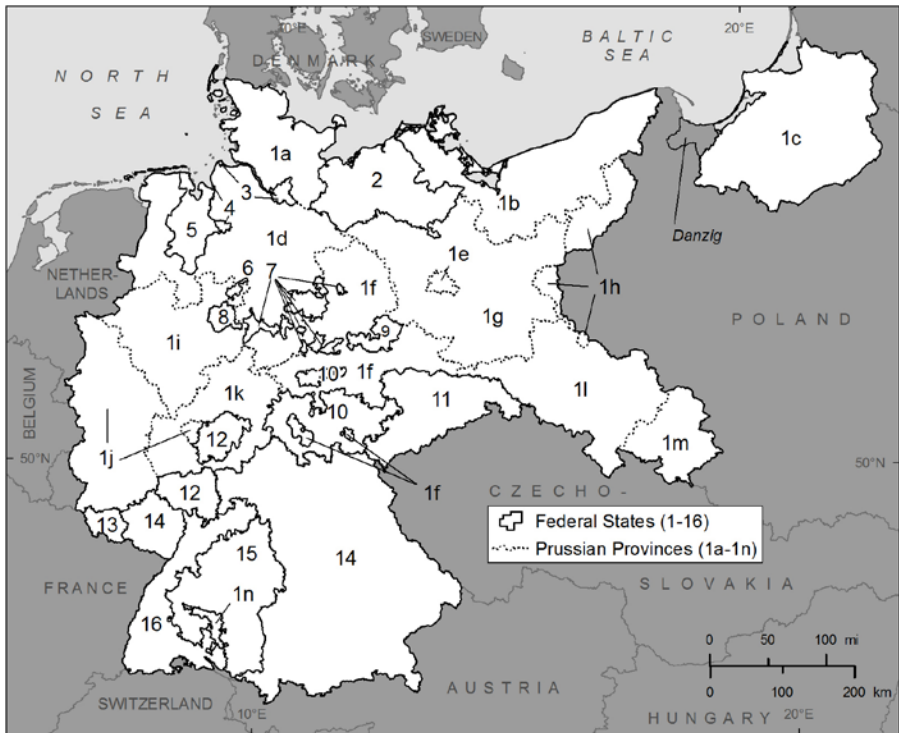
The Nazi Party divided the country administratively into districts run by regional Party bosses called Gauleiters reporting directly to Hitler. This map shows the Gau borders as they existed in 1937, plus their expansion to incorporate annexed territories and other areas under civilian administration by 1944.

Key: 1. Schleswig-Holstein; 2. Mecklenburg; 3. Pomerania; 4. Danzig-West Prussia; 5. East Prussia; 6. Hamburg; 7. Weser-Ems; 8. Bremen; 9. East Hannover; 10. Berlin; 11. Brandenburg; 12. Wartheland; 13. Westphalia North; 14. South Hannover-Braunschweig; 15. Magdeburg-Anhalt; 16. Essen; 17. Düsseldorf; 18. Westphalia South; 19. Kurhessen; 20. Thuringia; 21. Halle-Merseburg; 22. Saxony; 23. Lower Silesia; 24. Cologne-Aachen; 25. Moselland; 26. Hesse-Nassau; 27. Main Franconia; 28. Sudetenland; 29. Upper Silesia; 30. Westmark; 31. Franconia; 32. Bayreuth; 33. Baden; 34. Württemberg-Hohenzollern; 35. Swabia; 36. Munich-Upper Bavaria; 37. Upper Danube; 38. Lower Danube; 39. Vienna; 40. Tirol-Vorarlberg; 41. Salzburg; 42. Steiermark; 43. Kärnten.

Map by James Leonard.

Hitler was keenly aware of the power struggles and rivalries among his top lieutenants and remained watchful for potential challengers. Aside from this, Hitler showed little interest in bureaucratic details and relied on a relatively small circle of trusted, or maybe just semi-trusted, officials to administer the regime.<sup>29</sup> Hitler drew most of the leadership corps from the “old fighters,” an honorary title awarded to the Party’s earliest members. In general, Hitler awarded offices based on an individual’s loyalty, tenure within the movement, and ability to balance other members of his inner circle. Competence was usually a secondary consideration.

Hitler and his henchmen disregarded the Weimar Republic’s constitutional structure almost immediately after seizing power, but Hitler never pushed for complete structural reforms, choosing instead to leave the basic hierarchy of municipal, state, and federal governments intact, albeit with Nazis occupying those offices (figure 1.7). Some institutions, most



**Figure 1.7. Main Governmental Units in Nazi Germany**

Germany’s government operated through a federal system that devolved considerable power to state governments. Prussia was the largest state and was further divided into provinces.

Key: *Federal states:* 1. Prussia; 2. Mecklenburg-Schwerin; 3. Hamburg; 4. Bremen; 5. Oldenburg; 6. Schaumburg-Lippe; 7. Brunswick; 8. Lippe; 9. Anhalt; 10. Thuringia; 11. Saxony; 12. Hesse; 13. Saar; 14. Bavaria; 15. Württemberg; 16. Baden. *Prussian provinces:* 1a. Schleswig-Holstein; 1b. Pomerania; 1c. East Prussia; 1d. Hannover; 1e. Berlin; 1f. Magdeburg; 1g. Brandenburg; 1h. Posen–West Prussia; 1i. Westphalia; 1j. Rhineland; 1k. Hesse-Nassau; 1l. Lower Silesia; 1m. Upper Silesia; 1n. Hohenzollern.

Map by James Leonard.



notably the Reichstag parliament, lingered in ceremonial irrelevance. The traditional ministerial cabinet structure of Reich Ministers also remained, so Hitler ruled through parallel hierarchies of Party and government offices. In some cases, the lines between the two hierarchies blurred, if not vanished, as was the case for Goebbels, Hermann Göring, and Himmler. In other cases, bitter rivalries developed, such as that between the Party's Labor Front and the government's Ministry of Labor. Hitler's proclivity to appoint various types of special commissars and plenipotentiaries further complicated the matter. There were more than forty of these positions reporting directly to Hitler, as well as fifteen different commissars established under the Four Year Plan alone by 1942.<sup>30</sup>

The end result was a Nazi leadership cadre structured around parallel, competing, and overlapping hierarchies that, as we shall see in the chapters ahead, had a significant and at times deleterious impact on planning and carrying out the regime's myriad building programs and projects. Rivalries between and within hierarchies were often intense, yet the regime could not have achieved as much as it did without significant degrees of cooperation and collaboration. In practice, Hitler seemed largely content to let the Reich Ministers, Reichsleiters, Gauleiters, and other assorted lieutenants do as they wish so long as they advanced his goals, which were commonly defined in vague terms. The Party and/or state office of the individual certainly mattered, but far more important was Hitler's appraisal of the individual's loyalty, usefulness, and ability to compete within this ever-shifting hierarchy. As historian Ian Kershaw explained, rather than operating under specific sets of instructions, it was just important that Hitler's underlings were "working towards the Führer."<sup>31</sup>

### **THE MODERNIST CRUCIBLE, OR THE CULTURE WARS OF THE WEIMAR YEARS**

Germany was a relatively young country, not unified until 1871 under the leadership of the Prussian monarchy following a series of military victories over Denmark, Austria, and finally France. This new German Empire was a constitutional monarchy ruling over a federation of constituent states, each with their own lesser noble families and regional assemblies. Reflecting its origins in dynastic rule, the ruling class was generally conservative, both politically and culturally, yet increasingly assertive parliaments and a rising social democratic movement challenged the status quo. These political tensions unfolded within the context of extensive socioeconomic change characterized by rapid industrialization, urbanization, and technological innovation that engendered varied responses ranging from excitement to trepidation. In architecture, these conflicting impulses eventually manifested in two competing camps, although the dividing lines were often blurry.<sup>32</sup>

One side could be termed “avant-garde modernism” characterized by a general yearning for a new style that broke free of the cycles of revivalist architecture that dominated the nineteenth century. There was broad disagreement about what this new style might be except that persistent experimentation with new building materials, technologies, and forms offered the best means to discover it. These perspectives found expression in a variety of styles ranging from the highly decorative Art Nouveau (*Jugendstil*) movement to designs that mixed historicist designs with modern materials like steel, glass, and concrete. On the other side was what could be termed “conservative traditionalism” characterized by a general anxiety, if not hostility, toward cultural experimentation feared to undermine time-honored practices and values. These perspectives found expression through diverse activities and organizations commonly lumped together under the rubric of *Heimatschutz* (literally, homeland protection), which encompassed a diffuse set of ideologies and practices supporting the preservation and conservation of places and landscapes, whether urban, agrarian, or natural, deemed to possess intrinsic historical, cultural, or ecological value for the nation. In terms of new construction, traditionalists favored the adaptation of vernacular styles and materials, such as half-timbering and pitched roofs for residential construction, while simultaneously drawing inspiration from simplified neoclassicist forms for monumental public and private structures.

It was not initially clear that these two camps would become opponents since both endorsed the idea of developing a “new architecture.” Many of the main protagonists on both sides supported the foundation of the Deutsche Werkbund, an association of architects, designers, and artisans seeking to promote the application of recent innovations in German industrial design and mass production to architecture, interior design, and furnishings. The group sponsored a major exhibition in Cologne in 1914, including prominent buildings by Peter Behrens, Theodor Fischer, Walter Gropius, Bruno Paul, and Bruno Taut. Unlike the Art Nouveau movement, Werkbund projects featured generally rationalized, functional forms freed from most ornamentation.

It is easy to see Germany’s defeat in World War I as a watershed moment sweeping away the old order and resetting events along new trajectories since the war’s immediate aftermath saw the monarchy replaced by a republic and also occasioned the start of Hitler’s political career. Yet the Weimar Republic retained many of the basic federal structures of its predecessor, and the broader cultural and architectural trajectories persisted through the war. Indeed, the continuing hardships of daily life, the shock of defeat, and uncertainty over the future heightened tensions between modernists and traditionalists. In terms of architecture and urban planning, the modernist camp came to regard the war and its tragic consequences as demonstrating the failures of established practices and the necessity of new approaches. For

the traditionalist camp, the war highlighted the perilous state of national culture under threat from foreign, international, and communist influences.

The Weimar years became, as historian Rudy Koshar termed them, a “modernist crucible.”<sup>33</sup> Within this charged context, the Bauhaus academy, founded by Gropius and last directed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, became the intellectual heart of Germany’s modernist movement. A definitive split among professional architects had crystallized by the mid-1920s as the Bauhaus became decidedly associated with advancing avant-garde positions. These approaches would go by various names, most commonly *Neues Bauen*, meaning new building, or *Neue Sachlichkeit*, which roughly translates as new objectivity or practicality, or sometimes simply “international style.” The approaches were encapsulated by slogans like “form follows function” and “less is more,” but rather than purely functionalist approaches, proponents sought a more modernist, rationalized, industrialized aesthetic as an alternative to revivalist, traditional designs (figure 1.8).

To further their cause, a small group of architects, including Ernst May, Erich Mendelsohn, Martin Wagner, Gropius, and Mies van der Rohe, established an informal professional association known as The Ring in 1926



**Figure 1.8. Potsdamer Platz in Berlin**

Berlin’s Potsdamer Platz was the epitome of urban hustle and bustle during the Weimar years. Nazis and other conservatives derided contemporary cities for their excessive commercialism, typified by the large advertising visible in the upper left, and by modernist architecture, represented in the upper right by the sleek Columbia House completed in 1932.

Source: Waldemar Franz Hermann Titzenthaler.

dedicated to promoting Bauhaus styles through joint publications and exhibitions. The Weimar Republic's federal system afforded considerable opportunities to experiment with new styles, since regional and municipal governments had general autonomy concerning planning, zoning, and permitting issues. The Bauhaus soon became a prime target for conservative critics, who forced the school to move from Weimar to Dessau and then to Berlin, where the new Nazi government finally forced its closure in 1933.

The war and ensuing economic crises greatly curtailed construction and family formation. As a result, Germany faced an acute housing shortage as the economy recovered in the mid-1920s. Governments soon channeled significant funding into residential construction. Proponents of the *Neues Bauen* eagerly took advantage, arguing that their emphasis on functional designs, mass-produced components, and modern building techniques was most appropriate for housing the masses at reasonable costs. Often left unspoken was that mass-produced housing could be conflated with leftist political sympathies favoring communal, egalitarian living. Municipalities with left-leaning governments soon appointed planners who launched socialist-inspired initiatives, such as May's New Frankfurt program or Wagner's modernist housing estates in Berlin. By the mid-1920s, then, professional architects not only had split largely into two opposing camps but also their respective styles had become associated with clear ideological positions.

The Weißenhof Settlement, built in Stuttgart in 1927 featuring twenty-one starkly modernist, functionalist residences, was one of the most prominent Werkbund projects and indicative of the general shift within the association to favor modernism. The Weißenhof Settlement and other modernist projects were incredibly controversial and subjected to relentless criticism. Much of this criticism targeted modernist proclamations that their approaches were purely functional and ahistorical. This allowed critics to portray modernists as advocating a cold, mechanistic aesthetic that would sweep away Germany's traditions and values. Despite the attention directed toward Weißenhof and other modernist projects, they constituted a relatively small share of new construction, perhaps accounting for a maximum of 10 percent of new construction during the Weimar years.<sup>34</sup> Most public and private builders followed rather traditional styles with lower-density row housing or low-rise apartment buildings, reminiscent of earlier "garden city" neighborhoods such as Berlin-Staaken or Dresden-Hellerau.

A group of influential conservative architects, including Paul Bonatz, Paul Schultze-Naumburg, German Bestelmeyer, and Paul Schmitthenner, founded The Block group to counter the growing influence of modernist architecture. The group drew support from across Germany, but the so-called Stuttgart School, based at the technical university there, was its intellectual core.<sup>35</sup> In response to the Weißenhof Settlement, Schmitthenner organized a counter exhibition, the Kochenhof Settlement, featuring traditional designs with pitched saddle roofs and extensive use of wooden

materials. Opening in 1933, the exhibition of twenty-five houses was part of an effort by Schmitthenner and Block members to influence the direction of the new Nazi regime. The group managed to achieve some influence within Nazi housing and settlement policy, but this cohort of older architects was largely relegated to minor commissions until they acquiesced to the Hitler-Speer aesthetic. At that point, Speer and Hermann Giesler gladly invited their contributions to more prestigious projects, especially as the pool of available architects dwindled.

The Fighting League of German Architects and Engineers (Kampfbund deutscher Architekten und Ingenieure, or KdAI), a suborganization founded in 1931 within Rosenberg's Fighting League for German Culture (Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur, or KdK), provided another mechanism for conservative assaults on modernist architecture. Schultze-Naumburg, a prolific architect and writer, was the group's most vocal spokesperson and basically functioned as the Nazi Party's leading architectural expert until 1933.<sup>36</sup> He was originally a member of the Werkbund and supported its goals of fusing modern technologies with traditional craftsmanship, but his writings and speeches became increasingly radical and racist, culminating in his books *Art and Race* in 1928 and *Struggle for the Arts*, published in 1932 as part of the official National Socialist Library series. The KdAI was generally more interested in denouncing what it was against than explaining what it supported. In fact, the KdAI did not turn solidly against modernist architecture until 1930 when rationalized, mass-produced housing came to be identified with the collapse of industry during the Great Depression.

Perhaps the most systematic attempt to sketch out a traditionalist approach to architecture was Karl Willy Straub's *Architecture in the Third Reich*, published in late 1932 with an introduction by Schultze-Naumburg.<sup>37</sup> Straub contrasted the starkness of the Weißenhof Settlement and other modernist projects against the more homey and traditional works of Schmitthenner and medieval buildings. Tellingly, Straub focused on conventional structures like homes, churches, and offices. There was no suggestion of the sprawling neoclassicist ensembles that would become the centerpieces of Hitler's monumental building program. The culture wars raged throughout the Weimar years and contributed to a sense that Germany suffered from intensifying cultural stagnation and degeneration that paralleled the worsening political crisis. The situation only worsened as most governments ordered a halt to all public construction projects by fall 1931 due to financial constraints. Yet for all their differences, both modernists and traditionalists agreed that architecture and spatial planning offered vehicles to organize the masses into their idealized visions of a working-class proletariat or a national racial community and in a broader sense to replace the perceived chaos and individualism of contemporary life with a sense of order and egalitarianism.<sup>38</sup> In that sense, both camps saw themselves as agents of modernization, albeit on different trajectories.

## THE MASTER BUILDERS OF THE THIRD REICH

Adolf Hitler was the supreme authority within the Nazi movement. His rise from mediocre student, aspiring artist/architect, soldier, politician, putschist, prisoner, and back to politician must surely rate as one of the more improbable paths to power, not to mention that he was Austrian by birth and did not gain German citizenship until 1932.<sup>39</sup> Decisiveness was a major theme in Hitler's rhetoric; a trait he genuinely admired but rarely practiced. Instead, Hitler tended to issue broad and vague policy pronouncements with little interest in thinking through the details of implementation, potential complications, or unintended consequences. Hitler deliberately delegated broad authority to his lieutenants to devise their own strategies for realizing their Führer's goals. This mixture of ambiguity and delegation masked Hitler's lack of expertise and experience in policy or governance while also reflecting his belief that struggle, competition, and a survival-of-the-fittest mentality led to superior achievement. This approach to leadership also had the practical advantage of dividing power, setting his minions against each other, and thereby ensuring nobody else within the regime amassed enough power to threaten Hitler's supremacy.

Hitler considered himself to be a master builder in both the literal and figurative sense. This self-perception tied together his experience as artist, soldier, and politician. Hitler believed success in art, geopolitics, and politics stemmed from the same creative impulses characterized by courage, decisiveness, steadfastness, and genius. As Goebbels recorded in his diary in July 1926: "He [Hitler] speaks of the future architectural image of the country and is quite the master builder. Then he paints a picture of a new German constitution: And [he] is quite the artist of state!"<sup>40</sup> Gerdy Troost proclaimed Hitler to be "the great master builder of a new German homeland."<sup>41</sup> Hitler avoided involvement in the details of administration, but he directly involved himself in architecture, diplomatic and military strategy, and politics. This likely reflected Hitler's relative confidence in these areas based on his personal experiences as an aspiring architect, World War I veteran, and ultimately a successful campaigner. For Hitler, architecture was simultaneously a source and a measure of personal and national greatness. As Speer later reflected of his Führer, "but at bottom, I think, his sense of political mission and his passion for architecture were always inseparable."<sup>42</sup> For Hitler, one made the other possible, and vice versa.

Beyond these more calculated aspects, it was also clear that Hitler genuinely enjoyed architecture as a means of relaxation. After failing to gain admission to art school, Hitler recalled: "In a few days I myself knew that I should some day become an architect. . . . I served my love of architecture with ardent zeal. Along with music, it seemed to me the queen of the arts. . . . I was firmly convinced that I should some day make a name for myself as an architect."<sup>43</sup> Hitler continued painting to earn a living, but architecture

became his career goal. This goal probably motivated Hitler's move to Munich, where he hoped his drawing talents would help secure employment in an architectural firm renowned for building theaters and other large civic structures. From there, Hitler believed he could demonstrate his architectural genius and thereby become a professional architect even though he lacked the necessary educational credentials.<sup>44</sup> Hitler's private conversations frequently turned to architecture, sometimes very late into the night, and his travel itinerary invariably included visits to prominent buildings, most notably on his trips to Rome and Paris.

Hitler never issued a definitive pronouncement on the modernist versus traditionalist debate, although he did denounce "cubists, futurists, Dadaists, etc." during the cultural speech at the 1934 Party rallies.<sup>45</sup> Hitler came closest to setting a specific approach to architecture in his cultural speech at the 1935 Party rallies but even then limited discussion to general principles. Hitler was adamant that Germany's cultural greatness would find expression through great architecture. In this effort, commercial considerations would be inconsequential and idiot architects shunted aside. It was important, Hitler continued, to differentiate between monumental public buildings and private buildings by having public buildings assume a more representative and dignified character. These points do little to suggest how the buildings would actually look other than public buildings would be larger and more imposing. Although using slightly different phrasing, Hitler's remaining points reflected several basic modernist principles. Form should follow function with an emphasis on practicality and functionality. Further, architects should deploy a minimum of resources to achieve maximum effect. Architects were free to utilize modern materials and techniques to meet contemporary needs, while also drawing from forms associated with their racial forbearers.<sup>46</sup> Hitler never made clear what these principles meant in practice, except that an "authoritarian will" expressed through a heavily statist approach provided the mechanism for building his new Nazi Germany.<sup>47</sup>

Although avoiding specific details, Hitler did explain the general characteristics of what could be considered a "new German" architecture.<sup>48</sup> First, Hitler emphasized that architecture should be "heroic." Gigantism and scale were part of this, but speed, logistics, and other technological and organizational innovations could also be heroic. The idea of a "community" architecture that molded and glorified the nation was also a common theme in Hitler's discussions. This did not diminish the heroism of individual initiative, creativity, or genius, but discipline and sacrifice were necessary to ensure those talents were directed to benefit the national community. Another recurring theme was the concept of "purity." In Hitler's thinking, pure architectural forms manifested through simplicity, consistency, and an ordered disposition, ultimately embodying a racially healthy community. Hitler also stressed the importance of being "organic." This could be achieved through natural building materials but also through clarity,

honesty, and utility by reconciling form with function. Finally, the idea of “eternal” values was a prominent theme. Hitler envisioned a thousand-year Reich where the Party’s monumental buildings and spaces testified to his personal greatness and inspired countless successors. Returning to Hitler’s rally speech: “The commandment of our beauty shall always be: Health. Translated to architecture: clarity, functionality and—developing from both—again beauty.”<sup>49</sup> Hitler did not go much beyond these general themes in his public comments and certainly not into the details of specific dimensions, ratios, proportions, or guidelines. Instead, Hitler assumed that, under his leadership, the true creative genius of the German race would inevitably manifest in great art and architecture that reconciled his cultural ideas with his political imperatives.

Hitler repeatedly referenced the wonders of ancient Rome and Greece, in addition to Germany’s medieval cathedrals, as the clearest examples of community buildings and spaces embodying heroism and timelessness. As he declared during his culture speech at the 1935 Party rallies:

It is impossible to place the monumental architecture of the State or the Movement on a scale corresponding to that of one or two centuries ago, while the products of bourgeois creation in the sphere of private or even purely capitalistic architecture have expanded conversely and increased many times over. What lent the cities of antiquity and the Middle Ages their characteristic and hence admirable and endearing features was not the size of the private bourgeois structures but the manifestations of community life towering above them.<sup>50</sup>

Hitler believed contemporary architecture and planning failed on these counts with dire implications for the German people. He believed that rescuing the nation from this peril was both a political and architectural imperative and returned to these themes speaking at the Party’s second architectural exhibition in Munich in 1938:

Let us never forget: we are not building for our time, we are building for the future! That is why the structures must be grand, solid, and durable, and thereby they will become beautiful and worthy. . . . But you will now understand that we, as a true Volk movement, must keep the needs of our Volk in sight as we carry out our building projects. Hence we must build halls into which 150,000 or even 200,000 persons will actually fit. That means: we must build them as big as the technical possibilities of our day permit, and we must build for eternity! . . . Such an epoch has not only the right to leave its mark upon eternity in the form of great monuments, it has a duty to do so!<sup>51</sup>

Hitler’s demands for monumental structures and spaces built from timeless materials but at breakneck speeds led to compromises, producing buildings that incorporated modern materials and technologies—like steel skeletons, reinforced concrete, and mass-produced bricks—but were clad in veneers of “timeless” marble and granite.



Hitler undoubtedly considered himself to be his best architect. He prepared preliminary sketches for several Party buildings, most notably for the Great Hall and Triumphal Arch planned for Berlin. Hitler had some talent in drawing, painting, and design, but his self-regard surpassed his abilities. Given these limitations, as well as other demands on his time, Hitler relied on a cadre of architects, engineers, planners, designers, and professors to implement his ambitious building programs. Despite the apparent delegation of the workload to those subordinates, Hitler intervened incessantly in the planning and execution of the regime's showpiece projects (figure 1.9). Hitler routinely consulted with his favored architects, occasionally providing handwritten comments or corrections on their blueprints. Other Party officials were keenly aware of their leader's architectural interests and so would invariably use any meeting with Hitler to tout building projects in their jurisdictions.

Hitler exhibited a special fondness for plaster models that allowed him to evaluate the spatial layout, proportions, orientation, and scale of the regime's grander commissions. Hitler's top architects readily obliged their Führer's fondness. In fact, plaster models and other types of visualizations were common surrogates for the real buildings, since so few of the showcase projects were completed. The 1939 propaganda film *The Word in Stone*, for example, showed the finished Nazi buildings around Munich's Königsplatz and New Reich Chancellery in Berlin but relied on models, which were then superimposed over aerial photography, to illustrate other prominent projects.<sup>52</sup> Another example comes from a 1937 picture book. Edited by Hitler's personal photographer, the book showcased the "everyday" and "domestic" side of Hitler. Tellingly, of its one hundred photographs, seventeen related to architecture in some fashion, including views of Hitler's personal compound near Obersalzberg and various images of Hitler attending to architectural matters.<sup>53</sup> Hitler spent hours scrutinizing the models down to the smallest detail, providing yet another opportunity to leave his personal imprint. Hitler remained intimately involved with the regime's high-profile building programs almost until the regime's collapse, as shown on the cover.

As previously noted, the building and planning professions were riven by bitter conflict between modernists and traditionalists during the Weimar years. The dismal economic climate also proved challenging, especially for young professionals struggling to establish themselves, and further heightened the stakes of the architectural debates. Private commissions were in short supply, so many professionals looked to government contracts and positions and hoped the Nazi seizure of power heralded better times. Even proponents of modernist styles seemed uncertain of the new regime and possibilities for accommodation with it. Additionally, a number of architects and planners hoped the Nazi regime would break through the chaos and gridlock of the Weimar years and, in the process, open opportunities to reform Germany's cities, a goal broadly shared among modernists and traditionalists.



**Figure 1.9. Hitler Sketching Ideas for the Party Rally Grounds with Liebel and Speer**

This photo appeared in a propaganda picture book intended to personalize Hitler by highlighting his leadership in a variety of everyday contexts. A prominent theme was to depict Hitler taking an active role in designing many of the regime's showpiece building projects. From the left, Hitler sketches ideas for the Party rallies while Nuremberg mayor Willy Liebel and Albert Speer watch attentively.

*Source: Hoffmann, Hitler abseits von Alltag, 66.*

Hitler favored relatively young and unknown architects. Fritz Todt and Speer, incidentally the oldest and youngest builders (discussed later in the chapter), turned forty-eight and thirty-four years old, respectively, just as war broke out in 1939; Franz Xaver Dorsch, Giesler, and Hans Kammler were in their early forties for most of the war years. In a rather eerie coincidence, the architectural journal *Die Form*, tellingly a publication closely associated with the Werkbund, carried a short article in late 1933 featuring young architects, including designs on successive pages by Wolters, Josef Umlauf, and Speer.<sup>54</sup> Hitler likely assumed that younger architects were more pliable. Hitler showed little interest in the majority of the Party's projects or the men—and they were almost exclusively men—who would design and build them.<sup>55</sup> This disinterest was fitting since many of the regime's builders, like many of their contemporaries abroad, regarded themselves as technocratic professionals simply applying their expertise to solve problems, manage systems, and fulfill commissions.<sup>56</sup> Despite this, the political implications of their work were obvious. As Wolters proclaimed in his tome on the profession:

It is today for us self-evident that the master builder cannot stand aside from political events. To the contrary, it is the essential requirement for the profession that the architect must stand in the middle of the politics, that means on that ground that gives him energy and strength and brings him to productive activity. Only this way can the architect give his creations the stamp of his time, can he invent things of truth and beauty, creativity and greatness. He must be faithful, convinced of the political necessity, and ready to give his all for the ideology of his time and his people. As an individual, he must withdraw; he must count as the greatest success when it is said of his creations: this building is a work of art of the age of Adolf Hitler.<sup>57</sup>

Yet Hitler demonstrated some level of respect for at least four prominent architects who, along with Hitler, could justifiably be called the master builders of the Third Reich.

Paul Ludwig Troost was Hitler's first architect.<sup>58</sup> After completing his studies in Darmstadt, Troost established a successful private practice in Munich, but he was hardly a nationally prominent figure and avoided the heated debates of the Weimar period (figure 1.10). Troost designed a handful of unremarkable residences and other assorted structures but achieved modest acclaim for his work designing custom furniture and high-end interior designs, especially on ocean liners. His style, which reflected Biedermeier neoclassicism combined with modernist art deco and Arts and Crafts influences, was rather fashionable among wealthy conservative patrons. Hitler had admired Troost's furniture designs since the mid-1920s, but they did not meet until 1930. By all accounts, Hitler held Troost in high esteem and a genuine friendship ensued. Hitler soon commissioned Troost to redecorate the Party's national headquarters in Munich, the so-called Brown House.



**Figure 1.10. Hitler Reviewing Architectural Plans with Troost**

Hitler worked closely with Paul Ludwig Troost on some of the regime's first monumental building projects, including the Königsplatz and House of German Art in Munich. Here, Hitler and Troost, pictured on the left, review architectural plans, most likely in Troost's studio. The regime's propaganda machine regularly published images like this to emphasize Hitler's direct involvement in building projects across Germany.

*Source:* Hoffmann, *Hitler wie ihn keiner kennt*, 86.

Hitler was so pleased with the work that he rewarded Troost with several of the Nazi regime's first commissions. Troost died in 1934 at the age of fifty-five, but his widow Gerdy and his chief deputy Leonhard Gall continued his architectural studio. In his collaborations with Hitler during these early years, Troost was likely the single most important individual in shaping the main characteristics of the Nazi regime's state architecture. It is telling that Hitler never claimed to have invented the regime's official architecture, in contrast to Party propaganda that invariably portrayed Hitler as the ultimate inspiration for the regime's high-profile projects after Troost.

Albert Speer succeeded Troost as Hitler's top architect (figure 1.11). Speer studied in Karlsruhe and Munich before transferring to the Technical University in Berlin in 1925. Tellingly, Speer voluntarily transferred from Munich—a stronghold of traditionalist architecture—to Berlin—a hotbed of modernist architecture—with the original intention of studying under Hans Poelzig, a leading proponent of modernist architecture and member of The Ring. Poelzig declined Speer's request, but his colleague Heinrich Tessenow agreed to train Speer. Also a Ring member, Tessenow was noted for his



**Figure 1.11. Hitler and Speer Collaborating on Architectural Plans**

Hitler and Albert Speer collaborated on many of the Nazi regime's most prominent building projects, including the redesign of Berlin and the Party rally grounds in Nuremberg. Speer rose quickly from an unknown and struggling architect to become the regime's top builder and armaments minister.

*Source: Wolters, Albert Speer, 2.*

reform-orientated residential designs and minimalist buildings, which very much reflected Weimar-era modernism. Speer genuinely admired Tessenow, and it is most likely that Speer's personal inclinations leaned heavily toward his teacher's modernist principles. After graduation, Speer worked as Tessenow's assistant but struggled to establish an independent career.

Speer's decision to join the Party in 1931 led to a couple minor commissions, including renovating the Party's regional headquarters in Berlin in 1932. The project was modest but proved very consequential. Goebbels was Berlin's Gauleiter, and after the Nazi seizure of power the following year, he selected Speer to refurbish the new propaganda ministry building, apparently based on the earlier renovation. Speer's connections with Goebbels led to a chance to design decorations for the Party's May Day rally in Berlin in 1933, where Speer deftly arranged large banners behind the speaker's tribune to dramatic effect. By July, Speer traveled to Nuremberg to consult on staging for the upcoming Party rallies, as well as the first Reich Harvest Festival at Bückeberg, and by year's end was assisting Troost's renovations of Hitler's Chancellery apartment. These relatively modest projects established Speer as a capable manager with a talent for catchy stagecraft but not necessarily architecture. Perhaps most important, Speer found himself in Hitler's general proximity just as the new regime was embarking on a range of building programs. Just months later, Troost's death catapulted Speer to head of the Party's construction office.

Speer would go on to design some of the regime's most prominent buildings and spaces. Hitler assigned Speer general responsibility for the Nuremberg rally grounds and the transformation of Berlin as the new General Building Inspector for the Reich Capital in January 1937. In July, Speer asked the Reich Finance Ministry to grant him *de facto* authority over the Reich Building Directorate, the central supervisory agency for Reich government construction.<sup>59</sup> From this point, Speer basically gained a ministerial-level position reporting to Hitler directly. The position was also outside the regular government and Party hierarchies, allowing Speer considerable autonomy. Speer's inspectorate had an initial annual budget of 60 million Reichsmarks drawn from the Reich government and grew to employ around 1,400 people by 1942. Through this position, Speer provided overall coordination and commissioned individual buildings. Speer retained the most prestigious projects for his own private architectural office. Combining his new governmental salary with his growing list of commissions, one recent estimate concludes that Speer may have collected in excess of 10 million Reichsmarks by 1945.<sup>60</sup> Speer also selected several of his friends, many with modernist backgrounds, to serve as his deputies and managers, as well as rewarding them with lucrative commissions. Speer's reputation for speed and efficiency eventually led Hitler to appoint him minister of armaments and munitions after Todt's death. The transition seemed abrupt, but Speer's inspectorate began transitioning to military-industrial construction in 1940,

especially air raid shelters, transportation infrastructure, and eventually planning for postwar reconstruction.

Hermann Giesler emerged as Speer's main architectural rival and gradually accumulated a portfolio of commissions that rivaled Speer (figure 1.12). Giesler studied architecture in Munich and, like Speer, struggled to establish a career during the Depression. He joined the Party in 1931 but was not a prominent member. In 1933, Giesler became a minor building official in Bavaria but soon turned this position into his first major commission, the Order Castle Sonthofen, which probably brought him to Hitler's attention. Giesler eventually gained responsibility for the planned spatial redesign of Augsburg, Linz, Munich, and Weimar, as well as the Party's High Academy at Chiemsee. By 1938, the rivalry between Giesler and Speer was well established and probably welcomed by Hitler. Like Speer, Giesler headed a design bureau that operated outside the regular Party and government bureaucracies, but unlike Speer, Giesler never achieved a ministerial position.

Fritz Todt was the regime's top engineer, specializing in civil engineering and transportation construction. Todt studied in Karlsruhe and Munich before serving as an army and air force officer in World War I. He completed his studies after the war and eventually earned a doctorate in 1931. Todt joined the Party in 1922 and spent most of the Weimar years working as the technical director for a renowned, Munich-based road and bridge construction company. Hitler entrusted Todt with the high-profile appointment in July 1933 of inspector general of German roadways to supervise the construction of the new Autobahn motorways. Todt assumed control of the National Socialist League of German Technology and the Office of Technology of the NSDAP, effectively making him the regime's top technology official. In 1938, Todt established the Organization Todt (OT) to extend his authority over the Reich Labor Service and private construction firms during the construction of the West Wall fortification system. At the end of 1938, Hitler rewarded Todt by approving him for the new position of plenipotentiary for the regulation of the construction industry. Todt and the OT were soon coordinating the construction of military installations and fortifications across Europe, most notably the Atlantic Wall and Hitler's various field headquarters, as well as the transportation infrastructures necessary to support Germany's far-flung military operations. Hitler rewarded Todt's organizational talents by appointing him to the posts of general inspector for special products of the Four Year Plan, general inspector for water and energy, and minister of armaments and munitions. Most of these positions shifted to Speer after Todt's death in 1942.

Countless other architects, engineers, planners, designers, and professors also counted among Hitler's builders, and their names will turn up throughout this book. It is easy to overlook their contributions, but as Scott noted, these types of professions invariably assumed key roles in state-sponsored social engineering programs as the "order and harmony that once seemed



**Figure 1.12. Giesler Reviewing Some Blueprints**

Pictured here overlooking blueprints in 1938, Hermann Giesler was one of Hitler's top architects and a rival of Speer. Hitler eventually charged Giesler to oversee the redesign of Augsburg, Linz, Munich, and Weimar.

*Source:* German Federal Archives.



the function of a unitary God had been replaced by a similar faith in the idea of progress vouchsafed by scientists, engineers, and planners."<sup>61</sup> Those experts willing to accommodate the regime had much to gain since "everywhere in Germany one sees signs of the great building revival," noted historian Stephen H. Roberts in 1938, so much so that "the Third Reich is indeed the paradise of the engineer and architect."<sup>62</sup> Two of the more prominent but generally forgotten experts were Franz Xaver Dorsch and Hans Kammler, civil engineers in the OT and SS, respectively. In both cases, it was access to forced labor, either through civilian conscripts or concentration camp inmates, that allowed Dorsch and Kammler to gain control of Hitler's building programs during the final year of the Third Reich.

### FINANCING THE BUILDING PROGRAMS

The costs of Hitler's building programs are difficult, perhaps impossible, to calculate for several reasons, but the primary cause was Hitler's deep disdain of financial considerations. Hitler thought of his projects on a millennial timeframe, so annual budgets were of little consequence. Hitler and Speer did spend some time working through a financial strategy for redesigning Berlin. Speer would use his inspectorate's annual budget to cover basic planning and commissions for architects. The city of Berlin would contribute around 70 million Reichsmarks annually to purchase all required property, demolish unwanted buildings, and provide infrastructure and public services. The various ministries, businesses, and other organizations would cover the actual construction costs—in other words, each would pay for their own representative headquarters in Berlin using their existing government appropriations or corporate revenues.<sup>63</sup> This left only the main showcase monuments, which Hitler expected to fund through contributions from the people. This strategy would be replicated at other locations, eliminating the need for detailed cost estimates.

Once construction was ready to proceed, Hitler and his lieutenants routinely concealed or underreported costs. Hitler scoffed at Speer's estimate that the German Stadium in Nuremberg would cost upward of 250 million Reichsmarks. "When the Finance Minister asks what it will cost, don't give him any answer," instructed Hitler, "Say that nobody has any experience with building projects of such size."<sup>64</sup> To the extent Hitler was concerned with costs, he managed to convince himself that he knew better than the experts. As Hitler explained: "If the Finance Minister could realize what a source of income to the state my buildings will be in fifty years! . . . The whole world will come to Berlin to see our buildings. All we need to do is tell the Americans how much the Great Hall cost. Maybe we'll exaggerate a bit and say a billion and a half instead of a billion. Then they'll be wild to see the most expensive building in the world."<sup>65</sup>

The regime did lay out general timetables, but generally everything was to be done as fast as possible. Hitler ordered the regime's plan for Berlin completed by 1950, for example. The imperative for speed was a recurring theme in Hitler's actions, as it seemed to demonstrate decisiveness, heroism, and genius. "Do we have to build so much just now?" Hitler asked rhetorically before answering, "Yes, we do! We must build more now than ever before, because before us, they built either nothing or pitiful miserable structures."<sup>66</sup> The emphasis on speed may have also stemmed from Hitler's concerns that his health was deteriorating, so he feared he had limited time to see his "great" works accomplished. These deadlines were unachievable, even if Germany had completed its conquest of Europe in 1941 or if Germany had not launched the war at all. Nonetheless, Hitler's underlings still tried to meet their Führer's expectations.

As in most other aspects of the regime's endeavors, the financing of Hitler's building programs relied on varying degrees of opportunism, coercion, and blatant theft. Regional and municipal governments offered a collective source of revenue. Both the Party and state were reluctant or limited in their ability to finance the massive building programs envisioned by Hitler and his lieutenants, so costs shifted to regional and local governments whenever possible. Many local governments were initially supportive of new government building projects in their jurisdictions but soon chafed as they were increasingly excluded from the planning process but still expected to contribute considerable funds. Most lower-level governments were in no position to meet these new burdens as they were already straining under the demands of military-industrial expansion.

Germany's top entrepreneurs and financiers had amassed huge fortunes through industrialization, although they certainly faced challenges during the Great Depression. Most industrialists, especially those involved in construction, transportation, civil engineering, or any war-related production, were generally willing to follow the regime's lead. They stood to benefit both from any general economic recovery and specifically from profits gained through construction and rearmament. Bankers and investors could also profit by financing these projects. Like many public and private sectors, German big business was willing, after some initial hesitation, to go along with Hitler until it was too late.

Although not architects, Göring, Himmler, and Ley served as *de facto* master builders of the Third Reich. Each evolved into a major financial force within Hitler's Reich through a mix of state-party appropriations, membership dues, exploitation of forced labor, seized assets, and "donations" strong-armed from industry, banks, and wealthy individuals. In many ways, each presided over what were effectively quasi-public-private "partnerships" financed through an amalgam of regular appropriations, racketeering, extortion, and theft. The regime's ambitious building programs would not have been possible without these coercive arrangements.

The German people paid for Hitler's regime and its building programs, whether they supported the regime or not. State expenditures increased significantly, funded either through tax increases or deficit spending, and the overall tax burden became increasingly regressive. The burden was by no means shared equally. Jews in particular faced highly discriminatory taxes and loss of property. Increased conscription for labor and military service offered another mechanism to harness the productive power of the people, as did forced labor through concentration camps. The regime also restricted investment for consumer goods and housing, except for some priority programs. This effectively forced Germans to save more by limiting availability of consumer goods. Once deposited in banks, these savings could be invested in regime objectives. The regime also implemented increasingly strict wage and price controls, which simultaneously limited the earning power of German workers and reduced building costs.

Finally, the occupied peoples paid for Hitler's programs. Estimates vary but various forms of confiscation, theft, and forced labor from the conquered territories financed a significant portion of Germany's wartime economy. It is unlikely that Hitler's war machine could have lasted as long as it did without the incalculable booty extracted from these territories. Ultimately, these inflows could only provide a temporary reprieve from the inefficiencies and contradictions inherent in Nazi economic policy. These burdens were highly unequal with the peoples of the occupied eastern territories bearing a much greater share in terms of lost wealth, plundered resources, slavery, and death.

### THE "COERCED COORDINATION" OF THE BUILDING PROFESSIONS

On January 30, 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg—the Weimar Republic's second and last president—appointed Hitler to the office of Reich Chancellor. Aided by the Reichstag fire in February, Hindenburg's subsequent declaration of a state of emergency, and the Nazi Party's sweeping victory in the March parliamentary elections, Hitler and his movement ruthlessly focused their energies on the process of *Gleichschaltung*. The term *Gleichschaltung* denoted a process of "coerced coordination" whereby the various federal, provincial, and local governments, civic organizations, trade unions, churches, social clubs, and nearly every other imaginable organization—even the arts—were incorporated into and directed by the Nazi regime. *Gleichschaltung* entailed a flurry of new laws, organizations, and managerial positions that systematically dismantled the Weimar Republic's democratic system and established Hitler as Germany's absolute dictator by the end of 1934. In short, *Gleichschaltung* involved the practical

steps by which the Nazi Party endeavored to establish a totalitarian grip over Germany and build a new Nazi state.

Hitler and his top lieutenants focused their immediate attention on coordinating the police and other government agencies for obvious reasons. In April 1933, Hitler approved the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, which excluded non-Aryans from government jobs, including those employed in building and planning agencies, and the Law against the Overcrowding of Colleges and Universities, which applied those same exclusions throughout higher education.<sup>67</sup> In December 1933, the regime officially reorganized the German Congress of Cities (*Deutsche Städtetag*), an umbrella organization of municipal, county, and related governments, into the Party apparatus as the German Congress of Communities (*Deutsche Gemeindetag*) headed by Munich mayor Karl Fiehler.<sup>68</sup> Cumulatively, these moves placed Germany's various building and planning offices under direct regime control.

The Nazis also set about tackling the country's acute economic problems, the most pressing of which was reducing unemployment, which cut across all social classes and affected not only industrial workers but also white-collar workers and professionals. The problem was especially severe among the skilled and unskilled building professions, where unemployment rates among the later groups reached up to 90 percent in some cities.<sup>69</sup> Faced with millions idled, the Nazis, who up until that time avoided committing to a clear economic program, turned to public deficit spending focused on massive public works as the quickest means of creating jobs and boosting the economy. For the Nazis, reducing unemployment quickly became a political and ideological imperative—having come to power on a slogan of “bread and work”—as well as an economic necessity.<sup>70</sup>

Established in June 1933, the Reinhardt Program and similar government initiatives that followed used a combination of public spending, loans, vouchers, and tax incentives to stimulate a rapid expansion of the construction industry. From the point of view of work creation, the regime's infrastructure investment was a critical success. The first Reinhardt Program schemes reportedly put nearly one million unemployed back to work, and the October extension of the program may have added yet another 750,000 to the ranks of the gainfully employed. In a 1938 speech celebrating progress on his new Reich Chancellery, Hitler recounted how he, unlike his predecessors, identified the construction sector as a “key industry” for reviving the economy. “I recognized it anyway and I therefore began to build immediately,” Hitler continued. This broad-based building program encompassed two distinct paths, “first, in the direction of pure utility, in the direction of the satisfaction of practical needs such as residential building, road building, canal construction, and so on. Second, in the direction of beauty, so also grand and monumental works.”<sup>71</sup> Todt reported

that Germany's construction sector accounted for 3.2 billion Reichsmarks in 1932 but more than tripled to more than 10 billion Reichsmarks in 1938.<sup>72</sup>

By 1934, work creation programs, with the help of early rearmament orders, had effectively reduced German unemployment to half of what it had been before the Nazis seized power, handing the Nazis an immense propaganda victory. Uplifting newsreel footage featured large numbers of thankful workers cheerfully engaged in the repair, maintenance, and construction of the nation's most vital infrastructure, along with widespread fanfare across other media outlets. The results were sufficient enough that Hitler confidently touted them and promised an extraordinarily broad-based expansion in his economics speech during the 1934 Party rallies:

This year which lies behind us has accomplished the tremendous preliminary work for projects which will only become visibly evident to the nation in the course of the next few years. The gigantic roadbuilding plans could not be pulled out of a hat from one day to the next, but required a certain amount of time alone for their conception and design. But the German Volk will see what preliminary work has been accomplished during these twelve months in what will be carried out in the years to come. In addition to the national network of roads, tremendous new national railway stations have been completed in the conceptual and design stages. Revolutionary construction programs are being drawn up for a whole series of major German cities, the magnitude of which will only be able to be fully and finally appreciated after decades have passed. Some industries have been broken up, new industries have been founded; the settlement policy was consolidated in order to be more effective in broad points of view.<sup>73</sup>

Hitler vastly overstated the case that coherent, comprehensive plans existed at this point, but his Party bosses were busy envisioning a broad spatial reorganization of how Germans lived, worked, learned, relaxed, and participated in civil society.

The coerced coordination of cultural policy was slower, perhaps because there were multiple viable contenders for control: Rosenberg and Ley. Rosenberg, who wielded early influence as a Party ideologue, seemed to have the initial advantage. He headed the KdK, which seemed a logical choice to serve as the central coordinating agency. Its suborganization, the KdAI, provided a vehicle to promulgate a new official style, but like other Party organizations, it lacked regulatory authority or compulsory membership. Founded in 1903, the Association of German Architects (Bund Deutscher Architekten, or BDA) was the main professional organization representing self-employed architects. The BDA effectively coordinated itself by naming Eugen Hönig, a prominent figure among conservative circles in Munich and KdK member, as president in March 1933. At the association's fall conference, Hönig spoke of the need to bring the organization into alignment with the KdAI; Rosenberg followed as the featured speaker.<sup>74</sup> Events seemed

to be moving in Rosenberg's favor, but he was soon outmaneuvered. The KdK and its suborganizations were dissolved in 1934, reorganized as the National Socialist Cultural Community, and eventually transferred to the Strength through Joy department under Ley's authority. Rosenberg retained some lingering influence over Party ideology but had little substantive impact on the regime's building programs. The path seemed open for Ley to consolidate control over architects and other skilled professions just as he had subsumed labor unions and manual laborers into the German Labor Front (Deutsche Arbeitsfront, or DAF). In a rather rare instance of decisiveness, Hitler ultimately decided in favor of Goebbels.

Through his newly established Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Goebbels quickly assumed control over state iconography and pageantry. The ministry seemed revolutionary but, in fact, continued many practices established by its feeble predecessor, the office of the Reich Culture Warden, which was officially abolished but in practice most of its staff simply transferred to work for Goebbels.<sup>75</sup> In September 1933, Hitler issued a law creating the Reich Cultural Chamber (Reichskulturkammer, or RKK) as the coordinating organization for professionals in the media, literature, theater, music, and visual arts. Like the Party's other subsidiary and auxiliary organizations, the RKK was partially a crass instrument of control—a November 1933 regulation made membership compulsory to work in those fields—and partially an attempt to create a populist organization that would instill the idea of national community into specific segments of society. The Reich Chamber of the Fine Arts subsection of the RKK, initially led by Hönig, soon absorbed the BDA and other professional organizations, effectively bringing most building professions, including architects, landscape architects, and sculptors, in addition to artists, curators, and art dealers, under the regime's regulatory apparatus.<sup>76</sup> Hitler charged Goebbels in his capacity as propaganda minister with responsibility for these newly coordinated professions in the RKK. Goebbels showed relatively little interest in the visual arts, at least compared to his involvement in the press, radio, film, and theater. Goebbels was openly critical of the conservatism of Rosenberg, Schultze-Naumburg, and the other traditionalists, promising instead freedom for creativity and experimentation to develop a new Nazi style. Indeed, several key tenets of modernism ran through much of the Nazi building program.

Goebbels did not explain what a new official style might look like but remained rather cool toward traditional bourgeois tastes, finding more populist plays, books, and films better aligned with the regime's image as a mass movement. Perhaps Goebbels's most notable contribution was a May 1934 decree that all prominent building projects dedicate a certain percentage of their funding to the visual arts and handicrafts. Goebbels justified such expenditures—despite scarce resources—because “architecture is a symbol

of political life” and as a jobs program for sculptors, painters, and other artisans.<sup>77</sup> Goebbels rejected mass-produced items but otherwise left open what designers should include. In practice, the decree resulted in probably the most ubiquitous element of Nazi architecture—namely, the incorporation of assorted eagle, swastika, and oak wreath decorations (figure 1.13). Goebbels never officially banned proponents of modernism from practicing their professions or threatened them with imprisonment, resulting in some initial uncertainty concerning the status of modernist architecture.<sup>78</sup>

Despite this apparent tolerance, the result was largely the same as high-profile modernist architects, especially those with Jewish or leftist backgrounds, were harassed, purged from government positions, and denied public commissions. Most emigrated in short order. Less-visible modernists generally had the choice of reconciling themselves to the new regime or leaving the profession. Even those architects lacking objectionable backgrounds found their careers transformed as freelance work largely disappeared as the profession was reconceptualized. Instead of being just another category of workers under Ley or part of a band of cultural warriors under Rosenberg, Hitler and Goebbels envisioned architects and planners as essentially “state-artists.”<sup>79</sup> The situation was slightly different for engineers. Instead of falling under Goebbels, Todt carved out a separate professional organization, the National Socialist League of German Technology, including those specializing in civil engineering and public works.<sup>80</sup>

Finally, the building trades needed “coordination.” Germany had a robust union movement, which provided a strong base of support for socialist and communist parties. As a result, the regime’s coordination of trade unions was more forceful and deliberate than the rest of the construction sector. In May 1933, Hitler ordered Ley to establish the German Labor Front to coordinate and largely replace labor unions. The DAF also “inherited” considerable resources through the confiscation of union bank accounts, other assets, and most important, the collection of mandatory dues. This put Ley in the rather advantageous position of having an independent revenue stream. The DAF also became the *de facto* trustee for several union-affiliated building associations. Additionally, the DAF was an organization merely affiliated with the Nazi Party—to maintain the fiction of independent worker representation. So technically, the DAF was outside Party and state hierarchies, affording it considerable autonomy. The DAF grew relentlessly, eventually reaching around twenty-five million members by 1942, reflecting its expanding purview into cultural, educational, leisure, and housing policy.<sup>81</sup>

The regime also promulgated a series of laws and regulations intended to centralize and streamline construction. The Economics Group of the Construction Industry, basically a cartel of major companies, was established in June 1934. In March 1935, Hitler issued a law granting authorities the power of eminent domain to achieve the “purposeful structuring of German



**Figure 1.13. An Eagle, Wreath, and Swastika Motif at Luitpold Arena in Nuremberg**

An eagle clutching a wreath of oak leaves surrounding a swastika was a common decorative motif of Nazi architecture that combined traditional symbols of German nationalism with Nazi iconography. This bronze eagle, designed by Kurt Schmid-Ehmen, whom Hitler also commissioned to create statuary for the Field Generals Hall, the Königsplatz office buildings, and the German Pavilion at the International Exhibition in Paris, among other projects, was part of a matching pair that adorned the ends of the grandstands of the Luitpold Arena.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:25.



space.”<sup>82</sup> A later decree established a Reich Office for Regional Planning with broad supervisory power regarding public land use, including housing, defense, and transportation. Reporting directly to Hitler, the office seemed to offer a framework for directing and centralizing the myriad building programs emerging across Germany, yet it was frequently ignored as Hitler’s ambitious lieutenants carved out their own spheres of influence. Indeed, municipal and provincial authorities began issuing a flurry of building ordinances that melded their personal preferences with their understandings of Party policy.<sup>83</sup> Officials in places renowned for their historical buildings or natural beauty seemed especially inclined to issue sweeping ordinances. In 1935, the city of Frankfurt am Main issued “twelve principles” of architecture, for example, while officials in Stuttgart promulgated their own “ten architectural commandments.”<sup>84</sup>

The profusion of varying ordinances eventually prompted the Labor Ministry to issue its Ordinance concerning Architectural Design in November 1936. The ordinance stipulated that local authorities must ensure that the building approval process was timely and straightforward and did not impend economic development, yet simultaneously instructed that care must be taken to ensure all new construction was of high quality and took into consideration the “expression of a decent architectural ethos” that complemented surrounding buildings and landscapes.<sup>85</sup> The ordinances did not specify how officials would reconcile these competing and possibly contradictory dictates. A subsequent ordinance in December reiterated these points but added that they covered all areas, not just places of historic or natural beauty, and should be understood as retroactive; meaning existing structures in violation would have to be removed or somehow fixed. Tellingly, the ordinances made no provision for additional resources to accomplish these new tasks or defined how to judge what constituted “decent,” points duly noted in trade publications.<sup>86</sup> These vague directives contrasted with those of individual state and Party agencies, which issued quite specific directives guiding the design of new construction within their purviews; for example, the army published guidelines for barracks, the Hitler Youth for Hitler Youth homes, and such. The end result was that the building of Nazi Germany soon encompassed a variety of distinct styles, principles, and values. So the question of what constituted “Nazi” architecture cannot be answered with a list of physical characteristics but rather the ideological intentions of the politicians, builders, and eventually users.

That said, Hitler and his builders tended to favor distinct styles depending on the project’s function, size, location, and importance, although not necessarily based on agency. The regime generally favored a rather grand but stark and abstract neoclassicism for larger cities and higher-profile buildings. More traditional, vernacular designs were generally preferred for smaller, less important buildings and in more rural areas. Finally, military-industrial and infrastructure facilities commonly followed rather utilitarian,



**Figure 1.14. A Luftwaffe Radio Weather Station in Northern Germany**

Most likely located somewhere along Germany's northern coastline, this Luftwaffe radio weather station blended the homey feel of a thatched-roof cottage with the latest in military communication technology.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:64.

modernist architecture. For example, the trendsetting Aviation Ministry headquarters in Berlin featured the regime's official monumental style, a rural weather station might resemble a countryside cottage, and finally, aircraft hangars were functional structures<sup>87</sup> (figure 1.14).

The economy had returned to pre-Depression levels in most sectors by 1936. The resource, materials, and construction sectors experienced the greatest growth, having doubled in total employment from 1932 to 1934. The construction sector alone experienced fivefold growth and surpassed 1929 levels by 30 percent, as hundreds of thousands worked on improving highways, waterways, and rail and air transportation systems, along with some prestigious Party buildings.<sup>88</sup> The construction industry soon achieved full capacity and increasingly struggled with labor and material shortages. These troubles threatened to derail Hitler's order to make Germany ready for war through the Four Year Plan, finally coming to a head with the start of construction on the West Wall in early 1938. At this point, the need for greater central control had become clear to the regime.

Labor minister Franz Seldte issued ordinances in November 1938 declaring that building projects prepared and carried out by the government, the Party, and all its auxiliary organizations required no further approval, permits, or monitoring once authorized by the appropriate official. In the case of Party buildings, Party treasurer Franz Xaver Schwarz gave ultimate approval, obviously in close consultation with Hitler.<sup>89</sup> That December, Göring created the position of plenipotentiary for the regulation of the construction industry. Headed by Todt, the office worked to focus construction on activities essential

to war preparations, as well as increasing overall efficiency and production. Todt did not try to judge individual petitions. Instead, Todt relied on the allocation of building materials to regulate construction activity. Todt rationed materials to nineteen different cartels representing the military, industry, transportation, housing, and so on, with the armed forces and industry receiving the largest shares. Each cartel would then decide how to distribute its share, obviously creating an atmosphere of fierce competition, deal making, and corruption. The office still relied on the cooperation of private industry, which was generally forthcoming, especially larger firms that expected handsome profits. There was resistance from smaller firms and Gauleiters, who were more concerned about local projects. Todt and later Speer were gradually able to centralize more control, but in the end, the office failed to resolve the fundamental problem of reconciling competing and often conflicting demands in an atmosphere of diminishing resources.<sup>90</sup>

Hitler's monumental urban renewal program further complicated the situation by creating additional "priority" projects and bureaucratic spheres of influence. In January 1937, Hitler bestowed upon Speer *de facto* dictatorial powers over urban design and architecture in Berlin. Hitler followed this with the Law on the Redesign of German Cities in October 1937. From this point, Hitler issued a steady stream of decrees empowering individuals to implement the comprehensive restructuring of their cities with Speer in charge of Heidelberg, Nuremberg, and the City of the KdF Car (Wolfsburg); Giesler in Augsburg, Linz, Munich, and Weimar; Ley over the tractor works near Waldbröl; and various Gauleiters in charge of their respective cities. To clarify these decrees, two of Speer's associates explained:

It is the will of the Führer to leave for posterity not only isolated buildings in our old cities but rather to broadly establish the foundational planning of the cities for the distant future and to thereby permanently imprint the stamp of the time of the rebirth of the German nation on German cities.<sup>91</sup>

Hitler and his staff had to issue numerous subsequent ordinances and regulations to clarify the initial decrees and address unexpected problems. These decrees had the general effect of expanding the scope of each redesign project to include adjacent jurisdictions and facilitate the integration of planning for broader transportation and other infrastructure networks. The Greater Hamburg Act of 1937, for example, nearly doubled that city's jurisdiction. Although intended to streamline planning and administration, these various regulations encouraged the creation of local fiefdoms and fostered a decentralized patchwork of competing authorities and overlapping jurisdictions.

These trends continued into the war. Most non-war-essential construction halted in fall 1939, but much of it slowly resumed by early 1940. Hitler transformed this trickle of building activity into a torrent after the fall of France in June 1940 by ordering all government and Party agencies to support the

rapid completion of his monumental urban redesign projects in Berlin, Hamburg, Linz, Munich, and Nuremberg. Hitler was explicit that he considered their completion “now the most important building project of the Reich” and “the most important contribution to the final guarantee of our victory.”<sup>92</sup> Amid these heady days, Hitler simultaneously pushed forward a staggering array of governmental, residential, and military-industrial construction projects. Speer saw these as diversions that complicated his priority projects in Berlin and Nuremberg, and so requested that Hitler award him a new ministerial-level position over all construction and urban planning throughout Germany. Speer’s proposal was self-serving, but it also offered a path toward the more efficient and rational utilization of scarce resources. Hitler denied the request, continuing his proclivity to complicate any consolidation of authority among his lieutenants.

The fortunes of war soon changed, leading to a second order in January 1942 to halt all construction not essential to the war effort. Speer spoke before the Gauleiters in February and instructed them to suspend all nonessential construction. In March, Hitler decreed that those providing false information concerning their labor or material needs, and thereby endangering the war effort, would face fines, imprisonment, and even death. A month later, Speer extended Hitler’s threat to those commissioning nonessential construction projects. The ban also expanded to include preparations for Hitler’s urban renewal program and even rescind prior approvals.<sup>93</sup> These efforts culminated in Goebbels’s “total war” speech in February 1943. The concept of total war had circulated within policy discussions among lower-level officials and planners for some time. The basic idea was that all the country’s productive capacities should be harnessed in times of war.

By this time, a number of projects had stopped or been drastically curtailed, but a variety of nonessential programs continued apace despite worsening shortages, including the redesign of Berlin, the Nuremberg rally grounds, the Weimar Party forum, and other pet projects. In September 1943, Hitler empowered Speer to exert greater control by reorganizing his post to become minister of armaments and war production with jurisdiction over raw materials, industry, and construction.<sup>94</sup> It was only at this point that Germany canceled the delivery of granite from Swedish suppliers intended for the regime’s prestige projects, eliciting snide headlines in Allied newspapers.<sup>95</sup> In his new office, Speer ordered the Gauleiters to halt production of consumer goods and put the economy on a total war footing in October 1943, but the Gauleiters successfully resisted most intrusions into their fiefdoms. After repeated entreaties from Speer, Hitler finally issued his own formal decree of total war in July 1944 and then in August entrusted Speer with authority over all state and municipal building offices.<sup>96</sup> Yet by October, Speer directed the operational heads of Organization Todt to take charge of any officials in their districts. By the time Hitler moved to centralize the

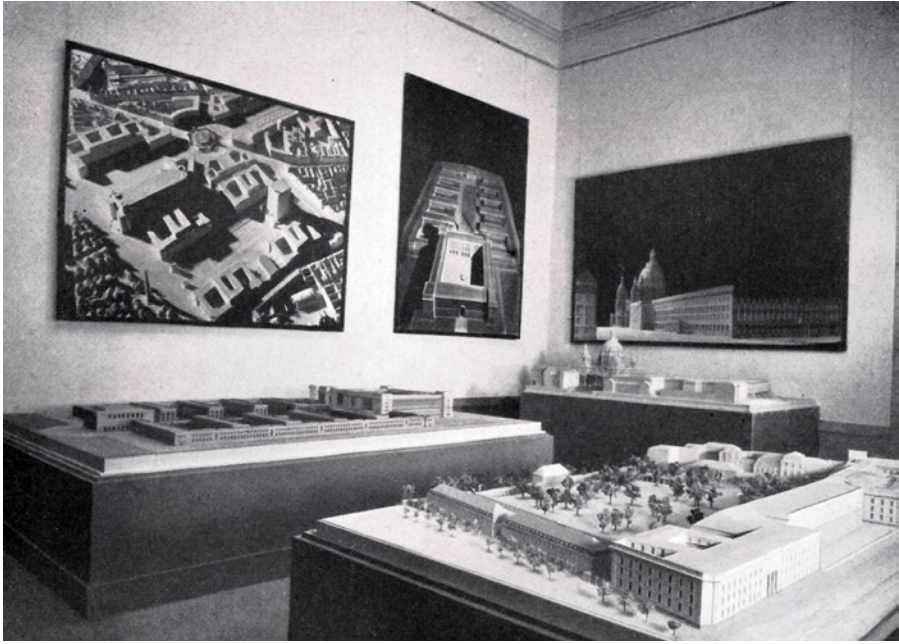
building sector, it was basically impossible to exercise coherent central control as the administrative infrastructures of the Nazi state crumbled rapidly.

### CODA: THE FIRST GERMAN ARCHITECTURE AND HANDICRAFTS EXHIBITION

The House of German Art in Munich served as a showcase for the new Nazi style and aesthetic in a double sense. First, its design and structure set the general tone for much of Hitler's later monumental building program. Second, the building displayed acceptable styles of art and sculpture culminating in the Greater German Art Exhibition, first held in 1937 and annually thereafter until 1944. This exhibition, along with the parallel Exhibition of Degenerate Art, received extensive coverage and attracted considerable popular interest. They were part of a larger campaign during 1937 and 1938 through which the regime's leading figures generally coalesced around a consensus view concerning what would be considered appropriate art, architecture, and spatial planning. Among other components, this campaign saw the founding of the regime's flagship journal *Art in the Third Reich* (later renamed *Art in the German Reich*); the short film *The Buildings of Adolf Hitler*; the unveiling of the Speer's design for the German Pavilion at the International Exhibition in Paris; a number of prominent picture books edited by Gerdy Troost, Speer, and others; and most notably the First German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition in the House of German Art (figure 1.15). Running January through April 1938, the exhibition included more than 500 architectural models and oversized photographs and drew around 260,000 visitors.<sup>97</sup>

The regime had announced many of these projects previously, but the exhibition was the first systematic attempt to organize and present the regime's building programs to the public. Here, for the first time, ordinary Germans could get a tangible sense of the regime's plans for a comprehensive spatial reordering of their cities, neighborhoods, and landscapes, a reordering of the nation's *Lebensraum*. The regime was apparently pleased with the exhibition and subsequently produced a simplified version to showcase its building plans to foreign audiences. Curated by Wolters, this traveling exhibition visited ten foreign cities between October 1940 and August 1943, with another ten cities under consideration. Speer and Wolters published an accompanying pictorial compilation that eventually ran to five different editions, well over 88,000 copies, and eleven foreign language versions by the end of 1943. In many ways, the title of this work encapsulated what Hitler and his master builders believed they had achieved: a *New German Architecture*.<sup>98</sup>

The Munich architectural exhibitions occupied a place near the apex of Nazi cultural policy, so naturally Hitler delivered the opening address. A closer examination of his speech is worthwhile given the extensive publicity it received. Hitler characterized the exhibition as heralding the start of a new era:



**Figure 1.15. The German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibitions**

The German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibitions held in the House of German Art in Munich in 1938 and 1939 displayed the regime's ambitious plans to build in a new Nazi Germany. This photo from the guidebook to the second exhibition shows room 25, which selectively revealed Hitler's plans to redesign Berlin. Posters on the wall illustrate plans for the Round Plaza, military technology faculty building, and eastern section of the east-west axis near the Berlin Cathedral. The models beneath the posters feature the latter two projects, while the model in the foreground shows the new Chancellery building.

Source: Haus der Deutschen Kunst, 2. *Deutsche Architektur- und Kunsthandwerkausstellung*, 13.

Since the construction of our cathedrals, we see here for the first time a truly great architecture on display, an architecture which does not consume itself in the service of petty, day-to-day orders and needs, but is instead an architecture that far surpasses the scope of daily life and its requirements. It has a right to assert that it will withstand the critical appraisal of millenniums and remain, for millenniums, the pride of the Volk which created these works.

Hitler acknowledged that many projects existed as mere models and sketches but was ardent that they were "destined to become reality—and will become reality!" In something of a departure from his normal practice of attributing his major decisions and undertakings to long-held beliefs punctuated by flashes of genius, Hitler emphasized that the regime's building programs were the result of systematic and comprehensive planning. "What you see here is not the product of a few weeks' or a few months' work, but the product, in part, of years of effort, albeit which took place secluded from

the public eye," Hitler explained. "For it is a National Socialist principle not to approach the public with difficult problems to allow it to debate them, but to first allow such plans to fully ripen, and then to present them to the Volk. There are things which cannot be subject to debate. Among these are all the eternal values."

After this prologue, Hitler continued with a cursory gloss over the breadth and depth of the regime's building programs, including everything from the monumental structures of the Nuremberg Party rally grounds to more banal military barracks and Hitler Youth homes. Interestingly, he noted the plans of Berlin and Munich were not included, because they were not yet finalized. Hitler claimed the exhibition would "reveal works which are destined to leave their mark not on decades, but on centuries! . . . These are architectural achievements of intrinsic eternal value and ones which will stand forever according to human standards, firm and unshakeable, immortal in their beauty and in their harmonious proportions!" Hitler's strident exhortations captured the imperative to build that surged throughout the National Socialist movement, the imperative to build the spatialities and geographies of a new Nazi Germany. Through architecture amid a planned reordering of German spaces, Hitler sought to speak to the distant future of his own creative genius and the world-defining epoch his movement inaugurated. As Hitler exclaimed at the beginning of his speech, "the merits of every great age are ultimately expressed in its architecture. When peoples internally experience great times, they also lend these times an external manifestation. Their word is then more convincing than the spoken word: it is the word in stone!"<sup>99</sup>

## 2



# Things to Take Your Breath Away

## *The Führer Cities*

Speaking at the Nuremberg rallies in 1934, Adolf Hitler touted his previous year's accomplishments. The audience would have recognized some of these—the declining unemployment rate, for example—but Hitler noted that he had been laying the foundations for other vital initiatives behind the scenes. Among these claims was Hitler's prideful declaration that "revolutionary construction programs are being drawn up for a whole series of major German cities, the magnitude of which will only be able to be fully and finally appreciated after decades have passed."<sup>1</sup> Hitler was true to his word. By the late 1930s, major urban transformation projects were envisioned or underway for nearly all major German cities. As Albert Speer explained, Hitler regarded these projects as "a serious opportunity to give the will of the National Socialist movement exalted expression in stone."<sup>2</sup> Equally important to the translation of ideology into stone and other construction materials, Hitler and his builders paid keen attention to the calculated arrangement of space and place to create overpowering geographies of National Socialism.

Five cities, known as the Führer cities (*Führerstädte*), occupied special places atop the hierarchy of the Nazi building program and enjoyed priority status, including Hitler's personal attention.<sup>3</sup> These were Berlin, Nuremberg, Munich, Hamburg, and Linz, each intended to fulfill a unique function for the regime. A radically redesigned and imperially adorned Berlin would become the intimidatingly proportioned decision-making capital of Hitler's new thousand-year Reich; Nuremberg's role would be to stage the choreographed spectacle of the annual Nazi Party rallies in a complex of uniquely designed architectural structures and spaces set against the legitimating backdrop of one of Germany's most romantic old cities; Munich's special status derived from its role as the birthplace and headquarters of the Nazi

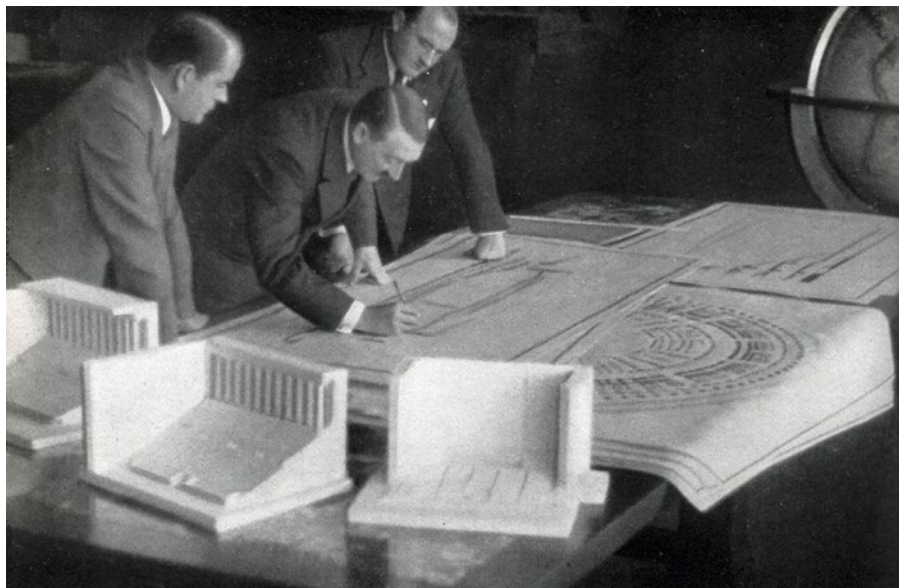


Party, as well as from its official designation by the regime as the capital of German art; Hamburg, as Germany's greatest port city and gateway to the world, was singled out for massive redevelopment centered on a huge skyscraper and a gargantuanly scaled bridge across the mouth of the Elbe River; and Linz, the town where Hitler spent much of his youth, would become a lavishly embellished cultural center featuring massive collections of fine art from around the world.<sup>4</sup>

All five cities, each in their own way, would become demonstration pieces of Nazi achievement and power, remade to inspire awe and admiration both at home and abroad. Plans for all five featured extraordinarily ambitious building projects set against far-reaching reorganizations of existing city spaces. Speer's staffers estimated these projects would require a standing labor force of around 280,000 workers—180,000 in Berlin alone—and reach a combined cost as high as 100 billion Reichsmarks—by any measure a staggering sum for that time—by their scheduled completion in 1950. They further reckoned this would consume about 20 percent of Germany's building capacity.<sup>5</sup> Already by the end of 1939, Fritz Todt estimated that Hitler's prestige projects—which were not entirely limited to the Führer cities—were consuming between 10 to 14 percent of all building materials.<sup>6</sup>

For all their differences, the proposals for the Führer cities came to embody certain replicable architectural and spatial features, in addition to a set of common organizational and administrative processes to execute their planning and implementation. As the pinnacles of the Nazi building program, Hitler was often intimately involved in the details of planning—meeting personally with municipal officials and their planning staffs; offering his ideas and even personal sketches of buildings and monuments; and intervening to help his favorite architects and administrators centralize planning and control over recalcitrant or insufficiently imaginative local officials and planners. Hitler used the occasion of official site visits to review the progress of his prestige projects, summon his planners and architects to Berlin or to his military headquarters for discussions, and pore endlessly over scale models at his leisure, noting changes or innovations he wished to see carried out (figure 2.1).

Hitler's direct involvement ensured a fair bit of consistency. All of the plans eventually shared several common elements. First, they entailed a fundamental spatial reorganization of the existing urban fabric to incorporate grand axes, broad boulevards, expansive vistas, and enormous assembly spaces, resulting in some cases in a significant displacement of the historic city center. Second, these new urban spaces and corridors were designed to frame and amplify the creation of entirely new colossally scaled architectural ensembles, replete with assembly halls, representative office buildings for Party and government functionaries, museums, operas, libraries, civic institutions, businesses, and iconic monuments. Finally, although less obvious



**Figure 2.1. Hitler Revising Blueprints with Speer and Ruff**

Here Hitler is shown being hands-on, literally, revising blueprints with Albert Speer, to the left, while Franz Ruff looks on intently. They are most likely working on the Nuremberg rally grounds, given the presence of models of the Zeppelin Field grandstands in the foreground. Source: Hoffmann, *Hitler abseits von Alltag*, 68.

and less prominent in Hitler's thinking, these showpiece embellishments of city centers extended outward toward a scattering of newly planned residential districts, additions to city parklands, and other recreational facilities, as well as a host of infrastructural improvements to reorient patterns of movement and access.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, the plans were intended as renewals or redevelopments. Even though they mandated wholesale demolitions over large areas to make way for new construction, these plans intentionally drew upon the national political, historic, cultural, and economic importance of these places and were meant to embellish and improve, rather than totally deny the past. The goal, in the eyes of the regime, was to rescue and symbolically bring to life each of these five cities by giving them special priority in the Nazi building program—to transform them into the dazzling urban jewels of a new Germany. These were to be urban landscapes where the old and the new would figuratively and literally come together—places and spaces where the greatness of National Socialism would shine brightest. The aim was to showcase, to Germans and the world, the ascendant might, prowess, and ideology of the Third Reich through the new vitality and breathtaking grandeur of these newly christened Führer cities.

## GERMANIC TECTONIC

Hitler was emphatic concerning the grand scale and purpose of his building plans. In contrast, he remained rather vague regarding the design of these structures and spaces. The general characteristics of Hitler's state architecture had a long pedigree. Its most basic elements—colonnaded structures marked by geometry and symmetry—had clear antecedents in the architectural orders of ancient Greece and Rome and their later revivals during the Renaissance and baroque periods. Similarly, the tendency to structure public space in ways that glorified the ruling classes, often through processional routes and communal plazas, was well established. So in a certain sense, the style that came to be most closely associated with the grand projects of Hitler's regime fits within an established architectural genealogy of sorts.

Yet Hitler and his top builders saw their work as a uniquely German manifestation of this ancient lineage. Specifically, the regime pointed to the neoclassical designs of Friedrich Gilly and Karl Friedrich Schinkel in Berlin and Leo von Klenze in Munich—men who drew inspiration from an Enlightenment-era belief that classical architecture embodied a timeless beauty based on simplicity, clarity, rationality, and purity that corresponded to the idealized virtues of German national identity and was hence particularly well suited for government offices, civic institutions, national monuments, and other public buildings. As historian George L. Mosse observed: "From the start of the nineteenth century, the classical tended to be confused with the monumental. They mixed the Roman tradition of the Colosseum with the Greek ideal of beauty."<sup>8</sup>

Neoclassical styles gradually, although not entirely, fell out of fashion during the late nineteenth century. In their place, various other revivalist trends (neo-Gothic, neo-Romanesque, etc.) came and went, but generally tastes gravitated toward greater ornamentation and eclecticism by the turn of the century. Partly as a rejection of these historicist impulses, proponents of the Art Nouveau movement sought out new, nontraditional, and transnational forms and ornamentation, but this in turn triggered its own backlash among those who believed time-honored forms could be adapted for contemporary times. The buildings of Peter Behrens (German embassy in St. Petersburg), Paul Bonatz (Stuttgart's main train station), Wilhelm Kreis (Hygiene Museum in Dresden), Hans Poelzig (IG Farben office building in Frankfurt), Heinrich Tessenow (Festival House Hellerau in Dresden), and Werner March (German Sports Forum in Berlin) are some of the more prominent examples of German architects drawing from art deco and cubist styles to create abstracted variants of neoclassical forms, or rough contours of a monumental conservatism. In fact, something of a consensus was emerging among German architects and officials favoring a "monumentalized modernism" for representational public and private buildings.<sup>9</sup>

Many of the main features of Hitler's official style—colonnades, large flat surfaces, minimal ornamentation—were already evident in these works.

Conservative activist and amateur cultural historian Arthur Moeller van den Bruck penned something of a manifesto for this movement with his 1916 essay *The Prussian Style* proclaiming the immediacy of recapturing, especially in the context of world war, the timeless Germanic ideals of heroism, stoicism, and discipline that characterized Schinkel and his contemporaries.<sup>10</sup> Moeller van den Bruck and his contemporaries succeeded in establishing Schinkel as the archetypal German architect, at least among conservatives. Paul Ludwig Troost was a minor figure in this movement but provided a crucial link in transmitting these ideas to Hitler and subsequently to Nazi official state architecture. The Nazis amplified and intensified these notions by infusing them with pseudo-scientific theories that positioned ancient Greeks, and various other peoples, as Aryan ancestors of contemporary Germans. The result was proclaimed to represent an entirely new style based on eternal aesthetic and architectural principles.<sup>11</sup>

There is no doubt that Hitler was the deciding factor in elevating this as the Nazi movement's designated style for representative state architecture. Hitler brushed aside the more traditional, modest, and rustic styles championed by Paul Schultze-Naumburg, the Fighting League of German Architects and Engineers (Kampfbund deutscher Architekten und Ingenieure, or KdAI), and conservatives in general. And Hitler reacted angrily when Paul Bonatz and Paul Schmitthenner submitted an unsolicited alternative design for Troost's Königsplatz plan in June 1934, apparently interpreting the suggestion as implicit criticism of Troost's work and Hitler's judgment.<sup>12</sup> It is less clear how or when Hitler came to this conclusion. In *Mein Kampf* and subsequently in numerous private conversations, Hitler recalled his youthful fascination with the buildings of Vienna's Ringstrasse Boulevard, as well as other prominent buildings such as the Opera House in Paris and the Palace of Justice in Brussels. Hitler's favorite buildings certainly included neoclassicist influences, most notably the Parliament Building in Vienna, but most exemplified the busy eclecticism that characterized historicist architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In his postwar memoir, Speer published sketches of massive neoclassicist monuments that Hitler purportedly completed in the mid-1920s while also claiming that Hitler's sketchbook of this same period was filled with public buildings he characterized as "inflated" and "decadent baroque" reminiscent of the Viennese Ringstrasse.

These two statements are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but it seems improbable that Hitler had already sketched out the general contours for grandiose public monuments in neoclassicist styles by the 1920s. It is more likely that Hitler came to his movement's official style through his collaborations with Troost during the early 1930s. Speer acknowledged as much:

“What was branded as the official architecture of the Reich was only the neo-classicism transmitted by Troost.”<sup>13</sup> Hitler publicly and privately affirmed Troost’s key contribution on numerous occasions. At the opening of the First German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition, Hitler explained that he could not acknowledge every architect featured in the collection but affirmed that “they were headed by the master of our time, Professor Troost.”<sup>14</sup> Troost’s rather thin résumé gave little indication of how he might approach designing representative buildings, but some early signs are evident in his work on the villa Becker built in Munich before World War I. The home featured many characteristics—abstract but symmetrical classical forms, smooth stone surfaces, a flat roof, an entranceway portico topped by a balcony, and coffered ceilings in the foyer—that would become hallmarks of the “reduced classicism” that Troost employed for Hitler’s first buildings.<sup>15</sup>

In a phrasing more in line with Nazi ideology, Gerdy Troost quoted Hitler as characterizing her late husband’s precedent-setting style as “Germanic tectonic.”<sup>16</sup> These characterizations fit best the earliest showcase buildings, like Troost’s work in Munich or Speer’s Zeppelin Field. Tellingly, the Zeppelin Field probably came closest to Speer’s intention to blend Troost’s interpretation of classicism with Tessenow’s modernist approach toward simplistic monumentality while also apparently having the least amount of personal input from Hitler. When Hitler was more directly involved, such as Speer’s later buildings in Berlin like the Führer Palace or Great Hall, the designs seemed to better reflect Hitler’s fancy for a more baroque and ornamental interpretation of neoclassicism.

If Troost provided the architectural outlines for Hitler’s monumental style, Speer transformed that aesthetic framework into a comprehensive sensory experience. First, Speer ensured that, instead of isolated structures, Hitler’s showcase buildings occupied positions demarcating spacious boulevards and plazas. These new representative spaces would provide Germany’s cities with the “outstanding symbol of national community,” the absence of which Hitler so lamented in *Mein Kampf*. Second, Speer set the tone for the elaborate stagecraft and pageantry that would infuse these new spaces and places with the ideology of National Socialism. Speer would accomplish this through the profuse use of oversized flags, streaming banners, piercing searchlights, blazing torches and cauldrons, among other elements including music, pylons, and standards, to further enclose and accentuate the main avenues of movement and focus. Masses of bodies marching in lockstep in rigid formations or performing carefully choreographed athletic routines served as another form of ornamentation.

Pulling these varied elements together, Wilhelm Lotz, a prominent Nazi pundit and editor, observed how the 1933 May Day celebrations in Berlin showed how Speer “already had all the tools at hand with which the celebrations of the new state had to be formed: the organized masses, the flags, and the alignment of the formations toward the speaker.” It was not enough

simply to have masses of people; they had to be organized in formations and aligned toward their leader in a manner emphasized through architecture, flags, uniforms, lighting, and space itself. As we shall see, Speer debuted his stagecraft in Berlin and then refined it through subsequent rallies at the Reich Harvest Festivals at Bückeberg and the Party rallies in Nuremberg until he had largely codified a new National Socialist celebratory style. Speer was “much more than an architect,” Lotz concluded, “he is a designer who uses all the means and building materials that support, form, and deepen the essence of the event.”<sup>17</sup>

So it was not a specific architectural form that made Hitler’s buildings distinctive. Hitler’s state architecture had clear antecedents in Germany and abroad before and after 1933. Nor was the use of such a style for the representational needs of the state unprecedented. It was present in both democratic and nondemocratic systems. In fact, there was something approaching an international consensus favoring a reduced neoclassicism for representative government buildings. Rather, what made Nazi architecture distinctive was the combination of architectural forms, spatial arrangements, and carefully staged pageantry contributing to a total experience intended to overwhelm and inspire participants and observers with a sense of national community and purpose. As one of Speer’s top deputies pointed out: “The scale of the individual person gives way to the scale of the formation.”<sup>18</sup> Returning to Mosse’s observations, these different elements worked together so that “the space dominated the actual buildings which surrounded the masses, the buildings themselves almost fading into the background as a convenient framework for the participants . . . to reach the point where space for festivals displaced the monument itself.”<sup>19</sup>

## CAPITAL OF THE WORLD

The regime first made public the broad outlines of its plans for Berlin on January 28, 1938.<sup>20</sup> The plan was again brought to public attention on April 12, 1938—three months before the formal opening of construction work at twelve sites, and just a week prior to initial work in conjunction with Hitler’s fiftieth birthday to widen a section of the city’s existing east-west axis. Newspaper headlines on that April day boldly proclaimed the prospect of an entirely “new face” for Berlin.<sup>21</sup> Weeks later, an enthusiastic Joseph Goebbels described it in his diary as “the most grandiose construction program of all time. The Führer has overcome all opposition. He is a genius!”<sup>22</sup> Formal planning for a “new” Berlin had been going on for years—Hitler had dreamed of reshaping the capital even before the Nazis came to power—but the scale and potential cost of Berlin’s intended transformation were so great that Hitler was wary of publicizing the plans for fear of negative public reaction. Hitler revealed some general indications

of his grand visions while laying the foundation stone for the Institute for War Technology building in November 1937:

Therefore, it is my inalterable intention and decision to now bestow upon Berlin the streets, edifices, and public areas it needs to allow it to be fitting and worthy of being the capital city of the German Reich. The size of these facilities and works shall not be calculated to fit the needs of the years 1937, 1938, 1939, or 1940; rather, they shall be determined by the knowledge that it is our task to build a thousand-year city equal to a thousand-year Volk with a thousand years of historic and cultural past for the unforeseeable future lying before it.<sup>23</sup>

But even then, the public release of information offered relatively few details on the grand scheme. The press releases, while including descriptions and maps to highlight some key features of the plan, were purposely vague about many of the details, and especially careful not to divulge any of the plan's destructive implications for substantial parts of the existing city fabric.<sup>24</sup>

### **The Plan for the Reich Capital**

The core of Hitler's scheme was a radical reorientation of the historic axis of the city center, which had traditionally run westward from the small island crossing of the Spree River at which the twin towns of Berlin and Cölln were founded in the thirteenth century, and where Prussia's ruling Hohenzollern dynasty later established its City Palace. This axis followed a broad leafy boulevard known as *Unter den Linden*, laid out in 1647 by the "Great Elector" Friedrich Wilhelm. Flanked on either side by the rectangular grids of the Renaissance-era suburbs of Dorotheenstadt and Friedrichstadt, the boulevard extended for around two kilometers from the Spree crossing to the western gates of the city. From there, Berlin's historic east-west axis continued westward, passing through stately *Pariser Platz* and the tall Doric columns of the city's iconic late eighteenth-century Brandenburg Gate. There, as the *Charlottenburger Chaussee*, the axis resumed its majestic westward course through the *Tiergarten*—the spacious former royal hunting park converted in the nineteenth century into a sprawling public pleasure park.

Many of Berlin's great landmarks and attractions sat along *Unter den Linden*, including the crown prince's palace, the royal armory, Schinkel's royal guardhouse, the Berlin State Opera, the city university, various foreign embassies, state ministries, high-profile businesses, and ritzy hotels. Beyond the Brandenburg Gate and set off just to the north of the axis, the opulent late nineteenth-century Reichstag parliament building faced westward onto the spacious *Königsplatz*, or Royal Square (renamed Square of the Republic during the Weimar years), dominated by a tall Victory Column erected in 1873 to commemorate Prussian victories over Denmark (1864), Austria (1866), and France (1870–1871). Running southward from this square for a distance of around 750 meters and crossing the *Charlottenburg Chaussee* at a near

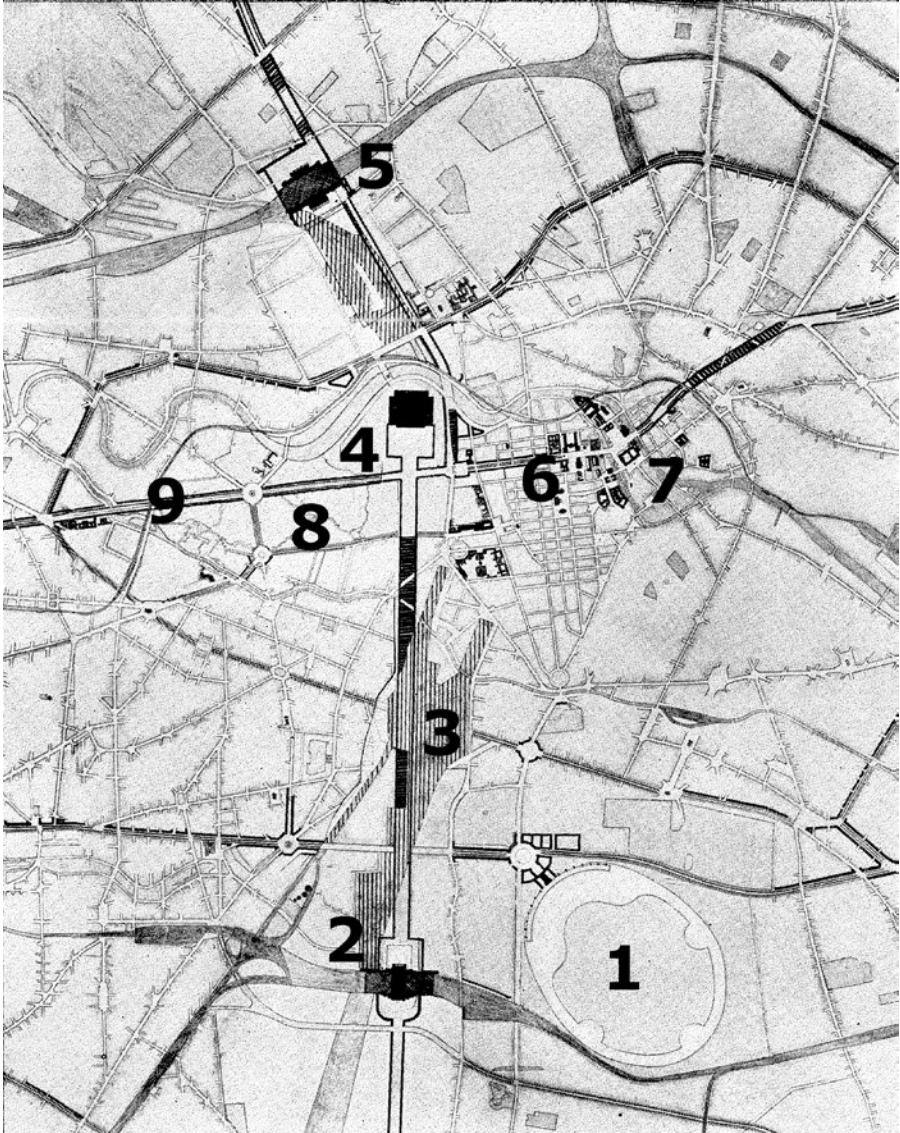
right angle was the so-called Victory Avenue, first laid out in 1873 and grandiosely (some would say garishly) embellished in the late 1890s with dozens of white marble statues of former Prussian royal grandees.

The regime's new plan, officially designated the Comprehensive Construction Plan for the Reich Capital, envisioned, first and foremost, the creation of an entirely new central axis and focus running in a north-south direction and cutting across the existing axis just to the west of the Brandenburg Gate.<sup>25</sup> The centerpiece of the new axis was a five-kilometer-long boulevard, dubbed the Avenue of Splendor (figure 2.2). Flanked on either side by rows of trees, wide sidewalks, and local traffic lanes, this broad multilane thoroughfare would become Berlin's most prestigious address, fronted on either side with block after block of impressive new public and private buildings. Speer entrusted the planning of this development to his close confidant, Rudolf Wolters.<sup>26</sup>

The mammoth thoroughfare would provide an entirely new focal point for the city, the centerpiece of a refashioned capital purposely intended to subvert, while still maintaining, the historic axis and spatial dynamics of the old city. The boulevard alone, without the many city blocks of attendant construction along both its sides, would cut a 120-meter-wide swath across the inner city, laying waste to the existing city fabric in its path. Indeed, the thoroughfare's footprint would be so wide as to present an obstacle to existing patterns of pedestrian and vehicle circulation—what one analysis of the plan has likened to a "Great Wall of China" separating two halves of the city.<sup>27</sup> Too intimidating to cross, pedestrians would be forced to traverse it via underground passageways, while east-west vehicular traffic would circumvent it altogether, be funneled through tunnels, or be obliged to cross at a limited number of intersections.

At its northern end, the course of the new avenue would run south from the Königsplatz in front of the Reichstag, cross the existing east-west axis and cut directly through the easternmost periphery of the Tiergarten, swallowing up in its inexorable southward progress the Victory Avenue, the statues of which would be saved through the expedient of transferring them elsewhere in the Tiergarten. To make way for the main stretch of the new boulevard and the attendant construction of block after block of new buildings along its path, an enormous swath of land in the near western and southwestern districts of the city center would be cleared. These demolitions would mean the loss of tens of thousands of residential units, shops, and offices. The plan also called for the removal of the major bundle of rail trackage leading from the south to Berlin's Anhalter and Potsdamer stations, both of which would be razed and replaced by a mammoth new South Station located at the extreme southern end of the axis. On the north side of the Spree above the Königsplatz, rail trackage leading to the Lehrter Station—also slated for demolition—would be removed to make way for a northward extension of the axis leading to the new North Station.





**Figure 2.2. The Main Components of the North-South Axis and Adjacent Projects in Berlin**

This map publicly illustrated the approximate locations for the main components of Hitler's plans to redesign Berlin but minimized the actual extent of the changes. The areas with dashed lines represented existing railroad yards. New construction was to be confined to the solid black shapes (roughly numbers 1–5), at least according to this map.

Key: 1. Tempelhof; 2. South Station; 3. North-South Axis; 4. Great Hall; 5. North Station; 6. Unter den Linden; 7. Spree Island; 8. Tiergarten; 9. Charlottenburger Chaussee.

Source: Stephan, *Die Baukunst im Dritten Reich*, n.p.

The entire complex was to be punctuated at key points by monumentally scaled buildings and spaces. The southern end of the axis would be anchored by the new South Station, expected on completion to rank as the world's largest train station. Speer's design, to be worked out by Herbert Rimpl, called for a sprawling four-level station—replete with elevators, escalators, and a steel-ribbed copper- and glass-sheathed canopy—that faced north so that travelers and dignitaries emerging through colonnaded front portals from its voluminous interior would be immediately confronted with a stunning vista of the broad new avenue stretching out before them to a vanishing point (figure 2.3). In the foreground would be a vast, nearly rectangular plaza nearly 750 meters long upon which Hitler dreamed of displaying captured military equipment from his wars of conquest. Just beyond this plaza, the visitors' gaze would unavoidably turn to the second monumental exclamation point along the course of the boulevard, a great 120-meter-tall Triumphal Arch—inspired by the Arc de Triomphe in Paris but more than twice as large—bearing the solemnly inscribed names of Germany's 1.8 million dead of World War I. According to Speer, Hitler had sketched his vision for this arch long before the Nazis came to power.

From there, the grand avenue would extend northward for nearly four kilometers, lined grandiosely, if somewhat monotonously, on either side with the looming gray-stone facades of block after block of oversized buildings. The buildings would have uniformly designed pseudo-neoclassical fronts with deeply set inner courts and cover entire city blocks. They would all be of roughly the same proportions, although several tall buildings were also contemplated, but only at a suitable setback from the main axis—which reflects a certain discomfort with constructing tall buildings that might detract from the otherwise stodgy, uniformly even facades intended to give the impression of solidarity. The boulevard-facing buildings were to house government ministries, Party offices, corporate headquarters, posh hotels, cultural centers, luxury retailing, and entertainment emporia of various kinds—even a Roman-style bath. The only major break in the long ensemble would be the Round Plaza traffic circle, situated at the key junction of the boulevard with Potsdamer Street and Leipziger Street, centered around a massive fountain pool (figure 2.4).

The plan called for a Soldier's Hall to the north of the Round Plaza to commemorate Germany's fallen in future wars. Commissioned to one of Hitler's favored architects, Wilhelm Kreis, who was instructed to follow a sketch done by Hitler, the Soldier's Hall was intended to impress.<sup>28</sup> At 250 meters long and nearly 80 meters high and centered on a spectacularly spacious grand hall beneath a high barrel-vaulted ceiling, the structure would not only honor the nation's fallen in a cavernous vaulted crypt but also pay homage to its military heroes and display the spoils of war and symbols of triumph, such as the rail car in which the 1918 and 1940 armistices with France were signed. War trophies would be displayed throughout Hitler's



**Figure 2.3. Model of Hitler's North-South Axis Planned for Berlin**

Never displayed publicly, this model, likely photographed in 1939, illustrated the true dimensions of Hitler's north-south axis. From bottom to top, the model shows the South Station, Triumphal Arch, Round Plaza, and the Great Hall, as well as the Great Basin toward the upper left corner.

*Source:* German Federal Archives.



**Figure 2.4. The Round Plaza along the North-South Axis Planned for Berlin**

Centered on a mammoth fountain, the Round Plaza was a major ensemble planned for the northern half of the north-south axis. The DAF's House of Tourism, one of the few parts of Hitler's grand plan for Berlin to near completion, is seen top center. The roofline of its twin, the corporate headquarters of Allianz Insurance, is partially visible at the bottom and demonstrates the kind of contributions expected of the private sector to Hitler's grand building programs.

*Source:* Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 58.

new Berlin. At Hitler's behest, Speer ordered military authorities to set aside around 200 of the heaviest captured guns and tanks for use as accent pieces along the new showcase boulevards.<sup>29</sup> Linked to this immense structure, and also designed by Kreis, was the future Army High Command consisting of a long rectilinear plaza, faced on both sides by a stately pair of administrative buildings and bookended on one end with a stout, rectangular, twelve-story skyscraper and on the other with a tall obelisk topped by an eagle with outstretched wings. Not to be left out, Hermann Göring successfully claimed the opposite lot on the boulevard for a new Field Marshall's Office to be designed by Speer. Nearby, a weapon and armor museum and a military cemetery would complete the martial ensemble.

At its northern end, the grand avenue would intersect, after passing through the eastern margins of the Tiergarten, with the city's historic east-west axis just prior to terminating at the entrance to a second great plaza, laid down as a Roman-style forum over the grounds of the former Königsplatz. Designed to accommodate more than a million people, this 350,000-square-meter space—often referred to as the Great Square and imagined as the future Adolf Hitler Square—was to be enclosed on three sides by government buildings. A new Reichstag would dominate the eastern side and tower

over the existing 1894 Reichstag, which Hitler rather surprisingly wanted renovated as a library for Reichstag deputies. The Armed Forces Supreme Command and another new Reich Chancellery would occupy the southern side. These two hulking masses would flank the main entrance from the north-south axis onto the Great Square. The proximity of armed forces buildings was highly suggestive of the military's centrality in Hitler's empire. The western side of the square was reserved for the Führer Palace, from which Hitler would rule, featuring a banquet hall capable of seating several thousand, a theater for around 950 people, and roughly 15,000 square meters of reception spaces for awing visitors. The crowning touch, to be built on the north side, was a mammoth Great Hall that would totally dominate the enclosed forum space before it, in addition to being visible from along the entire length of the north-south boulevard.

Tucked into a bend in the Spree, which was to be rerouted to flow beneath the building's raised forecourt, the Great Hall was planned as an immense domed structure, conceived at an almost unimaginable scale (figure 2.5). Also known as the People's Hall, the structure was intended to be the world's largest enclosed space, capable of accommodating crowds of up to 180,000 on the polished-stone floor of its cavernous interior. Soaring high above the assembled crowd, and above rows of tiered galleries,



**Figure 2.5. The Great Hall Planned for the Northern End of the North-South Axis**

The Great Hall was to be the centerpiece of Hitler's plans to transform Berlin into a world capital. Like many of Hitler's later collaborations with Albert Speer, the hall's design combined overwhelming size with a blend of neo-baroque and neoclassicist ornamentation.

Source: German Federal Archives.

would be a gigantic coffered dome of 250 meters in diameter topped by a 46-meter-wide oculus. This enormous domed structure would rise above a massive 74-meter-high square granite base—necessitated by the unsuitably soft sandy subsoils underlying the site—to a height of 290 meters, roughly on par with the height of the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Visitors ascending the steps to the People's Hall would pass two 15-meter-tall sculptures by Arno Breker—Atlas holding the heavens and Tellus holding the earth. The building would be the monumental centerpiece of the New Berlin—framed as the eye-catching exclamation point to the grand north-south axis, visible from all parts of the city, and greater in its height and proportions than any other planned or existing structure in the city.

Almost as an afterthought, the plan included a further northward extension of the axis leading away from the rear of the Great Hall and veering to the west at about a 30-degree angle to connect with the proposed site of the new North Station. Often referred to as the "bent axis," the stretch separating the Great Hall and the North Station would center on an elongated kilometer-long reflecting pool, or Great Basin, scaled at roughly the same width as the framing facades of the Great Hall and the North Station at either end. The basin was to have a stunning effect, showcasing for visitors emerging from the North Station a reflective image of the Great Hall at its far end. It was also the most practical use of the low-lying marshy tracts of land in and along the former bend of the diverted Spree. The pool was to be flanked on either side by government buildings similar to those arrayed along the main north-south axis, including a new town hall, a police headquarters for the city of Berlin, Naval High Command, and a city technical works building. The basin would also provide a recreational space, replete with outdoor facilities offering opportunities for dining, relaxation, and water sports of various kinds.

While the grand avenue, along with its attendant monumental structures and spaces, was to be the centerpiece of new development, the new axis was also to extend far beyond the two new "bookcasing" rail stations. Altogether, the axis would stretch across the city for a distance of thirty-eight kilometers. To the south, extensions of the axis would allow access to the city's Tempelhof Airport and lead to new suburban residential areas planned on the city's southern periphery. Referred to as South City, this new suburban district would house a population of 400,000 thereby helping to relieve crowding in the city center. This new development, laid out in a rectilinear fashion, would also host a series of major government buildings, including a building trades school, an army war academy, a police technical academy, a Waffen-SS headquarters, a training facility for the national customs service, and an office building for the Aviation Ministry. The axis would also extend to a similar development on the north side, although those plans were less developed. There was some effort to integrate Party offices and other types of public services into these areas, but Speer primarily focused on the spatial

alignment and aesthetics of these apartment blocks in relation to his overall concept for two principal axial boulevards through Berlin. Hans Stephan, Speer's main deputy responsible for planning the city's east-west axis, explained how these new residential areas would, through "the natural ranking ordering of worth, subordinate themselves to the scale and formation of the great monumental buildings of the state and the national community."<sup>30</sup>

The historic east-west axis would also be extended in either direction to a total length of fifty kilometers, again opening up the possibility for new developments at either end. Thus, two grand axes, one old and one new, would traverse and reorient the spatial organization of the entire city. The eastward extension of the old axis would require considerable demolition and construction to widen existing thoroughfares. Just to the east of the Spree Island, the narrow Kaiser Wilhelm Street was to be redeveloped and lined with monumental new buildings as it arced northward to the commuter train station at Alexanderplatz. On the north side of the thoroughfare, the plan called for a new block-long building to house the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce, matched on the south side with a similar structure. A series of new office buildings, the Reichspost telephone exchange, and an art museum, along with a three-sided square of buildings enclosing St. Mary's Church—which was not aligned with the avenue—completed the planned ensemble. From there, three alternative eastward routes leading to the eastern edge of the city were left under further consideration.

The western extension—following the widening and transformation of the Charlottenburger Chaussee into a "via triumphalis"—would continue on to what had been known before 1933 as Reich Chancellor Square but renamed Adolf Hitler Square after the Nazis came to power. Given that the master plan for Berlin called for the square before the Great Hall to bear Hitler's name, another name was needed, and in 1939, the regime announced its intention to rechristen the space as Mussolini Square and erect a statue of the Italian dictator on the site, as well as a new rail station with a special hall for arriving foreign dignitaries. Near the end of the axis in the park-like Grönewald district just to the southwest of the Olympic Stadium, the plan called for the development of a massive multiple-winged Institute for War Technology arranged around an elongated courtyard. Construction work on the monumental entry to the main building was underway by fall 1937. The unfinished shell of the building was buried under the "Teufelsberg" rubble mountain after the war. The area was also to become home to a sprawling university "city," a giant university hospital and clinic complex, and a vast array of leisure facilities.

In addition to extending the axes to the perimeter, the plan envisioned a total overhaul of the city's rail and traffic network that eliminated three central stations and their trackage, in favor of the two mammoth stations at the ends of the main segment of the north-south axis. In cooperation with German railway authorities, rail lines throughout the city would be rationalized,

augmented, and re-laid. The plan called for linking the two new stations with a new line circling the city center, thereby eliminating the need for the other existing central stations. Existing roads and thoroughfares were also to be redrawn to move traffic flows around the city center and Tiergarten, as well as away from the city center along radiating routes. Ultimately, planners hoped to construct a successive series of four to five ring roads, including an outermost Autobahn ring that would sweep around the entire city. This series of concentric high-capacity traffic rings would connect with the city's two main axes. In addition, a series of new radial roads and rail lines would radiate out from the center.

Although most attention, including that of Hitler himself, focused on the showy building projects along the axis between the new North and South stations, other major building and landscaping projects were planned throughout the city. In and around the Spree Island, at the city's historic core, planners foresaw the construction of four new museums in anticipation of exhibiting art, archeology, and ethnology collections on par with the greatest in the world. The scale of these museums, with their fortress-like towers and long colonnaded fronts, would require a vast expansion of the space previously allocated for that purpose. Accordingly, much of the land along the banks of the Spree to the north and west of the old city center was slated to be cleared for new construction.

New green spaces would help define the city's districts and suburbs and provide the population with access to open spaces for leisure and recreation. Horticulturalists provided recommendations on the most suitable trees and shrubs for these parklands. Beyond the Autobahn ring, planners reserved space for airports, including a facility on Rangsdorfer Lake, on the edge of the planned South City, for seaplanes. Space was also allocated for extensive surrounding parklands, which would be stripped of their present forest cover of Brandenburg pine and replanted with deciduous trees to recall the region's original vegetation. Hitler cared little for these more lived spaces replete with hiking trails, beaches, athletic fields, and restaurants. Instead, his focus remained on his showpiece monuments. In October 1941, as German forces marched seemingly inexorably eastward through Soviet territory, Hitler imagined how visitors would experience his future capital:

When one enters the Reich Chancellery, one should have the feeling that one is visiting the master of the world. One will arrive there along the wide avenues containing the Triumphal Arch, the Pantheon of the Army, the Square of the People . . . things to take your breath away!<sup>31</sup>

### **Genesis and Prosecution of the Plan**

The principal architect of the plan—the details of which were largely worked out between June 1936 and November 1938—was Albert Speer, who had by



then risen to become Hitler's most favored and trusted architect. The driving force behind the plan, however, was Hitler. From the beginning, Hitler took an intense interest in the restructuring of the capital, intervening in every detail, particularly the north-south axis. Indeed, Hitler allegedly began thinking about remaking the city along the lines of a grand north-south boulevard as early as the mid-1920s, perhaps even taking it upon himself around that time to make early sketches of his visions for a huge triumphal arch and great domed hall.<sup>32</sup> There is also the suggestion that Hitler, as early as the 1920s, had examined previous plans for the city. Berlin had been the subject of several design competitions and presentations dating back to the Greater Berlin Competition of 1907, for which there were at least twenty-seven entries. Subsequent plans of various kinds emerged in the late 1910s and early 1920s. Hitler's ideas for Berlin likely drew from concepts borrowed from these earlier plans, particularly a 1917–1919 plan for Greater Berlin set down by the Swiss architect and city planner Martin Mächler, which featured a grand north-south axial boulevard along the line of the Victory Avenue with two great rail stations at its endpoints. A 1927 plan by modernist architect Hugo Häring had called, as did the Nazi plan for the city, for the removal of the Victory Column from the Königsplatz to create a large open space before the Reichstag.<sup>33</sup>

Soon after taking power in 1933, Hitler ordered municipal authorities to begin developing a new urban plan for the National Socialist capital, making clear his dissatisfaction with the current layout. He declared the city "unsystematic," largely due to the very rapid and uncontrolled expansion that had taken place during the decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The city's architecture was also, in Hitler's view, vastly inferior compared to other major capitals. Hitler's contempt for Berlin came through in *Mein Kampf* where he declared: "If the fate of Rome should strike Berlin, future generations would some day admire the department stores of a few Jews as the mightiest works of our era and the hotels of a few corporations as the characteristic expression of the culture of our times."<sup>34</sup> To get things underway, Hitler summoned municipal leaders to a meeting at which he laid down his basic ideas for rebuilding the capital. He also met with railroad officials to discuss reorganizing the city's transport network. Between 1933 and 1936, he consulted regularly with the Berlin Planning Office on the preparation of a plan based on his ideas.

Over time, however, Hitler grew frustrated with what he perceived as a lack of vision and commitment on the part of city officials and planners, who often balked over the scale and projected cost of his ideas. To overcome their reticence, Hitler threatened to move the capital from Berlin to a new site on the Müritzersee in Mecklenburg.<sup>35</sup> Eventually, in June 1936, he decided to show Albert Speer, who was not yet directly involved, a copy of a city plan on which Hitler had sketched corrections. From that point on, Speer became unofficially involved in the planning process, and roughly six months later

on January 30, 1937, he was officially commissioned by Hitler to oversee the project under the rather grandiose title of General Building Inspector for the Reich Capital. Speer—now ensconced along with his staff of architects and planners in the former Berlin Academy of Arts building at 4 Pariser Platz and given extraordinary powers over the Berlin city government—assumed control of the project. Yet even with Hitler's explicit backing, Speer faced numerous challenges to his authority. Berlin mayor Julius Lippert proved the most obstinate. Speer finally convinced Hitler to remove Lippert in 1940.<sup>36</sup>

Contributing to the regime's remaking of the city was a series of building projects that either preceded or arose independently from the master plan. The first of these was a renovation of the Reichsbank headquarters in central Berlin. In February 1933, just a month after becoming chancellor, Hitler took a personal interest in the design competition, which included entries from thirty of Germany's leading architects including several prominent modernist proponents, among them Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. After reviewing the tendered proposals, Hitler rejected all of them and opted instead for an unsubmitted design prepared by the bank's housing department manager, Hermann Wolff. Although work on the building was not completed until 1940, the chosen design was predictive of things to come in that it typified the sparse classicism, heroic detailing, illusion of solidarity, and oversized proportions that would eventually characterize most of the official buildings of the Third Reich. Hailed by Reichsbank president Hjalmar Schacht at the cornerstone-laying ceremony in May 1934 as "an example of what patriotic will can do in times of stress," this early prestige project was an important first step in the use of new construction in the capital as a means of heralding the ambitions and ideology of the regime.<sup>37</sup>

Another project that preceded the regime, but was quickly embraced by it, was the planning for the 1936 Berlin Olympiad. In October 1933, Hitler took it upon himself to make an official visit to the future site of the games in the Grünewald district of western Berlin. Work was already underway under the direction of Werner March to remake the existing stadium built by his father, Otto March, for the canceled 1916 games.<sup>38</sup> As with the Reichsbank headquarters expansion, Hitler intervened, expressing dissatisfaction with the direction and progress of the project. He called for an enlargement and further redesign of the stadium, as well as a 150-meter eastward shift in its location. This shift would allow sufficient space for an ambitious 131-hectare Reich Sports Field complex—consisting of an Olympic Square, the new Olympic Stadium, May Field parade grounds for open-air assemblies and exhibitions (beneath which was to be built a cavernous hall to pay tribute to the soldiers who fought in the 1914 Battle of Langemark), Waldbühne amphitheater, and associated spaces and secondary buildings—all aligned symmetrically along an east-west axis. The grounds underwent extensive landscaping and excavation, under the direction of Heinrich Wiepking-Jürgensmann, to create the impression of a complex that was modern and monumental but yet in

harmony with nature. Arno Breker, Josef Thorak, and other sculptors contributed heroically sized, chisel-featured statuary idolizing the physical beauty of Aryan athletic prowess and strength throughout the grounds. The completed 110,000-spectator oval stadium—imposingly clad in granite quarried in Franconia and ringed by tall sharp-edged stone columns—was widely regarded at the time, along with the other elements of the complex, as both a marvel of modern sport facility design as well as an unmistakable political statement about a nationally resurgent, progressively efficient, and peaceful new Germany (figure 2.6).<sup>39</sup> As March explained, the various revisions to the Olympic grounds meant that “the layout of the National Stadium should allow the

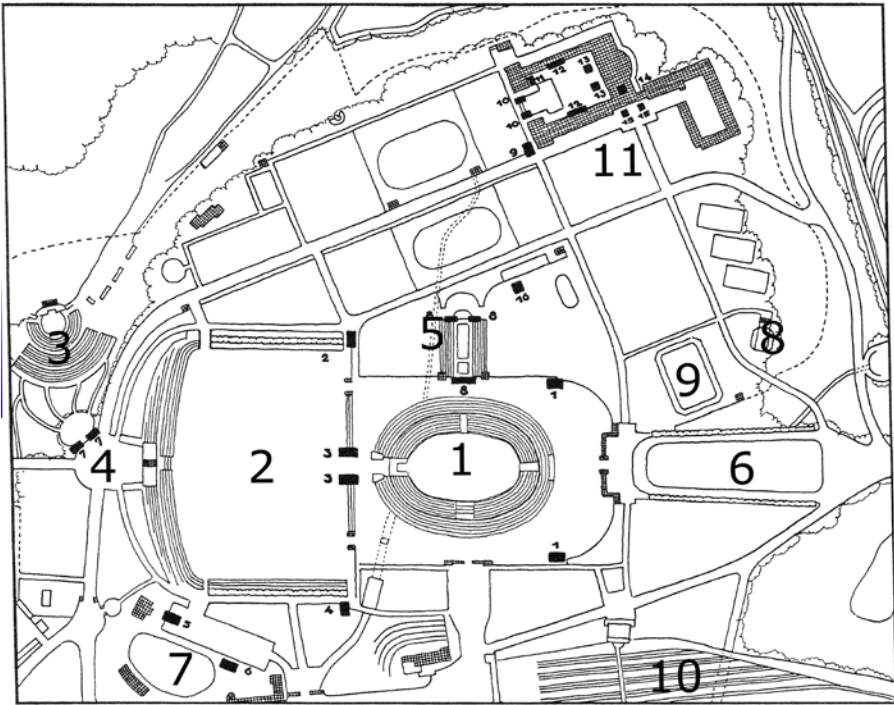


Abb. 17 Plastik im Reichssportfeld. Standorte im Lageplan

1. Karl Albiker, Diskuswerfer und Stafettenläufer 2. Willy Meller, Siegesgöttin 3. Joseph Wackerle, Rosseführer 4. Sepp Mages, Sportkameraden 5. Willy Scheibe, Reiterehrung 6. Reinhold Kübart, Turnierpferd 7. Adolf Wamper, Hochreliefs 8. Max Laeuger, Keramische Reliefs 9. Willy Meller, Eingangspfeiler 10. Adolf Strübe, Stiere 11. Georg Kolbe, Ruhender Athlet 12. Arno Lehmann, Keramischer Fries 13. Arno Breker, Bronze 14. Georg Kolbe, Zehnkämpfer 15. Waldemar Raemisch, Adlerpfeiler 16. Joseph Thorak, Faustkämpfer

### Figure 2.6. The Reich Sports Field Built for the 1936 Berlin Summer Olympics

Dubbed the Reich Sports Field, the 1936 Summer Olympic complex centered on the Olympic Plaza, the Olympic Stadium, and the May Field with its imposing clock tower with various ancillary structures in the vicinity. This map highlights the oversized statuary that tied the complex together.

Key: 1. Olympic Stadium; 2. May Field; 3. Amphitheater; 4. Clock Tower; 5. Swimming Stadium; 6. Olympic Plaza; 7. Equestrian Field; 8. Tennis Stadium; 9. Hockey Rink; 10. Train Station; 11. House of German Sport.

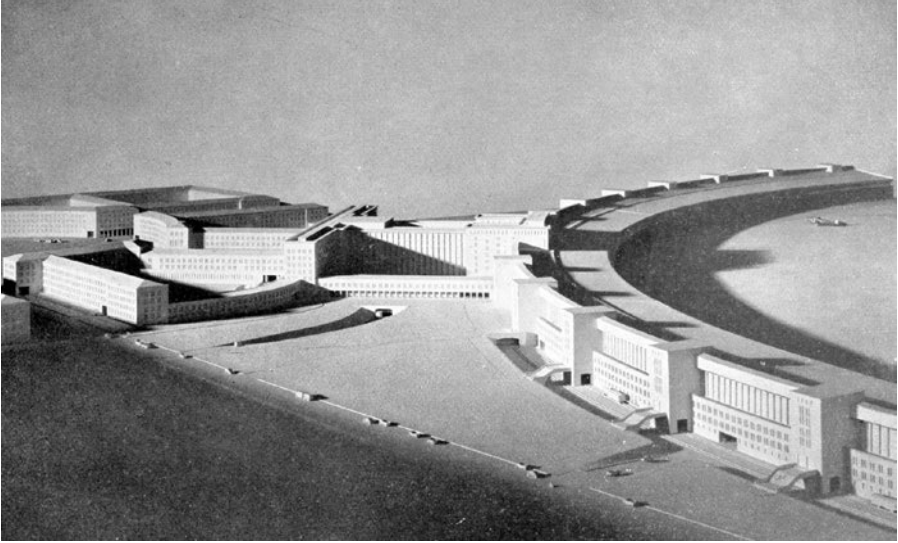
Source: March, *Bauwerk Reichssportfeld*, 41.

communal masses to be structured in a way that allows a close relationship to the Führer or the individual speakers."<sup>40</sup>

A number of other official building projects were underway by the mid-1930s. The transformation, for example, of Berlin's Lustgarten—the formal pleasure garden on the Spree Island in the heart of the capital—by Speer into a ceremonial rally space for the 1936 Olympics and other regime-sponsored events, called for paving over lawns and gardens with a rectangular grid of granite blocks and the tight enclosure of the space with viewing stands, flags, and bunting; all set amid and framed by the surrounding iconic symbols of the nation: City Palace, Cathedral, and Old Museum. The net effect was a purposely designed public rally ground within which the massed, regimented ranks of Germans would feel a sense of oneness with themselves, the movement, and the nation.<sup>41</sup> This objective soon manifested elsewhere through the proliferation of various types of assembly architecture and spaces in the other Führer cities.

Hitler's early interventions involved places or projects where construction or at least planning was already underway. The massive reconstruction of Tempelhof, the Berlin city airport established in 1923 to the south of the city center, was one of the first projects originated by the Nazi regime. Tempelhof was already one of the world's busiest airports, but Hitler ordered it rebuilt in a more grandiose form. Ernst Sagebiel, whom Hitler commissioned to oversee the project in 1934, had already established a promising career in Berlin working for modernist and Jewish German architect Erich Mendelsohn before losing his job due to the Depression.<sup>42</sup> Sagebiel joined the Nazi Party soon after it seized power. Whether his membership reflected belief or opportunism or both, Sagebiel soon became the regime's leading aviation architect and, along with Paul Ludwig Troost, helped solidify the regime's penchant for a severe modernist neoclassicism even before Speer rose to prominence.

Tempelhof was designed to be the world's largest and most modern airport. The new 285,000-square-meter steel-framed terminal building—completed between 1936 and 1941—took the unique form of a 1.2-kilometer-long sweeping arc facing an oval-shaped field (figure 2.7). Here, too, Hitler allegedly intervened, proposing the arc-shaped terminal in place of the originally contemplated series of rectangular buildings. With ceremony and display in mind, the roof of the terminal building offered tiered seating so that as many as 100,000 spectators might witness air shows and other official events. Departing passengers approached the airport through a semicircular plaza and then a smaller square guarded by two large eagle reliefs. These open spaces were lined with administrative buildings clad in smooth limestone pierced by numerous windows. The main entrance, topped by an eagle clutching a wreathed swastika, stood nearly five stories high and bore clear similarities to the later Aviation Ministry building. Guests moving inside encountered a cavernous limestone lobby bathed in light by rows of windows stretching



**Figure 2.7. Tempelhof Airport in Berlin**

Designed to be the world's largest airport, Tempelhof featured a curved terminal stretching over one kilometer that opened to an expansive grassy landing field. Passengers traveled through a broad plaza lined with matching administrative buildings, partially seen to the left, to enter the spacious lobby in the center.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:132.

from floor to ceiling. Speer's master plan for the city eventually incorporated this renovated Tempelhof as an extension of the new north-south axis.

In 1935, Sagebiel also won the commission to design, in similar gigantic-style, an office building to house the Ministry of Aviation along with the headquarters of the Luftwaffe. Stretching an entire city block along Wilhelmstrasse in the city's historic government quarter, the seven-story, 2,800-room limestone and travertine-faced structure, distinctively intimidating in appearance with severely massive facades topped with heavy cornices and inscribed with long serried rows of shallow windows and protruding window frames, was completed in just eighteen months between February 1935 and August 1936—a notable tribute to the regime's ability to marshal abundant building material and labor quickly for its prestige building projects (figure 2.8). The immense scale and importance of the building was reflected in its seemingly endless corridors, oversized staircases, and enormous cadre of officials and bureaucrats. The regime touted the finished structure as the largest office building in Europe and an example of how National Socialist architecture strove to “combine practical purpose with symbolic form.”<sup>43</sup> At both the Aviation Ministry and Tempelhof, Sagebiel's rather stark designs differed from Speer's neoclassicism, perhaps reflecting the modernist influences of his former employer.



**Figure 2.8. The Aviation Ministry in Berlin**

The new Aviation Ministry in Berlin featured a facade of smooth stone pierced by rigid rows of windows to convey a sleek, modernist look. That, combined with the breakneck speed of construction, epitomized the Nazi regime's efforts to present itself as efficient, capable, and progressive.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:68.

Speer was actively involved in government- and Party-sponsored building projects within the city from the beginning. Speer first displayed a knack for theatrics, as well as architecture, while supervising the 1933 May Day celebrations. The staging relied on copious numbers of swastika banners, flags, standards, and other decorative elements to transform the Tempelhof field into an intensely political rally space. Speer soon employed this same flair staging the Nuremberg rallies. Also in 1933, Speer became involved with Troost's renovation of the Chancellery building as liaison to the building trades, a post that brought him into regular contact with Hitler, who followed the project closely and to whom Speer delivered daily briefings.

Hitler eventually charged Speer, in January 1938, with designing and building an entirely new Chancellery (figure 2.9). Less than a year later, the project was completed, and the "new Berlin" possessed an official state building from which the nation's diplomatic and administrative affairs could be conducted. The Chancellery was suitably intimidating in its overall dimensions, stark gray neoclassical exterior, and sumptuous interior designed to impress and overwhelm any visiting dignitary—the main hall was twice as long as the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles (figure 2.10).<sup>44</sup> In fact, the planning for the Chancellery began well before 1938. Hitler had



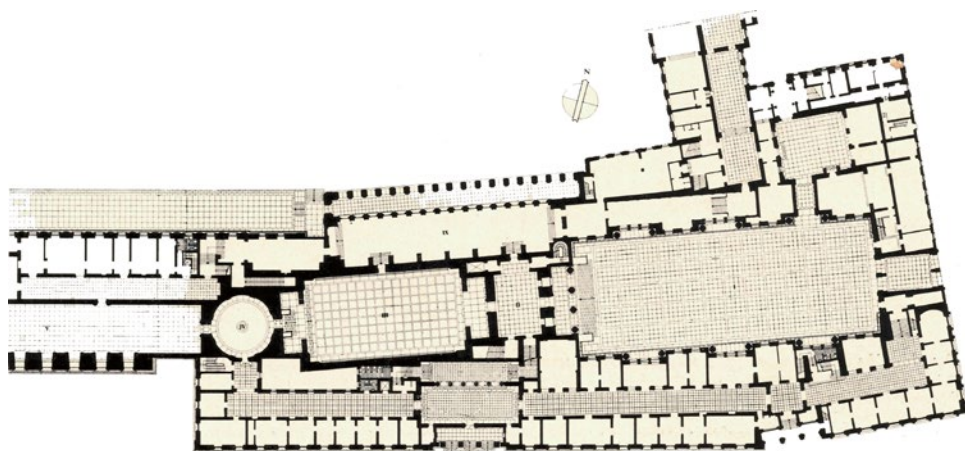
**Figure 2.9. The Court of Honor Entrance to the New Reich Chancellery in Berlin**

The regime heralded the new Reich Chancellery as testament to its engineering and organizational prowess. The main entrance was through an imposing and austere interior courtyard, dubbed the Court of Honor, flanked by two super-sized bronze statues representing the armed forces and the Party done by Arno Breker. The building's modernist neoclassicism and sheer size were characteristic of Hitler's earlier monumental building projects.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:73.

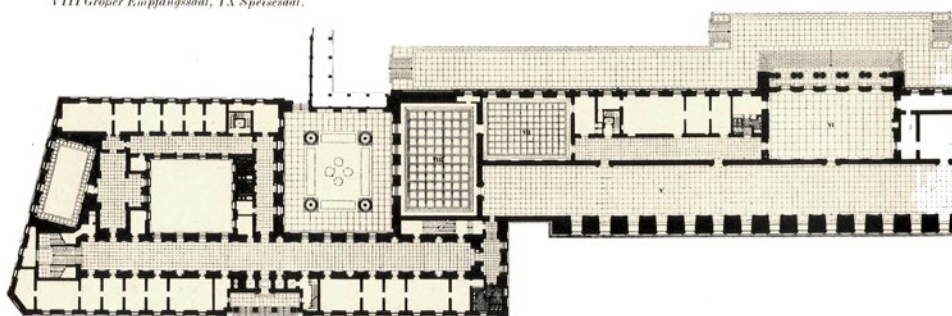
prepared some initial sketches as early as 1935 and ordered Speer to begin preparations in June of that year.<sup>45</sup> Nonetheless, the Nazi-controlled media hailed the remarkably speedy construction of the building as a triumph of National Socialist architectural and construction prowess, with Speer taking full credit for the feat. Speer had become a part of Hitler's inner circle and already made an imprint on the new National Socialist capital, even before taking over as Hitler's chief architect.

For all practical purposes, the master plan for Berlin grew out of close collaboration between Hitler and Speer. Many of the basic ideas and designs originated with Hitler, but it was Speer who, with the assistance of his rapidly growing staff, fleshed them out and developed them into viable components of a larger scheme. The lure of Hitler's grandiose plans eventually garnered contributions from many prominent conservative architects initially shunned by the regime, including Peter Behrens, German Bestelmeyer, Paul Bonatz, and Wilhelm Kreis. Speer later described Hitler's almost child-like delight in poring over, and in showing others, detailed wooden and plaster scale models of the grand north-south axis. The models were specially constructed, artfully illuminated with spotlights to



*Hauptgeschoss (S.12 u.13). M. 1:1250.*

*I Ehrenhof, II Vorhalle, III Mosaik-  
saal, IV Runder Saal, V Marmor-  
galerie, VI Arbeitszimmer des Füh-  
rers, VII Reichskabinett-Sitzungs-  
saal, VIII Großer Empfangssaal, IX Speisesaal.*



**Figure 2.10. Building Floor Plan of the New Reich Chancellery in Berlin**

A series of grandiose interior spaces complemented yet also contrasted the new Reich Chancellery's austere exterior. Visitors would enter through the Court of Honor, on the top right, to pass through the Mosaic Hall and the Round Room before reaching the Marble Gallery. Stretching nearly 150 meters long, the gallery, like the other interior spaces, sported opulent finishes and fixtures but was rather sparsely furnished. Hitler's personal office, toward the bottom right, was located halfway along the gallery and opened onto the Chancellery gardens.

*Source:* Nonn, "Die neue Reichskanzlei und die Führerbauten in ihrer kulturpolitischen Bedeutung," 1048–49.

capture scenes as they would appear at different times of day, and kept on constant display in the former exhibition rooms of the Berlin Academy of Arts for Hitler's private pleasure.<sup>46</sup> During the latter war years, Hitler sought solace in revisiting again and again with Speer the plans for post-war Berlin and the other Führer cities.

Construction work on the master plan commenced in summer 1938. Most of the early work focused on widening and improving the existing



east-west axis and clearing space at various sites for the projected north-south axis and new rail stations. Unter den Linden underwent a face-lift in preparation for the 1936 Olympics. That work now extended westward to the Charlottenburger Chaussee, which was widened, given a median strip, a martial framing of monumental plinths and columns, and new ornamental street lighting specially designed by Speer. Work also commenced on a system of underground tunnels that would smoothly route traffic from one axis to the other at their projected intersection. In the center of the Tiergarten, the Great Star roundabout intersection was graced by the Victory Column relocated from in front of the Reichstag. To enhance this monumental exclamation point, the traffic circle around the Victory Column was widened to more than twice its former size, and the addition of an extra stone tambour at its base raised the height of the relocated column by 7.5 meters. Pedestrian access was provided by the construction of four subterranean passages accessed through four neoclassically styled stone guardhouses set on the periphery of the roundabout. The completed Charlottenburger Chaussee project, which extended westward through the grounds of the new technical university near the Olympic sports complex, saw immediate political service for the regime as a ceremonial parade axis for the games, as well as for political and military parades.

Elsewhere, work was underway before the end of 1938 on clearing the bend of the Spree in preparation for laying the foundations for the Great Hall and the reflecting basin leading to the new North Station, on the approaches to the planned Round Plaza roundabout on the north-south boulevard, and on the site of the future South Station. During an official ceremony on June 14, 1938, Hitler laid the cornerstone of the House of Tourism, the only master plan building actually to be built (or largely built before construction stopped in 1942) along the projected north-south axis. This large-winged structure, centered on a concave colonnaded facade, stood solitary watch during the war years over the otherwise cleared but still undeveloped site of the Round Plaza. The year 1938 also saw the removal of the statues along the Victory Avenue to another part of the Tiergarten to make way for construction on the north-south axis, as well as the beginning of demolition work on scattered sites elsewhere along the path of the axis.

Private and semiofficial construction projects were also underway at various points around Berlin. A surviving example is the Nordstern Insurance Company office, part of a horseshoe-shaped ensemble of buildings constructed during the 1930s to house government and private offices on Fehrbelliner Square in the western part of the city. Designed by Otto Firle, this T-shaped structure with its gently curving frontal facade displays all the distinguishing features of National Socialist official buildings: steel frame, natural stone facing, shallow recessed windows and doors with heavy protruding frames, pronounced symmetry, and sparse decoration. The private sector wished to proclaim its loyalty by mimicking the regime's official

building style. The private sector also wished to be prominently situated within the New Berlin, as evidenced by the speed with which it claimed building sites along the proposed north-south axis or in the Tiergarten embassy quarter, like the combination office building and guesthouse built by the Krupp conglomerate to accommodate employees conducting business in the capital designed by Paul Mebes and Paul Emmerich.

Work on the master plan slowed with the onset of war in September 1939 but picked up again by spring 1940. Dissatisfied with the slow rate of progress to that point (only around 7,000 dwellings out of a planned 52,000 had been demolished and cleared), Speer made the decision in May 1940 to begin using dynamite to level entire city blocks at a time and to employ concentration camp inmates to clear debris. The demolitions displaced thousands and proceeded in parallel with the eviction and deportation of much of Berlin's Jewish community to the east. A short time later, in a burst of enthusiasm following the surrender of France, Hitler tried to accelerate efforts by issuing an official proclamation prioritizing his Berlin projects (along with the other Führer cities) and stating his expectation that the projects be completed by 1950.<sup>47</sup> Space for the Great Hall was quickly cleared, for example, but little in the way of actual construction followed.

Nonetheless, despite the distractions of war and the consequent diversion of strategic material and labor, demolition work along the projected north-south axis continued doggedly into late 1942—only to be aided, rather ironically, thereafter by the devastating effects of Allied bombing raids. The chronicle of Speer's bureau actually characterized the bombing as "valuable preparatory work for the purposes of the redesign" of Berlin.<sup>48</sup> Near the height of his power in October 1941, Hitler privately confided that "Berlin will one day be the capital of the world."<sup>49</sup> The following June, Hitler even reportedly contemplated a new name for his capital to help integrate Germanic peoples across Europe into the Nazi empire: "The name Germania for the capital of the Reich in its new representative form would be very appropriate, for it would give to every member of the German community, however far away from the capital he may be, a feeling of unity and closer membership."<sup>50</sup> Less than a year later in March 1943, work on the plan to reshape Berlin was formally abandoned.

Speer estimated the public cost of the Berlin rebuilding plan at 4–6 billion Reichsmarks, but this is undoubtedly low. Initial estimates prepared by Speer's staff in February 1938 put the cost of Reich government buildings at a little more than 4 billion Reichsmarks, but this listing lacked estimates for several projects, including the Great Hall and the Führer Palace, as well as the costs for businesses, Party offices, railroads, and streets. The Great Hall alone was scheduled to cost 600 million Reichsmarks by 1944, just to prepare the site for actual construction. Speer's staff estimated the final cost for the Great Hall at 2.15 billion Reichsmarks in 1943, while one contemporary, independent estimate put the final tally as high as 6 billion Reichsmarks.<sup>51</sup>

## THE CITY OF THE PARTY RALLIES

The redesign of the nation's capital made little progress beyond planning and demolition. In contrast, the transformation of Nuremberg, the host city of the annual Nazi Party rallies, moved ahead rapidly during the prewar years. This was, in large part, a simple function of the special role the city played as the stage on which the largest, most choreographed event of the Nazi political calendar—involving hundreds of thousands of on-site participants and experienced through the media by tens of millions more across Germany and countless others around the world—was performed.<sup>52</sup> Although rallies had been held in Munich in 1923 and in Weimar in 1926, the gatherings of the Party faithful took place in Nuremberg in 1927 and 1929. By the time the city had been called upon to host its third rally in 1933, Hitler had officially designated Nuremberg as the permanent rally site. Thereafter, every September from 1934 until the outbreak of war brought about the suspension of the rallies in 1939, Nuremberg played host to what had by then become an elaborate eight-day political ritual. Staging the rallies required an extensive rally ground building program, as well as a systematic reworking of the city's historic center. Because of the immense propaganda value of the Party rallies along with the intense backing of Hitler, Nuremberg enjoyed a certain priority status over the other Führer cities when it came to the allocation of resources. Indeed, the city had become a veritable beehive of construction and restoration activity by the mid-1930s, earning it the sobriquet of "the world's largest building site."

The choice of Nuremberg as the permanent rally site appears, at first glance, somewhat incongruous. The city had a reputation as a "red" stronghold and had not been especially supportive of the Nazis during their rise to power. Moreover, while the city had hosted previous rallies, the municipal government had been noticeably less than enthusiastic about the undertaking and seemed lukewarm at best to become the permanent venue.<sup>53</sup> At the same time, there were distinct advantages. The city's location was readily accessible from all parts of Germany, a point proven by the fact that the 1927 and 1929 rallies had been well attended. Nuremberg also had, already in place, the kind of public facilities and grounds necessary for staging such an event. But most important, Nuremberg had immense propaganda value as a truly iconic "German" city, because in the minds of most Germans the city possessed symbolic associations with the nation's history, art, and culture stemming from its glory days as an imperial city during the Middle Ages. These attributes fit perfectly with the regime's desire to build among Germans a growing sense of national pride. Holding the annual Party rallies in Nuremberg offered the opportunity to accomplish that goal by connecting the regime's vision of a new and glorious National Socialist future with a romantically inspiring symbol of Germany's national past.

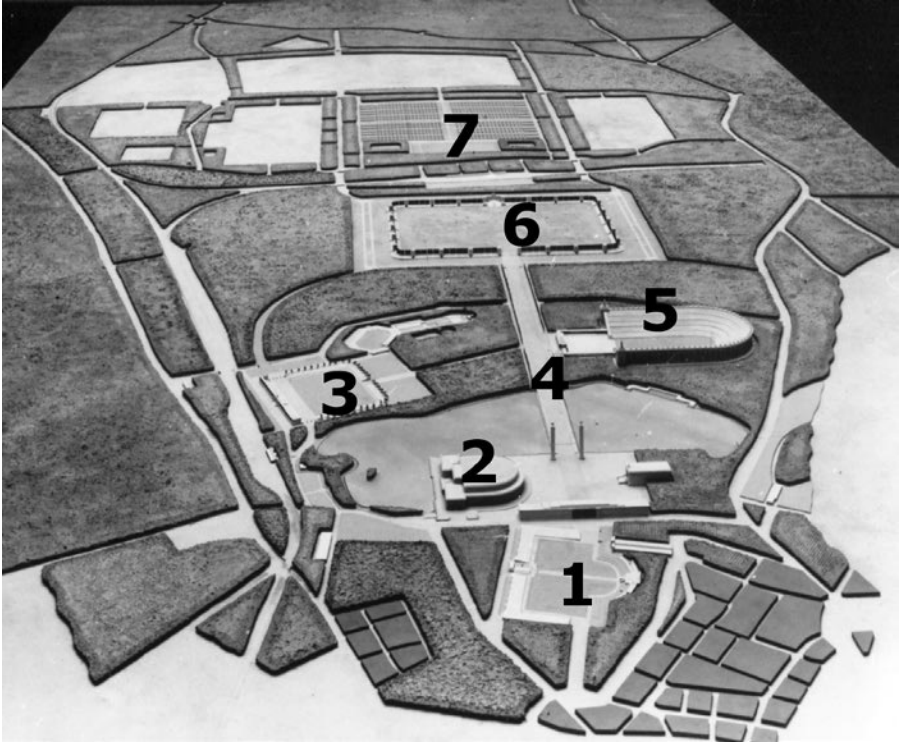
### **Nazi-Era Construction, Cleansing, Restoration, and Preservation**

Accordingly, the regime's building plans for Nuremberg called for the simultaneous pursuit of massive new construction projects on the city's periphery—to provide a dedicated permanent venue for rally events and activities—and a concerted program for the cleansing, restoration, and preservation of the city's historic center. The rally grounds complex on the city's southeast periphery evolved from a municipal park and recreation ground. The site already possessed a landscaped park known as the Luitpold Grove, which contained a 1930 stone memorial to local soldiers who perished during World War I; a 16,000-capacity meeting hall; the picturesque Dutzendteich Lake with its lakeside café; a zoo; a number of sporting fields; a public swimming pool; and a municipal stadium with a capacity of 50,000.<sup>54</sup> The completed rally grounds complex would cover an immense area of 16.5 square kilometers as it developed under the auspices of a special public corporation created in 1935 to partner the city of Nuremberg, the state of Bavaria, the Reich, and the Nazi Party. As early as fall 1934, Speer had produced a master plan for the entire complex (figure 2.11). Mayor Willy Liebel and other local officials spearheaded the concomitant cleansing, restoration, and preservation of the city's historic center.

The development of the grounds began by reworking the Luitpold Grove and its Hall of Honor necropolis. Redubbed the Luitpold Arena, the grove space transformed from a landscaped park to a leveled field flanked by massive stone grandstands topped by a wall of banners and featuring a granite pathway leading across the field from the stands to the foot of the necropolis. On the seventh day of the rallies, this open-air arena's special role was to provide the stage on which Hitler and his entourage passed solemnly along the granite pathway, past the massed ranks of 150,000 Sturmabteilung (SA) and Schutzstaffel (SS) troopers, to pay homage to the nation's and Party's martyred dead.

The second alteration was the transformation of the Zeppelin Field—an amateur sports field named after the German airship pioneer who used it briefly for experimental flights in 1909—into a squarish, stadium-like ceremonial space for staging massive rallies. Designed by Speer and constructed between 1934 and 1936, the field's most impressive feature was the main tribune, a grandiose 350-meter-long stone grandstands that stretched the length of one end flanked at either end by massive pylons and topped by a colonnaded screen bearing a giant swastika set in an oak-leaf wreath. From the Führer's rostrum, a squarish raised podium jutted out from the center of the tribune. Here, Hitler took center stage as he addressed massed audiences, reviewed processions of Party organizations, or witnessed demonstrations by the armed forces.

The Zeppelin Field seemed somewhat redundant since it served the same basic function as the Luitpold Arena without being significantly larger. Yet



**Figure 2.11. The Main Structures of the Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg**

This model illustrates the general spatial layout of the rally grounds complex. The most iconic images of the rallies were of events that took place in the Luitpold Arena and Zeppelin Field, the only major components of the plan to reach completion.

Key: 1. Luitpold Arena; 2. Congress Hall; 3. Zeppelin Field; 4. Great Road; 5. German Stadium; 6. March Field; 7. Langwasser Camp.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:26.

the Zeppelin Field was a significant refinement in Nazi spatial design and assembly architecture. The Luitpold Arena was rectangular with the Hall of Honor and speaker's rostrum facing each other along the longer sides with the rostrum set back in a semicircle. This arrangement resulted in rather awkward orientations and sight lines between the rostrum, hall, and the nearest corners, while also setting up two juxtaposing symbolic focal points. In contrast, the Zeppelin Field was square with the main tribune clearly accentuated as the dominant side. The Führer rostrum's more forward position clearly set it as the sole focal point. The Luitpold Arena may have enclosed a large space, but the Zeppelin Field, as one account of its construction states, "encloses a large space, but it encloses it in order to align those assembled within toward an ending point," in this case Hitler's speaking platform.<sup>55</sup>

The elaborate pageantry staged within the Zeppelin Field proved captivating. Witnessing the scene in 1937, the British ambassador described



**Figure 2.12. The Zeppelin Field's Cathedral of Light at the Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg**  
The Zeppelin Field hosted some of the most memorable scenes of Nazi power. Filled with massive formations of marching Nazi storm troopers bearing Party standards and other regalia, this space provided a monumental enclosure for meticulously choreographed pageantry. Surrounded by searchlights aimed directly upward into the night sky, the Zeppelin Field transformed into an ephemeral cathedral of light.

Source: Nuremberg City Archives.

the field surrounded with several hundred searchlights pointed upward to create the effect of a lofty enclosure (figure 2.12). "The effect, which was both solemn and beautiful," the ambassador continued, "was like being inside a cathedral of ice." Combined with tens of thousands of Nazi troopers marching in massed formations amid a sea of banners, flags, standards, and spotlights, the overall scene was "indescribably picturesque . . . as a display of aggregate strength it was ominous; as a triumph of mass organization combined with beauty it was superb."<sup>56</sup>

Two other outdoor-event facilities were planned and begun, although neither was completed. The first was the German Stadium, an immense horseshoe-shaped sport facility, magnificently fronted at its open end by an oversized reddish-gray granite propylaeum and colonnaded courtyard (figure 2.13). The stadium would seat an almost inconceivable 405,000 spectators and become the permanent home of the Olympic Games. Hitler laid the cornerstone for this 350-meter-long and 150-meter-wide colossus in 1937 and ordered a mock test section laid out, but serious construction never began.



**Figure 2.13. Model of the German Stadium Planned for the Party Rally Grounds in Nuremberg**

This model vaguely hints at the colossal magnitude of the planned German Stadium. Designed to accommodate more than 400,000 spectators, the stadium was intended to host all future Olympic Games, assuming Hitler's grandiose plans came to fruition. The influence of ancient Greek and Roman architecture, inflated to unbelievable proportions, was a common hallmark of Hitler's monumental building program.

*Source:* Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:32.

The second, massive facility—on which work was underway by 1938—was the March Field, laid out on the southern edge of the rally grounds on the site of an army parade and exercise field. The impetus behind its construction was the realization that the Zeppelin Field would be too small to hold the ever-larger rallies anticipated for the future. Surrounded by twenty-six stone towers crowned by eagles—and appearing much like a medieval fortress—the March Field, at nearly a kilometer wide and more than half a kilometer long, was designed to hold up to half a million rally-goers, nearly twice the capacity of the Zeppelin Field.

The March Field was also the terminus of the rally ground's central axis or Great Road. Completed in 1939, the one-hundred-meter-wide grand processional way, paved with 60,000 gigantic square slabs of gray granite, was aligned with the viewing stand on the southeast side of the March Field from which it—in a rather obvious attempt to link the rally grounds to the "greatness" of the historic host city—cut directly across the rally grounds in the direction of the distant silhouette of Nuremberg's old imperial castle, perched on the heights above the far side of the old city center.

The other rally grounds megastructure was the Congress Hall, begun in 1935 on the northwest shore of the Dutzendteich Lake. Altered by Hitler after his 1938 visit to Rome to mimic the external appearance to the Roman Colosseum, the Ludwig and Franz Ruff–designed structure would provide indoor auditorium seating for up to 50,000 Party rally delegates, with room for 2,400 more attendees and 900 standards on the main stage.<sup>57</sup> The huge glazed ceiling would be translucent. Most of the building’s sixty-meter-high outer shell was completed before the outbreak of war, but the interior and roof were never finished.

The rally grounds were complemented by the construction of a host of other auxiliary structures and facilities, including a multi-winged SS barracks built between 1937 and 1939 and a number of extensive camps built around the peripheries to accommodate the swarms of rally-goers belonging to various organized groups, such as the SA, SS, Labor Service, Strength through Joy, Hitler Youth, and League of German Girls. The largest of these camps, the Langwasser, could accommodate more than 200,000 rally-goers. In addition, two railway stations, a power station, and a water tower rounded out the rally ground’s basic infrastructure.

In Nuremberg’s city center, work proceeded along two fronts: the restoration and preservation of historical structures and the removal of the “building sins” of previous generations, particularly commercial buildings of modernist design. The intent was to reframe the past in such a way that the Nazi Party under Hitler’s leadership appeared to play the central role in reconciling the nation’s cultural greatness and modernity while saving the nation from racial and cultural degeneration. Taking up the cause, Mayor Liebel was quick to declare that “the National Socialist city administration considers it as one of its most important tasks to preserve the countless beauties of the old town and to free it from the defacements that it was partially exposed to in recent decades.”<sup>58</sup> In order to demonstrate the Party’s commitment to this cause, Liebel ordered work to begin immediately on the “restoration of architectural and artistic monuments threatened by decay, the purification of disturbing advertising and architectural disfigurements from the image of the old town, and the renovation of the old town.”<sup>59</sup>

These efforts focused initially on Nuremberg’s main market square, the historic center of the city and a space that figured prominently in the pageantry of the annual rallies as a site for parades and other ceremonial activities. Officials began by simply renaming it Adolf Hitler Square. By early 1934, more substantive changes were underway, targeting in particular the square’s telegraph building, a late nineteenth-century neo-Gothic structure that the authorities singled out as an “unbearable foreign body” inconsonant with the square’s medieval charm.<sup>60</sup> The building accordingly received a face-lift that altered its facade and roofline to complement neighboring structures. As a final touch, anti-Semitic wall murals were added to project



an unmistakable message. Elsewhere around the square, the windows and doors of buildings were realigned to create an appropriately harmonious visual and ideologically correct effect.

Meanwhile in the northwest corner of the old town, work began on the restoration of Nuremberg's medieval imperial castle. The castle's renovation focused on a systematic cleansing of many interior modifications made during the previous century with the goal of restoring the structure to a "pure and unadulterated state."<sup>61</sup> Later projects converted portions of the castle complex into an immense youth hostel in the hope that the Hitler Youth who stayed there while attending the annual rallies might be appropriately inspired by the power and dignity of the place. Other cleansing and restoration projects included the removal of refuse and vegetation from the city's neglected medieval fortifications and the repair or reconstruction of dilapidated sections of the city's medieval wall in order to create unobstructed views of romantic old battlements and moats. The town hall, Holy Spirit Hospital, and several churches also received restorative attention, while Nuremberg's large late nineteenth-century Moorish-style synagogue, vilified for its "foreign-style" and disproportionate size, was summarily demolished in 1938—shortly before *Kristallnacht*—along with a host of other perceived "building sins" throughout the town.

In addition to various government projects, authorities placed considerable pressure on private property owners to make aesthetic changes to structures that failed to meet newly enacted building standards due to excessive commercialism, as well as foreign and modern influences. Home and business owners, often with financial incentives, undertook efforts to project an "old German" look through renovations that exposed half-timbering, replaced flat roofs with gabled peaks, and substituted traditional-looking signage in place of more obtrusive or garish modern forms. By 1941, the city administration proudly claimed credit for the restoration of some 400 buildings.<sup>62</sup> The net effect was a thoroughly medieval-looking cityscape, which had become an integral part of the elaborately staged rally events. Some of the most impressive and memorable rally events were the massed-rank parades through the winding streets of the old town, romantically framed along the way by bunting-draped, half-timbered facades and red-tiled, gabled roofs.

The Nazi building program in Nuremberg's historic center allowed the regime to demonstrate its support for preserving Germany's medieval treasures, a laudable goal in the eyes of most Germans, while at the same time connecting the Third Reich with the perceived golden age of the medieval Holy Roman Empire. To advance this narrative, officials and preservationists sought to erase from the urban landscape anything separating this idealized past from the Nazi claims of a glorious present and future. In essence, the regime's building program provided a means for connecting medieval Germany and Nazi Germany, and of drawing parallels between the regime's

calls for forging a traditional, cohesive, and ordered community through greater discipline, obedience, and sacrifice by the people.

### The Old and the New Nuremberg

The Nazi building program in Nuremberg had two very different facets: the planning and construction of the mammoth, modernized neoclassical structures on the rally grounds just outside the city and the relatively small-scale reworking within the old town of structures and spaces deemed inconsonant with Nuremberg's romanticized image. While seemingly contradictory, those leading the two projects saw them as complementary, intertwined efforts to create and project images of national greatness, political legitimacy, and future grandeur. The rally grounds and old town improvements together symbolized Nuremberg's and Germany's renewal and rejuvenation. For Friedrich Bock, a local library director and author of a 1938 book titled *Nuremberg: From City of the Imperial Diets to the City of the Party Rallies*, this was a thrilling, uplifting narrative of rebirth and resurrection of national greatness under the leadership of the Nazi Party.<sup>63</sup> The author of another period book written for girls likened Nuremberg to the story of Sleeping Beauty. The text recalled how, like the fairy-tale princess, a once beautiful and vibrant city endured a long and anguished slumber, only to be reawakened by Hitler to its former grandeur and a bright future as the "center point of the Reich."<sup>64</sup>

The symbolic connection between the old imperial city and the new rally grounds was a constant propaganda theme, for example, in solemn pronouncements that "every German girl and German boy will burn with desire to see the old and the new Nuremberg."<sup>65</sup> To make the symbolic connection clear, as noted previously, the grand axis of the rally grounds was purposely aligned with the imperial castle to the northwest. The axial relationship between rally grounds and imperial castle was made clear through their juxtaposition on the September 1938 cover of the magazine *Die neue Linie*, while the September 1939 cover of the girls' magazine *NS-Frauen Warte* visually portrayed the connection between the two Nurembergs by showing an eagle, a traditional symbol of German greatness, passing over an image of the Zeppelin Field set against the turreted skyline of the walled medieval city.<sup>66</sup>

The staging and performances of the rallies deliberately reinforced that message. Parade routes of the various Nazi organizations were laid out so as to connect the imperial castle; a thoroughly cleansed, restored, and preserved Adolf Hitler Square; and the new rally grounds complex (figure 2.14). The performative link between the old and the new was vividly captured in Leni Riefenstahl's imaginatively filmed documentary of the 1934 rallies, *Triumph of the Will*. The film opens with footage of Hitler's arrival over Nuremberg by plane, followed by his jubilant entry into old Nuremberg interspersed by shots of the city's historic center. Toward the end of the film,



**Figure 2.14. Columns of Soldiers and Nazi Troopers Marching through Nuremberg's Old Town** Nuremberg's old town provided a secondary venue for the Party rallies. The regime had its medieval buildings systematically restored with an emphasis on uncovering half-timbering and removing modern-looking advertising. Massed columns of soldiers and Nazi troopers marched through the old town amid great fanfare and cheering crowds. A film crew perches on a ladder below the swastika flags, documenting the scene for propaganda purposes.

*Source:* Nuremberg City Archives.

another extended sequence of shots intermingles coverage of rally ground events, footage of Hitler reviewing his troopers parading across Adolf Hitler Square, and lingering views of Nuremberg's old streetscapes.

The high status afforded to Nuremberg was indicative of its unique position within the Nazi building program. Summarizing the First German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition, one writer generalized the regime's

building program as focused on the hierarchical reordering and renewal of the city, the field, the camp, the youth, the street, and craftsmanship as the key venues for instilling a sense of national community and purpose.<sup>67</sup> The amalgamation of the old and the new Nuremberg was the most vivid combination of these disparate settings.

## THE OTHER FÜHRER CITIES

Hitler elevated three other cities to the status of Führer cities: Munich, Hamburg, and Linz. Munich, which held not one but two honorary titles—Capital of the Movement and Capital of German Art—received considerable early attention and saw the development of grandiose plans to redesign the city in the years leading up to the war. In the case of Hamburg—the Capital of German Shipping and Gateway to the World—little was actually done, but ambitious plans emerged to alter the existing urban landscape by relocating the city center, constructing a gigantic suspension bridge across the Elbe, and building a skyscraper for the regional Party headquarters that would far surpass the heights of any American rival. The Nazi building program for Hitler's hometown Linz—dubbed the Patronage City of the Führer—barely progressed beyond the planning stage but envisioned the city as the cultural capital of the Third Reich and, somewhat incongruously, an industrial center. The plans for these cities, along with those for Berlin and Nuremberg, were for Hitler a constant pre-occupation. He was in more or less constant contact with the planners and their staffs, frequently summoning them for consultations, and poring delightedly at every opportunity over the scale models assembled to display the grandiose changes envisioned for his five Führer cities.

### Capital of the Movement and Capital of German Art

Munich was incredibly important for the regime because of its special role as the birthplace of the Nazi movement and home of the Party's national headquarters.<sup>68</sup> Hitler underlined that importance in August 1935 by bestowing upon Munich the honorific title of Capital of the Movement despite already declaring it as the Capital of German Art in October 1933. The city quickly became a high-profile site of propaganda and pilgrimage for Party faithful. It was the site of annual celebrations of the Party's early years of struggle and eventual triumph, as well as hallowed as the ideological center of the movement. Hitler had suggested the city's special status years earlier when he wrote in *Mein Kampf*: "The geo-political significance of one central focal point for a movement cannot be overestimated. Only the presence of such a place, exerting the magic spell of a Mecca or a Rome, can in the long run give the movement a force which is based on inner

unity and the recognition of a summit representing this unity.”<sup>69</sup> The city was equally notable for a series of initiatives to proclaim its importance as the capital of German art, including numerous festivals and extravagantly staged parades to showcase German cultural achievements and political success.<sup>70</sup> Munich was, in the imagination of the regime, to become a center of art and fashion that would outshine Paris.<sup>71</sup>

Given its ideological and cultural importance, Munich played an early and influential role in the evolution of the regime’s building program. Munich hosted one of the regime’s first high-profile building projects, the gargantuanly scaled, heavily columned House of German Art, designed on Hitler’s orders by the architect Paul Ludwig Troost (figure 2.15). The close collaboration between Troost and Hitler on the design of the building exerted considerable influence on the aesthetic appearance of subsequent monumental buildings. Construction on the neoclassical building adjacent to the city’s English Garden began on October 15, 1933—the Day of German Art—and was inaugurated in July 1937 in time for the infamous antimodernist Greater German Art Exhibition. Munich also saw the completion of the



**Figure 2.15. The House of German Art in Munich**

The House of German Art was one of the Nazi regime’s first major building projects. Its stark lines, neoclassicist forms, and monumental proportions suited Hitler’s personal architectural tastes and helped inaugurate the regime’s official style for prominent government buildings. The house also served as an exhibition hall to proclaim the regime’s view of arts, crafts, and furnishings.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:22.

regime's first monumental ensemble on the site of the Königsplatz, which again was much influenced by Troost's early designs.

Subsequent efforts resulted in the completion of numerous administrative buildings in and around the city center and eventually grandiose plans involving massive construction projects across the city, but the redesign of the Königsplatz was the more prominent building project completed. This neo-classical square—laid out near the center of the city in the early nineteenth century by Bavaria's Hellenophilic King Ludwig I—was one of Munich's most recognizable cultural icons and a popular destination among locals and visitors. Bisected by Brienerstrasse, a major east-west boulevard, the idyllically grassy rectangular square was fronted on three sides by imposing limestone-faced neoclassical structures—on the west by a Doric-style propylaeum inspired by the Athenian Acropolis, which served as a gated entrance to the square; on the north by the ionic-style Glyptotek, a museum of Greek and Roman antiquities; and on the south by a Corinthian-styled classical art exhibition hall known as the New Gallery.<sup>72</sup>

By the end of 1933, Troost, working closely with Hitler, had come up with a plan that gave the square a new look and a new identity. After Troost's untimely death in 1934, Leonhard Gall directed Troost's studio and supervised the execution of his prior commissions.<sup>73</sup> Troost's widow, Gerdy Troost, took an active role in managing her late husband's affairs, in effect serving as the studio's business manager. Gerdy also assumed chief responsibility for the interior decoration of her husband's buildings.<sup>74</sup> Hitler held Gerdy in high regard and valued her judgment; so much that Hitler entrusted her with the interior design of his private living spaces in the Old Chancellery, the Berg-hof estate near Obersalzberg, and his apartment in Munich. Gerdy's designs drew from her husband's work on ocean liners to create a carefully crafted atmosphere of "sparse classicism."<sup>75</sup>

The Königsplatz plan, which was largely kept secret until March 1934, called for filling in the open east side with four new structures. Completed in fall 1935 across the square's main axis of approach were two identical, classically columned honor temples built to house the sarcophagi of the sixteen martyrs killed in the Nazi movement's abortive 1923 putsch. The two temples, which in the rear opened to a garden space, became a focus of Nazi ritual as altars of the movement. Completed in 1937 to either side of the pair of temples were two nearly identical heavily neoclassical buildings—Hitler's personal office to the north and the Party administrative headquarters to the south. Like the House of German Art, the office buildings were box-like neoclassical limestone structures with heavy cornices and porticos featuring modernist Doric-styled columns to complement the older existing buildings on the other sides of the square, but otherwise rather sparsely decorated aside from large bronze eagles and wreathed swastikas (figure 2.16). No changes were made to the existing buildings, but the square itself



**Figure 2.16. The New Führer Building Adjacent Munich's Königsplatz**

Featuring an austere neoclassicism and minimal decoration, the two Party office buildings on Munich's Königsplatz were indicative of the regime's earliest monumental structures. The Führer Building shown here served as Hitler's personal office, although he rarely used it in practice. Its twin, partially shown to the right, provided office space for Party bureaucrats.

*Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 11.*

was isolated from traffic, paved over in 1935 with huge granite slabs quarried from all over Germany, and equipped with two tall spread-eagle-topped flagpoles and sixteen bronze twin-lantern lampposts.

Troost's redesign of the Königsplatz served several functions. It provided the city and the regime with a monumentally scaled ceremonial assembly space that could be used for state functions, political rallies, and Party gatherings, especially the annual November marches and cultic rituals of remembrance associated with the 1923 putsch. Indeed, Party propagandists touted the redesigned square as the "Forum of the Movement." Like Nuremberg, the Königsplatz provided the regime with a symbolic spatial and architectural representation of national renewal under Nazi rule. The new square symbolized both the rise of a "new Munich" from the chaos and paralysis of the Weimar period and the union of old and new into a vigorous new national community, thereby conferring historical legitimacy to Hitler's regime. Indeed, contemporary German press coverage emphasized how the project symbolized a completion of the Königsplatz space, rather

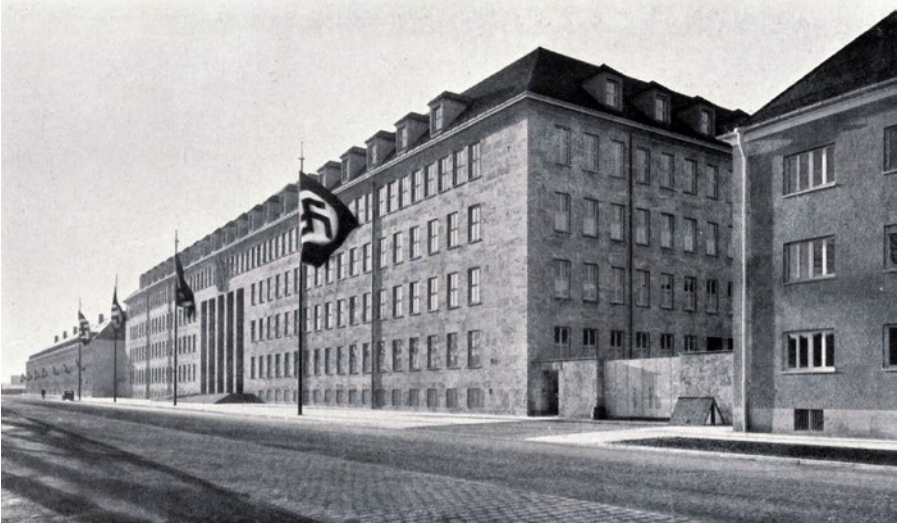
than a mere addition or alteration. The Party press was equally adamant in attributing the project's vision to Hitler who, it was confidently asserted, had already completed the planning process with Troost before assuming the chancellorship in January 1933. Finally, it served as a prototype, at least initially, in style, function, and location for the regime's desire to build monumental ensembles in the centers of other German cities. As the first such ensemble to be completed, Munich's Königsplatz received much media attention during the mid-1930s. The new Königsplatz, along with the completion of the House of German Art, also supported an image of Hitler and his regime moving decisively to address the economic crisis of the 1930s and foster a broader national revival.

The Nazi building program was also responsible for a relatively large number of buildings and monuments in and around Munich's city center. The acquisition in 1930 of a modest three-story neoclassical town villa just behind the Königsplatz on Brienerstrasse—later dubbed the Brown House after Hitler and Troost, with the aid of private funds, redesigned the residence to house the Party's national headquarters—along with the reworking of the Königsplatz, made the immediate district an attractive locus for Party administration. This soon led to the construction or acquisition (in some cases through forced acquisitions from Jewish owners) and renovation of dozens of nearby buildings. The area became an administrative quarter for various Party organizations, including the SS, SA, Supreme Party Court, German Labor Front, Nazi German Student Association, Reich Youth Leadership of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, and such. Nearby extensions of the Königsplatz museums were also planned, as well as a museum of architecture opposite the House of German Art, more office space for various branches of the Party administration, and a giant Hall of the Party connected to a mausoleum—modeled after the Pantheon in Rome—for Hitler.

In addition to planned construction in the Nazi Party quarter, a number of large-scale buildings serving government functions appeared around the city by the late 1930s, including a new headquarters for the Bavarian state government, a regional Luftwaffe headquarters, a House of German Law, and a House of German Doctors. One of the largest completed Party buildings was the Nazi Party Quartermaster and Material Control Office (figure 2.17). Stretching around 110 meters, this hulking structure served as a supply depot for managing the licensing, procurement, and issuing of official Party regalia, uniforms, and accessories like belts, daggers, and so on.

The most breathtaking plans for the city, however, were concocted in the years following Hitler's 1937 decree designating Munich as one of the five Führer cities slated for extensive urban renewal. Under the administrative leadership of Hermann Giesler—who succeeded Troost—a coordinated citywide program of major projects had coalesced by July 1940. The plan's centerpiece was a grand east-west axis, reminiscent of the Berlin north-south axis in its width, length, iconic focal points, and attendant blocks of





**Figure 2.17. The Nazi Party Quartermaster and Material Control Office in Munich**

Officials working in the cumbersomely named Nazi Party Quartermaster and Material Control Office administered the licensing, production, and distribution of Nazi uniforms, flags, and other regalia. The hulking building was part of a sprawling bureaucratic apparatus that saturated German society with Nazi symbols and ideology.

Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 101.

choreographed monumental flanking architecture. The planned axis was to stretch for a total distance of six kilometers, from near the city center out to an Autobahn interchange on the western periphery.

The innermost part of the axis was a 2.4-kilometer-long and 200-meter-wide stretch of the boulevard—anchored at the east end by a towering 212-meter eagle and swastika-topped obelisk, designed by Speer and Giesler as the city’s “monument to the movement.” The special purpose of the monument’s base was to house the movement’s hallowed “blood flag” carried in the failed 1923 putsch and displayed up until then in an “honor hall” in the Brown House. The base of the monument would feature friezes depicting the Party’s early struggles and triumphs. The monument was one of Hitler’s favorites. Speer devoted a great deal of time producing several variants, based on Hitler’s original sketch, until Hitler was finally satisfied. Like so many prestige projects, the monument was an oversized version of something else—in this case Trajan’s Column in Rome. It commanded a great square and dwarfed the surrounding structures, as well as the nearby iconic twin towers of Munich’s main cathedral, which were only half as tall.

Along the broad boulevard, which was to be free of traffic intersections, the plan called for a nearly continuous line of monumentally scaled buildings—all rendered in the regime’s typically sparse neoclassical style—to house government offices, businesses, and a high-rise hotel and matching high-rise

Party publishing house, as well as an array of shops and entertainment venues, including a new marble-columned, 3,000-seat opera house offset to the north of the boulevard and commanding a secondary, but shorter, southward axis leading to a great plaza and the entrance to the city's southern station. Beneath the east-west axis boulevard, Giesler planned a subway line and underpasses for cross-traffic. At its western end, the boulevard would boast a new central train station, so that the old central station could be demolished to make way for the new Party obelisk. The new station was conceived as an eye-catching structure capped with a massive 136-meter-high aluminum dome topped with a giant cupola—intended to be the world's largest. The steel and glass structure, designed in a modernist style by functionalist architect Paul Bonatz, strayed from the usual aesthetic but won Hitler's favor as a monument to modern technology and the future.<sup>76</sup> Beyond the train station, a series of Nazi Party buildings would complete the axis as it extended out to a forum dedicated to the SA and a giant arch to welcome visitors entering the city from the Autobahn.

As in Berlin, there was an avid interest in providing new peripheral residential districts, partly in response to anticipated housing shortages due to demolitions. Accordingly, two large projects were planned: South City and North City. South City was the larger of the two, with a projected 18,000 housing units arranged in six rectangularly shaped districts along a north-south axis. North City would be a special amenity-rich residential district for SS and police families leading to a pair of very large SS barracks. Housing for both projects would be in the form of residential blocks. Neither project ever advanced beyond the planning stage. These and a host of other planned communities and industrial parks around the edge of the city were to be linked and enclosed between an inner and outer Autobahn ring, the latter having a diameter approaching twenty-five kilometers.

### **Capital of German Shipping and Gateway to the World**

Strategically situated at the head of the estuary through which the Elbe River empties into the North Sea, Hamburg's importance revolved around its role as the Reich's greatest port. Indeed, over time the sobriquet most often associated with the extensive Nazi building program for the city was Gateway to the World. Much of the language surrounding the project paid lip service to the notion that Hamburg would not only be one of the leading cities of an ascendant Germany but also compete with New York as a major world port and metropolis. Like Munich, much of the regime's planning, which envisioned the total renewal and spatial reorganization of the city, came well after Hamburg's designation as a Führer city, and little was actually accomplished before the war eventually brought planning to a standstill. Yet, in terms of ambition, scale, and cost, the city's building program would rival those of the other Führer cities.

The iconic centerpiece of the plan was the construction of a gigantic suspension bridge to span the Elbe between Hamburg's neighboring town of Altona on the north bank of the river and the port of Hamburg to the south.<sup>77</sup> The idea of a crossing at this point has a long history. Many schemes were put forward over the years, including an 1894 proposal for a cableway that could ferry 6,000 passengers an hour back and forth across the river. The decision to build a suspension bridge originated with Hitler during a 1935 visit to the city. Hitler, along with a host of local politicians and dignitaries, took a downriver excursion during which a major redevelopment of the Hamburg waterfront featuring a suspension bridge was discussed.<sup>78</sup>

Imagined as the largest bridge in the world, architects and engineers assigned to the project studied other bridges, including the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, to give them direction in terms of the requisite form, scale, and engineering. In the end, the plan called for a tall bridge with 185-meter-tall pylons (figure 2.18). In many ways obsessed with the bridge project, Hitler minutely reviewed every proposal, rejected models presented to him in 1936, and provided his own sketches.<sup>79</sup> Scale models were built and sent to Hitler's summer residence at Obersalzberg for inspection. Most



**Figure 2.18. Model of Plans to Redesign Hamburg as Germany's Gateway to the World**

This model illustrated Hitler's determination to redesign Hamburg as Germany's gateway to the world. A colossal suspension bridge spanning the Elbe would surpass other iconic bridges abroad, especially in the United States, and demonstrate Germany's technological prowess. The Nordmark complex in the upper right featured a tall office building, likened to a lighthouse, that hinted at Hitler's growing appreciation for building skyscrapers.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:129.

of the Altona residential suburb of Othmarschen would have been razed just to make way for the approach roadways to the planned bridge.

Konstanty Gutschow, a Hamburg city architect whose proposed plan for the renewal of the Elbe waterfront won first prize in a 1937 competition, led planning for this new Hamburg.<sup>80</sup> Gutschow and his team began planning to redevelop some fifty kilometers along the banks of the Elbe, but by 1940, their charge had been expanded to a comprehensive twenty-five-year building program to transform not just the waterfront but the entire city. At the core of the plan, as was the case in so many Nazi urban renewal schemes, was a relocation of the city center. The new center was to be moved three kilometers westward and aligned along a north-south axis running southward from the Altona rail station to the banks of the Elbe. The axis would be linked by an elevated roadway to the old city center and contain the usual mix of prestige buildings for government and Party offices, as well as businesses, hotels, museums, and a library. At its terminus, the boulevard would open on to a 100,000-capacity forum and line of blockish Party buildings set along the banks of the Elbe and fronted by an immense assembly hall large enough to accommodate 50,000.

The definitive iconic structure of the proposed complex was the Nordmark regional Nazi headquarters building. Originally imagined to be a showy German riposte to American skyscrapers—and unusual for Nazi projects, which initially eschewed tall office buildings—the original plans had to be downsized to a height of 250 meters due to the unstable local subsoil. Nonetheless, the structure was to be topped with a gigantic neon swastika that could be seen at night from far out to sea. The plans for this towering building demonstrate that, when it suited the interests of Hitler and his architects, the ordinary stylistic constraints on building designs for the Führer cities could be flexible. As Hitler proclaimed in a 1940 Berlin speech to the Army High Command: “What is so extraordinary about America and its bridges? We can do the same. This is why I am having skyscrapers built there [in Hamburg] which will be just as ‘impressive’ as the American ones.”<sup>81</sup>

The balance of the plan for Hamburg included the construction of hundreds of public buildings, such as government halls and forums, Hitler Youth centers, and educational and sport facilities, along the banks of the Elbe and throughout the city. There were extensive plans for arterial road and rail construction, an Autobahn ring, river embankments and roadways, numerous bridges, expanded port facilities, new industrial parks, residential estates, and parklands. The plans were so extensive that little of the old fabric of the city would have remained untouched by the end of the twenty-five-year project. Cost projections were staggering, so much so that completion of the project would have consumed far more than the city could possibly afford. The labor requirements of urban renewal alone, excluding the requirements of building the suspension bridge and enlarging the harbor, would have required a permanent construction labor force of some 65,000.

### Patronage City of the Führer

The elevation of the Austrian city of Linz to the status of a Führer city rested on Hitler's romantic reverence for the place where he spent nine years of his childhood. Hitler considered the idyllic old city on the Danube to be his hometown and expected eventually to retire there to live in a specially designed retirement home on a hill overlooking the city. He fervently wanted Linz to become a cultural mecca, unparalleled for its vast world-class collections of art, as well as for its stately architectural beauty. It was Hitler's ambition that Linz should become the most beautiful city on the Danube, outstripping both Vienna, for which he had little affection, and magnificently sited Budapest. He also wanted Linz to become one of the Reich's major metropolises, and under the Nazis, the city grew rapidly after 1938, expanding through the incorporation of neighboring settlements and emerging from its somewhat sleepy provincial past as a thriving administrative, trade, and industrial center. Like the other Führer cities, Linz became the object of extensive construction planning.<sup>82</sup>

The initial prestige project for Linz was the construction of the Nibelungen Bridge over the Danube. The new bridge would replace the outmoded Gitterbrücke Bridge that had spanned the river since 1872. Replacing the old bridge, which was too narrow for modern traffic in addition to hampering shipping when the river ran high, had been under consideration as early as 1900. The realization of the project under the Nazis constituted a symbolic step toward attaining the economic and cultural rise of a new "Greater Linz." Hitler personally proposed the project to the mayor of Linz on a 1938 visit to the city and, after careful consideration, chose to name the bridge for the epic Germanic Nibelungenlied saga.

Construction began in fall 1938 with the demolition of buildings on the bridge approaches and wrapped up in summer 1940. Like all prestige projects of the time, the bridge was to be iconic in appearance. The structure was clad in granite blocks quarried at the nearby Mauthausen concentration camp, and the bridgehead was framed by an imposing pair of sparse squarish pseudo-neoclassical buildings—designed by the architect Roderich Fick—intended to link the bridge with the city's main square.<sup>83</sup> In keeping with the romantic Nibelungenlied theme, the approach to the bridge was also to be embellished with six-meter-high granite equestrian statues of the Germanic warriors, Siegfried and Gunther, as well as their wives, Kriemhild and Brunhild. The statues were never installed, although plaster mock-ups of Kriemhild and Siegfried were briefly put in place for Hitler's personal inspection on the occasion of his visit to the city in 1943.

Hitler was deeply involved in the planning process, personally producing reams of sketches and plans for buildings and making frequent visits to the city right into the war years to consult with his architects and planners. The building program, under the direction of Fick and then Giesler, called

for a thorough spatial redevelopment of the city center along both banks of the Danube. Speer later recalled Hitler's dreamy musings on the city's rebuilding: "Do you see how neglected the bank of the Danube looks? I want to see Giesler put a row of buildings over there, one more beautiful than the next. Above all, Linz must have a new museum and a new opera house. With the mountains in the background, its situation is far more beautiful than that of Budapest or Vienna."<sup>84</sup>

The plan for the city featured as its iconic centerpiece, on the north side of the river, a 162-meter-tall bell tower and carillon. Within the base of the tower, beneath an octagonal groined vault, the remains of Hitler's parents were to be respectfully interred as a national shrine. Hitler wished the tower to be shorter than the spire of the Ulm cathedral—the world's tallest Gothic tower at 172 meters—but significantly taller than St. Stephen's in detested Vienna. Hitler also instructed Giesler to ensure the tower fit in with the local landscape and would reflect the morning and evening sun. The city's redevelopment would also feature the obligatory wide boulevard—the Linz axis—running southward from the Nibelungen Bridge through the city center and flanked on either side by ordered blocks of arcaded and monumentally sized buildings to house government offices, businesses, museums, and restaurants, before terminating at the grand entrance to a modernistic, new railroad station constructed entirely of steel and glass. Also planned, by Hitler's own hand, were a new 2,000-seat opera house dedicated to Anton Bruckner—one of Hitler's favorite composers—a new town hall; a forum that could accommodate 100,000 people; a people's festival hall with space for 30,000; a concert hall; a theater; a mammoth eighteen-floor, 2,500-bed KdF Hotel; and an Italian Renaissance-style Führer Hotel. The jewel of the ensemble, however, was the 150-meter-long Führer's Museum—designed in a fashion similar to that of the House of German Art in Munich and intended to hold more than sixteen million works of art—with special quarters for Hitler's favorite period, the nineteenth century; many of the works would be "acquired" by plunder or purchase from private collections across Europe. To make way for the museum, which would also house a million-volume library, the Linz central train station would be razed.

Linz's newfound importance also came to rest on its growing industrial might, which Hitler deemed necessary to sustain the city's role as an international cultural center. To the east of the city, along the gently bending right bank of the Danube, already lay an extensive industrial and port district, anchored by a sprawling steel mill complex. After Austria's annexation, the Reichswerke Hermann Göring—Nazi Germany's largest steel and iron producer—became the heart of the city's rapidly expanding military-industrial complex. By the early war years, the city had become a major armaments center through the relocation of several dismantled Czech war production factories, as well as by the additions of a nitrogen factory, a benzole plant, a major ordnance depot, and an expansion of the existing port and warehousing facilities. The opening

of the nearby Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camps in 1938 provided additional labor to support this military-industrial expansion.

As a result, Linz grew rapidly from 112,000 residents in 1938 to 185,000 by 1943. The master plan for the “new” Linz ultimately envisioned a city with as many as 400,000 inhabitants. Traffic planning included both an inner and outer ring road and a major connection with the Autobahn system to which Linz would become a hub. The usual attention to residential housing resulted in the construction of 11,000 new residences and 2,700 new buildings by 1943. Further plans were developed to construct a technical university, planetarium, and observatory. With the exception of the Nibelungen Bridge, hardly any of the planned redesign of the city center got underway. Nonetheless, the scale model of the new Linz, which was moved from Giesler’s studio in Munich to the Chancellery in Berlin in February of 1945, fascinated Hitler, who spent countless hours poring over it right up to the bitter end.

### **CODA: THE HEAVY-LOAD-BEARING-BODY**

The Führer cities were to be showcases of power—unbridled manifestations of National Socialism in architecture, space, and place. In each case, the Nazi building program took advantage of urban places and spaces familiar to all Germans and set about transforming them into ideologically “programmed” set-piece displays of monumental architecture, set in heavy stone, and arranged in predictably axial and symmetrical spatial layouts and forms. Much attention was devoted to the eternal and the great. These new urban landscapes were to stand the test of time, to surpass all precedents, and to glorify the Nazi movement. These new geographies of National Socialism would replace seemingly chaotic urban landscapes with order and direction by providing the people with vast formal assembly spaces and shrines to instill national celebration and pride. In their severe magnitude and beauty, as well as their calculated use of space and place, the Führer cities would also unite the masses, epitomize the possibilities of collective effort and determination, offer a sense of self-confidence and renewal to a noble and heroic nation, and impress on friend and foe alike the absolute power and authority of an ascendant National Socialist Germany.

As the 1930s advanced, the scale and scope of the projects entertained by Hitler and his teams of architects and planners expanded almost without limit. Little heed was paid to the staggering cost of these grandiose building schemes not only in money but also the enormous economic strain of providing the necessary building materials and labor. Everything and anything seemed possible. The people were kept unaware of the vast amounts earmarked for these showy projects. Skeptical or reluctant municipal officials were pressed to go along or simply bypassed. Nor was there much concern about the scale of destruction to be visited on city centers in order to carry

out the renewal plans, all of which were deemed, with chilling indifference, to be absolutely necessary and fully justified. The ongoing efforts to reorder and architecturally adorn the Führer cities developed concurrently and in conjunction with similar but smaller-scale efforts in other German cities, as we shall see in the following chapter.

Looking back from the present, there is much to criticize in what the Nazis planned for the Führer cities. The plans, in their scale and grandiosity, seem remarkably out of proportion. The seemingly lifeless and highly regimented ensembles of buildings are beyond human scale, insensitive or even dehumanizing to the people who might have lived or worked there. Equally abnormal is their monotony and predictability. Speer, looking back years later, reflected on the uncompromising rigidity of the urban landscapes he and Hitler designed. In his original design for the north-south boulevard in Berlin, Speer made the somewhat self-serving claim that he “tried to put into it all the variety of cityscape that had evolved in the course of centuries. It was a congeries of styles . . . but in the end failed, despite some good details, what primarily came through was not variety but monotony and emptiness.”<sup>85</sup>

Hitler had little interest in the social aspects of architecture and planning; his passion was for the monumental and symbolic appeal of building ensembles and assembly spaces. His approach, from the beginning, was highly politicized. The city was a political stage to be carefully set and choreographed architecturally and spatially. Function and human comfort were sacrificed to a manipulative aesthetic ideal that valued quantity, size, coldness, and intimidation above all else. Moreover, the plans envisioned reorganizations of city centers that often violated the existing physical and social fabric, for example, the laying out of new axes that blatantly usurped the traditional primacy of the old city center, the forced introduction of incompatible or awkwardly outsized architectural or spatial elements, or the flagrant severing of existing flows of communication and movement.

Yet, for the time—given the renewed sense of national pride that millions of ordinary Germans were feeling—the fanfare that surrounded the carefully selected and heralded aspects of these building plans hardly seemed out of place. Nor were they necessarily without precedent, or that much different in architecture and conception from what was going on in other places in Europe and around the world. Precedent was certainly evident in the nineteenth-century remaking of Paris under Georges-Eugène Haussmann, which Hitler very much admired, and to a lesser extent with the layout of the Ringstrasse in Vienna. In the United States, the City Beautiful Movement of the 1880s through 1910s reflected a desire for comprehensive urban planning in line with bourgeois sensibilities. The Burnham Plan of 1909, for example, envisioned reordering Chicago around broad arterial motorways radiating outward from monumental civic, cultural, and leisure spaces to link together parks along the lakefront and the urban periphery.



And one could easily point to a host of relatively recent design precedents and dalliances with large-scale urban reconstruction in the capitals of other authoritarian countries, such as the proposed axial plans in Madrid or the ambitious Moscow plan of 1935. In Fascist Italy, Mussolini ordered a broad axial boulevard, dubbed the *Via dell'Impero*, plowed through the center of ancient Rome, entailing the destruction of numerous historical buildings and ruins. What Hitler and Speer envisioned was, in many ways, in line with the modernist and utopian tradition that infused thinking in planning circles throughout the world in the 1920s and 1930s. This was an era in which statism was on the rise not only in authoritarian states but also in the democratic West, and governments everywhere had sponsored large public building projects. What made the Nazi program stand out was its scale and the extremely political single-mindedness in which the program was conceived and pursued.

Hitler saw himself as an architectural genius guiding the redemption of Germany's cities just as he imagined himself to be a figurative architect building a new political and racial hierarchy across Europe. The Führer cities, and especially Berlin, represented the epitome of Hitler's megalomania by bridging these dual roles of master builder. As the pinnacle of Germany's enlarged and reorganized "living space," the places, spaces, and architecture of Hitler's Berlin would stand as testament to Nazi hegemony across the continent and beyond, or as Hitler dreamed, "things to take your breath away." Despite these grand ambitions, little of Hitler's master plan made it beyond the drawing board. Some scattered government offices, corporate headquarters, and even foreign embassies were completed.<sup>86</sup> Speer managed to complete portions of Berlin's east-west axis through the Tiergarten, but this involved relatively minor modifications, such as widening the main thoroughfare, relocating the Victory Column, and installing ornate streetlamps. The Labor Front's House of Tourism on the Round Plaza along the north-south axis and the meeting hall of the German Congress of Communities along the east-west axis were both nearly complete when work halted in 1942, but little else of the planned grand boulevards came to fruition.

In contrast, Hitler's architects did manage to produce—in a rather systematic manner—incredibly detailed scale models of Berlin's monumental axes and other showcase projects. The Party press routinely featured these models as signs of Germany's resurgence and the regime's commitment to creating a brighter future. Nobody seemed more fascinated by the miniatures than Hitler, who spent hours at night—often well into the early morning—marveling at the models, pondering everything from the grandeur of the designs down to the smallest details. Even as the Soviet army neared Berlin and most German cities were reduced to rubble, Hitler still spent hours enthralled by the models, especially those for Linz. Unfortunately, the models are lost to history, presumably destroyed in the fighting or perhaps by order of the regime or the architects to prevent them from falling into enemy hands.

One evocative reminder of Hitler's fantasies for Berlin, however, sits just a short distance from the planned location of the Triumphal Arch on the north-south axis. Even under the best of circumstances, the arch represented a monumental effort both in terms of its dimensions, as well as a variety of technical challenges. Even more problematic, much of Berlin sits on very sandy soils, so it was immediately questionable whether the ground could support the weight of Hitler's arch and other gargantuan monuments. Speer ordered a test footing, termed the "heavy-load-bearing-body," poured in 1941 to find out.<sup>87</sup> The odd-looking structure consisted of two concrete cylinders (figure 2.19). The lower cylinder, which measured about twelve meters in diameter and just over eighteen meters in height, was buried vertically with about a meter protruding above ground level. The upper cylinder—measuring around twenty-one meters across and reaching some fourteen meters high—sat across the lower cylinder. Combined, the two hulking masses resembled a stout T-shaped plug weighing in at 12,650 tonnes concentrated on a mere one hundred square meters of ground. By the time the war had clearly turned against Hitler, the "plug" had sunk much further than the engineers deemed allowable. The foundations for the arch would clearly need much more extensive preparations than Speer realized, although by this time the point was moot as Hitler's war had turned on Germany with unbridled violence, laying waste to entire cities.



**Figure 2.19. Massive Concrete Test Footing for Hitler's Planned Triumphal Arch**

Albert Speer ordered the pouring of this massive concrete test footing to test the ability of Berlin's sandy soils to support Hitler's planned Triumphal Arch. The block still stands among a small clump of trees. Note the groundskeeper standing at the bottom center.

Source: Joshua Hagen.



# A Nazi Civic Spirit

## *Reordering Cities and Towns*

Recounting his captivation with the Nuremberg rallies, conservative art historian Hubert Schrade related how he was especially enthralled as Adolf Hitler strode from the speaker's tribune on the Luitpold Arena between massed formations of Nazi troopers to commemorate the nation's and Party's fallen before the Hall of Honor necropolis. Schrade noted how through sheer will Hitler had molded the masses into an "archetype of committed communal life, the soldierly formation of rank and file" ready to "sacrifice on behalf of the nation." To promulgate this "majesty of a political-cultic act" beyond the annual rallies, Schrade called for the construction of assembly halls across Germany to facilitate national celebrations encompassing the entire national community.<sup>1</sup> Schrade's proposal was characteristic of general discussions regarding architecture, urban planning, and cultural policy during the regime's early years. There was clearly an imperative to build and manifest the movement's ideology visually and spatially, yet a great deal of uncertainty remained as to what, where, and how to build. Hitler and his builders had largely resolved these questions by the late 1930s. The heart of the regime's building program would be "the creation of new city centers, new structural middle points of a size that shall dominate every private building," proclaimed Rudolf Wolters, Albert Speer's chief deputy, adding that "through the redesign of the city centers, the solutions of all other urban planning questions are essentially decided."<sup>2</sup>

Berlin and the other Führer cities would showcase prominently the power and glory of the new Nazi Germany, but the regime had much broader ambitions. All across Germany, a sprawling hierarchy of new monumental urban spaces would at all levels bind people, Party, and Reich together in obedience to Hitler. This aspect of the Nazi building program envisioned providing nearly all German cities and towns with new political-propaganda assembly spaces that blended the governmental-bureaucratic function of Berlin and

the cultural-historical role of Nuremberg, albeit on smaller scales. Hitler and his lieutenants believed a calculated spatial reordering of the urban landscape, coupled with new monumental architectural ensembles, would rejuvenate Germany's civic culture around the ideals of National Socialism. Ernst Jarmer, director of the Reich Office for Spatial Planning, summed it up succinctly with the statement, "administration is today synonymous with the directed design of administrative spaces."<sup>3</sup>

The unprecedented pace of urbanization sweeping Germany since the nineteenth century had spawned persistent and broad-based social anxiety. Fueled by employment opportunities in the burgeoning industrial sector, Germany's urban population had swelled from about one-third of the total population in 1817 to around two-thirds by 1933. Nearly all cities recorded significant gains, especially the major ones. Berlin increased from around 820,000 residents in 1871 to more than 4.2 million in 1933. Over the same period, Hamburg grew from 240,000 residents to more than 1.1 million; Munich went from 170,000 residents to around 735,000. Germany's defeat in World War I and the ensuing upheavals only exacerbated the problems associated with rapid, unplanned urbanization.

Against this backdrop, the Nazi movement's critique of German cities was largely consistent with the decidedly negative rhetoric of other conservative-nationalist groups. These groups interpreted Germany's industrial-fueled urbanization from a social-Darwinist perspective, emphasizing the fact that cities had lower birth rates and higher death rates than rural areas. Urban growth, therefore, relied on the continued influx of rural migrants and ultimately resulted in demographic decline. Additionally, big cities were thought to cultivate values antithetical to traditional German morality, customs, and community. The unbridled commercialism, individualism, and cosmopolitanism that animated major cities like Berlin struck conservatives as crass, hedonistic, and superficial.

Hitler's own ruminations in *Mein Kampf* and the rhetoric of other Nazi leaders did little to distinguish the Party's position from other nationalist denunciations of contemporary urban-civic life. Nazi criticism of big cities seemed more strident at times, especially its shrill warnings about the evils of racial miscegenation and foreign influence, both heavily imbued with anti-Semitism. Yet, these same themes pervaded the antiurban rhetoric of other nationalist groups, and Nazi propaganda offered little aside from romanticized portrayals of agrarian life. This likely reflected political calculation on Hitler's part. Combining acclamation of traditional rural values, vilification of chaotic urban life, and vague calls for national cultural renewal could appeal to voters ranging from farmers and small-town merchants to urban-based middle- and working-class households, among other groups. More specific proposals risked fracturing this diverse coalition.

The Nazi regime gained wider latitude to develop concrete programs for reordering German cities and towns as it solidified its grip on power

during 1933. Hitler soon embarked on a program to harness the productive capacity of Germany's urban-industrial complexes to his dreams of a racially pure and politically obedient German nation ruling over a territorially expansive Reich. To realize this vision, Hitler extended his building program beyond the Führer cities to reach almost every conceivable geographical corner and facet of daily life, eventually including wide-ranging programs to construct networked places of residence, education, and work, all subjects of later chapters. The regime also sought to address a central critique of Hitler and other Nazi elites toward German cities—namely, the lack of suitable venues for building national community and civic life consistent with National Socialist ideals. Much as the Führer cities would become showpieces for the new Reich's grandeur and prowess, Hitler would imprint Nazi ideology into the spatial and architectural fabric of all other German cities and towns (figure 3.1). The overall intent was a general re-ordering of Germany's urban landscapes into a network of spaces, places, and architectural ensembles that extended and amplified the Nazi Party's political-administrative hierarchy, while simultaneously reclaiming cities and towns as living space of the German nation.



**Figure 3.1. Map of the Führer Cities and Other Major Building Sites**

Hitler's dreams of redesigning the so-called Führer cities swiftly expanded to encompass most of Germany's largest cities and eventually into the annexed territories. Regional Party officials promoted building programs in their capitals as a means to curry favor with Hitler and thereby amass power, prestige, and resources.

Map by James Leonard.

## TENTATIVE BEGINNINGS

Hitler believed the lack of focal points and communal spaces in contemporary German cities resulted in isolation, degeneration, and wretchedness. For strident “blood-and-soil” Nazis, the remedy was government intervention to return people to new farmsteads, villages, and semirural suburbs. In contrast, Hitler believed his architectural talents could redeem Germany’s cities, much like his movement would restore the economy, society, and government. Despite his inflated self-regard, Hitler’s background in urban renewal amounted to little more than vague affinities for neoclassicist styles and an intense desire for monumentality and timelessness. Nazi ideology offered little concrete guidance concerning the form, function, or location of new civic spaces. Further complicating matters, the new Nazi regime inherited from the Weimar Republic a federal system that vested most authority over urban planning and cultural policy in local and regional governments. As a result, the regime’s initial building projects through 1937 were rather disjointed, contingent, and reactive. Instead of working from an original master plan, Hitler and his subordinates engaged in an incremental process of developing a basic template for urban renewal projects consistent with the regime’s ideological and practical objectives. These efforts initially focused on rehabilitating existing urban centers but evolved to encompass the creation of colossal new spaces.

### **Cleansing Civic Space**

To reduce unemployment, newly installed Nazi mayors, governors, and other lower officials turned to various work programs inherited from the Brüning administration. Supported by Reich subsidies, these emergency measures often included modest urban renewal, beautification, and sanitation projects centered on historical buildings and districts, as well as allocating larger sums, as discussed in later chapters, for emergency housing and infrastructure construction. In addition to absorbing unemployed laborers, these early restoration projects also benefited key actors in the regime’s subsequent building efforts—namely, professional artists, artisans, architects, conservators, and planners. Historic town halls and baroque palaces were refurbished, medieval castles and town walls were cleared of overgrowth, and prominent public squares received a general “tidying-up,” allowing these refurbished civic places and spaces to document the nation’s historical greatness.<sup>4</sup>

The Nazi seizure of power also afforded the Party its first opportunity to move into more impressive accommodations. Initially, Nazi officials simply ensconced themselves within existing civic spaces, such as Hitler moving into the Chancellery or new Nazi mayors installing themselves in town halls. Often centuries old and located prominently on the main square, these town halls were established focal points for civic identity and among Germany’s most prestigious historical buildings. It is not surprising, then,

that the Party's occupation of these town halls often coincided with the refurbishment of the building and adjacent spaces. Renovation efforts spread quickly across Germany with high-profile projects soon underway in Munich, Nuremberg, Cologne, and Breslau (Wrocław, Poland). Countless other municipalities followed suit.

The Nazi media characterized these efforts as rescuing the nation's cultural treasures and restoring their contemporary relevance. Cologne's town hall could be said now to testify to local culture and tradition, as well as provide an "administrative building suitable for contemporary practical and representative demands . . . through the creation of new spaces in which the creative forces of our time can find their expression and rival those of the past."<sup>5</sup> Beyond a simple restoration, the renovation of Breslau's town hall represented "a great feat of the Third Reich, a consequence of the creative power of our Führer Adolf Hitler who also created the spiritual and economic prerequisites for this project."<sup>6</sup> These projects generally aimed to restore the town halls and surrounding spaces to their general appearance around 1800, before the impacts of industrialization and modernization. Many of these projects were planned—and in some cases actually began—during the Weimar period, but Nazi officials deftly claimed credit for the entire effort. Through these projects, the regime touted its determination to lower unemployment, preserve the nation's architectural heritage, and finally restore some semblance of order, decency, and continuity to urban life seemingly beleaguered by tumult during the previous years. Indeed, the idea of restoring town halls and other monuments found general approval among many of Germany's varied socioeconomic groups, especially the conservative-nationalist middle class. These "cleansing" campaigns continued into the early war years but gradually assumed a diminished role within the regime's building program and propaganda.

Those Nazis assuming positions within municipal or provincial governments generally had office spaces readily available, but Party officials typically had no such luck. Before 1933, most Party officials worked in converted residential or commercial properties. Even the national Party headquarters in Munich, the so-called Brown House, was a renovated bourgeois residence dating to the early nineteenth century (figure 3.2). This continued into the regime's early years. Regional Nazi officials in Essen and Würzburg, for example, simply remodeled a 1920s office building and a nineteenth-century hotel for their respective headquarters.<sup>7</sup> This kind of improvisation spread across Germany as Nazi officials at all levels sought office spaces befitting their growing stature in Germany's civic life. These efforts afforded the Party a more visible presence in the urban landscape but that enhanced visibility remained rather scattered and contingent upon local circumstances and individual initiative.

While many Nazi officials simply renovated existing structures as Party offices, some desired new buildings. To reflect his stature as Reich governor



**Figure 3.2. The Party's Brown House Headquarters in Munich**

The Nazi Party purchased this elegant neoclassical residence to serve as its national headquarters. Dubbed the Brown House, after the Party's "brownshirt" uniforms, the building played a very minor role in the actual administration of the movement. Instead, the Brown House mostly served to lend the Party a veneer of respectability and refinement.

Source: Bulgarian State Archives Agency.

(*Reichsstatthalter*) and Gauleiter of Thuringia, Fritz Sauckel petitioned Hitler in May 1933 to authorize the construction of a new Party building located in Ilm Park, adjacent Weimar's historic center.<sup>8</sup> Sauckel's proposal placed his regional Party office next to an ensemble of world-famous classicist structures, most notably the Goethe House and Museum.<sup>9</sup> Hitler was receptive to the general idea of new Party buildings, but the location would have undoubtedly proven controversial given the cultural significance of the area, and Hitler likely wanted to avoid controversy as he consolidated power. Sauckel's proposal faded from view, but the idea of new Party buildings in Weimar would resurface.

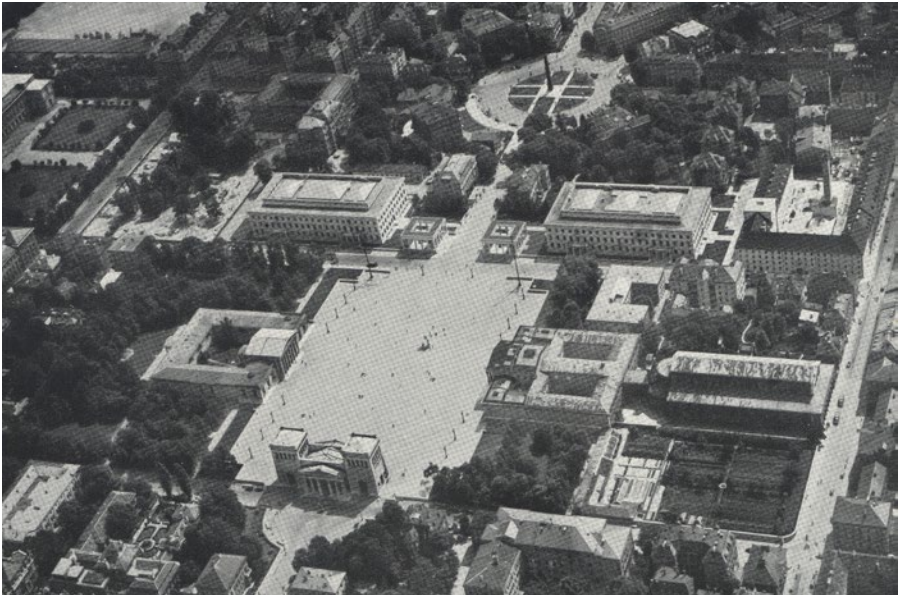
### **A Forum of the Movement**

As municipal officials plunged into these various building schemes, Hitler set about translating his vague architectural notions into concrete plans for reordering German society around new monumental spaces and ensembles befitting the Party's position as the leading force in national life,



as well as for his own personal aggrandizement. As noted earlier, Hitler and Paul Ludwig Troost worked closely on redesigning the Brown House and other Party buildings in Munich. They often spent hours together in Troost's studio reviewing the latest drawings. Their collaboration helped lay the foundation for a general aesthetic for the Party's subsequent monumental building programs.

As discussed in chapter 2, Troost's preliminary designs for an office building near the Königsplatz offered Hitler an opportunity to construct a new urban ensemble suitable for massive propaganda rallies, as well as space for the rapidly expanding needs of the Party bureaucracy. The redesigned Königsplatz seemed consistent with Hitler's call for new assembly spaces, his passion for monumentality, and his desire to manifest the regime's dominance through a broad spatial reordering of civic life (figure 3.3). Yet the Königsplatz project suffered from several disadvantages. First, the new ensemble conflicted with several basic tenets of Nazi architectural ideology. The German press emphasized how the overall plan created an impression of balance, harmony, and restraint. The two new office buildings' symmetry astride the main axis and their relative deference to the scale of the three



**Figure 3.3. The Redesigned Königsplatz in Munich**

Hitler ordered the Königsplatz's grassy interior space replaced with granite pavers and the eastern side enclosed with a matching pair of Party office buildings separated by two Temples of Honor. Touted by the Party press as the "forum of the movement," the redesigned square offered an oft-used space for propaganda, most notably for the annual commemorations of the 1923 putsch.

*Source:* Fiehler, *München baut auf*, 69.

existing structures do lend themselves to this interpretation, but these were certainly not key components in Hitler's building program. The buildings contradicted another repeated Nazi architectural trope—namely, that form should follow function. Yet Hitler's personal office and the Party administration building had identical exteriors despite having quite different functions.

Also, unlike the Zeppelin Field and the other prominent speaking locations utilized by Hitler, the new Königsplatz lacked a focal point that could serve as a platform for addressing the assembled masses. Given these ideological and practical deficiencies, it is not surprising that Hitler selected other locations for his Munich speeches. The square was used during the annual putsch commemorations, but other locations in Munich were equally prominent during these events. Finally, contrary to the hyperbolic press coverage, the new Königsplatz played a minor role in the subsequent development of Hitler's monumental building program. Indeed, after the initial burst of publicity, the new Königsplatz was quickly eclipsed by other projects more consistent with Nazi ideology and Hitler's own grandiose ambitions. Hitler would no longer be content to merely renovate historical structures and spaces.

Nonetheless, the Königsplatz project was an intermediate step in Hitler's attempts to develop a building program for redesigning German cities. Much of this stems from Hitler's initial decision to redevelop an existing location with established popularity. This placed certain constraints on the project, especially for a regime still consolidating power. Indeed, many locals were reportedly shocked when the extent of the proposed project became public.<sup>10</sup> Also, the surviving planning documents indicate that the Königsplatz design was not finalized until late 1933 and the square's commemorative function not until late 1934. The process was undoubtedly complicated by Troost's death in early 1934. So instead of Hitler and Troost developing a definitive plan before 1933 and then implementing it decisively, the plan continued to evolve through 1933 with additional refinements lasting into 1934.

From an ideological and practical standpoint, the Königsplatz project did mark a seminal moment in Hitler's vision for rebuilding German cities but not as a model for emulation. Rather, the shortcomings of the project made evident to Hitler the necessity of a new approach to urban planning and design.<sup>11</sup> The problems with the new Königsplatz were never acknowledged openly by Hitler or the Party press for obvious reasons, but Alfred Rosenberg later claimed Hitler privately conceded as much. Recalling a conversation with Hitler regarding the Königsplatz, Rosenberg wrote: "Adolf Hitler said to me himself that after several years of development much could have been done differently. . . . Here Hitler's desire for processional spaces and to turn the city to stone thwarted his great will for monumentality. He wanted to have it too quickly."<sup>12</sup>

Despite its deficiencies, the redesigned Königsplatz helped set a general aesthetic for official Party buildings. Soon officials at all levels of the Party's



**Figure 3.4. The Gau House in Nuremberg**

Regional Party officials tried to mimic Hitler's monumental buildings on smaller scales. The Gau House in Nuremberg, with its spartan facade and neo-Doric portico, resembled its larger counterparts in Berlin and Munich.

*Source: Troost, Das Bauen im Neuen Reich, 1:90.*

hierarchy began planning and eventually commissioning new Party buildings. These early Party buildings were mostly stand-alone structures fit into the existing urban landscape. The more prominent projects, such as the Gau House in Nuremberg, borrowed heavily from the Königsplatz Party buildings (figure 3.4). Yet Hitler's vision of forging of a new national movement capable of achieving domestic dominance and international supremacy would necessitate continually expanding building campaigns to anchor the Party as the center of German civic life.

### PARTY FORUMS AS NEW CIVIC CENTERS

Once Troost's plans for the Königsplatz became public, Party officials rushed to prepare proposals for various types of parade grounds, rally spaces, and Party buildings for their cities. Hitler likely had little, if any, direct involvement with these early proposals but undoubtedly knew that many of his subordinates were eager to move forward with new building projects that

would cement their personal status and that of their city within the Nazi hierarchy. As noted previously, a number of new “Party Houses” were built during the regime’s first years but mostly as stand-alone structures. Hitler needed a general framework to ensure these energies flowed into a comprehensive program that addressed the Party’s representative and administrative needs rather than the petty aggrandizement of local officials.

Hitler, though, lacked the ability to develop the regime’s monumental building program on his own. He was a novice and lacked a trusted architectural mentor after Troost’s death. Any effort to make substantive revisions to the Königsplatz project after March 1934 would have undermined the propaganda narrative that portrayed the project as evidence of his decisive leadership and artistic talents. Hitler found a solution to this dilemma in the proposals local authorities presented to him during his travels across Germany. By deftly positioning himself as the unofficial arbiter for several of these urban renewal projects, Hitler perused and purloined the ideas of other architects, planners, and officials to build a general template for new civic spaces that embedded Nazi power within thoroughly reordered urban landscapes. Indeed, some of these proposals may have exposed for Hitler the practical and ideological deficiencies of the new Königsplatz.

### **Provisional Plans**

The regime’s first years in power witnessed a flurry of building activity, but aside from the Autobahn, much of this activity consisted of relatively modest, disjointed projects. Yet even as the refinement of Munich’s Königsplatz plan proceeded during 1933, other Nazi functionaries were busy developing plans for more ambitious building programs. Toward this end, German Labor Front (DAF) chief Robert Ley launched a nationwide House of Labor design competition in January 1934. Drawing inspiration from the after-hours clubhouses promoted by Italy’s Fascist Party, Ley envisioned a multipurpose recreational complex, featuring meeting halls, game rooms, sport facilities, and a large assembly space for 10,000 to 20,000 people. The competition rules specified that designs should conform to Nazi principles—namely, that “they should represent the embodiment of the new community idea that knows no class differences,” but offered little additional guidance.<sup>13</sup>

Instead, contestants were vaguely informed that designs should feature a main building complemented by various sport and recreation facilities forming a square capable of holding at least 10,000 people. Since planning for the Munich project proceeded in private, Ley’s initiative was one of the first national architectural competitions under the new regime. As such, it attracted a great deal of attention, eliciting nearly 700 entries from a range of modernist and conservative architects. Jury members included Paul Bonatz and Heinrich Tessenow, suggesting a credible competition. Many of the entries were displayed in Berlin, but observers noted the difficulty in

evaluating the submissions due to the unusually vague contest guidelines.<sup>14</sup> Yet “a conscientious, concise, clear, simple design is already common to see,” observed prominent journal editor Friedrich Paulsen, adding “the frequent connection to or the background of classicism is (still) unmistakable.”<sup>15</sup> There was an apparent tendency among the entries to mimic the stylings of the House of German Art and redesigned Königsplatz.

Some later press reports suggested the contest was largely pointless. Local architect Clemens Klotz had supposedly written to Ley in May 1933 proposing some type of House of Labor. Ley directed Klotz to prepare design options for a location along the Rhine riverfront opposite Cologne’s historical center.<sup>16</sup> As early as the end of 1933, Klotz had already produced sketches for a Party complex centered on a massive domed assembly hall reaching 65 meters in height and fronted by a neoclassicist facade around 30 meters high by 150 meters wide. This main structure connected to a long colonnaded wing running toward the riverfront, which helped define a rectangular space in front of the main facade. Hitler approved a model of Klotz’s design in September 1934 pending some undisclosed modifications. Yet Klotz never entered the contest. Nonetheless, national architectural journals soon publicized Klotz’s design, with one journal actually noting that it seemed less consistent with the competition instructions than that of contest winner Walter Kratz.<sup>17</sup>

It is probable that Ley had already settled on a general idea for the overall project by the end of 1933, with Klotz as the architect. Instead of identifying a winning design, the competition served to solicit ideas surreptitiously that could be used to refine Klotz’s design and identify additional architects who could advance the Party’s building program. It is also possible Ley had already approved a design for a House of Labor in Cologne, in which case the contest served to solicit ideas for similar structures in other cities.<sup>18</sup> Some press reports may have conflated the contest and Klotz’s already-approved design. Klotz moved to Munich, supposedly at Hitler’s behest, and soon received numerous high-profile commissions from the DAF. Klotz continued to revise his original idea for a House of Labor in Cologne by adding various attachments and extensions to the main structure, but the project largely disappeared from the public press and internal planning documents by 1936.<sup>19</sup> The proposal progressed further than the initial idea for a Party office building in Weimar, but the project still faded from view without explanation.

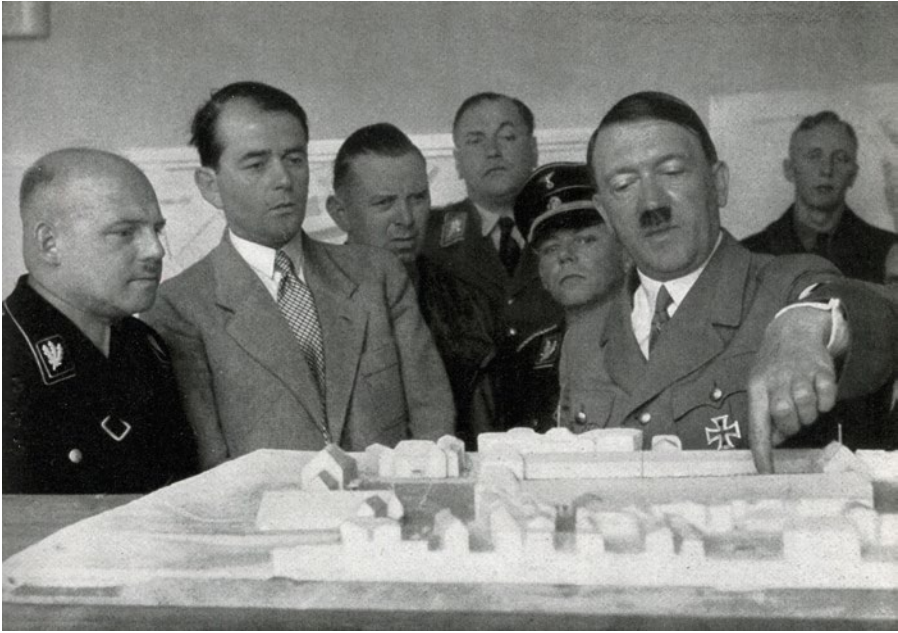
During this apparent lull in Weimar and Cologne, Hitler’s interests shifted to Dresden, where Mayor Ernst Zörner was busily planning a major urban expansion, apparently on his own initiative. Zörner’s plan centered on the city’s Hygiene Museum along with an adjacent swimming pool and sports arena, located around 500 meters southwest of the city center. Beginning in March 1934, the city planning department drew up various plans to add a regional administration building, assembly hall, and amphitheater. Whereas Sauckel’s Weimar project focused narrowly on the Party’s administrative

needs, Zörner proposed a multifunctional administrative, cultural, and sports complex. Hitler responded enthusiastically upon viewing these plans during a visit to Dresden in April 1934. This general concept offered several advantages. First, the overall size of the complex far exceeded any of the regime's other urban development projects to date. Second, the proposed location was spacious and relatively undeveloped, so the regime would generally have free reign to realize its ambitions. Yet the initial plans lacked a few key elements. The buildings and their different functions were adjacent to one another, but they occupied distinct spaces and were not aligned with one another. As a result, the complex lacked an obvious focal point, which risked diminishing any possibility of the space demonstrating the central importance of the Party in German life. The complex was also somewhat isolated with no obvious connection to the rest of the city.

Little happened until December 1934 when the Dresden city council announced a competition for an Adolf Hitler Square in the vicinity of the Hygiene Museum. The competition rules emphasized the goal of creating a new monumental assembly space and went so far as to provide a list of specific buildings to be included but were vague about the role of the Hygiene Museum. The guidelines, likely influenced by Speer, also stressed focusing attention on scale and layout but said little about the submission of detailed architectural schematics, material costs, or construction time lines. Accordingly, the actual entry materials featured mainly site plans and aerial views. This oddity hinted at the true purpose of the contest, which like Ley's earlier design competition for Cologne, was more to garner ideas than to award a commission.

Overall, it seems Hitler was using the contest, combined with his experiences from Munich, Weimar, and Cologne, for this same purpose. Indeed, Hitler's vision for introducing new civic spaces into German cities evolved as he interacted with these varied projects. Hitler had worked out a general idea of his preferred style with Troost and then elaborated that vision through Speer, including a few general ideas about types of buildings and their functions (figure 3.5). While Munich's Königsplatz realized Hitler's desire for a monumental outdoor assembly area and representative Party buildings, the project also demonstrated the limitations of adapting existing spaces and ensembles.

The Dresden competition generated significant interest with 277 entries submitted by March 1935. The entries exhibited a high degree of conformity, typically featuring a large, open square with an assembly hall and Party administration building on opposite sides. The Hygiene Museum was usually located about halfway along the assembly space's northeastern side with the opposite side left open to the city park. Most entries integrated the museum as a third element on the main square, although some used colonnades to screen off the museum. A couple entries also included a bell tower. Given the wide publicity accompanying the competition's announcement



**Figure 3.5. Hitler Offers His Opinion of an Architectural Model to Sauckel and Speer**

Hitler closely followed the regime's higher-profile building projects. In this photo, Hitler offers his opinion of an architectural model, presumably of Weimar, while Albert Speer and Fritz Sauckel, to the left, pay close attention. The original caption indicated that Hitler was offering "suggestions."

Source: Hoffmann, *Hitler abseits von Alltag*, 65.

in the summer of 1935, public discussion was surprisingly curt. The city planning department prepared designs for a broad boulevard linking the museum area and the city center, but there was no effort to follow through on the winning design. A growing power struggle between Zörner and the Gauleiter of Saxony, Martin Mutschmann, may have contributed to this lack of progress, but hiatuses following Hitler's interventions in local planning issues were common.<sup>20</sup>

### Adolf Hitler Squares

By November 1934, the idea of a new Party building in Weimar resurfaced, this time as a broader complex of administrative buildings around the Karl August Square in front of the State Museum. The site, which was about midway between the city center and train station, was a working-class area of nondescript nineteenth-century apartment blocks. The building stock was in relatively poor condition and made a generally unfavorable impression on visitors arriving by train. According to Hermann Giesler, Hitler selected this location because of these deficiencies. While it might have been easier

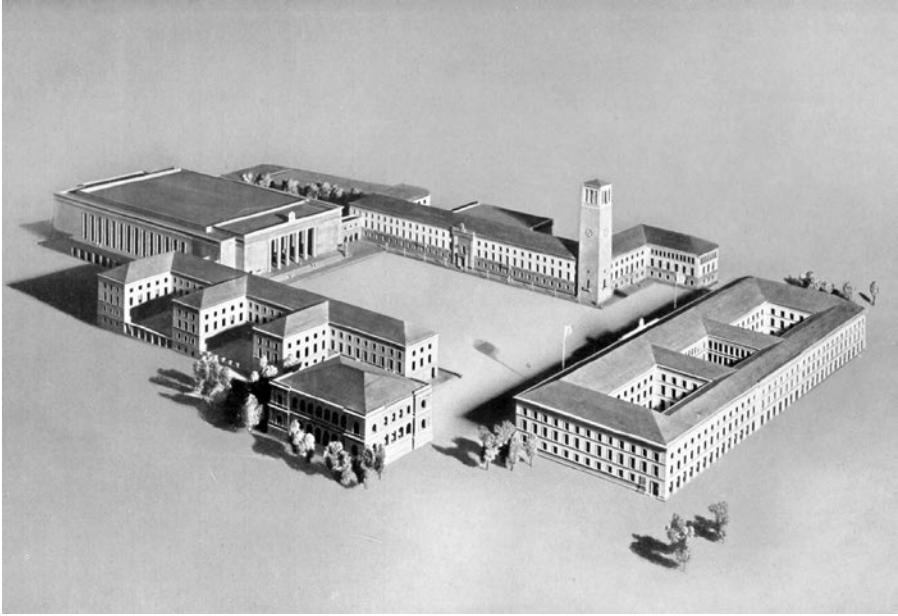
to build in parks or other open spaces, Giesler maintained that for Hitler, "it was about overcoming the chaos, the unformed in the city space."<sup>21</sup> A majestic Party forum would greet visitors to Weimar far better than uninspiring tenements. The centerpiece would be the Reich Governor office building but also included were buildings for the Gauleiter and his staff, the DAF, and the army. City planner August Lehrmann and Paul Schultze-Naumburg separately created several Party forum proposals through the middle of 1935. A committee composed of various local officials and Speer reviewed the designs and eventually selected Schultze-Naumburg's plan for further development. Hitler overruled an earlier decision in favor of Lehrmann, perhaps not coincidentally around the same time the results of the Dresden competition were announced.

Like the Dresden competition, and even more so, the guidelines for Weimar were quite specific. The overall goal was a monumental Party complex located on Karl August Square. The Reich Governor building would occupy the eastern side of the space flanked by various Party buildings along the north and south. The western side would feature a DAF building, set back slightly to allow entrance to the square. The exact role of the State Museum was not specified, similar to the Hygiene Museum in Dresden.<sup>22</sup> Despite these similarities, the Weimar contest differed in several key aspects. The Dresden competition drew several hundred participants who provided relatively basic outlines and sketches. The Weimar contest was limited to no more than twelve invited entrants with Speer personally involved in recruiting the eventual winner. The group was invited to Munich to visit the Königsplatz and receive instructions. Each was charged with providing sketches from numerous perspectives, a plaster model of their concept, a partial model along with a detailed written description of their design for the Reich Governor building, and finally a cost estimate by the end of March 1936.

Then in early March, shortly before the deadline, Speer informed participants that Hitler had changed the competition's parameters. Instead of the Reich Governor building, an assembly hall would be the main building and the deadline extended to June. Submissions were remarkably consistent despite the last-minute change. Some proposals retained the State Museum as a relatively prominent element in the new ensemble. Most, however, relegated it to a distinctly minor role, as was the case in the Dresden competition. Giesler's design was among the latter group and declared the winner by Hitler in June 1936.<sup>23</sup> Beyond the specifics of his entry, Giesler's victory probably owed much to his acquaintance with Ley and Speer, as well as his prior performance working on the DAF's school at Sonthofen.

Giesler's winning proposal envisioned a large, traffic-free Adolf Hitler Square measuring 160 by 95 meters (figure 3.6). This plaza would be dominated by a Hall of National Community, standing 25 meters tall with seating for 12,000 people. The exterior was clad in stone but utilized modern designs and materials beneath; in this case, the roofing system consisted of





**Figure 3.6. Model of Weimar's Gauforum**

This rendering depicts the final design of Weimar's Gauforum. Hitler commissioned dozens of similar projects across Germany. Each Gauforum was unique, but they typically included a grand assembly hall, a clock tower, and various office buildings surrounding a central paved plaza. The Weimar forum was exceptional in that it was nearly finished, except for the assembly hall in the upper left.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:89.

reinforced concrete beams supporting lightweight concrete sheeting. The stairs leading up to the hall's main foyer were flanked by two commemorative pylons and crypts for local Nazi martyrs. The DAF office building stood across the square from the assembly hall, while the two remaining sides were occupied by a Reich Governor and Gau administration building along the south and a building for other Party organizations on the north. All three administration buildings were three stories tall but slightly shorter than the hall.<sup>24</sup> Overall, the buildings' proportions and facades were consistent with the Troost-Speer version of modernist classicism.

Hitler personally ordered two noteworthy alterations to the Reich Governor building—namely, a small modification to make the main entrance more pronounced and the addition of a tower.<sup>25</sup> Given the specificity of the design instructions, which made no mention of a tower, it is hardly surprising that none of the participants thought to include one. The nature of the competition clearly suggested that success relied on conforming to the prescribed guidelines rather than individual creativity. In contrast, the Dresden contest had been comparatively open with some designs including a tower, specifically the first- and third-place entries. It is quite possible that Hitler's direc-

tive to add a tower to the Weimar plan drew from the Dresden entries. Over time, Hitler came to favor ever-taller towers and even skyscrapers. Giesler's first tower was only thirty meters high, just a bit taller than the main hall. The tower had grown to around seventy meters by the time the last plans were drafted in 1942.<sup>26</sup>

Hitler's late demand for an assembly hall at Weimar also likely stemmed from events in Augsburg. After a fire destroyed Augsburg's multipurpose civic center in 1934, the mayor launched a design competition for a replacement, apparently without the involvement of higher Party officials. Reflecting the project's local origins, only architects born or currently residing in Augsburg could participate. Thomas Wechs, a local architect primarily known for building churches, had been declared the winner, and Reich financial assistance had already been approved by the time Hitler visited in September 1935. After being shown Wechs's plan for a rather modernist-looking building with a broad facade dominated by nineteen tall vertical windows, Hitler personally sketched an alternative facade directly onto Wechs's drawing. Hitler's modified design closely resembled the various proposals for Party buildings found among the entries in the Dresden competition and the early designs by Lehrmann and Schultze-Naumburg for Weimar. Soon Speer, and later Giesler, were effectively acting as project supervisor. Over the next two years, Wechs forwarded seven revisions. His original modernist, multipurpose center gradually evolved into a neoclassicist, mono-functional assembly hall. The similarities between Wechs's later designs and the new assembly hall in Weimar raise the possibility that Giesler used Wechs's work to refine his own design. Indeed, Wechs later intimated that his design was manipulated as a proving ground for developing a template for the assembly halls that would become standard components in later Party forum projects.<sup>27</sup>

In a 1939 summation filled with superlatives, Sauckel described the purpose of Weimar's Party forum:

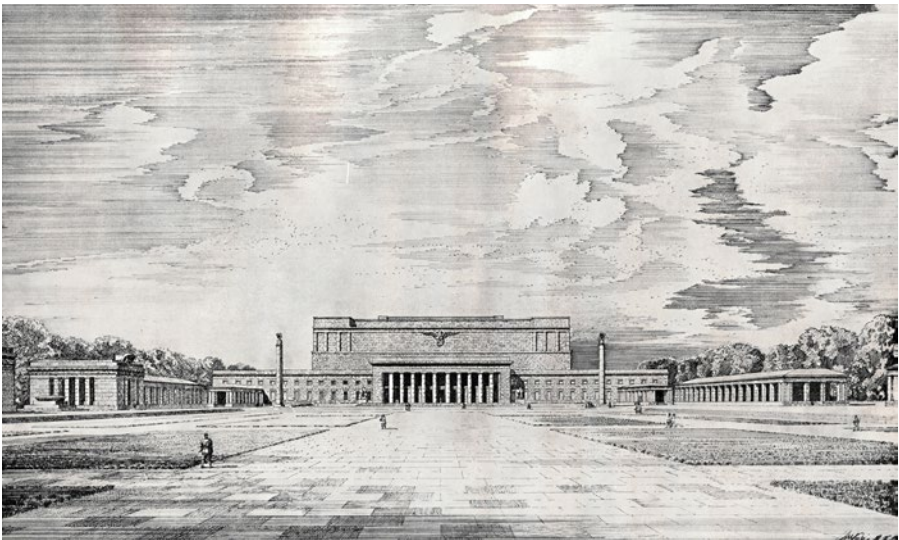
In the Third Reich, the Party and state totally encompass the life of the people. . . . Therefore, new space must be created in Weimar. Offices for the Party, its Labor Front, its formations have long been lacking. This resulted in an urgent necessity for the NSDAP, for its rallies and ceremonies, to create those spaces of community and leadership in which true German belief, German idealism, German creative power . . . would always be able to draw new strength.<sup>28</sup>

Hitler was the driving factor in the speedy progress of the early projects in Munich, but his interventions in Weimar, Dresden, and Augsburg generally slowed momentum. The conclusion of the Weimar competition broke this pattern. Now that the major elements of the program were basically set in terms of buildings, spatial layout, function, aesthetics, and location, Hitler instructed Giesler to begin building immediately.

Back in Dresden, the power struggle between Zörner and Mutschmann was finally resolved with the former's dismissal in June 1937. Around this

same time, Hitler and Speer reengaged the idea of a Party center in Dresden and entrusted Wilhelm Kreis with advancing the effort. Kreis had competed in the initial Dresden contest but did not receive any award or distinction. Yet he enjoyed several advantages. First, Kreis had designed the Hygiene Museum and recently received several commissions from Hitler for projects in Dresden. Speer also thought highly of Kreis, even selecting him to design prominent buildings in Berlin and elsewhere. Dresden also provided an opportunity to get a second Party forum underway quickly. Hitler and Speer were already familiar with the general situation. Additionally, Paul Wolf and his colleagues had continued producing various designs, while attention focused on Weimar, for a Party forum and boulevard connecting to the city center.<sup>29</sup> As a result, Kreis had ready access to an extensive body of planning materials. Kreis was also in regular contact with Speer, whom he credited with providing suggestions that helped secure Hitler's final approval.<sup>30</sup>

Little wonder, then, that by November 1937 Kreis could present a general site plan for Dresden's Party forum that closely corresponded to many other preexisting proposals: a large paved square measuring 350 by 200 meters set between a massive Saxony Hall and Gau House standing 45 and 35 meters tall, respectively. Instead of additional office buildings, rows of colonnades along the other sides provided a sense of enclosure and separation from the surrounding landscape (figure 3.7). The colonnades opposite the Hygiene Museum led to two Temples of Honor, which stood astride the central promenade into the baroque city park. Kreis included a seventy-five-meter-tall clock tower, but this time it was a freestanding campanile. Four freestanding

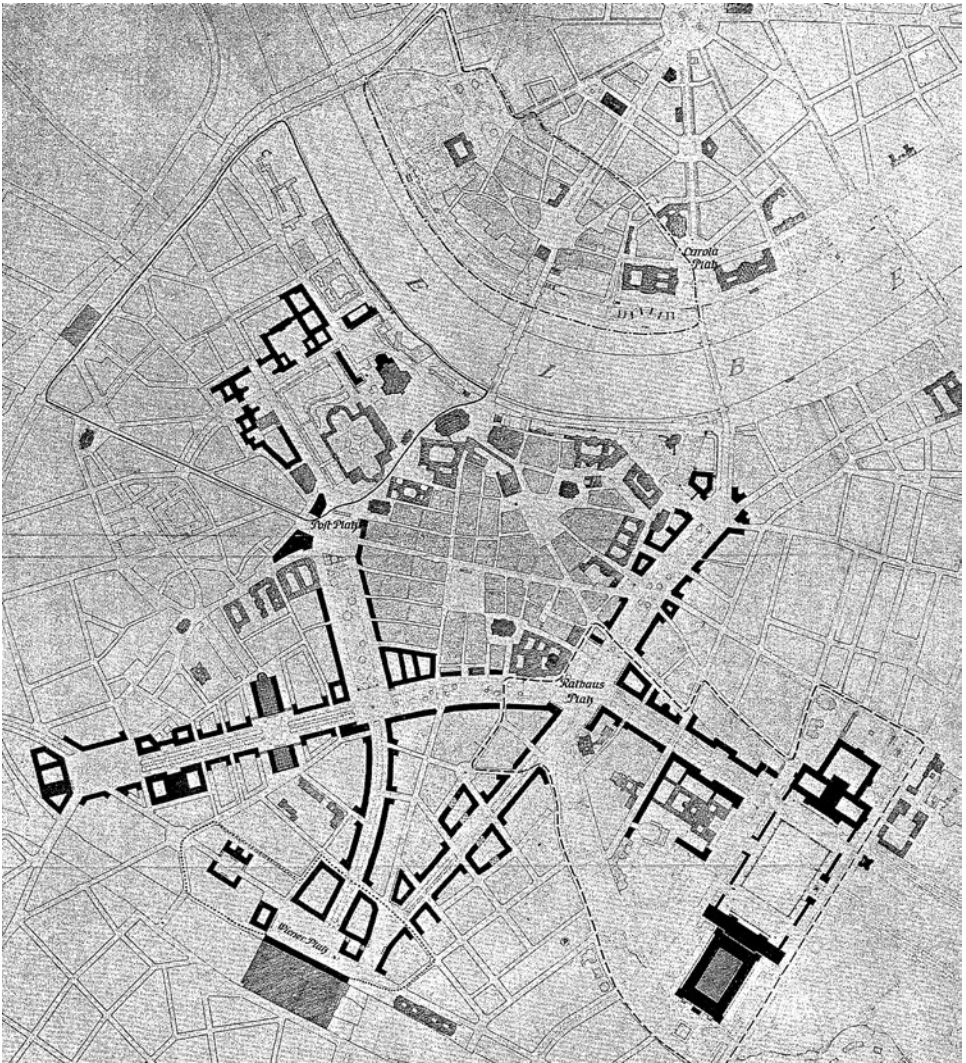


**Figure 3.7. Sketch Showing the Saxony Hall Planned for the Gauforum in Dresden**

Progress on the Gauforum in Dresden did not go far beyond drawings like the one shown here. The view looks across Adolf Hitler Square toward the Saxony Hall.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 68.

columns, two at each end of the square, provided a further vertical element. One noticeable elaboration of this plan compared to Weimar is that Kreis's forum would connect to the city center via a broad boulevard stretching to the town hall and a network of new avenues leading to the train station, state opera, and other important landmarks around the historical city center (figure 3.8). Instead of single forum, Hitler now envisioned a more thorough



**Figure 3.8. Map of Hitler's Plans to Redesign Dresden**

This map illustrates the extent of Hitler's plans to redesign Dresden. The new Gauforum in the bottom right would form part of a network of broad boulevards, linking the forum with the train station in the lower left and encircling the historical city center. The buildings depicted in black would all be newly constructed.

Source: Mutschmann, "Die städtebauliche Neugestaltung Dresdens," 17.

spatial reordering of the Gau cities. Because the city planning department had continued revising plans for restructuring the city throughout this time, Dresden was among the first cities to have a relatively comprehensive redesign plan approved by Hitler.<sup>31</sup>

### **Improvisation and Amalgamation**

Hitler styled himself as an architectural savant, but he relied heavily on others to translate his vague architectural visions into concrete programs. He moved quickly with his first two major projects, the House of German Art and Königsplatz, but the pace slowed noticeably after Troost's death. The lull is striking considering the fanfare accompanying the announcement of those first two projects. Individual buildings were commissioned and the development of the rally grounds in Nuremberg continued, yet neither provided much guidance for Gauleiters and other Nazi officials across Germany eager to put the Party's stamp on their cities.

After this rapid start, Hitler had cause to proceed more systematically. First, Hitler needed time to consolidate the Party's grip over all relevant levers of political, economic, and cultural power. A hasty, expansive urban building program might have produced unnecessary disruptions and complications. Second, Hitler lacked a cadre of reliable and competent architects who shared, or were at least willing to accommodate, his general views on architecture and urban design and were willing to translate his ambitious visions into coherent projects. Third, Hitler possessed only the vaguest notions of monumentality, heroism, and timelessness that would somehow bring order to the city and instill Party dominance over civic life. It was not clear what sort of buildings this might entail, where they should be located, or how they should relate to the existing city and to one another. Hitler's early experiences in Munich demonstrated the dangers of moving too hastily. Yet Hitler's last-minute intervention in Augsburg confirmed that, in the absence of clear guidance from above, lower officials would move ahead with their own ideas and, in some cases, even contradict Hitler's predilections. In Cologne, for example, officials launched a competition for a rally space in October 1935. The winning entry featured a stone orator's tribune backed by a large steel mesh eagle clasping a swastika that closely resembled, if not duplicated, Speer's provisional staging at the Zeppelin Field.<sup>32</sup>

By 1936, Hitler had largely resolved the barriers that stood in the way of moving rapidly ahead with a comprehensive building program. With respect to cultural matters, Joseph Goebbels had mostly succeeded in subordinating the building professions within his ministry in addition to dismissing or excluding "undesirable" individuals (communists, Jews, etc.) from government posts and commissions. In his deepening collaboration with Speer, Hitler found a trusted confidant to assist him in evaluating individual architects and their proposals. The exact chronology and motiva-

tions remain clouded, but the narrative presented here argues that Hitler, in consultation with Speer, intervened in various design competitions, both publicly in Dresden and privately in Weimar, to refine a relatively comprehensive program for new Party forums and simultaneously identify architects to carry out his wishes.

Hitler wanted to avoid open public design competition for the new Party forums. Proposals for forums located in relatively open areas in Cologne and Dresden sharpened Hitler's idea for new Party spaces by allowing him to "brainstorm," albeit largely anonymously, on issues of scale, orientation, layout, and purpose, but at the same time, he was not about to credit open competitions, even in part, for the regime's eventual blueprint for a national building program. The result was a shift to a private competition with more specific instructions in the case of Weimar.

It is unclear why Hitler did not include instructions for a tower and assembly hall in the original Weimar competition, since both ideas were included for Dresden and Augsburg. These may have been deliberate omissions so that Hitler could later point to specific elements in the final design that resulted from his personal intervention. But later press reports positioned Hitler as the overall inspiration for the entire project, not just a few components. It is more probable that whoever compiled the initial Weimar instructions, perhaps somebody on Speer's staff or somebody in the city planning department, was simply unaware of Hitler's interest in the Dresden tower and Augsburg civic hall. Indeed, it is possible that Hitler only thought to combine these disparate elements after the contest guidelines had been issued. This fits with Hitler's leadership style in which indecision, equivocation, and improvisation were often reinterpreted as decisive and brilliant insight. It is most likely that Hitler intervened impulsively in these projects as he coincidentally became aware of them. Yet Hitler had little idea how to bring them to a successful conclusion and lacked the capacity to develop such a strategy. He therefore delayed until something came along that might do the trick. The insertion of the assembly hall into the Weimar competition was likely exactly what it appeared to be, a piece of last-minute improvisation, probably filtered through Speer.

Either way, the process of developing the general parameters of style, spatial layout, function, and location for the Party forum program was a gradual and contingent process. By shifting from project to project and often using Speer as an intermediary, Hitler was able to selectively influence and manipulate these projects while simultaneously obscuring his involvement. Once projects were publicly announced in their more or less final form, Party propaganda positioned Hitler as the driving creative force behind them. Indeed, writing in the regime's premiere art and architectural magazine, art historian Alexander Heilmeyer explained how the "new Weimar" had "a common creator: That is the Führer." Because of this fact, Heilmeyer claimed, the new Party buildings "could not stand isolated, rather they had

to represent unity in order to become a monumental declaration of the new National Socialist power of will and formation, as well as the immortality of the National Socialist Third Reich."<sup>33</sup>

## PLANNING INFLATION

Most Gauleiters were not privy to the details of these projects but nonetheless would have been aware of Hitler's affinity for monumental architecture from the more widely publicized projects in Berlin, Munich, and Nuremberg. It is easy to understand why many Gauleiters, and even lower-level officials, were eager to have their cities included in some fashion. The construction of new Party forums offered an opportunity to curry favor with Hitler, subjugate rivals, acquire prestige, control resources, and patronize local constituencies. Yet the extent of Hitler's ambitions remained uncertain. In January 1937, Hitler announced "the methodical expansion of several of the Reich's major cities."<sup>34</sup> Hitler specifically mentioned Berlin, Munich, Nuremberg, and Hamburg, but it was unclear if this list was exhaustive. The publicity surrounding Weimar's Party forum during the second half of 1937 suggested that other cities, most obviously the Gau capitals, were also eligible. This was reinforced in early 1938 by the inclusion of the Weimar and Dresden forums in the First German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition, as well as in Gerdy Troost's pictorial oeuvre of Nazi architecture published that same year.<sup>35</sup> Preliminary planning efforts quickly proliferated among the Gau capitals.

### From Gauforums to Urban Redesign

Much as the redesigned Führer cities would provide appropriately grandiose buildings and spaces for the Party's top leadership, regional Party forums (*Gauforums*) would embed new civic spaces focused on national community and Nazi dominance into the Gau cities.<sup>36</sup> Yet as evidenced from Weimar and Dresden, the Gauforum program was far from standardized. Indeed, a central component of Nazi architectural ideology was that the Party's building program would, or at least should, attempt to reflect the creative impulses of the architects, as well as conform to natural topography and climate, preserve historical monuments and buildings, and respect local traditions and customs. As outlined by Mutschmann, the regime's redesign of Dresden and other cities "would have the same ideological foundation throughout the Greater German Reich, just as our people speak a common language in all our regions and are filled with a singular national will. It will, however, be influenced by local tradition and landscape."<sup>37</sup> This was to contrast with the standardization and artificiality supposedly imposed by the industrial-capitalist city.

The main ingredients were clear despite the rhetoric of heroic creativity. These new Party forums would conform to the aesthetics of monumentality exhibited by the regime's early projects in Munich, Nuremberg, and Berlin. Their function would be twofold: to provide representative office buildings for regional Party functionaries and their subordinates; and to create large assembly spaces for political rallies, speeches, and commemorations. In practical terms, this meant a large outdoor plaza framed by monumental buildings, including some type of indoor assembly hall, office buildings for various Party officials, and a tower. The dimensions of the square and buildings would correspond to the size of the city. Prominent buildings like historical monuments, prestigious theaters, and famous museums were not explicitly precluded. But unlike the Königsplatz where historical structures remained prominent if not dominant, the Weimar and Dresden examples made clear that these types of structures would have secondary roles in the new forums. Instead of trying to fit into existing public spaces, these new Party forums would typically replace dense, ramshackle working-class neighborhoods near a city's historical center and main train station. Such areas could be razed without excessive opposition.

Initial plans for the Weimar and Dresden forums left much of the existing urban landscape intact, but during 1937, Hitler began moving toward a more comprehensive reordering of the Gau capitals. By this time, Hitler was setting in place a general legal and organizational framework for redesigning the Führer cities that went far beyond simple Party forums. Much of Berlin would be nearly completely demolished and built anew. The historical centers in Munich and Nuremberg would be retained but encircled by new Party buildings and monuments linked together through spacious boulevards and plazas. Instead of simply applying the basic forum template from Weimar and Dresden to other cities, Hitler's later interventions in Augsburg, Bayreuth, and Cologne suggest the forum program was evolving into comprehensive plans to reorder entire cityscapes.

Augsburg had been on the verge of commissioning a new multipurpose building when Hitler intervened, triggering a multiyear redesign process. Hitler, with Speer and Giesler among his entourage, attended a local Party event in Augsburg in November 1937. They undoubtedly expected the city's proposed building to come up, and indeed it did. Hitler expressed approval for Wechs's revised design but outlined a much broader reordering of the city, very likely linked to his decision to create a new Gau for Swabia with Augsburg as its capital. Instead of a stand-alone Party forum, Hitler proposed a forum sitting alongside a broad boulevard running roughly halfway between the historical city center and the main train station. City planners quickly prepared designs, but Hitler was dissatisfied. As he had done previously with Wechs's design, Hitler sketched his ambitious vision directly on these plans. In a now familiar pattern, Hitler pushed aside local architects and the city planning department and charged Giesler with developing the idea.



Giesler was familiar with the city through his previous supervision of Wechs's designs and produced a general concept quickly.<sup>38</sup> Instead of its customary role as the boulevard's endpoint, the Party forum occupied a central location midway along the 1,200-meter-long avenue running between the train station and the city center in order to effectively connect the new development to the old city. The forum would be around 122 by 180 meters and accommodate 80,000 people. In contrast to the Weimar and Dresden plans, the forum would sit astride and slightly elevated from what was envisioned as a bustling commercial boulevard.<sup>39</sup> Also noteworthy is that the forum would have a different spatial configuration. An assembly hall, office building, and clock tower, apparently getting progressively taller at 116 meters, remained the main features (figure 3.9). Yet unlike Weimar and Dresden, the Gau office building would dominate the square. The assembly hall, designed to hold 20,000 people, was to be shorter than the Gau building (25 meters versus 44 meters tall), and its main entrance would not even face the forum. A memorial for Party martyrs, as found in Munich and Weimar, was also lacking, as it was in Dresden.<sup>40</sup>

Similar trends appeared in Bayreuth. Hitler was a huge admirer of composer Richard Wagner and a patron of Bayreuth's annual Wagner Festival. Indeed, planning in Bayreuth was of particular concern to Hitler given the city's role as a showcase for his cultural sophistication and patronage. Hitler undoubtedly kept informed of local developments during his frequent visits. Between 1933 and 1936, the former ducal riding hall was extensively remodeled into a festival hall, located just south of the historic city center. Local planners also worked up plans for a paved processional square in front of the hall extending to the south. After Hitler viewed a scale model during a visit in July 1937, the initial idea of building off of the festival hall was discarded. Instead, a much larger Gauforum was planned farther to the south consisting of an assembly hall flanked by a theater and Party office building.<sup>41</sup> According to Speer, this shift was attributable to the "personal initiative of the Führer," as was the "basic idea for a city center" in Augsburg.<sup>42</sup>

Cologne likewise experienced this inflationary trend in planning. In April 1937, the local Party newspaper reported that Cologne would be among the first cities scheduled for redesign by the regime. By November 1937, the same month Hitler visited Augsburg, Klotz had produced a Gauforum plan for Cologne, suggesting that he had been working on the project for some time. Set in roughly the same location as his proposed DAF complex, Klotz's forum centered on a massive assembly hall set between colonnaded office fronts enclosing a large square. In that sense, the design followed an increasingly well-trodden path. Yet Klotz was able to merge long-standing efforts to reorganize Cologne's rail network into his design and create a new forum variant. To the west of the assembly hall, the square opened across the Rhine to the historic city center. To the east of the assembly hall a second square, centered on a reflecting pool and also



**Figure 3.9. Model of the Gauforum in Augsburg**

The Augsburg Gauforum featured the obligatory party office building, clock tower, and assembly hall in the foreground. Later Gauform designs shifted subtly toward great ornamentation, as well as taller towers and even skyscrapers.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 67.

lined with colonnaded offices, led to an immense new train station.<sup>43</sup> In his 1941 memorandum to Party treasurer Franz Xaver Schwarz summarizing the regime's redesign program, Speer reported that Hitler had directly intervened in Cologne's project on several occasions. In conversations with Cologne's Gauleiter, Hitler rejected initial proposals and substituted his own idea for a new city center organized around a new forum facing the

Rhine riverfront. Hitler's exact involvement remains unclear, but he was likely drawing from proposals previously developed by Klotz and Ley for a House of German Labor complex at that location.

These examples highlight the increasing importance of integrating new transportation linkages and broad boulevards into the redesign of Gau cities. The Dortmund city planning department, for example, produced a plan for a five-kilometer-long avenue running southward from the city center. After several bends, this boulevard terminated at a new Gauforum complex surrounded by sport, leisure, and nature areas all accessible from a new train station. During his visit in 1939, Hitler rejected this plan and, on Speer's prompting, charged esteemed city planner Hermann Jansen with Dortmund's redesign. Jansen retained much of the basic structure from the original plan but straightened the main ceremonial axis.<sup>44</sup>

Instead of marking an endpoint, these examples suggest the Weimar and Dresden forums were part of a continuing evolution of the Party forum idea in terms of its function, location, and relationship to the surrounding cityscape. Weimar's forum was basically a stand-alone complex. Sited roughly halfway between the historical city center and the main train station, it lacked prominent boulevards connecting these urban nodes. Only later did attention turn to designing spaces that linked the complex to the rest of the city. Dresden's forum had a ceremonial axis leading to the city center, but its location precluded a single boulevard linking both with the train station. Augsburg's forum would be the midpoint of a massive axis, but the ensemble lacked appropriately monumental endpoints. These Party forums were sited near city centers, but they had relatively little impact upon historic districts.

In Cologne, Klotz's initial plan placed a Party forum directly between the train station and the city center with new buildings, spaces, and infrastructure linking them together. By 1939, a small cadre of planners and architects launched sustained and comprehensive efforts to redesign Cologne, including plowing two broad boulevards, perhaps seventy meters wide, through the city center to link up with the Party forum across the river.<sup>45</sup> Instead of constituting a new node within a polycentric morphology, Cologne's Party forum would become the literal and symbolic urban center with the remaining historical districts encased within a network of monumental axes and squares.

It was unclear to what extent the regime's euphoric plans for Cologne would be repeated elsewhere. During their first conversation concerning the Weimar forum, Giesler claimed Hitler wanted Party buildings to fit organically into the existing urban structure.<sup>46</sup> That may have been Hitler's initial intent, but it was soon clear that his impulse to build a new Nazi Germany entailed a rapacious appetite to destroy the old. Indeed, subsequent plans for Weimar and Dresden quickly progressed far beyond new forums to entail a wholesale reordering of urban spaces around the historical center.<sup>47</sup>

Beyond simply providing venues for rallies and bureaucrats, the expansion of the Gauforum program suggested that a much broader transformation of German cities was in the offing.<sup>48</sup>

### **Authority and Organization**

The scope of Hitler's ambitions expanded, but the issue of implementation remained. The ad hoc interventions by Hitler and Speer worked reasonably well while experimenting with a limited number of cities to develop the basic concept. But these experiences also illustrated the danger that high-profile construction projects would simply be viewed by municipal and regional authorities as means to acquire prestige, wealth, and power. There were also risks that the confiscation of property might generate public opposition or economic disruption. This was already clear in the initial planning for Berlin and Nuremberg where, despite the Party's firm grip on power, Speer faced numerous obstacles as myriad Reich, state, municipal, and Party organizations jostled for power. Hitler's appointment of Speer as general building inspector in January 1937 and the promulgation of the Law on the Redesign of German Cities that October attempted to resolve these complications by granting Speer wide latitude to resolve design matters, property rights, and jurisdictional disputes. Yet Hitler's Redesign Law neglected to clarify which cities were covered. This caused considerable confusion among both government and Party officials.<sup>49</sup>

Gradually, the law expanded to cover other Gau cities. Normally, city planning departments drew up the initial proposals. Municipal officials were largely excluded from the process but were still expected to contribute massive funding to implement the projects. Hitler and Speer reviewed the proposals, ensuring a degree of consistency and adherence to the overall concept. It was also apparent that Hitler and Speer kept the planning process secret so to keep any Party quarrels out of public view and minimize chances for public opposition to coalesce, especially since these plans invariably meant some people would lose their homes or businesses to clear space for the new forums and boulevards.<sup>50</sup> Plans were only publicized once they reached a more or less final state. Hitler then decreed that the city in question would be covered by the Redesign Law under the purview of the local Gauleiter, much as Speer was in charge of Berlin.

In anticipation of a torrent of proposals, Speer tried to set some general parameters and priorities in early 1939. He encouraged officials to begin planning work but cautioned that the five Führer cities, along with Weimar and Augsburg, would have priority. Accordingly, Speer encouraged "construction-happy communities" to develop low-cost approaches, such as building on open land to avoid the costs of replacement housing and compensation for confiscated property. Speer repeatedly warned against hasty demolitions since urban redesign required comprehensive preliminary

planning.<sup>51</sup> Gauleiters and other Party officials largely ignored Speer's entreaties and plowed forward, taking their requests for extensive urban renewal projects directly to Hitler. Hitler further undermined Speer by authorizing the redesign of ever more cities. In February 1939, Hitler issued the first batch of "redesign decrees" for Gau cities, consisting of just two short sentences: "For the city of [name], I order the implementation of special city building measures as determined by me. I instruct the Gauleiter of Gau [name] to take the steps mentioned" in the 1937 Redesign Law (table 3.1).<sup>52</sup> The first sentence was a bit redundant in that Hitler basically ordered the implementation of whatever projects he approved. The second sentence was more substantive since it empowered the Gauleiter to act, or at least claim to be acting, on Hitler's behalf. A decree did not mean that planning for that city had been finalized; rather, it indicated that Hitler felt relatively comfortable with the overall plan in terms of basic composition and location and had confidence in the ability of the supervising architect and officials. It clearly did not mean that Hitler had thought through practical issues related to financing, materials, labor, or replacement housing.

By the end of 1940, many Gau cities had prepared preliminary plans for new Party forums, with several cities possessing relatively comprehensive proposals. The steady stream of redesign decrees from Hitler motivated many Party officials to move with haste lest their cities be excluded. Hitler seemed caught up in the excitement as well, especially after the defeat of France in summer 1940. Speer later complained in his autobiography: "Un-

**Table 3.1. Time Line of Initial Führer Redesign Decrees**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>
October 4, 1937	Redesign Law	March 15, 1940	Innsbruck
November 5, 1937	Berlin	May 12, 1940	Hannover
April 9, 1938	Nuremberg	July 12, 1940	Königsberg, Oldenburg, Posen, Saarbrücken, Wewelsburg
July 6, 1938	City of the KdF Car (Wolfsburg)	December 20, 1940	Bremen, Memel, Wuppertal
December 21, 1938	Munich	February 28, 1941	Waldröhl
February 17, 1939	Augsburg, Bayreuth, Breslau, Dresden, Graz, Hamburg, Würzburg	May 16, 1941	Bochum, Danzig, Klagenfurt, Lüneburg, Reichenberg
March 25, 1939	Linz, Salzburg	May 29, 1941	Frankfurt am Main, Heidelberg
March 31, 1939	Münster, Stettin	October 21, 1941	Litzmannstadt
June 7, 1939	Düsseldorf, Cologne, Weimar	August 18, 1942	Vienna

Source: Reichsgesetzblatt Teil I (1937–1942).

der the influence of his Gauleiters, he [Hitler] wildly lengthened the list of cities slated for reconstruction. . . . Neither I nor anyone else was ever asked about the feasibility of such decisions."<sup>53</sup>

Nevertheless, the five Führer cities retained priority status. Weimar and Augsburg were also favored since much of the preliminary work was already complete. Beyond these, Hitler's other redesign decrees reflected his expansionist ambitions as they focused disproportionately on border regions. In a very real sense, these new Gauforums would constitute the building blocks of empire by serving as launching points for German hegemony across Europe and anchoring newly annexed territories to the Reich. As Speer explained, Hitler wanted to afford building programs in Breslau and Königsberg (Kaliningrad, Russia) special status because of their eastern locations.<sup>54</sup> The competition announcement for Frankfurt an der Oder's new forum noted the city would transform into a "bulwark of the empire against the East."<sup>55</sup>

These efforts quickly expanded into the annexed territories. Preliminary redesign plans for Graz and Linz had progressed sufficiently for them to become the first cities designated for renewal outside Germany's 1938 boundaries.<sup>56</sup> Plans to redesign Posen (Poznań, Poland) as the new Gau capital of Wartheland were apparently largely finished by the end of 1939.<sup>57</sup> By summer 1941, planners had produced relatively complete redesign programs for at least eighty-five towns and cities across Wartheland.<sup>58</sup> Similar efforts commenced in the annexed portions of West Prussia, East Prussia, and Upper Silesia. Although not technically within the annexed territories or designated as a Gau capital, Warsaw would also be transformed. Hubert Groß, director of planning in Würzburg, had presented plans for that city's redesign to Hitler and Speer by June 1939. The design was apparently well received. Groß was dispatched by November to redesign Warsaw around a typical forum and axis layout while simultaneously reducing the city's population from one million to around 400,000.<sup>59</sup>

It was soon apparent that Hitler's grandiose building plans could upset the shifting balance of power within the regime or even undermine other regime priorities. As supervisor of the Four Year Plan, Hermann Göring assured municipal leaders that the Führer city projects would proceed but took care to warn that "it is however not necessary now that every other city believes it must also implement a massive building program at the same time for there is a huge difference between the Reich capital Berlin and Kyritz [a small town northwest of Berlin]."<sup>60</sup> Göring expressed concern over the possibility that these monumental projects might jeopardize housing construction necessary to support industrial expansion, admonishing his colleagues to remember that "more important than the construction of administrative palaces is also at present the concern for inexpensive apartments."<sup>61</sup> Even privileged projects faced challenges. By June 1939, Giesler received only around 10,000 workers earmarked for furthering Munich's

redesign, roughly one-third of his request. The building sector was soon poaching workers from building material suppliers, which in turn created shortages that ironically undermined construction not only on the Führer cities but also on military-industrial projects.<sup>62</sup>

Speer grew increasingly concerned that these Gauforum projects siphoned resources away from Berlin and Nuremberg. Already by August 1940, Speer wrote to the Reich Chancellery chief of staff, Hans Lammers, concerned that the Gau building program would cause shortages of construction materials, especially stone, as well as divert capable architects from the Führer cities.<sup>63</sup> Other Reich officials complained that some Gauleiters were interpreting the redesign decrees as bestowing them with *carte blanche* over all construction projects within their districts. In July 1941, the interior minister, Wilhelm Frick, sent a lengthy memo to Lammers protesting that the Gauleiters were using Hitler's redesign decrees to claim seemingly unlimited powers to intervene in municipal and state affairs, warning that "exactly these disorderly jurisdictional questions are already leading to serious difficulties in the state and municipal administrative apparatus and to undesirable friction."<sup>64</sup> Speer also wrote to Lammers in August 1941 cautioning that planning seemed out of control: "From Gauleiters to the smaller Kreisleiters and mayors, urban planning initiatives seem to be the main piece of public work after the war and a personal proving ground."<sup>65</sup> Speer also noted to Lammers that "incipient 'overplanning'" and "large-scale amateurism" proliferated as neighborhoods were being torn down to make way for Gauforum projects without any thought of providing replacement housing.<sup>66</sup> Speer suggested curtailing all planning activity beyond his projects, but these disputes lingered without definitive resolution until the war gradually halted construction.

After failing to gain overall oversight authority, Speer withdrew from the broader redesign program to concentrate on Berlin and Nuremberg. In a quasi-resignation letter, Speer summarized the regime's redesign program for Schwarz in February 1941. The memo provided a basic summary of the program and Speer's knowledge of the current status of Gauforum planning for forty-one cities. These included twenty-three Führer and Gau cities and an additional four cities that were not actually Gau cities but had received a redesign decree anyway. Speer listed eighteen additional cities that had yet to receive Hitler's official approval and indicated that he had little or no knowledge of what, if any, planning work was underway there. In most cases, the Gauleiters assumed primary responsibility, including preparation of a comprehensive plan for everything to be built in their capital over the next twenty years. Speer argued that additional costs would be minimal, since many of these buildings would have been built regardless. Yet without a comprehensive plan, these buildings would be constructed in disparate locations and lack any type of overall impact. Avoiding this, in Speer's opinion, would generally require the laying out of a new city center. Speer went on to stipulate:

Fundamentally, the Führer wishes the construction of a Gauforum in all the Gau capitals, which will primarily be a seat for Party buildings, a Gau hall, an assembly square, a clock tower, and also the office of the Reich Governor. These Gauforums are to generally be the central point for all urban planning considerations. In the future, a new theater, hotel, various administrative buildings of the state government (police presidium, etc.), and often a new commercial street with administrative buildings for the economy and stores will generally be planned adjacent these Gauforums.<sup>67</sup>

Speer's memo provided the basic components for an expansive building program that would fundamentally reorder cities around new civic spaces focused on the Party as the centerpiece of an extensive network of broad boulevards linking the historical center, important cultural centers, and the main arteries of commerce and transportation. As Speer explained: "Today, the National Socialist Reich will give the city a new built center that in its direct connection with the old representative core through its spatial extent and size gives the entire cityscape the crucial element."<sup>68</sup>

### **Compliance and Complication**

Speer's memo recommended an increasingly standardized program to provide appropriate civic buildings and spaces for Germany's major cities. Reality was more contingent and varied. The cities that came to occupy prominent positions within the regime's monumental building program tended to have an ambitious mayor, Gauleiter, or city planner, who could often draw upon pre-1933 planning efforts. They knew that Hitler was often quick to intervene decisively when presented with building proposals, plans, and requests during his travels across Germany. As a result of these local initiatives, officials succeeded in developing redesign plans agreeable to Hitler, dutifully complying with any revisions their Führer ordered.

The city of Münster, for example, began implementing a flood control program during the 1920s that created an artificial lake. As the project neared completion after 1933, city and Party officials considered options for developing the new lakefront areas. They eventually decided to build a Gau house, which was finished in 1936. In the wake of the publicity following the Weimar and Dresden forums, professor and architect Hermann Bartels led efforts to further develop the area into a Party complex. Gauleiter Alfred Meyer took this proposal to Hitler, which led to a decree in 1939 empowering Meyer to take charge of the city's redesign.<sup>69</sup>

The development of Hannover's Gauforum was strikingly similar. Here, too, local officials had approved the construction of an artificial lake for flood control purposes during the 1920s, but the economic crisis stalled the effort. After seizing power, Nazi officials revived the project as part of their work creation efforts, finishing the project in 1936. The initial plans to develop this new lakefront as a leisure area with sports and swimming



facilities, restaurants, and festival grounds were soon augmented with parade grounds, an exhibition area, and eventually a typical Gauforum complex including an assembly hall and tower. Final plans were completed by May 1939. Hitler generally approved the proposal but ordered the main Gauforum ensemble shifted over a kilometer to the southeast to be directly on the lakefront. Bartels, who would also work on plans for Heinrich Himmler's Schutzstaffel (SS) center at Wewelsburg and preliminary planning for the redesign of Posen in occupied Poland, had a revised proposal ready later that year. Hitler issued another of his redesign decrees for Hannover in 1940. Despite Hitler's approval, the project never really got started for various reasons, including Göring's resistance to allocating resources to the project and a bitter power struggle between municipal and Gau authorities, likely exacerbated by the persistent absenteeism of Gauleiter Bernhard Rust, who was preoccupied with his other job as Reich minister of education.<sup>70</sup>

In the previous examples, local initiatives eventually resulted in Hitler designating these cities as priority projects, but that was not always the case. Stuttgart mayor Karl Strölin worked tirelessly to elevate his status and that of his city. A prominent role in Hitler's building program provided a clear opportunity, but Strölin seemed unable to comprehend the basic Gauforum blueprint or reconcile it with his own ideas for Stuttgart. During a visit to Stuttgart in 1938, Strölin presented Hitler with various building projects, including a plan to redesign the historic city center focusing on a new city hall, market hall, and improving traffic flow. It is unclear whether Hitler voiced an opinion, but other projects reviewed by Hitler were subsequently reported in the local press and, in many cases, actually built, while the plan for redesigning the Stuttgart city center vanished.<sup>71</sup> Hitler was likely less than enthused about restructuring Stuttgart around a new city hall, instead of monumental Party buildings.

In other cases, the improvisational nature of Hitler's leadership, especially his dealings with the Gauleiters and Reich ministers, complicated efforts to establish a more centralized building program. Ambitious Gauleiter Robert Wagner ordered planning to begin in late 1935 for a massive reordering of Karlsruhe as a new capital for the Gau Baden, but the project never seemed to attract Hitler's attention. Eventually in 1940, Hitler declared Strasbourg in occupied France the capital of an expanded Gau Baden-Alsace, and Speer supervised an invitation-only contest to design a "new Strasbourg."<sup>72</sup> Neustadt an der Weinstrasse served as the capital of Gau Palatinate, which was expanded to include the Saar region and its largest city Saarbrücken after it returned to Germany in 1935. Officials in Saarbrücken presumably presented drawings for a potential Gauforum to Hitler during his visit in late 1938 in the hopes of replacing Neustadt. However, a few months later in January 1939, Gauleiter Josef Bürckel publicly announced that Hitler had just designated Kaiserslautern as the new Gau capital. Local planners had barely begun work when Hitler changed course and designated Saarbrücken as the capital of a new and expanded Gau Westmark that incorporated oc-

cupied French territory.<sup>73</sup> Speer's summary memo the following February on Gau projects succinctly noted "Strasbourg (instead of Karlsruhe)" and did not mention Kaiserslautern at all.<sup>74</sup>

In other instances, Hitler appeared to commission competing Gauforums. Oldenburg was the official Party seat of the Gau Weser-Ems and received its own redesign decree from Hitler in July 1940. Municipal officials in Bremen sought to elevate their city in Hitler's building program and accordingly developed their own redesign proposal, which they presented to Speer for approval that September. Speer voiced no objections but was reportedly uncertain whether the project could proceed because the Redesign Law only applied to Führer and Gau cities. Speer neglected to mention that he had chaired a design competition for a new Gauforum in Wuppertal and was at least informed of concurrent efforts for a Gauforum in Dortmund, although neither were Gau cities.<sup>75</sup> Hitler resolved the issue by declaring Bremen and Wuppertal redesign cities in December 1940.<sup>76</sup> This signaled that Hitler intended to broaden the redesign program beyond the Gau capitals, although no effort was made to clarify which additional cities might be involved. Instead, Hitler issued ad hoc orders, complicating any effort to create a clear hierarchy of new urban spaces congruent with the Party's official political hierarchy of Reich-Gau-Kreis.

Other Gauleiters seemed indifferent. The Gauleiter of Essen, for example, appeared disinterested in urban policy and left the city's mayor in charge. The mayor was adamant in devoting available resources to housing and other efforts to manage the city's rapid industrial expansion. In Schwerin, the capital of Gau Mecklenburg, Party officials commissioned a modest Party house and festival hall by 1936 but later rejected forum plans that would have necessitated extensive demolitions, preferring instead to adapt existing buildings through simple renovations.<sup>77</sup> The mayor of Augsburg seemed pleased by Hitler's interest in the city but balked at the costs. The mayor's entreaty to the Finance Ministry for assistance was denied.<sup>78</sup> The finance minister, Lutz Graf Schwerin von Krosigk, made it clear to Lammers in January 1941 that his ministry would support the Führer city projects, but the Gau cities would have to pay for their own redesign: "The upgrading of the Führer cities will be immediately supported with all strength. The Gau capital upgrades must be adapted to the given opportunities."<sup>79</sup> These complications were reflected in Speer's 1941 memo. In several cases, Speer acknowledged that planning was underway for a city, but he was unaware of the details. For the three cities mentioned here, as well as Bochum and Klagenfurt, Speer simply wrote "unknown." In the case of Strasbourg, Speer noted that Hitler, returning from his victory tour of Paris, had sketched out a location for the new city center (figure 3.10). In addition to the Gau complex, this district would include a Reich Governor building, a theater, a university building, a hotel, and several administrative buildings. Yet Speer confided that "the Gauleiter appears initially to be more interested in the construction of a hotel and theater."<sup>80</sup>



**Figure 3.10. Hitler and His Entourage Touring Paris**

Shortly after France's surrender in June 1940, Hitler and his entourage toured the major architectural monuments of Paris. The party's front four from left to right are Hermann Giesler, Albert Speer, Hitler, and Arno Breker.

*Source:* German Federal Archives.

### **An Evolving Program?**

As part of Berlin's reconstruction, Hitler ordered the Gau capital transferred to Frankfurt an der Oder, a relatively nondescript town east of Berlin. Frankfurt lacked any suitable administration buildings, so the transfer necessitated a massive building program to accommodate the imminent influx of bureaucrats and their families as the city assumed its new administrative role and proclaimed special mission as an eastern cultural center.<sup>81</sup> Speer communicated with local authorities in early 1937 to arrange a design contest that, beyond the immediate purpose of redesigning Frankfurt, might "reveal the strength that appears suitable to be used for other great tasks."<sup>82</sup> This could have reflected Hitler's recognition that Speer and Giesler were overburdened but might also imply a continuing search for new ideas. The contest garnered 573 entries. Unsurprisingly, the leading proposals were all variations on the Weimar model with a large neoclassicist assembly hall flanked by Party offices around a large open square.<sup>83</sup>

Hitler and the jury, which included Speer and Giesler, were not impressed, and so they invited twelve entrants to participate in a second competition by December 1938. Hitler, Speer, and Gauleiter Emil Stürtz reviewed the revised entries in January 1939. After Speer provided his assessment, Hitler followed with his own thoughts and selected a design by Hans Mehrtens for further refinement.<sup>84</sup> Mehrtens's basic layout, a large square surrounded by Party buildings, was familiar enough. Yet the design lacked the rigid symmetry characteristic of the plans for Weimar and Dresden. The main avenues of approach were not centered on the square. The Gau and DAF office buildings were asymmetrical, while the Gau hall and the Reich Governor building faced away from the square. Aside from the asymmetry, these other elements were reminiscent of Giesler's planning for Augsburg. The buildings also shied away from rigid neoclassicist facades and seemed more in line with neo-Romanesque forms. Most strikingly, the standard clock tower was replaced by a stout skyscraper, perhaps fourteen stories tall, attached to the Gau offices. This reflected Hitler's evolving reappraisal of skyscrapers as he expressed increasing fascination with new technologies and a desire to integrate them into his projects. Hitler's demands for a massive skyscraper in Hamburg was the most obvious example, as were the main towers featured on the Nazi schools at Sonthofen and Chiemsee, both designed by Giesler. To what extent the selection of Mehrtens's design represented a substantive shift in Hitler's thinking toward his Party forum program is an intriguing but unanswerable question since war prevented any subsequent developments.<sup>85</sup>

There were other subtle indications of shifts in the Gauforum program. Reinhold Niemeyer, involved with the redesign effort in Frankfurt an der Oder and later charged with responsibility for Prague, wrote that proper urban planning has to take into account the locality's individual character and

structure.<sup>86</sup> According to Niemeyer: "The new, what shall be created, must, and this is fundamental, be connected with the essential, structural factors of life of the city in question." So if a city's morphology was dominated by a riverfront, then the new Party forum should be located along the riverfront, as was planned for Frankfurt. Around this "city crown," the emphasis should be on adapting the existing urban layout to technical concerns, especially transportation. Monumental boulevards may or may not be practical in this respect and even risked damaging the organic essence of the city. "For axes can be a great artistic achievement of great emotion in the proper location," Niemeyer proclaimed, "but if their use is generalized, then they would become pathetic and embarrassing."<sup>87</sup> Instead of replicating the Weimar forum in other cities, these later plans and writings suggested that the entire forum program remained in flux and perhaps drifting away from overly standardized designs. The relatively late emergence of the "city crown" (*Stadtkrone*) concept also suggests the continued evolution of the Gau cities program. In this case, Nazi planners were reaching back to a utopian modernist proposal advanced by Bruno Taut during World War I.

Indeed, Speer, writing the concluding comments for the initial forum competition in Frankfurt, attributed the disappointing results to the fact that participants

allowed their plans to be influenced to an excessive extent by known architectural structures. Most of the participants have thus made a fatal mistake. A design that is meant for Weimar, for example, cannot be readily transferred to Frankfurt/Oder. Or a design that is intended for Munich can only rarely be used for the brickwork architecture of the German east. When the diversity of landscapes and the particularities of the traditional urban design are disregarded, then occurs a uniformity of all cityscapes and landscapes. That would be synonymous with the end of the diversity of German building culture.<sup>88</sup>

Hitler bestowed his last redesign decree on Vienna, where Hanns Dustmann laid out plans for an ensemble including a squat, rectangular train station, a round plaza, and a towering, domed Gau hall adjacent to an assembly square that closely mimicked the main elements of Speer's north-south axis in Berlin, except for its arrangement in an L shape instead of a straight line. These final examples illustrate how the Gauforum program remained in flux as it vacillated between conformity and adaptability.<sup>89</sup>

These planning efforts eventually merged into the work of Speer's reconstruction staff and helped set the stage for postwar reconstruction. The sheer scale of devastation left by Allied bombers made clear that most major German cities required extensive reconstruction efforts. As early as March 1943, Speer and Hitler had already discussed postwar reconstruction. In these discussions, Hitler conveyed his desire that the main focus would be the "reconstruction of the old city centers in historical cities . . . and when possible . . . the widening of the streets."<sup>90</sup> In October 1943, Hitler issued his decree

Concerning the Preparations for the Reconstruction of Bomb-Damaged Cities expressing his resolve that repairs would be carried out "in the context of a comprehensive reorganization."<sup>91</sup> This could not happen during the war, but Hitler nonetheless ordered that reconstruction plans be prepared.

Hitler determined which cities fell under his decree but gave overall supervision to Speer, who quickly pulled together a reconstruction staff and began developing plans for the broad-based reconstruction and spatial reorganization of Germany's cities. Team members came initially from Speer's staff but soon expanded to include most of the regime's highest profile architects, including Dustmann, Giesler, Konstanty Gutschow, Hans Bernard Reichow, and Herbert Rimpl. Nominally headed by Wolters but effectively headed by Gutschow, the group had compiled a list by May 1944 of forty-three cities that would be the focus of their efforts. Quickly, attention shifted to whether "reconstruction" was the best approach or whether to focus instead on completely restructuring and modernizing urban areas. For architects and planners, who generally aspired to reform urban life, the answer was obvious. As Speer instructed the Gauleiters in a December 1943 memo, "particular attention must be given to the fact that here is a unique opportunity to make the cities livable again in terms of traffic."<sup>92</sup>

The general consensus was that cities should be organized as a *Stadtlandschaft*. Literally meaning city landscape, the basic idea was that cities be structured as relatively dispersed residential cells based on local Party chapters. Gutschow developed some of the most extensive reconstruction plans for Hamburg, which envisioned the city's residential areas rebuilt as Party-based cells. These basic units would be systematically oriented around a monumental Party and governmental center that was ordered into a broader hierarchy of Kreis, Gau, and Reich. Like the regime's other wartime efforts, events rapidly overtook these reconstruction initiatives. Speer, Gutschow, and the other top architects were soon absorbed in other tasks, but some team members demonstrated surprising resolve. Even after being forced out of Berlin by Allied bombing during summer 1944, the group doggedly continued their planning activities into late April 1945.

### BUILDING THE PARTY'S BASE

The regime's program for new Gauforums paralleled similar developments within the Party's lower echelons. Given the regime's determination to dominate public life, it was logical that smaller municipalities should also receive new Party buildings and spaces. Some officials in smaller communities were understandably keen to benefit from the regime's vigorous construction program, although they obviously could not expect to build monumental forums. Compared to larger cities, the experience of smaller cities and towns was more varied, reflecting cooperation and competition between Party and

municipal authorities, strength of Party support, local economic conditions, and the extant urban landscape. In contrast to the rather uncertain evolution of the regime's Gauforum program, efforts to provide administration buildings for the Party's lower echelons proceeded with great speed. Initially, officials tended to make do by renovating existing structures, often office buildings, to create a District (*Kreis*), Community (*Gemeinde*), or Party House. Yet given the regime's emphasis on building a new Germany, both literally and figuratively, lower-level officials increasingly sought new headquarters for themselves and the Party's sprawling bureaucracy.

### From District House to District Forum

In the Nazi political hierarchy, the district leaders (*Kreisleiters*) were next in rank below the Gau level. They soon fell in line with the new official style heralded by Troost and Speer. The size and style of the Kreis House in Weimar, for example, was clearly in keeping with other prominent Party buildings in Munich, Berlin, and obviously Weimar's own forum (figure 3.11).<sup>93</sup> Yet Weimar's Kreis House was an exception, resulting from unique local circum-



**Figure 3.11. The Kreis House in Weimar**

The Kreis House in Weimar followed the standard style for prominent Party and government buildings. The sprawling and ever-expanding Party bureaucracy required a corresponding expansion of offices.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:91.

stances. Weimar was simultaneously a Gau city and occupied a very prominent position within the regime's building program. It is noteworthy that separate Kreis offices were absent from plans for other Gau cities, suggesting that the local Kreis offices would simply merge into Gauforum spaces.

The Kreis House in Weimar undoubtedly grew out of Giesler's Gauforum project, but others were generally the result of local initiative. Unlike planning in the Gau cities, these lower-level projects attracted little attention among the Party's upper leadership and reflected the varying dynamics of local Party politics and planning practices rather than any systematic program. This also meant that a number of them were completed, although renovating existing structures remained the predominant means of providing local offices. These new district offices were usually unassuming two- to four-story buildings that drew upon local building traditions, such as sloping roofs, plastered facades, and the use of vernacular materials, in place of the stony neoclassicism of Hitler's monumental buildings. Despite these differences, these Party buildings were still intended to confer a sense of permanence, respectability, and authority, largely through austere facades and rigid window arrangements. These local offices were also generally conceived as single structures that had relatively little impact on the existing urban morphology, function, or practice. This changed after 1937 as Party authorities began developing plans to emulate the Gauforum program on a smaller scale. The surge of publicity for the Führer and Gau city projects, culminating in the German Architecture and Handicrafts Exhibition in early 1938, provided clear direction for the overall form, function, and layout for Party buildings. Although obviously on smaller scales than the Gauforums, these district forums aimed to add a sense of monumentality and grandeur proportional to the size of community.

The proposed Kreisforum in Regensburg was one of the larger examples. Local officials began preliminary steps to organize the construction of an administration and civic building soon after 1933. The project stalled until 1938 when a design competition was launched for a Party complex to be located in a park adjacent the historical city center. The competition called for an assembly square for 50,000 people enclosed on three sides by a meeting hall for 8,000 people and office space for Party bureaucrats. Despite receiving 99 entries, the results were inconclusive. Giesler, who chaired the jury, soon assumed responsibility for the project, in perhaps another instance of a competition being used to solicit ideas surreptitiously. Unsurprisingly, Giesler's concept was reminiscent of his other projects. The main entrance to the assembly hall faced outward from the main square, as in Augsburg, and a heavysset skyscraper overlooked the complex, rather than a clock tower, as in the designs for Sonthofen and Frankfurt an der Oder.<sup>94</sup>

These were largely local initiatives, but it appears that more formal guidelines were emerging. Guidelines published in February 1941, discussed later in the chapter, concerning the construction of local Party



chapter buildings noted that Ley, Speer, and Schwarz were presently developing additional guidelines for the design of Kreis centers.<sup>95</sup> Perhaps the Regensburg competition was an initial step toward forming a template, similar to the role played by some of the early Gau city projects. Although significantly smaller than the Gauforums, the construction of new forums for more than 800 different Kreis cities would have been a tremendous undertaking. Officials in Wilhelmshaven, for example, went through various planning permutations to build new sport and cultural forums that would have included a new town hall, theater, concert hall, assembly hall, a stadium, and indoor swimming hall.<sup>96</sup>

Regensburg and Wilhelmshaven, however, appear to be exceptions as relatively few local officials succeeded in pushing such ambitious efforts. For example, the five Bavarian Gau regions included ninety-four districts in 1940, but apparently only fourteen of these Kreis cities made efforts to begin formal planning for a Party forum. These were generally the more populous Kreis cities. Cost was a major deterrent, especially if a Kreis house already existed. An additional reason for the lack of support was that many of these local officials basically merged their Party functions with municipal ones. In 1935, more than 40 percent of Kreisleiters in Bavaria were simultaneously mayors. Despite efforts by the Party leadership to separate Party and municipal administration, the proportion was still around 25 percent by 1942. Unfortunately, there has been no systematic Reich-wide inventory of these Kreisforum projects, and case studies are lacking. If Bavaria is remotely close to representative on this matter, the rapid profusion of Gauforums after 1937 was not replicated at the Kreis level. The annexed territories, though, may have been an exception as plans emerged relatively quickly to establish new Kreis cities in Wartheland and West Prussia.<sup>97</sup>

### **Party Buildings and Spaces on the Local Level**

Nazi officials on the local level had a fair amount of flexibility in terms of providing suitable administrative buildings and civic spaces. Most of these local chapters simply renovated existing buildings, although a few built a new community or Party house (figure 3.12). Both options tended to be relatively modest single structures in traditional styles. Financial concerns were a major factor since these communities were relatively small and unlikely to receive significant external assistance. The planning frenzy that swept the upper levels of the Party leadership after 1937 had limited impact at the local level. For example, in Bavaria there were maybe only a dozen or so local chapters that made preliminary plans for new Party centers out of nearly 1,800.<sup>98</sup> As noted previously, many local chapters had already invested in new or renovated Party houses, so expansive and expensive forums likely have seemed redundant and impractical.



**Figure 3.12. The Community House in Riederau in Southern Bavaria**

Even smaller communities needed Party offices, but they tended to adopt styles that were more traditional. This community house in the southern Bavarian town of Riederau, with its onion-shaped dome, mimics vernacular architecture in the German Alps.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:137.

The Party leadership gradually moved toward greater coordination of local-scale Party buildings. In 1937, Ley proposed that every chapter should have a community house that contained an assembly hall, as well as local Party and government offices.<sup>99</sup> But aside from projects directly under Ley's control, such as at the Mascherode settlement or the Erwitte training academy, few community houses materialized. Ley eventually received approval in early 1941 from Hitler, Speer, and Schwarz to issue instructions to begin planning for the construction of a "community house" for every local chapter. According to the official guidelines, these buildings would "cultivate and promote the unity of the community" as they became the "central point for the people's support and supervision, the people's culture, sports, and social life."<sup>100</sup> The instructions specified that each building contain office spaces for the local Party administration, an event room, restaurant, health station, kindergarten, and sports facility. These Party buildings would occupy a prominent central location that also adjoined an outdoor assembly space and a "court of honor for the fallen." The size of the building and adjoining spaces varied, but generally the main event room would accommodate between 10 to 15 percent of the local population with seating for 1,500 people as the upper limit.<sup>101</sup> Speer and his staff would supervise the overall design process, including selecting the architects.

In many ways, the guidelines for these community houses provided greater specificity than either the Gau or Kreis forum programs. These structures would become the basic building blocks for a thorough spatial reorganization of German social and civic life around the Party and its affiliated organizations. They would form the spatial and symbolic anchors for Hitler's promised postwar residential construction program. As Ley noted: "Only once every local chapter of the NSDAP possesses such a community house will National Socialism be firmly and irrevocably established for all eternity. That is the will of the Führer!"<sup>102</sup> It was not exactly clear how many of these community houses were needed. The Party had well over 20,000 local chapters, but some of these would likely merge into the larger Führer-, Gau-, and Kreis-level projects. Perhaps as many as one hundred community houses were built by November 1940. Ley claimed planning for an additional 300 buildings was nearing completion.<sup>103</sup>

This impulse was soon extended into the countryside. As one handbook for rural construction noted: "For political, ideological, and cultural guidance, suitable spaces must be available in every village, as the smallest unit of the Volk community."<sup>104</sup> Whether called a "village house" or some other name, these structures would occupy prominent locations and contain a festival room, administrative offices, and various cultural facilities like libraries and museums. Plans were soon drawn up to integrate village houses into the annexed territories, especially Wartheland.<sup>105</sup> As late as early 1944, planners were still envisioning how each hamlet would have a community house with a common room spacious enough to hold 200 to 250 people. Larger villages should have a more substantial structure with a meeting room for around 600 people, as well as a clock tower.<sup>106</sup> Whatever the eventual total number, their construction would have been a substantial effort. The changing fortunes of war ensured most stayed on the drawing board.

The Party's leadership obviously had a keen interest in provisioning themselves with appropriately grand architectural venues befitting the movement's new centrality in civic life. The regime also assumed responsibility for the provision of basic services. The gradual economic recovery that followed Hitler's seizure of power meant governments at all levels could begin to address numerous building needs that had been postponed during the Depression. Ley's guidelines specified that local Party houses would be distinct from municipal administration, but in practice, many Party officials also held municipal posts, especially mayors of smaller communities. Many of these mayors would have understandably found the refurbishment of existing municipal property more expedient and practical than new Party structures, especially since government taxation offered a readier source of financing than Party coffers.

In addition to the renovation of historical town halls noted previously, this also helps to explain the significant number of new town halls constructed in smaller communities during the Nazi period. Indeed, the town hall gener-

ally remained the nexus of civic life in smaller communities. While describing the new town hall built in the Bavarian town of Weilheim, one writer proudly declared that the appearance of countless new town halls and other municipal buildings in smaller communities was “one of the many phenomena of daily life that corroborated the miracle of the unprecedented economic ascent of Germany since the National Socialist seizure of power.”<sup>107</sup> These new town halls usually reflected local building traditions and were sited on the main town square or near the train station (figure 3.13). Both locations would have offered some type of outdoor assembly space, although surrounded by private buildings rather than Party offices. At the local level, it seemed that many Party officials were assuming that the Party would basically act through established municipal administrations.

The Party also needed a greatly expanded bureaucracy to extend its influence throughout Germany’s transportation, communication, education, judicial, and financial infrastructures. Even the immense new forums would be woefully insufficient for the administrative needs of Hitler’s rapidly expanding state bureaucracy. This resulted in a surge of construction focusing



**Figure 3.13. The Town Hall in Munich’s Pasing District**

This town hall in Munich’s Pasing district had a relatively unassuming and traditional demeanor but served to extend Nazi control to the lower levels of government. The building is little changed today and still houses municipal offices.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

on the provision and administration of public services, like law enforcement, post offices, and public finance. The regime's early efforts to address these services were patchwork and often reflected local peculiarities. Yet the amount of construction was striking with new government buildings seemingly appearing in every city and town of note. The general outline of a more coherent program that integrated these other governmental services into the Party's broader urban redesign program gradually emerged after 1936.

Reich-level agencies based in Berlin, for example, would have monumental offices incorporated into Speer's plans. This pattern would be repeated for provincial administration through the expanded Gau city program. Both the Führer and Gau buildings would conform, like the Reichsbank in Berlin, to the stylistic and spatial dictates of Hitler and Speer. A number of these projects were actually completed, but they tended to be isolated structures, like the House of German Law and the House of German Doctors, both in Munich, which housed the Party's auxiliary organizations for those professions (figure 3.14). The total volume of finished construction ap-



**Figure 3.14. The House of German Law in Munich**

The Nazi Party created a number of organizations to incorporate civil society into the movement, including a plethora of professional associations. Each required its own offices, such as the legal profession's House of German Law. The building today is unchanged, aside from the removal of the eagle/swastika relief above the main entrance, and currently houses part of the University of Munich's library.

Source: Joshua Hagen.

peared greater at the district and community levels, but these were usually discrete projects driven by local authorities featuring traditional designs. Despite the rather disorderly nature evidenced by the initial stages of the regime's efforts to build new civic and communal spaces, a general tendency emerged over time with the relatively standardized monumental neoclassicism being adapted for administrative spaces in the Führer and Gau cities, while smaller communities pursued less comprehensive programs around dispersed offices drawing from vernacular styles. Yet whether it was a Reich headquarters in Berlin or a small-town branch office, it was important that the buildings projected a sense of authority, dignity, and permanence.

The extent to which the trends evident in the Gau redesign program would eventually work down to smaller communities is unclear, but the regime's policies for the occupied eastern territories suggest such a course. For example, planner Josef Umlauf produced a fairly systematic blueprint for reorganizing Germany's new eastern territories. These areas would remain largely agrarian, but new cities would be needed for central administrative functions. Each village and Party chapter would have its own community house with a basic structure of village, town, and city corresponding to local chapter, Kreis, and Gau. Following the standard format of a community hall with an assembly square, Umlauf declared that "these buildings will hence be less expressive of the individuality of each city rather more so the comprehensive will of the leadership of the entire Reich."<sup>108</sup>

In contrast to the rhetorical importance given to creative genius in Nazi cultural policy, the trajectory in the east seemed increasingly restrictive and standardized. In his earlier call for the construction of new Party spaces across Germany, Schrade emphasized that these projects must remain very simple, allowing room for improvements by future generations.<sup>109</sup> An official treatise on governmental buildings several years later offered a narrower perspective: "Public buildings must manifest a demeanor that is consonant with the principles and ideals represented by the state. The overall architectural form must express—free from all silliness—the dignity and the authority of the sovereignty that resides within that building. . . . There is no room here for individual artistic conceptions, for experimental styles and modern forms."<sup>110</sup> Ironically, the increasingly programmatic nature of Hitler's building program seemed more likely to impart upon Germany's cities and towns a comprehensive and final form that largely precluded later alterations.

At the official ground-breaking ceremony for the Weimar forum, Giesler elaborated on the importance of architecture and construction in Nazi Germany:

Through the buildings of the Third Reich, National Socialism wants to speak to the German soul and bear witness for all ages of the breakthrough of the great heroic spirit that animates our times. We are building again, because we need the language of architecture in the struggle for the hearts of all German people.

We reach for the chisel, because brush and paint are too weak to portray the experience of National Socialism. We join the stones together and interlocked just as the hands and hearts of our community join together. So for us, building is a symbol of the community.<sup>111</sup>

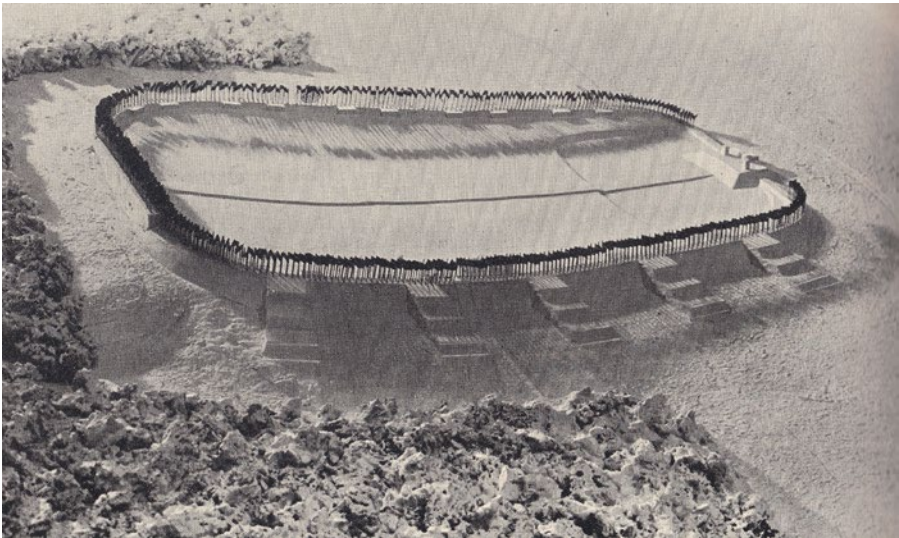
Hitler and his subordinates frequently voiced this linkage between building physical structures and building a national community united in National Socialism. Yet despite continuing pronouncements on the need to rejuvenate German cities as part of a broader national renewal, the Party did not possess a coherent program for the construction of new civic spaces. As a result, the Nazi regime's seizure of power generated a period of uncertainty regarding architecture and urban planning. The regime's early years featured much improvisation as Nazi leaders from Hitler down to local Party officials endeavored to reorder urban space consistent with their personal ambitions and visions for the Party's role in civic life. This translated into a rather haphazard affair with numerous individual projects commissioned but no systematic program.

Hitler, Speer, and Giesler drew on these disparate ideas as they formulated a relatively concrete program for reordering civic space across German cities. It gradually became clear that the centerpiece of these efforts would be vast new rally spaces bounded by monumental Party buildings and assembly halls as exemplified by the megalomania to transform the Führer cities into international showpieces for the strength and might of the Nazi Party and German nation. The Gauforums would transmit Nazi control from Berlin down to the district and communal levels. Together they would form the backbone for a new German empire. Coupled with new civic buildings at the district and municipal levels, the overall result would be a reordered urban network that literally and symbolically positioned the movement within a hierarchical network of nation-party-state power.

The importance afforded to architecture and urban planning pervaded the regime. Once the general outlines of Hitler's vision for urban restructuring emerged in 1937, a wave of feverish planning swept Germany, peaking after France's defeat in 1940. As the tide of war shifted and some Party officials began to fret that the proliferation of projects diverted valuable labor and resources from the war effort, other Party officials, architects, and planners continued drafting plans for redesigning German cities and towns around new Nazi Party centers. This activity lingered until the war halted most projects, but even then some Party officials and planners kept dreaming and planning. Municipal governments kept refining their plans, while Giesler managed to continue construction on the Weimar forum into 1944 and design work for Linz into 1945.<sup>112</sup> For some, it was a path for self-aggrandizement, prestige, and wealth; for others, it was simply a technocratic endeavor to be pursued despite broader realities.

**CODA: THE SCHIRACH BUNKER**

The annual Reich Harvest Festival remains an often-overlooked high point in the Nazi holiday calendar. Goebbels began searching during summer 1933 for a festival location in Lower Saxony—an area believed to be the ancestral Germanic homeland—and eventually adopted a hillside location known as Bückeberg near Hameln around forty kilometers southwest of Hannover. The hill possessed a gently sloping side that formed the rough contours of a natural amphitheater while providing scenic views of the surrounding rolling countryside. The location also had good rail access and was already government property. Goebbels ordered Speer to stage the festival. Speer re-pressed the basic elements of his May Day decorations from Berlin but added a more rural accent for a roughly oval assembly space that eventually grew to accommodate 180,000 square meters encircled by a row of around one hundred swastika flags. Speer placed a platform for around 3,000 dignitaries at the top of the slope, fronted by a harvest altar. A pathway of around 700 meters long ran down from the hilltop, bisecting the grounds, to a speaker's platform for Hitler and his entourage at the bottom (figure 3.15).



**Figure 3.15. Model of the Bückeberg Hillside Redesigned for the Reich Harvest Festival**

The annual Reich Harvest Festival staged at the Bückeberg hillside celebrated the idea of Germany as a nation of yeoman farm families tying together blood and soil. As shown by this model, the structure was a relatively basic enclosure defined by a thick wall of flagpoles. Along with the Zeppelin Field, the Bückeberg space was purposely built to subsume massive crowds, as were the redesigned spaces of the Luitpold Arena, Lustgarten, and Königsplatz.

*Source:* Wolters, *Albert Speer*, 10.



The festival's high point came when Hitler descended along the pathway from the hilltop, making his way among the people to the speaker's platform. After delivering his address, Hitler ascended the hill, creating obvious religious overtones. The German military was soon involved in the festivities, including the construction of a mock village nearby where battles involving around 10,000 soldiers could be staged as a display of German might. Instead of monumental architecture, Speer opted instead for simple wooden platforms and flagpoles to further the impression of a natural blood-and-soil setting, although the project required years of extensive excavation to perfect the gradient of the slope and provide the necessary infrastructure. The inaugural festival drew around 500,000 people but grew to as many as 1.3 million attendees by its last staging in 1937.<sup>113</sup>

The festivities at Bückeberg became the centerpiece of efforts to transform the region into a showcase of German agriculture. The Reich minister for food and agriculture, Richard Walther Darré, asserted that Goslar would host the headquarters of the Reich Food Corporation and the annual Reich Farmers Conference, eventually leading to the city's official designation as the Reich Farmers City.<sup>114</sup> Other cities jockeyed for their own official titles, such as Stuttgart, which managed to gain recognition as the City of Ethnic Germans Abroad. In each case, local Party officials imagined such initiatives would necessitate significant construction projects to reflect their locales' new elevated position within the regime's urban hierarchy. A great deal of planning activity commenced, but little was actually realized. In the cases of Goslar and Stuttgart, the most notable result was the completion of wooden assembly halls, reflecting their relatively low status in the distribution of building materials.

The Weimar forum was the chief exception as Giesler managed to get the project somewhat close to completion by war's end. The only Gau "complex" actually finished was the underground Gau Command Post, the so-called Schirach Bunker, located in the forests northeast of Vienna. The Gauleiter of Vienna, Baldur von Schirach, had the bunker constructed as his personal command post from 1944 to 1945. Measuring just over eighty square meters, the bunker featured a communications center, conference room, and sleeping quarters.<sup>115</sup> German officials huddling in an austere underground bunker as air raids devastated Vienna and Soviet forces closed in marked a rather ignominious end to a building program intended to reorder civic space for Hitler's thousand-year Reich.

## 4



# From Chaos to Order and Back Again

## *Home, Hearth, and Family Life*

Writing in late 1941 during the planning euphoria that took hold as Germany appeared on the verge of victory, Robert Ley's chief of staff for housing, Heinrich Simon, declared: "The foundation of the state is the healthy family with many children: the foundation of the healthy family is the healthy home."<sup>1</sup> Such assertions reflected the regime's determination to foster social equality and generally improve living standards and, in the process, control gender norms and familial relations with the ultimate goal of promoting a racially based pronatalism. Adolf Hitler demonstrated little personal interest in residential construction, but many within his movement were keen to embed their understandings of the Party's ideology and goals into the spatial fabric of daily life. As the anonymous writer of a propaganda piece published in New York in 1940 explained,

the ability to combine features which the wisdom of the race has discovered to be of permanent value, with modern needs and building materials, is what differentiates the contemporary home in Germany from the more starkly theoretical version of the modern house developed elsewhere. . . . Today the effort is to build modern, efficient low cost housing, using all the technical inventions which have simplified modern building and modern living without, however, losing the homelike quality of the traditional German dwelling.<sup>2</sup>

Although seemingly benevolent on the surface, the regime's housing programs quickly evolved into instruments of social, economic, and political control, even intruding in reproduction and familial relations.

A broad-based restructuring of where and how people lived was integral to the regime's efforts to reorganize German living space and thereby transform Germany into a new Nazi state. As Karl Neupert, a section leader for urban and residential planning in the German Labor Front, noted, the regime

had a vested interest in shaping residential patterns, because “the relationship of the German people to the community and to the nation as a whole, as well as their attachment to place and landscape, find here their built form.”<sup>3</sup> In that sense, systematic and comprehensive residential construction programs served to build in a double sense: building the actual homes and building the bonds between blood and soil that transformed abstract land into German living space. In fact, the contrast between the perceived chaos of the Weimar period and the proclaimed restoration of order under the Nazi regime was a prominent theme in Party propaganda. One retrospective marking ten years of Nazi social policy credited what had been achieved in bringing order out of chaos to “the radical change from social to socialist housing policy, which today includes all elements of building design from the provision of the land to the exterior building form.”<sup>4</sup>

The idea of restoring order to Germany’s tumultuous cities addressed widespread anxieties concerning housing conditions that had roiled German society for decades, and indeed, reflected a broad strand of thought among professional architects and planners across Europe and North America.<sup>5</sup> In the case of Germany, the country’s rapid industrialization during the nineteenth century triggered massive but largely unplanned and unregulated urban growth, quickly leading to deplorable living conditions in crowded tenement districts. Municipal governments began the arduous task of providing adequate water and sewage systems, but their efforts were woefully insufficient. World War I and the subsequent economic turmoil of the early 1920s only exacerbated the problem as residential construction ground to a halt. The problems of overcrowding and deteriorating housing stock were especially acute in working-class neighborhoods where continued in-migration and pent-up demand among young families produced severe housing shortages.

There seemed to be a direct correlation between the precipitous declines in housing quality and the fervent politicization of housing policy. Reformist impulses were quickly subsumed within the broader debates between modernists and traditionalists on art, architecture, and culture. Modernists tended to regard larger apartment blocks and relatively avant-garde styles as consistent with their ideals of communal living and social progress. In contrast, traditionalists believed that low-density dwellings drawn from folk architecture strengthened national values. Some traditionalists embraced a thoroughly antiurban ideology that regarded the big city as irredeemable and advocated returning people to small towns, villages, and farms. For them, the nation’s continued urbanization carried the risk of cultural corruption by “foreign” (i.e., Marxist, capitalist, and Jewish) influences. A third strand of reformist ideology sought to combine the best attributes of urban and rural living in new “garden” cities, as popularized by the English reformer Ebenezer Howard. Ideally, these garden cities would be medium-sized, low-density communities surrounded by ample farm-

land and parks. Howard's ideas found support across Germany's political spectrum. Modernist and leftist activists were drawn to the idea of garden cities as egalitarian worker communes, while traditionalist and rightist activists, such as Theodor Fritsch, embraced garden cities as a means to restore cultural and racial purity.<sup>6</sup>

Facing pent-up demand after World War I, especially among demobilized soldiers and their spouses eager to start families, the Weimar government imposed rent controls to keep housing affordable. This also limited the rate of return for real estate developers, who soon refrained from investing, ironically worsening the shortage and making housing more expensive. Municipal and regional governments tried to fill this gap and managed to increase housing construction significantly during the late 1920s as the economy stabilized. Yet both modernist and traditionalist efforts fell far short of satisfying demand. Most middle- and lower-income families simply had to make do with whatever prewar housing stock happened to be available.

Construction of all kinds, and especially residential construction, dropped precipitously as the 1929 financial crisis and subsequent depression devastated government revenues and private investment (table 4.1). Against this desperate backdrop, the government of Chancellor Heinrich Brüning implemented a series of emergency measures to stabilize and revive the economy, including various subsidy and loan programs to promote housing construction. The first of these emergency decrees basically channeled additional funding to provincial governments to build simple housing for low-income families, especially disabled veterans and parents with many

**Table 4.1. Net New Housing in Germany, 1919–1943**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Residences</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Residences</i>
1919	56,714	1932	141,265
1920	103,092	1933	178,038
1921	134,233	1934	283,995
1922	146,615	1935	238,045
1923	118,333	1936	305,856
1924	106,502	1937	315,698
1925	178,930	1938	282,788
1926	205,793	1939	206,229
1927	288,635	1940	105,458
1928	309,762	1941	61,767
1929	317,682	1942	38,609
1930	310,971	1943	29,609
1931	233,648		

*Source:* These estimates are drawn from Dieter Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes im Nationalsozialismus: Eine soziologische Untersuchung ideologisch fundierter Leitbilder in Architektur, Städtebau und Raumplanung des Dritten Reiches* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1993), 230, 257. They include new construction and new residences resulting from remodelings but minus residences demolished within Germany's 1937 borders.

young children. Nonetheless, total public subsidies for housing construction dropped from a peak of 1.34 billion Reichsmarks in 1928 to around 140 million Reichsmarks in 1932.<sup>7</sup>

As the situation deteriorated, the Brüning government assumed greater authority over housing, culminating in the decree for the Assurance of the Economy and Finance and to Fight against Political Violence in October 1931. Specifically, the decree authorized financial support for a nationwide construction program focused on smaller suburban settlements, as well as the provision of garden plots for the unemployed. This would promote “the sedentarization of the population in the countryside, lower unemployment, and ease the subsistence of the unemployed.”<sup>8</sup> By relocating unemployed households from urban centers to peripheral settlements, Brüning’s conservative government hoped these settlers would provide their own sustenance and therefore be less sympathetic to communism. The Depression provoked similar government programs in other countries, such as the Resettlement Administration established by American president Franklin Roosevelt as part of his New Deal initiatives.

The new position of Reich Commissar would oversee the program and was additionally authorized to exercise eminent domain when suitable land was not available at an appropriate price. Despite this apparent centralization, Brüning’s program relied heavily on preexisting local initiatives to achieve quick results. Consequently, residential developments from across the political spectrum received funding, despite Brüning’s conservative sympathies. The program enjoyed broad public support, although it remained woefully inadequate. There had long been housing shortages among low-income neighborhoods in larger cities, but shortages soon spread to middle-class housing and smaller towns. By 1933, available housing tended to be luxury apartments unaffordable for most families or dilapidated tenement apartments. Consensus estimates put the housing shortfall at around one million dwellings with demand projected to increase by around 300,000 annually.<sup>9</sup> The Nazi regime moved quickly to address that shortage, partly to curry public favor and partly to build and establish National Socialist control over the geographies of home, hearth, and family life.

## CONTINUATION AND POLITICIZATION

By 1933, architecture and housing policy were established as politically divisive issues. Yet despite its denunciations of chaotic urbanization, modernist architecture, and land speculation, the Nazi Party’s official program and various electioneering efforts included only vague demands for agrarian land reform, urban renewal, and traditional architecture. The new Nazi regime quickly expanded Brüning’s program through the first and second Law on the Reduction of Unemployment issued in June and September 1933.<sup>10</sup> This



**Figure 4.1. Propaganda Celebrating New Housing Construction**

Housing construction was a major focus for the Nazi regime upon taking power. These building programs helped reduce the shortage of housing and jobs. They also provided a source of propaganda demonstrating the regime acting for the good of the people. The regime routinely staged and propagated ceremonies like this one, marking a topping-out celebration.

*Source: Nationalsozialismus in Staat, Gemeinde und Wirtschaft, 72.*

so-called Reinhardt Program, in combination with previous Weimar-era initiatives, soon directed several billion Reichsmarks worth of subsidies, credits, loans, and vouchers into an array of construction activities, especially housing. Hitler's propaganda apparatus claimed sole credit for the entirety of these work creation efforts and touted housing construction as tangible evidence of the regime's determination to reduce unemployment, improve living standards, and achieve social equality. Despite official pronouncements, the record was not overly impressive. Overall, the Nazi regime managed to exceed Weimar-era levels slightly, completing an average of around 245,000 units annually from 1933 to 1940 compared to around 232,000 units from 1924 to 1932.<sup>11</sup> Residential construction gradually returned to average levels, but the Nazi regime continued to subsume housing policy within its broader ideological and strategic objectives (figure 4.1).

### Rescuing the Old Town

Most German cities were centered on a densely populated historical core, often medieval in origin, that contained the city hall, main church, and other prominent buildings. These historic districts suffered progressively worsen-

ing sanitation and housing stock as industrialization fueled rapid urbanization. As middle-income households gradually relocated to newer apartment buildings and eventually suburban neighborhoods, these central areas often offered the only low-income housing as buildings were continually divided into ever smaller apartments, some no more than a single room. This maximized profitability by increasing the number of occupants, but landlords tended to be reluctant to otherwise invest in maintenance. Cities often lacked resources to provide the necessary public utilities. The threat to public health was tragically illustrated by the cholera epidemic that swept Hamburg in 1892, claiming more than 8,000 lives. Despite the clear danger, progress in addressing the situation was both slow and piecemeal due to resistance from property owners, the Weimar Republic's decentralized federal system, and a general lack of government and private funds.

By the time of the national conference on historic preservation in October 1933, the situation seemed to have reached a crisis point. A survey conducted in Breslau, for example, estimated that just over 10 percent of buildings were in good or very good condition.<sup>12</sup> In an impassioned speech titled "On the Rescue of the Old Town," art historian Wilhelm Pinder called for "absolutely uniform national legal regulation! Creation of a superior authority that has the power . . . according to the Führer Principle!"<sup>13</sup> The inclusion of relatively modest funding for the renewal of historical neighborhoods in the Reinhardt Program seemed a first step toward meeting the aspirations of many planners, preservationists, cultural conservatives, and indeed much of the general public.

Nazi critiques of urban conditions were a campaign staple. Hitler set the tone in *Mein Kampf* when he deplored "these wretched caverns, the lodging houses and tenements, sordid scenes of garbage, repulsive filth, and worse. What was—and still is—bound to happen some day, when the stream of unleashed slaves pour forth from these miserable dens to avenge themselves on their thoughtless fellow men!"<sup>14</sup> Many Germans believed the Nazi regime was simply fulfilling a campaign promise when the labor minister, Franz Seldte, declared in November 1933 that "even in this winter, the pickaxe will swing into action in the slums of so many large cities in order to eliminate rotten neighborhoods which are the breeding grounds of criminal attitudes and various endemic diseases."<sup>15</sup> Renewal of these historical districts marked a tentative step toward a broader reordering of the urban landscape and society in accordance with the regime's political and strategic objectives, while also reducing unemployment by subsidizing the construction industry.

Metaphors of cities as "sick" bodies in need of "healing" had been common since the nineteenth century but acquired greater political and racial salience during the Nazi period. The new Nazi regime grounded its housing renewal programs upon preexisting concerns about urban sanitation, public health, and social ills. To this, the regime added an increasing concern for political, security, and strategic issues. The regime's racist worldview tied

all those concerns into an imperative calling for government intervention in “sick” neighborhoods. In 1933, Friedrich Paulsen, a prominent journal editor, described the goals of housing renewal in terms of public health and economic development achieved through technical changes in real estate speculation, property rights, and financing.<sup>16</sup> Before long, the emphasis shifted to the social, demographic, and political implications of renewal. Nazi ideologue Gottfried Feder summarized the political objectives of housing renewal in a 1934 speech: “We rehabilitate old towns and historical districts, and break up large cities as such, to destroy the breeding grounds of Marxism.”<sup>17</sup> Beyond public health and work creation, Hamburg planning director Karl Koester explained how the removal of “inhumane and politically questionable” dwellings also served “population and security policy.”<sup>18</sup> Proponents of rehabilitating historical neighborhoods quickly adopted the idea of creating healthy “living space” and reconnecting “blood and soil.”

Nazi officials portrayed their urban renewal programs as unprecedented, but they generally followed well-established practices. After the 1892 cholera epidemic, for example, Hamburg embarked on a relatively comprehensive program to improve housing and sanitation. The city identified three predominantly working-class neighborhoods for renewal. Work was slowed by legal and financial obstacles, but two areas were largely completed by 1933. The remaining area, the so-called Passageway Quarter, was a densely populated labyrinth of narrow alleys, shadowy corridors, and cramped courtyards known for poverty, unhygienic conditions, and dilapidated structures. According to city building director Johann Christoph Otto Ranck, the neighborhood’s deterioration had inadvertently accelerated as “prostitution and asocial people” displaced from the other renewal areas concentrated there. This also, according to Ranck, had political implications, since the burgeoning local communist movement “not only found many supporters here, but in the maze of passageways and courtyards also found an exceedingly good opportunity to gather its forces unnoticed during troubled times and to withdraw in case the police threatened to seize them.”<sup>19</sup> This eventually led to “communist nests” that resisted policing, explained local architect Konstanty Gutschow, concluding that “the struggle against communism means therefore the struggle against inhumane living conditions.”<sup>20</sup>

Hamburg’s new Nazi government began demolition work in late 1933 using unemployed construction workers. The renewal area contained 154 buildings with 1,140 apartments, around 10 percent of which were condemned, in addition to nearly 340 small businesses. Some of the structures dated to the mid-sixteenth century, but there had been extensive subdivisions and additions since then, and the overall quality of the building stock was poor. Coupled with the area’s communist sympathies, it is easy to understand why officials decided to level the area rather than undertake extensive restoration efforts (figure 4.2). The renewed neighborhood would feature a total of 520 “healthy, friendly apartments” and around 20 percent

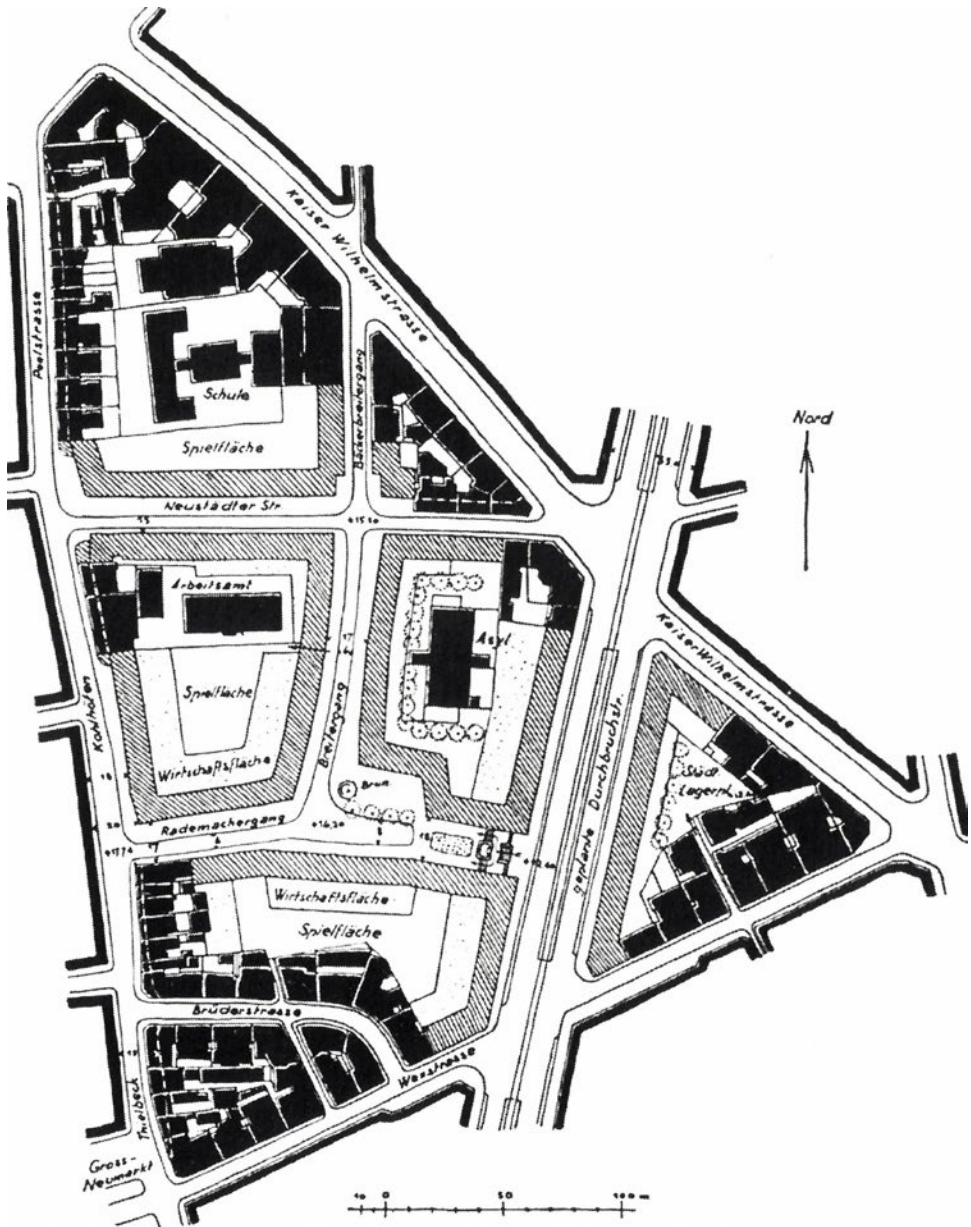




**Figure 4.2. Maps Showing Hamburg's Passageway Quarter before and after Renovation**

Hamburg's Passageway Quarter was a high-profile urban renewal project that simultaneously targeted the regime's opponents. These maps compare the neighborhood's density before and after the renovation. The buildings in gray shading reflect new construction.

Source: Ranck, "Gesundung der Hamburger Innenstadt," 694–95.



fewer residents. Ranck reported strong demand for the new units but not by the prior residents since "it is understandable that shady riffraff would have had no desire for negotiations with authorities."<sup>21</sup>

The new brick apartment buildings, set in a relatively spacious arrangement, were much better suited for policing functions like surveillance and crowd control. Calls to restore historical areas and break up large cities also emerged in tandem with the regime's homesteading policy, discussed later in the chapter. These programs aimed at dispersing urban populations, thereby reducing their vulnerability to aerial bombing. Architect W. Piegler claimed that the dangers of an aerial attack were important considerations from the start of the project. In addition to lowering overall population density, the new layout reduced the built-up area from 68 to 46 percent, making bombs less likely to strike buildings directly. The city also mandated that each new building be fitted with reinforced shelters in the basement and fire-retardant structures in the roof. Yet by Piegler's own estimates, the shelters would accommodate less than half of the area's residents.<sup>22</sup>

Hamburg was something of an extreme case because of the severity of its sanitation problems. Yet numerous other municipalities also recognized the need to rehabilitate certain residential areas and generally improve sanitation. As a result, many city planning offices already possessed draft proposals or at least tentative ideas. Yet legal obstacles related to property rights and high costs generally precluded large-scale projects like those in Hamburg. Most cities limited themselves to smaller, piecemeal measures. Several cities received Reich subsidies and loans to initiate preliminary planning in late 1932, but the additional assistance offered through the Reinhardt Program provided an opportunity to expand those projects.

In Kassel, for example, the left-leaning government had launched a detailed survey of the city center by 1925 that led to the renovation of some of the worst dwellings. These renovations usually focused on combining cramped apartments and clearing overbuilt courtyards. The Depression halted these initial efforts, but a relatively comprehensive urban renewal program reemerged by fall 1933. Unlike Hamburg, which focused on demolition and reconstruction, Kassel largely concentrated on "gutting" or "hollowing out" block interiors to make way for gardens, playgrounds, and other open spaces. The other major element was punching new thoroughfares through the city center to improve traffic access with the aim of revitalizing local businesses. The total number of dwellings was reduced by around 20 percent. Presumably, the population declined by a comparable percentage, which also diminished the potential impact of air raids. The city bore the bulk of the costs for property acquisition, demolition, and infrastructure, while property owners were expected to repair or rebuild their own buildings as required by city planners. In total, the city, Reich, and private sources each covered about one-third of the total costs, although Reich support tended to be loans or tax breaks.<sup>23</sup>

Local planners were rather technical in tone when describing the Kassel project in professional journals. They mostly emphasized the overall benefits to public health by opening these overbuilt areas to light and air, to businesses by reducing traffic congestion, and to the nation by preserving historic architecture. Instead of areas dominated by "the poor and the sick and the riffraff," the project would ensure that "healthy people lived in healthy dwellings, that the breeding ground for sickness and immorality disappeared, that businesses were properly incorporated into urban traffic, that the old town becomes alive again and the economy in the old town can progressively develop."<sup>24</sup> In comparison to Hamburg, the impact on Kassel's urban morphology was less dramatic. As Kassel city planner Gerhard Jobst characterized the Hamburg projects: "That is not old city rehabilitation but rather old city annihilation."<sup>25</sup> Even when structures were torn down to make way for the new thoroughfare, the new buildings mimicked traditional proportions and styles, blending in with surviving older buildings.

Other municipalities soon announced plans to restore "health" to "asocial" and "unclean" neighborhoods. Cologne's Rhine Quarter was another crowded and dilapidated neighborhood, but local Nazis identified the area more with common criminality and immorality than communism. The district also differed in that it was adjacent to some of Cologne's most prominent landmarks and included some of the city's oldest houses. The area was also along the Rhine riverfront and part of Cologne's famous skyline. Sporadic efforts to improve the situation had been ongoing since around 1900, but conditions continued to deteriorate. By 1933, the Rhine Quarter was seen by many as a literal and figurative "center of contagion," where, according to local conservator Hans Vogts, "the health, economic, and social conditions corresponded to the sickly building conditions."<sup>26</sup> Yet given the area's historical importance, it could not simply be leveled and rebuilt in large apartment blocks as in Hamburg.

Instead, officials decided to renovate as many buildings as possible and retain much of the street layout. The project's objectives included the "preservation of the neighborhood for residential purposes and small commercial businesses, cleansing of asocial and degressive elements, opening up the larger blocks to create healthy housing conditions, and conforming the remaining structures to modern living needs, along with the preservation of the old character of the architecture and streetscape."<sup>27</sup> These broad goals would be accomplished by clearing overbuilt courtyards, renovating the remaining buildings, and finally changing the neighborhood's socioeconomic profile. Work began in fall 1935 and proceeded quickly. Of the original 178 buildings, nearly half were torn down and the overall total reduced to 108.<sup>28</sup> Whenever possible, old fragments were reused to give the new buildings an older feel. Municipal regulations strictly limited the appearance of building exteriors and banned modern advertising, like neon signs. Few visitors

would have realized the extent to which the area and its buildings had been modified or even built anew.

These steps improved the housing stock but did not necessarily address the social or economic health of the neighborhood. This required, according to Vogts, "a rooted population that retains its good elements."<sup>29</sup> Therefore, previous residents could remain "so far as they were decent" while "asocial elements" were relocated to outlying settlements.<sup>30</sup> New property owners were contractually obligated to maintain their buildings and prohibited from renting to "unwanted elements" and "immoral persons."<sup>31</sup> The overall population size remained unchanged, but it now consisted of merchants and artisans. In effect, the new neighborhood presented an idealization of medieval life for the enjoyment of middle-class tourists. The Rhine Quarter was the first step, but municipal officials believed the effort would eventually encompass some 38,000 residences and 145,000 people.<sup>32</sup>

This pattern was repeated elsewhere. In Hannover, city officials targeted the district adjacent to the seventeenth-century Ballhof theater for complete renewal. Chief city planner Karl Elkhart, who was also responsible for planning Hannover's new Party forum, said of the district, "obviously, it was not, socially speaking, the most valuable people who lived in this neighborhood. Fifteen percent of them could be described as asocial." Beginning in 1932, the city purchased the area and eventually demolished 235 out of 249 apartments, while replacing only 72 units.<sup>33</sup> In Frankfurt, Mayor Friedrich Krebs noted in August 1933 that in addition to the obvious benefits of restoring old buildings and improving sanitation, historic preservation also addressed social ills like prostitution and "nests of resistance of communists and other asocial elements."<sup>34</sup> As municipal architect Theodor Derlam explained, "it was a political necessity that cities went in to eliminate these dangerous herds."<sup>35</sup> The program decreased the number of people residing in the city center and undoubtedly transformed its sociopolitical composition as less than one-quarter of original households returned.<sup>36</sup> Derlam also directed efforts to prepare existing medieval cellars for use as makeshift air raid shelters.<sup>37</sup>

These projects could be implemented quickly, because they often built on preexisting plans. As a result, they encompassed rather limited areas and reflected local priorities. There was, however, a growing desire to expand these scattered renewal projects into a more systematic, longer-term program. Stuttgart mayor Karl Strölin argued that urban renewal projects implemented as part of a comprehensive effort aimed at the "dispersion of the city" were "necessary for the elevation of national health and simultaneously for reasons of air raid protection and fire safety," adding that "in the long run, the existence of our nation can only be secured when the broadest reaches of our compatriots have a direct connection with nature, with soil and land." This also offered a chance to address "asocial elements of all kinds" since "the extremely asocial elements must be seized with great

severity and then brought to where they can be either further educated or, when that is no longer possible, detained for the long run such as in public institutions, workhouses, and similar closed facilities."<sup>38</sup>

As these projects sprouted up across Germany, Andreas Walther, a sociologist at Hamburg University, developed a new approach for a broader social rehabilitation. Drawing from an understanding of Chicago School sociology gained while in the United States, Walther analyzed election results to map out concentrations of communist voters, since as he smugly asserted, "these communist strongholds coincided in frightening proportions with herds of antisocial and criminal behavior."<sup>39</sup> Walther then used government records to map out the residences of juvenile delinquents and chronic welfare recipients and eventually police reports on those with "asocial" dispositions, like prostitutes, homosexuals, petty criminals, addicts, and gamblers. Walther explained that neighborhoods with high concentrations of data points indicated unhealthy areas ripe for rehabilitation and argued that similarities in the spatial distributions of these variables proved a positive correlation between "politically destructive attitudes, youth endangerment, the hopelessly lazy and incapable, intellectual and psychopathic inferiority, and many types of asocial and criminal behaviors." Before what he termed a "radical rehabilitation through demolition" commenced, Walther advocated direct interviews with residents in the targeted area to sort out healthy families who could be relocated within the city or to suburban neighborhoods. Those deemed "incapable of recovery would be taken into custody; the inheritance of biologically hopeless defects would be eradicated."<sup>40</sup>

The prioritization of military-industrial expansion hindered plans for additional large-scale renewal programs, but Walther's work shows how fast housing renewal shifted from improving living conditions and renovating historic buildings to become a mechanism for social and political control. The Hamburg suburb of Altona, for example, witnessed recurring street fighting during the final years of the Weimar Republic as Sturmabteilung (SA) troopers staged provocative marches through a local communist stronghold. Deemed a "slum of the first order," city officials soon targeted this area for renewal and commenced demolition in May 1934.<sup>41</sup> Some residents resisted leaving their homes but to no avail as demolition apparently commenced before evictions were even complete. Understandably, few original residents applied to live in the new three-story apartment buildings or petitioned authorities for any type of replacement housing.

The German Society for Housing sponsored a survey of these disparate projects. The results exposed the limitations of the regime's efforts. Just over half of the promised Reich support had been dispersed by March 1939, and much of that was limited to loan guarantees. Most cities relied heavily on private financing. Cities generally broke even on the number of dwellings demolished in the renewal area versus the number of replacements constructed. The study concluded that the total number of dwellings



**Figure 4.3. A Building in Downtown Nuremberg before and after Renovation**

Urban renewal under the Nazi regime tended to prioritize a certain old German aesthetic, especially half-timbered facades, as seen here in a before-and-after comparison from Nuremberg. The mansard roof gave way to a more traditional-looking timbered gable. The oriel window on the new floor was recycled from another demolished building.

*Source:* Nuremberg City Archives.

renovated was relatively low.<sup>42</sup> Despite the modest scope, these various renewal and beautification projects probably left a generally favorable impression on many Germans (figure 4.3).

The haphazard pursuit of these urban renewal projects was a source of disappointment for the many professionals who endorsed Pinder's call for a unified and comprehensive national program. Appeals for a national law to address the financial, legal, and jurisdictional challenges associated with renovating historic neighborhoods were prevalent in professional journals during the Weimar period and continued into the early years of the Nazi regime. Yet, the attention of the Party leadership was shifting to other priorities. As Strölin had already noted in 1935, "in the end, the physical and moral health of our national compatriots must be more important for us than the preservation of every old building."<sup>43</sup> The regime's final answer came indirectly in the form of the Four Year Plan and the Law on the Re-design of German Cities. Up to that point, Seldte, the Labor Ministry, and municipal governments had exercised primary responsibility for housing

renewal campaigns, but now Ley, Albert Speer, and the Gauleiters gained overall purview over urban planning, including residential construction. Urban renewal basically came to an end as a distinct element of the regime's building program with projects continuing after 1937 incorporated within the redesign programs for Gau capitals.

### **Homestead Settlements**

The Nazi regime had been critical of the Brüning housing program but largely continued it. This reflected a mixture of political and practical calculation. First, the Brüning program had proven moderately successful and popular. Second, the program's second phase had just been approved in December 1932, meaning the Nazi regime could take credit for this preapproved expansion during 1933. Third, the Nazi Party did not really have its own housing policy, aside from vague rhetoric about traditional values and vehement denunciations of modernism, nor did it possess an institutional apparatus to coordinate a nationwide program. As a result, the Nazi regime's early housing projects, like those of its Weimar predecessor, favored low-density settlements located along the urban fringe (figure 4.4). These



**Figure 4.4. Low-Density, Single-Family Housing in Nuremberg**

The Nazi regime's residential construction program continued its predecessor's proclivity for low-density, single-family housing on city peripheries. This row of homes in Nuremberg was typical of the housing touted by the regime as addressing its commitment to helping the masses. The homes are largely unchanged today.

*Source:* Robert C. Ostergren.



**Table 4.2. Housing Terminology**

<i>Type</i>	<i>German Equivalents</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Farmstead	<i>Bauernhof</i>	Family-owned farm; usually between 10 and 30 hectares.
Homestead	<i>Siedlerstelle Heimstätte Kleinsiedlung</i>	Family-owned home usually with around 40 square meters on the ground floor and an unfinished attic that could later add 10–20 square meters of space; relatively large lots ranging from 600–1,200 square meters to provide ample garden space and allow for future additions; usually single-story detached homes but occasionally duplexes or row housing.
Family Home	<i>Eigenheim</i>	Family-owned home generally with 60–80 square meters of floor space; small lots usually under 400 square meters with limited gardening space; usually single-story detached homes but occasionally duplexes or row housing.
Small Apartment	<i>Kleinwohnung Mietwohnung</i>	Apartment normally with less than 75 square meters in floor space per unit; usually in two- or three-story buildings.
People's Apartments	<i>Volkswohnung</i>	Apartment normally with less than 40 square meters in floor space per unit; usually in two- or three-story buildings.
Make-shift Homes	<i>Behelfsheim</i>	Emergency, single-family home assembled from prefabricated components or salvaged materials.

*Source:* These definitions are rough approximations. Different agencies had different definitions and quarreled as to which should be considered the Reich standard. The issue was never resolved. As late as 1942, officials were still trying to clarify housing terminology. See Joachim Fischer-Dieskau, "Zur Klärung der Begriffe im Wohnungs- und Siedlungswesen," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 8 (1942): 242–44.

settlements consisted of single-family "homesteads" on relatively large garden plots and were intended to lessen public support for the more radical proposals offered by socialist and communist activists (table 4.2).

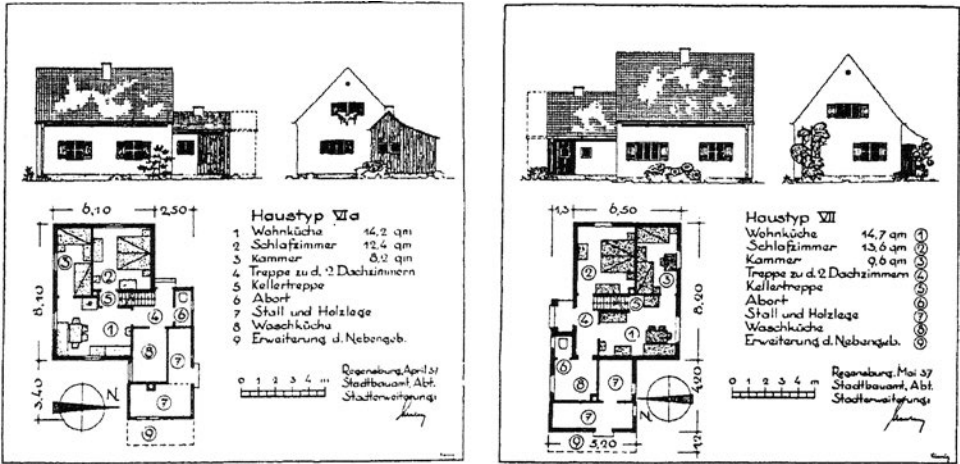
Despite this seeming continuity, the Nazi settlement program soon assumed more overt political functions. According to a government study published in 1938, homestead settlements would serve "state-political" objectives by shifting urban populations to semirural settlements and thereby promoting cultural renewal and traditional values through the time-honored practices of tilling the soil and raising animals. There were also "food-political" objectives to be achieved—namely, promoting greater self-sufficiency or "food freedom for the German people." Once basic sustenance was secure, couples could have more, and healthier, children, thereby revitalizing the nation's "demographic-political" prospects and reinforcing certain norms related to gender and procreation. There were also "labor-market-political"

and “economic-political” benefits as settlement construction lowered unemployment rates and increased demand for household goods. Finally, homestead settlements addressed Germany’s “space emergency” by easing urban overcrowding and increasing worker productivity through more relaxing home environments.<sup>44</sup>

This program, moreover, furthered reduced residential densities and thereby helped decrease vulnerability to air raids. Party officials could also assume a greater role regulating daily life within the settlements, beginning with screening potential settlers so as to reward favored constituencies, such as veterans and Party members, in place of supporting unemployed households in general. To ensure continued compliance, residents were generally subject to a probationary period, usually lasting three years, during which time Party officials monitored the garden’s productivity and general upkeep of the property. Those deemed lacking would be evicted. Like the restoration programs for historic neighborhoods, the regime’s settlement program was predicated on the belief that specific ideological objectives could be reached through a carefully calculated use of architecture, spatial layout, and relative location.

The regime lacked an overarching authority to coordinate housing policy, so initial low-density suburban projects were largely dependent on continuing efforts already underway or initiatives by ambitious local officials. The efforts of Regensburg mayor Otto Schottenheim to build a new garden suburb is one example.<sup>45</sup> At the cornerstone ceremony in September 1933, Schottenheim described how the project was not simply about easing overcrowding in the city center, “but rather a new community shall arise here, a new city. . . . In this settlement, we want to be a cellular nucleus of the new state to the honor and joy of the settler, the city, and our great German fatherland.”<sup>46</sup> Asserting that the building of new neighborhoods was integral to the creation of a new national community, Schottenheim exclaimed “the reward is then the creation of a new, healthy, and increasingly contented national community.”<sup>47</sup> Another writer concurred: “In Schottenheim, a new polity, a type of new city with new people, shall arise.”<sup>48</sup>

Financial constraints shaped the initial design of Schottenheim’s Harthof district. The settlement, named after the mayor, occupied open land partially owned by the city, around 2.5 kilometers northeast of the city center. The spaciousness of the site allowed for relatively large lots reaching around 1,000 square meters (figure 4.5). Unfortunately for homesteaders, though, the area’s high water table was not conducive to gardening. Rather than detached single-family homes, many units were duplexes with relatively modest-sized standardized designs. For example, House Type VIa featured an eat-in kitchen measuring about 14 square meters, a master bedroom of around 12 square meters, and a living room of around 8 square meters. The attic provided space for two small bedrooms crammed under the sloped roof. The house also had a modest cellar and stalls for raising small animals,



**Figure 4.5. Standardized Designs Used in the Schottenheim Settlement in Regensburg**

The Schottenheim settlement in Regensburg was typical of early residential construction during the Nazi period. Homes tended to be small but set on relatively large lots on the outskirts of town that would allow residents ample room for gardens and small animals to help sustain the family. The homes were often limited to a few standard designs as shown here, which planners believed to foster an orderly community.

Source: Kerler, "Baulicher Gliederung und Gestaltung Schottenheims," 626.

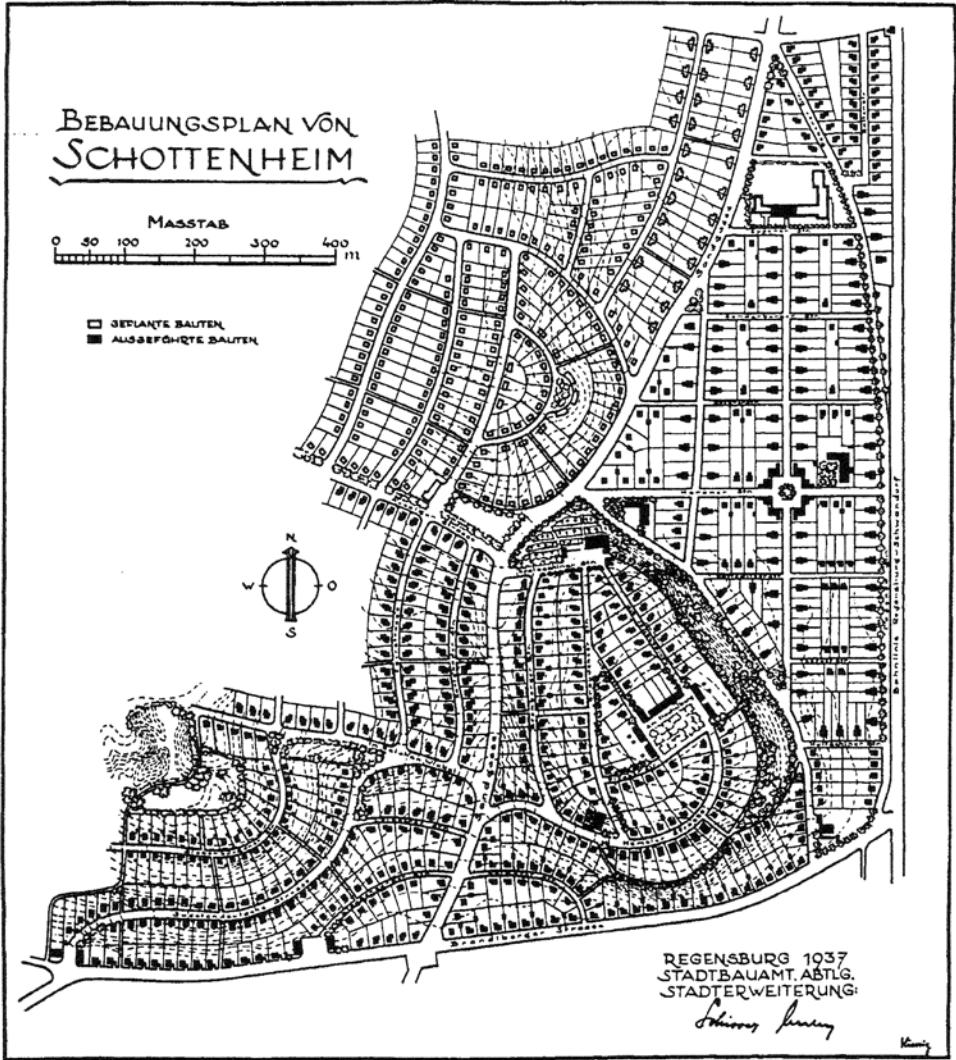
most commonly chickens but also rabbits, pigs, and ducks. Total living space varied but remained under 50 square meters. The imperative to build quickly meant homes suffered from recurring problems with moisture, shoddy plastering, and cheap materials. While city water service was provided, sewage systems were lacking. Instead, homes made do with "outhouse-type" facilities attached to the main structure. Although highly laudatory of the settlement in general, one writer observed that these "pits must be emptied very often, extremely unpleasant both for the settlers and the vicinity, as well as for the garden."<sup>49</sup> Waste water from cooking and cleaning had to be carried from the house in buckets. Settlers were expected to assist in the actual construction to reduce costs.

Given the modest size and simple design, work proceeded quickly with about 260 units completed by early 1935. An unpretentious central square was framed by two-story buildings with small shops and offices for a doctor and dentist on the ground floors and small apartments above. An adjacent tavern provided a social center for the community, but aside from a modest school to the north, the settlement lacked significant service facilities or retail and employment opportunities. Public transport was also lacking, so nearly all residents had a considerable walk or bicycle ride into town to work or shop. Additionally, residents were forbidden from selling any of their produce or animals, or from using their house for any type of commercial purpose.

Nazi officials left an unmistakable political imprint by subjecting residents to a rigorous regimen of selection, screening, and surveillance. In the end, around two-thirds of the final selectees were Party members.<sup>50</sup> Once approved, officials monitored the new settler family to ensure they tended their garden and animals properly and otherwise conducted themselves as good Germans. City planner Albert Kerler warned that Mayor Schottenheim “would proceed with ruthless severity against those settlers who do not feel obligated toward their homestead and neglect their land and garden.”<sup>51</sup> Noting each settler’s obligations regarding the common good, another writer concurred: “For these reasons, a sharp surveillance of rental receipts and repeated inspections of house and garden are necessary, but without awakening among the settlers the feeling of being constantly under supervision.” If needed, the mayor promised “to immediately remove all bad or merely questionable settlers from the settlement.”<sup>52</sup> Given the high rate of Party membership, the settler population was inclined to be highly supportive of the regime, but the explicit threat of removal and highly intrusive levels of surveillance maximized compliance. For the 1936 Reichstag elections, Schottenheim voters showed up at the polling station at 8:00 a.m. to cast their ballots. By 8:30 a.m., local officials telegraphed Hitler that the Nazi Party had received 100 percent of the vote.<sup>53</sup>

The settlement expanded greatly after 1935 with the addition of the Flachelberg and Im reichen Winkel sections. Important shifts in the layout and purpose of these new sections occurred. Most noticeably, the new additions sported curving streets, championed by the Stuttgart School as fostering an organic sense of community (figure 4.6). Additionally, most homes were larger and had garages. And a greater effort was made to provide services and amenities. A second market square was added in the Flachelberg section, replete with various businesses and a post office, as well as regular bus service to the city. Notably, a church was sited atop the hill overlooking the settlement. Additional expansion was planned including a movie theater, sports complex, and sufficient housing to accommodate as many as 26,000 people, although the outbreak of war eventually limited the settlement to around 4,500 residents. These were divided among 961 households of which 827 lived in detached or semidetached single-family homes.<sup>54</sup>

The settlement’s socioeconomic profile also changed significantly. The newer neighborhoods consisted mostly of middle-class households, many of which could arrange private financing for their homes without government support or needing to contribute their own labor. The first residents in Hartshof were mostly unemployed, unskilled laborers from the city center who had to contribute to the construction of their homestead. A number of the smallest houses were reserved for veterans. In contrast, later residents were financially secure families seeking more spacious living space outside the congested city center. Living conditions also improved as later residences tended to have city gas and proper bathrooms. Only 16 percent of



**Figure 4.6. Layout of the Schottenheim Settlement in Regensburg**

The layout of the Schottenheim settlement reflected the Nazi regime's shifting priorities. The early Harthof section to the right had a grid layout and relatively large lots, so the unemployed could raise their own food. The later sections to the left featured curved streets and smaller lots on the assumption that households were headed by wage earners employed in factories and white-collar professions.

Source: Kerler, "Baulicher Gliederung und Gestaltung Schottenheims," 621.

Schottenheim's total residents were classified as unskilled workers, along with 4 percent retirees, and 2 percent each of unemployed, widows, and disabled veterans. In contrast, skilled laborers, white-collar workers, civil servants, and other professionals totaled nearly three-fourths of the resi-

dents. The costs borne by residents reflected this shift as monthly rents or mortgage payments ranged from 12 to 15 Reichsmarks initially but climbed to 35 Reichsmarks for later homes, compared to a national average for working-class housing of 24 Reichsmarks. The screening process deliberately reinforced this middle-class preference. Writing in 1940 of the Schottenheim settlement's successes, one scholar declared "now young, fun-loving, lively, eager-to-work, physically and mentally healthy national compatriots are obtained as settlers during a selection, in contrast to the unemployed."<sup>55</sup>

In addition to being an early Schutzstaffel (SS) member eventually rising to the rank of brigade leader, Schottenheim was also a doctor who eagerly promoted the Nazi Party's rhetoric concerning racial purity and pronatalism. This partially explains his persistent interest in the linkages between settlement policy and public health. Proponents claimed settlers experienced fewer illnesses, were better fed, and had more children than city dwellers. A later study declared the settlement exemplary for national health care. Among other things, the study noted that second-graders who lived in the settlement grew an average of nine centimeters and gained 3.27 kilograms during the year compared to seven centimeters and 2.5 kilograms for city kids.<sup>56</sup> Such claims are generally plausible given the poor sanitary conditions in many urban areas and the higher incomes of most families in the settlement.

The Ramersdorf settlement outside of Munich was another local initiative intended to have broader resonance for Nazi residential policy. In May 1933, city planner Guido Harbers proposed that the city sponsor a housing exhibition.<sup>57</sup> Harbers believed the exhibition would generate good press and be revenue neutral since entrance fees and home sales would offset costs. Harbers also hoped the exhibit would help set the direction for residential construction under the new regime. "In addition to the propagation of German residential culture here and abroad," Harbers explained, "the main objective of the exhibition is to form effective settlement propaganda in the sense of our Führer."<sup>58</sup> The city approved the idea of a "model settlement" to be accompanied by a garden show and other related exhibits. Harbers selected an area along the city's southeastern edge near the village of Ramersdorf.

Harbers intended the project to have a rural, village-like feel. The area was roughly trapezoidal in shape with narrow, gently curving streets. The homes were small, ranging from 56 to 129 square meters, but the lots were rather large with ample green space. The entire project included 192 units, 152 of which were detached single-family homes. The rest were row houses along with a few duplexes. The residences incorporated more than thirty different designs from around twenty different architects, but the exteriors showed little variation. The homes were rectangular in shape with white plaster or stucco facades and pitched tile roofs. In this sense, Ramersdorf was not terribly different from Schottenheim in terms of the general size, shape, or appearance of the homes or the overall spatial layout of the neighbor-

hood. They even had complementary themes for local place-names. Streets in Schottenheim were named after “lost” territories, like Danzig and the Sudetenland, while streets in Ramersdorf honored the movement’s putsch martyrs. Yet, the relative locations were different with Ramersdorf being adjacent to built-up areas and Schottenheim some distance away. This offered several practical advantages for Ramersdorf, including relatively easy access to an existing streetcar line and public utilities. Indeed, Ramersdorf homes had baths, toilets, running water, sewer, gas, electricity, and telephone service. The actual construction went relatively smoothly. Harbers included a few stores and a church in his original design, but they were not built until after the exhibition. The city council expressed no reservations about including a church, especially since the congregation arranged the financing.

The Ramersdorf exhibition ran from June to September 1934, but fiscal problems plagued the effort. Cost overruns made the homes expensive. Schottenheim’s earliest homesteads cost around 3,500 Reichsmarks compared to a purchase price of 12,500 for the cheapest house in Ramersdorf.<sup>59</sup> Unsurprisingly, Ramersdorf would not be home to unemployed laborers. An occupational survey of the original inhabitants in February 1935 found that 34 percent of households were headed by civil servants, 24 percent were self-employed merchants and other professionals, 19 percent were disabled veterans and other retirees, 17 percent were office workers, and just 5 percent were craftsmen. A later survey in 1939 confirmed that the settlement had become a neighborhood of middle-class civil servants, professionals, and retirees.<sup>60</sup> Despite the costs, home sales were brisk, with 147 units sold by the end of the exhibition, but the more expensive units were slow to sell. Organizers were forced to cut prices under mounting financial pressures. They managed to sell the remaining units by February 1935, but proceeds from sales fell around 15 percent short of covering construction costs. Entrance fees to the garden show and other exhibits also fell far below expectations. In total, the entire project ran a deficit exceeding 1 million Reichsmarks, which the city was forced to absorb.<sup>61</sup>

Beyond the financial difficulties, the project failed to live up to propaganda expectations. Despite its designation as a “model settlement” and Harbers’s efforts to drum up support among the Party’s elite, few prominent dignitaries made the pilgrimage, and most of those limited their visits to the garden show and other displays. Joseph Goebbels’s burgeoning propaganda ministry made no effort to publicize the event nor did other Reich officials. The professional press devoted some attention to the event, but much of it was delivered in a matter-of-fact tone, if not outright critical. Some writers complained of the settlement’s uniformity, leading one to comment: “In some ways, this high modern exhibition is still recognizably within the old capitalist, liberal camp.”<sup>62</sup> Others complained Ramersdorf contained too much variation.<sup>63</sup> Nearly all noted that the houses were twice as expensive as those in comparable settlements.<sup>64</sup> A local engineer actually calculated the

cost ratios for enclosed space versus actual usable living area for each house type and concluded that “the concept of efficiency has not yet been properly grasped by all architects.”<sup>65</sup> Another writer scoffed that the settlement “can be described as a ‘villa colony’ . . . intended for a stratum with ‘upscale residential decors.’” Adding that “as a foundation for the German settlement program, it lacks the inner legitimacy.”<sup>66</sup> In a rather damning summary, yet another writer concluded “the ‘practical effectiveness’ of the exhibition always remained slim.”<sup>67</sup> One writer was slightly more charitable, noting that although the exhibition fell short, “these kinds of youthful errors” accompany “every presentation of a new movement.”<sup>68</sup>

Schottenheim and Ramersdorf were two of the more notable examples, but there were other projects scattered across Germany as local leaders seized the initiative. Officials in Leipzig claimed to have built around 2,000 homesteads in satellite settlements by October 1935. One of these, the Meusdorf settlement, was unusually comprehensive, encompassing around 800 residential units for unemployed households, a school, church, and future plans to develop it into a self-sufficient village.<sup>69</sup> In other instances, local Nazis commissioned or modified settlements specifically for SA members, military veterans, and other so-called Front Line Fighters. The most prominent examples included the Siegfried Kasche Settlement, touted as “the first large German SA settlement,” in Frankfurt an der Oder, and the Albert Leo Schlageter Settlement, heralded as “the first German Front Line Fighter Settlement,” in Berlin-Britz.<sup>70</sup> Many of these first “Nazi” neighborhoods involved newly installed mayors, who claimed credit amid great fanfare for the completion of projects begun by their predecessors.

In that sense, Schottenheim and Ramersdorf were somewhat unique in that they were mostly conceived, planned, and executed after the Nazi seizure of power. Both could rightly be classified as “Nazi” projects, yet neither provided a model for housing policy. Indeed, Schottenheim and Ramersdorf directly contradicted some basic principles of later Nazi residential planning. Most noticeable, both featured decentralized layouts that made little provision for Party facilities or rally spaces. For example, schools and kindergartens were included in Schottenheim, but Hitler Youth facilities were lacking there and in Ramersdorf. Schottenheim was to have a “community house,” but it was located at a peripheral location on the settlement’s south-eastern corner. Further, this structure allowed the joint purchase and storage of supplies, like fertilizer, instead of social events or Party assemblies.

In contrast to the lack of visibility afforded to the Party, new churches occupied prominent positions. In Schottenheim, a church occupied the central location between the Harthof and Flachelberg districts. In Ramersdorf, the existing Catholic church, St. Maria, stood directly across from the main exhibition entrance, while a new Protestant church was later built on the western edge of the settlement. Perhaps the most basic critique was the continued practice of class segregation so vehemently denounced by Nazi



propagandists. Ramersdorf, as we have seen, was almost entirely conceived and implemented as a middle-class residential suburb. Schottenheim had a broader socioeconomic mix between unskilled laborers and middle-class professionals, yet lower-class residents were clustered in the easternmost neighborhood farthest from the city with limited access to public services. In contrast, middle-class residents had properties closer to the city and enjoyed greater access to public services and other amenities.

Despite the rhetoric of a new beginning, initial settlement construction under the Nazi regime was generally consistent with the emergency, ad hoc, and local character of the Brüning program. Even basic geographical matters of design, layout, and location were largely consistent. Yet some new elements were present, such as the procedures for racial and political screening of applicants and continued monitoring to ensure proper utilization and maintenance of the homestead. Like the regime's initial efforts concerning urban renewal, early projects like Schottenheim and Ramersdorf signaled the advent of new approaches for housing policy under Nazism but not necessarily the specific direction.

### **Back to the Countryside**

The regime's initial approach to rural areas also exhibited continuity with practices and policies dating to the Weimar years and earlier. Germany's smaller towns, villages, and farms struggled to cope with mechanization, foreign competition, and out-migration. Nazi leaders promised, albeit vaguely, to rectify these issues. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler assigned a special role to farmers in maintaining a healthy nation: "A solid stock of small and medium peasants has at all times been the best defense against social ills such as we possess today. And, moreover, this is the only solution which enables a nation to earn its daily bread within the inner circuit of its economy."<sup>71</sup> Nazi electioneering portrayed the Party, with considerable success in many parts of the country, as the champion of rural concerns. Not only did such promises appeal to small-town and rural voters, they also found favor with conservative middle-class residents in larger cities. This political trope played into a long-standing line of thought, stretching back to the mid-nineteenth century, that equated cities with cultural, moral, and national decline while romanticizing the agrarian countryside as traditional, virtuous, and healthy. Indeed, various government policies since Bismarck had favored rural interests, especially those of large estate owners in eastern Prussia, and encouraged ethnic Germans to settle in areas with significant Polish populations. In that sense, Nazi rhetoric reflected a fairly well-established strand of German cultural anxiety and government policy.

The Nazi Party's seizure of power provided an unprecedented opportunity to act upon these impulses unfettered by constitutional considerations. This desire to act was strongest among the Party's folkish ideologues, most

notably Heinrich Himmler, Alfred Rosenberg, and Richard Walther Darré. In particular, the Reich minister for food and agriculture, Richard Walther Darré, who was most responsible for associating the phrase “blood and soil” with the Nazi movement, dreamed of a radical re-agrarianization of German society. Instead of simply founding new suburbs or satellite settlements, big cities should be broken up and populations dispersed to agrarian settlements. The geographical dispersion from densely populated cities to rural areas would supposedly achieve several ideological goals, including the restoration of traditional values, increased fertility rates, and ultimately a healthier, stronger, and racially pure populace. Over time, however, the practical demands of greater mechanization, efficiency, and self-sufficiency in food would crowd out these ideological impulses.

To realize these goals, Hitler approved the Law concerning the Renewal of the German Peasantry in July 1933, which declared the creation of rural settlements and family farms as a major objective.<sup>72</sup> This was followed in September by the Reich Law on Family Farms, which outlined three main goals. First, the regime claimed full jurisdiction, superseding traditional customs. Second, farms could no longer be divided among multiple heirs or sold like other property. Finally, the regime would create small and medium-sized farms, distributed as evenly as possible across the country. Small plots would be consolidated until the farm could sustain a family. Larger estates would be divided into family farmsteads not exceeding 125 hectares. These farms would be owned directly, rather than leased, and racial restrictions would naturally apply. Viewing the continued subdivision of farms as inefficient, the law also effectively codified male primogeniture, meaning the eldest son would inherit the entire property, although divisible inheritance was common in southern and western Germany.<sup>73</sup> The overall geographical intention of these programs of consolidation, division, and reclamation was to disperse farming families and agricultural production from Germany’s south and west toward the north and east as a sort of “internal colonialization.”

New farmsteads invariably mimicked vernacular architecture, whether thatched roofs along northern coastal areas, half-timbering across central Germany, or alpine styles in the south. Darré codified these vernacular aesthetics in 1935 with guidelines stipulating that farmsteads must appear rural and in harmony with the surrounding landscape.<sup>74</sup> This also triggered a series of research projects documenting folk architecture in an effort to aid in the design of farmsteads that reconciled traditional forms with modern needs. This was seen as reflecting a harmonious merger of nature, culture, and race.

Party officials in the Rhineland undertook one of the more ambitious and detailed examinations of rural conditions. The group tallied 18,149 family farms throughout the province but estimated that just over 8 percent could be classified as “healthy” farmsteads according to Reich law.

The group launched a pilot project to reorganize one village near Trier. An intensive inventory was conducted covering size, ownership, and various socioeconomic characteristics. Of 102 family farms, only 47 would be left unchanged, while 22 would be dissolved, presumably because they were deemed too small. Those farm families would be resettled to the east, providing they met the selection requirements. The remaining farms would be altered in some fashion to meet Reich law. In addition to these changes, the village was to experience a dramatic spatial reorganization with a new village square, community house, Hitler Youth home, school, pool, sport facility, and guesthouse.<sup>75</sup>

It is unlikely the plan went far given that it was only published in 1941, but it is illustrative of the wholesale reorganization envisioned for rural areas. Wilhelm Grebe, a prominent figure in reorganizing rural areas, published a handbook for rural construction covering both farms and villages. Grebe sketched out how local traditions could be adapted to modern needs. This entailed restructuring entire villages, often aiming to create more dispersed settlements oriented around a central village square with a community house.<sup>76</sup> The regime was more successful in reorganizing landholdings when it utilized major construction projects, such as the Autobahn and military facilities, to occasion broader reorganizations of adjacent properties.

The conversion of marginal lands into new farmsteads played a more prominent role. This "inner colonization" gained a high profile in the regime's propaganda. Germany's North Sea coast was one focal point. The area had a long history with flood control and land reclamation. Building on unrealized plans prepared by a local builders' association in 1931, Gauleiter Hinrich Lohse launched an ambitious program that envisioned an extensive series of new dikes to transform tidal lands into productive farmlands, or polders, augmented by new dams and causeways connecting nearby islands to the mainland. This program advanced the regime's blood-and-soil ideology and supported several practical objectives, like increasing agricultural production and providing jobs through 1934 for some 8,000 unemployed laborers. Lohse envisioned the construction of forty-three new polder settlements over the next century for as many as 15,000 people. Lohse's initiative was well received, garnering support from Darré, Rosenberg, Hermann Göring, and Hitler. The slogan of "A People without Space Creates Space" tapped into broad social anxieties over the sense that Germany's territorial and colonial losses through the Treaty of Versailles had condemned the nation to poverty and scarcity.<sup>77</sup> Although not stated directly, the project likely also drew inspiration from the efforts of Benito Mussolini's Fascist government to drain and settle the Pontine Marshes southeast of Rome, including the establishment of several new towns.

The centerpiece of Lohse's campaign would be the Adolf Hitler Koog (Polder), now known as Dieksanderkoog, in the southwest corner of Schleswig-Holstein. The idea of naming the settlement after Hitler was probably a

local initiative aimed at ingratiating the project with the Reich leadership. It undoubtedly enjoyed substantial local support as this province had been a Nazi electoral stronghold. Many places across Germany were renamed “Adolf Hitler” during 1933, so much so that the regime issued new guidance specifying that the use of Hitler’s name be limited to new places. This polder qualified in a double sense as a new settlement and literally as new land wrested from the sea. And as the Führer’s namesake, the settlement had obvious symbolic importance and at least tacit support from Hitler.<sup>78</sup> The actual settlement consisted of a new nine-kilometer dike enclosing around 1,300 hectares of reclaimed land divided among eighty-nine farmsteads and twenty-four homesteads for laborers and craftsmen. Farmsteads ranged from three to thirty hectares with a clear majority between fifteen to twenty hectares. The homesteads were also provisioned with up to three hectares to allow for substantial gardens (figure 4.7). Several homesteads were grouped with a local school and restaurant to form a hamlet. The farmsteads closely followed the vernacular “gulf-house” style common to the West Frisian portions of the North Sea coast that combined the functions of house and barn



**Figure 4.7. Farmsteads in the New Adolf Hitler Koog**

Nazi propaganda made great fanfare over the construction of new farmsteads, although relatively few were built. Farmsteads mimicked traditional rural architecture in the region, such as these farmsteads in the new Adolf Hitler Koog. The regime touted this settlement and farmsteads in general as evidence of its commitment to securing more living space and restoring the bond between blood and soil.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:162.

in a single structure. Yet the new farmsteads appeared to have brick exteriors with tiled roofs rather than the customary half-timbering and thatch.<sup>79</sup>

Hitler visited the settlement in August 1935 amid great fanfare. During the visit, Hitler officially dedicated the settlement and also laid the cornerstone for the new community center, the New Land Hall. Hitler used the occasion to link the act of building to his vision of eternal struggle among nations, exhorting listeners to remember two paramount insights:

When we stand here today on this new land, we should not forget two lessons: labor alone has created this work. May the German Volk never forget that at no time has life ever been given as a gift; it must continually be fought for and achieved by labor. And the second lesson: just as here every square meter must be won from the sea and shielded with untiring, brave devotion, so must everything which the entire nation creates and builds be shielded by all Volksgenossen (ethnic German people). This is a symbol of labor and of constant struggle, of diligence and bravery! Let no one forget that our Reich, too, is but a polder in the waters of the world and that it can only be maintained if its dikes are strong and are kept strong. With this thought in mind, I hereby lay this cornerstone.<sup>80</sup>

The hall resembled the farmsteads, but its north exterior was decorated with oversized reliefs of a farmer holding a shovel and a soldier holding a rifle with an eagle clutching a swastika centered above. Located more than a kilometer from the village center, the hall was situated on a slight hill adjacent to the dike, affording views of the sea and surrounding farmland. The interior consisted of a main assembly room, other meeting spaces, and a small library. The settlement lacked a church, so the hall functioned as the community's main gathering place. The impression that the hall was to serve as some type of church surrogate was reinforced by its modest free-standing bell tower, a common feature of rural churches across northern Germany and Scandinavia.

In total, only six polder settlements were constructed, including the Hermann Göring Koog and Horst Wessel Koog.<sup>81</sup> Despite their relatively small size, these types of agrarian projects received considerable attention in the regime's ongoing rhetoric of blood and soil. Indeed, the Adolf Hitler Koog became something of a tourist attraction for Germans and foreign visitors, publicized through newspapers, brochures, postcards, and even films. The influx of visitors was such that within a year of the settlement's dedication, local authorities successfully petitioned Göring to asphalt the main access road.<sup>82</sup>

Potential settlers were subject to a rigorous screening process to ensure applicants had suitable farming backgrounds, had pure racial ancestry, and were dedicated Party members, preferably active in the SA or SS. Applicants and their spouses had to undergo a medical examination and were expected to produce many children. Eldest sons were excluded, since they should

inherit their parents' farm.<sup>83</sup> Various government agencies covered slightly more than half of the project's 7.6 million Reichsmarks cost. The remainder was privately financed. Settlers could contribute their own labor to reduce costs, but they were still required to provide a down payment equal to 10–15 percent of the building and land costs.<sup>84</sup> This requirement likely limited the settlement to relatively well-off farm families.

Darré's functionaries implemented similar screening procedures elsewhere. A study of applicants from 1934 indicated that around 18 percent were denied and another 10 percent were accepted conditionally, giving a fairly high acceptance rate of just over 70 percent. Coincidentally, around 70 percent of applicants were from rural districts, with Pomerania accounting for around 18 percent of applicants compared to a combined 6 percent from Baden, Bavaria, and Württemberg.<sup>85</sup> Later estimates that west Germans accounted for only one-quarter of those assigned to new farmsteads in eastern regions seemed to confirm these early results.<sup>86</sup> The screening tightened considerably in later years. Between 1934 and 1939, roughly half of applicants for new farmsteads were denied, leading to widespread complaints. Even officials in the Agriculture Ministry cautioned that "exaggeratedly strict handling of the selection" was causing the rejection of otherwise qualified young male applicants on tangential matters, like a relative's suicide or having a broken marriage engagement.<sup>87</sup>

Another much publicized folkish project was the reconstruction of Öschelbronn. A fire destroyed much of the village in September 1933. The catastrophe garnered nationwide attention. Hitler soon visited and ordered authorities to rebuild the village immediately. Unemployed workers and Reich Labor Service members quickly cleared the rubble, donations flooded in, and the effort was declared to be a "National Socialist Redevelopment Project." The village was rebuilt in a rural vernacular style featuring "old, rooted-in-soil oak half-timbering."<sup>88</sup> Yet the new Öschelbronn was significantly different. To the chagrin of residents, the reconstruction committee had near complete authority over decision making. Nearly all the former property lines were altered to lower the village's building density. Many locals would have liked to rebuild with masonry structures, but officials imposed a rustic half-timbered aesthetic to ensure that "a villagescape of truly German character arises which embodies the impression of the will to action of the new time and clears away the sins of the old system once and for all."<sup>89</sup> The new Öschelbronn mimicked a traditional farming village, but ironically, even before the fire, most locals worked in factories in nearby Pforzheim. Nevertheless, regime propagandists touted the reconstruction of Öschelbronn as a "pure German village."<sup>90</sup>

Despite the regime's efforts, agriculture remained inefficient and heavily reliant on human and animal power. The modernization of agriculture faltered as breakneck military-industrial expansion consumed ever increasing amounts of labor and materials. Grain harvests declined and prices rose

even before the outbreak of war cut agricultural production in half. By the end of 1941, the regime had created only 22,200 new farmsteads, and nearly 13,800 of those had been built before the end of 1935. In both 1933 and 1934, the regime reported the creation of slightly more than 4,900 farmsteads, but by 1938, this dropped to less than 1,500 as military-industrial expansion gained priority.<sup>91</sup> Grebe complained, for example, that officials from the Forestry Ministry had taken away forestry rights from farmers so wood would be available for military-related construction, making rural construction increasingly difficult.<sup>92</sup> Many of the new farmers were disillusioned and overwhelmed by the workload. One field report from 1934 noted that

some families, perhaps one quarter, have internally given up on the whole thing already. They allow the farming to go however it wants. They say they would prefer to return to the city today rather than tomorrow. . . . More than half of the settlers can no longer pay their interest [on their loan].<sup>93</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the migration of people from rural to urban areas continued unabated, with estimates of one million additional agricultural workers switching to other sectors between 1933 and 1938.<sup>94</sup> Ironically, as we shall see, the regime furthered this trend through a decisive shift in housing policy after 1935.

## CENTRALIZATION AND MILITARIZATION

Notwithstanding the sharper political rhetoric, the Nazi regime's initial residential projects generally followed patterns set during the Brüning administration and continued to allow a great deal of local initiative and adaptability. Hitler and his top lieutenants were too busy consolidating power and suppressing political opposition to invest much in housing. By the winter of 1933–1934, however, the new regime had made considerable progress in achieving both political goals. Simultaneously, the emergency housing funding approved previously was running out, offering the regime an opportunity to rethink housing policy. This seemed especially relevant and pressing in the face of a housing shortage that continued to rise from an estimated deficit of 1.1 million residences in 1933 to 1.5 million, or around 10 percent of all urban households, by the end of 1935.<sup>95</sup>

### The Rise of the DAF

Ambitious local officials drove the regime's earliest residential projects, but soon various government and Party organizations vied to centralize housing policy. The German Labor Front (DAF) was one of these organizations, but there was little indication that Ley or his DAF would succeed as government ministries with established roles in housing were immediately wary

and moved swiftly to undercut the DAF. In March 1934, Hitler created the position of Reich Commissar for settlement affairs in the Ministry of Economics to supervise all settlement construction, excluding farm projects that remained under Darré.<sup>96</sup> Hitler's motivations are unclear, but the appointment of Gottfried Feder as commissar suggested a dramatic new direction for housing policy.

An engineer by training, Feder was among the founders of the Nazi movement, and his economic theories helped steer the Party's initial political platform in a stridently anticapitalist and antiurban direction. Feder's first appointment in the new regime was as a deputy in the Ministry of Economics, but the sudden promotion to Reich Commissar both expanded his role and shifted authority over housing from the Labor Ministry. In two programmatic speeches delivered in May 1934, Feder outlined his vision for a radical reorientation in housing and settlement planning that would entail the "dispersal of large cities" and "the sedentarization and rerooting of the population in the native soil" through the creation of hundreds of "new settlements, new rural places amid a rich peasantry."<sup>97</sup> Feder's ideas clearly drew on earlier garden city concepts and more broadly from the ideological milieu of agrarian romanticism, neo-medieval nostalgia, and conservative nationalism. This put Feder squarely at odds with the Labor Ministry, which favored building new suburban settlements around large metropolitan centers.

Feder's meteoric rise was matched by his fall. In July, Hitler issued a decree empowering the minister of economics with statutory authority "to police and organize" housing policy.<sup>98</sup> By the end of the month, Hjalmar Schacht gained appointment as economics minister and prioritized improving the government's financial situation while maintaining spending for public works. In so doing, Schacht sought cooperation with Germany's leading industrialists, who were clearly alienated by Feder's anticapitalist rhetoric. Feder was soon ousted from office, and in December, Hitler returned responsibility for housing policy to the Labor Ministry, effectively dissolving the office of Reich Commissar.<sup>99</sup> This odd maneuvering highlights the incessant bureaucratic infighting among Hitler lieutenants, as well as Hitler's own uncertainty about and disinterest in housing issues. These erratic and arbitrary shifts also reflected a broader deprioritization of housing policy in favor of industrial production, rearmament, and ultimately war preparations.

The bureaucratic machinations of 1934 favored the Labor Ministry, but the ministry and its leader Franz Seldte were largely limited to channeling Reich funds to housing projects supervised by others. The DAF gained a foothold in housing policy in April 1934 with the creation of the Reich Homestead Office of the National Socialist German Workers' Party and Labor Front. Charged with jurisdiction over non-farmstead housing, one official noted succinctly that "significant political objectives will be achieved through homestead settlement, and so it was completely natural that the Party, as the sole carrier of political will in the state, intervened here."<sup>100</sup>



The office's jurisdiction was unclear within the muddled Party-state bureaucracy, but it rapidly gained an extensive staff with higher-level officials focusing on propaganda, housing guidelines, and the implementation of a limited number of model projects, while local-level officials took charge of settler selection and supervision.

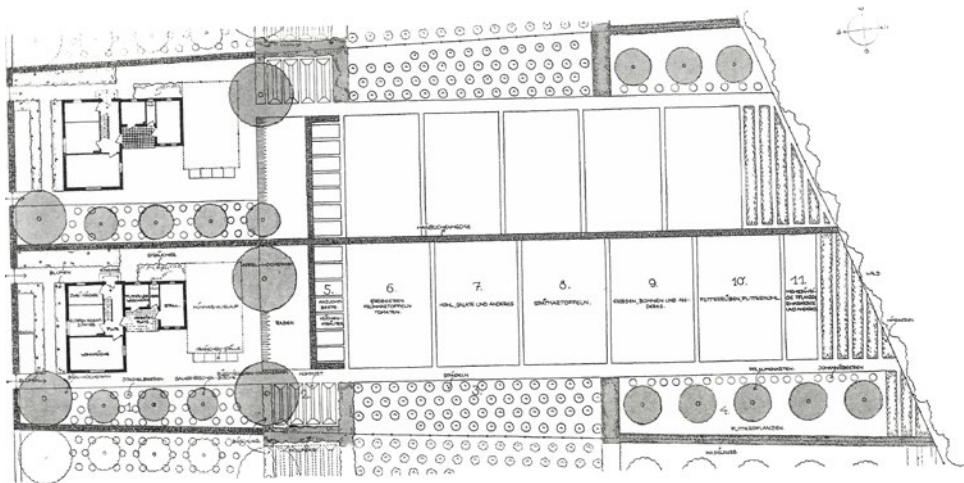
Johann Wilhelm Ludowici headed the new DAF office and served as liaison for housing on the staff of Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess.<sup>101</sup> Ludowici also acted as Feder's representative during his brief tenure. This resulted in an ungainly liaison position, representing the Nazi Party, the Reich Commissar in the Ministry of Economics, and the technically independent DAF under Ley. Feder's ouster and the nominal restoration of housing authority to the Labor Ministry did not substantively change Ludowici's complicated situation. In fact, an intense institutional, ideological, and personal rivalry ignited between the DAF and the Labor Ministry. Seldte and his staff guarded the ministry's traditional bureaucratic influence over housing and favored a market-oriented, technocratic approach. Ley and the DAF sought expanded influence for the Party and a more statist, centralized approach.

Undaunted, Ludowici attempted to chart an independent course for the Homestead Office after Feder's dismissal. Ludowici retained a decidedly antiurban perspective that identified contemporary cities as detrimental to traditional values "in which the concept of culture increasingly has less to do with the true German works of literature, the visual arts, etc., as with asphalt, sewer systems, comfortable enjoyment of life, and diversions."<sup>102</sup> To remedy this, Ludowici promoted the dispersion of industry and population into new country-town settlements that would create a synergy between farmers and industrial workers. This would achieve the cultural objectives of promoting fertility, racial purity, and national solidarity while still advancing several security objectives, such as achieving food autarky, increasing industrial production, and reducing vulnerability to air attacks.

Ludowici claimed that his agency was responsible for housing design and policy and that its guidelines were applicable for all housing and all agencies, except farmsteads.<sup>103</sup> In practice, Ludowici and the Homestead Office were largely limited to homestead settlements, and even then their influence was often advisory. The office issued guidelines that largely institutionalized homesteads as the regime's preferred housing form. These settlements would be located far enough away from established urban areas to bring people back to nature but still close enough to allow employment in industrial centers. Ideally, these settlements would consist of relatively uniform single-family homes on generous garden plots where class distinctions dissolved into an ethnic German community based on healthy agrarian traditions. The homes would be rather basic, often utilizing well water instead of indoor running water. A 1935 pamphlet from the Homestead Office declared that a flushing toilet was "not only a luxury but also a mistake."<sup>104</sup>

The office disavowed any inclination toward uniformity and standardization, emphasizing instead that planners utilize local building materials and traditions. Yet simultaneously, the guidelines explicitly called for simple saddle roofs with a pitch of 50 to 60 degrees and plastered exterior walls. Hipped roofs were undesirable, and square floor plans with tent roofs were forbidden. The office collaborated with the Beauty of Labor organization to develop standardized furniture that would be inexpensive yet folksy. Homes should be arranged in groups that avoided set patterns while paradoxically maintaining “a uniform roof form, a uniform roof pitch, uniform roofing material, a uniform ridge direction, a uniform plastering with at most a slight change in the plaster color and a change in the color of the wooden window frame.”<sup>105</sup> Fences, hedges, and enclosure walls would follow a common plan. The settlements would have relatively narrow streets and paths that provided spaces for social interaction with traffic routed around the settlement. The office also provided detailed instructions for maximizing garden productivity (figure 4.8). Sources differ on the actual number of homesteads constructed by the regime, ranging from perhaps as high as 200,000 to as low as 83,000.<sup>106</sup>

The Labor Ministry issued regulations that largely codified the Homestead Office’s guidelines in September 1937. The regulations were intended to summarize and clarify government policy concerning homesteads, as



**Figure 4.8. Detailed Diagram of a Homestead and Its Associated Garden Plots**

The DAF issued detailed guidelines for the design and operation of homesteads and their associated garden plots. This diagram shows the interior layout of the house on the left with gardening space extending to the right. Specific sections were labeled, for example, with number 6 calling for strawberries, potatoes, and tomatoes.

Source: Reichsheimstättenamt der NSDAP und DAF, *Ein Beispiel aus der Siedlungsplanung*, 26.

well as push back somewhat against the DAF's growing claims over housing policy. Settlements were to be located in areas that allowed gardening and raising small animals but also near areas of employment. Settlers would still contribute their own labor during construction to lower costs. Water, gas, and electricity would only be provided if they could be delivered at extremely low costs from existing municipal services. Instead, stoves would provide heat; wells would supply water. Regime officials were vehemently opposed to any idea of providing sewage systems, adding that "in any case, all waste water and garbage must be collected and be made useful for the settler's economic use." The standard lot was around 1,000 square meters. The interior spaces would consist of a living/kitchen space of 14 square meters, the parental bedroom of 12 square meters, and between 6- to 8-square-meter rooms for the kids' bedrooms, a work room, cellar, animal stall, and finally a small feed room and privy.<sup>107</sup>

Beyond scattered efforts to sponsor Front Line Fighter settlements, Ley achieved an important victory when Hitler charged the DAF with organizing a settlement program in support of the regime's industrial policy. Specifically, Hitler gave the DAF responsibility for building settlements for coal miners near Aachen in west-central Germany. Ley broke ground in May 1934 and work proceeded rapidly, with more than 1,000 homesteads completed by the end of 1936. The program soon expanded to coal-producing areas in Upper Silesia, the Ruhr, and the Saar-Palatinate, perhaps reaching a total of around 50,000 new homes. The DAF had no direct experience in housing, but Hitler's decision to empower Ley had several practical and political advantages. First, the DAF's financial resources allowed it to offer low-interest loans that covered much of the costs. Second, Hitler's intervention provided an entry point for direct Party influence over housing policy and reflected Hitler's inclination to establish rival power centers within the regime. Third, as the successor of the non-defunct trade unions, the DAF was the nominal representative of workers, so there was a certain logic that it take charge of worker housing.<sup>108</sup>

Ley claimed the Aachen project represented an innovative and comprehensive program, but the layout and design were actually quite conventional. The program consisted of ten different settlements scattered across the countryside. Little effort was made to provide shops, services, or other amenities; nor was much effort made to provide any type of Party or communal space, although one settlement possessed a village commons centered on a school.<sup>109</sup> The Gleiwitz-Zernik settlement in Upper Silesia was the first of these DAF settlements that made some effort to include schools, leisure facilities, stores, and a social club. Despite their rather ordinary nature, these coalfield settlements were some of the few housing projects realized by the DAF and the subject of much propaganda.

The coalfield settlements signaled the subservience of housing policy to military-industrial production. Instead of settlements for the unemployed,

the DAF only settled employed workers. Indeed, government officials in March 1933 were already openly discussing the risks of settling economically weaker households and concluding "it makes more sense, therefore, to settle economically stronger groups."<sup>110</sup> The Homestead Office soon followed suit, and eventually a Reich decree in February 1935 codified the policy that settlements "shall primarily benefit those national comrades who are professionally active and predominantly employed in the industrial sector and thereby serve to reconnect the productive German people, especially the German workers, to the soil of the homeland."<sup>111</sup> By the middle of 1935, only workers employed in qualifying industries were eligible for government loan guarantees or tax breaks, as direct state funding was broadly curtailed. Even these incentives dwindled in favor of securing necessary financing through quasi-public building associations or private companies. From 1924 to 1930, public investment accounted for as much as 50 percent of total housing funding, but this dropped to less than 10 percent for the period from 1934 to 1939.<sup>112</sup> Ironically, the regime took greater control over housing as it withdrew financial support.

The Aachen coalfields also marked an important step in institutionalizing the process of settler selection. Up to this point, local officials handled selection, but the DAF sought to centralize settler selection through the Homestead Office. Otto Marrenbach, the DAF chief of staff and executive director, emphasized the importance of a vigorous screening process that selected only productive Germans. To succeed, families had to prove that they were "politically reliable, genetically healthy, genetically proficient, as well as occupationally and also economically capable."<sup>113</sup> Ludowici was more blunt, declaring: "Today, we are no longer trying to keep inferior people alive."<sup>114</sup> In practice, this meant that settlers had to be under fifty years old with younger children or recently married with intentions to have children in the immediate future. Families also needed racially pure backgrounds, and of course, active participation in the Nazi movement was advantageous.

The selection process was lengthy and cumbersome. Applicants began with a questionnaire covering the family's finances and children submitted to the mayor and the regional branch of the Homestead Office. A second form dealt with a family's suitability for homesteading. Much of the content here focused on the wife, questioning whether she maintained an orderly household and was capable of properly managing a homestead. Personal data was reviewed to screen for asocial tendencies, such as drunkardness or political unreliability. Again, wives received special scrutiny and were asked about intimate matters concerning menstruation cycles and prior miscarriages. This information then went to local law enforcement and welfare officials, as well as to the secret police, for background checks. The family also had to prove its Aryan ancestry. Depending on the results, the family could be subjected to a medical examination. Assuming the family passed, the application went for final approval to a committee consisting

of the mayor, a local official from the Homestead Office, and the leader of the local Nazi Party chapter.<sup>115</sup>

The rigor of the selection process varied from place to place. One official report stated that 6,439 out of 9,721 applicants in Silesia were approved, indicating a 66 percent pass rate. Another official claimed that 30 percent of applicants from the Braunschweig region were deemed unacceptable.<sup>116</sup> The situation in Mannheim may have been extreme, where in one batch of 217 applications, dating from September 1935 to August 1936, only 79 were approved, 78 withdrew or submitted incomplete forms, and 60 were rejected. Through fall 1936, officials rejected 15,000 out of 67,000 applicants across Germany, or around 22 percent.<sup>117</sup> The centralization of the selection process through the DAF generated additional frictions between competing Party and state bureaucracies. Municipalities were generally responsible for residential planning, so some local officials regarded the DAF as interfering in local matters, such as in Regensburg, where Mayor Schottenheim regarded selection as his personal prerogative.

Regardless of the exact approval rate, many settlers had limited experience tending gardens or animals. To address this, the regime merged existing fraternal organizations and mutual benefit societies into the German Settlers League under the Homestead Office. The league assumed responsibility for training and advising settlers. It also played a key role in monitoring settlers during their three-year probationary period. Wives were initially forbidden from working outside the home to eliminate job competition with men and increase fertility rates. The end result was that the bulk of homesteading work fell to wives, since husbands worked long days in factories, often some distance away. As Ludowici explained: "In the settlement, the settler wife is just as important as the husband, and today in the family and in household economics, she has to likewise fulfill her compulsory military service just as the husband as soldier."<sup>118</sup> The DAF acknowledged as much, stating that "also in contrast with before, special emphasis was placed on the suitability of the wife" during the selection process.<sup>119</sup> The German Women's Work organization assumed the task of helping "city wives" adapt to the rigors of homesteading. In the end, settlers faced a demanding succession of selection, training, and probation processes that lasted years. Instead of improving living standards, the organizations that sought to help settlers adapt to rural life functioned more as mechanisms of control, surveillance, and enforcement.

Living conditions were difficult with basic services like running water and sewage systems often lacking, which only added to the rigor of homesteading. As one female writer noted in 1935, the wives were solely responsible for "the tending of the garden, the feeding of the small animals, the education of a large gaggle of children, and additionally as previously the care of the entire household."<sup>120</sup> Internal government reports confirmed these

concerns. A social worker visiting a settlement near Hamburg reported that wives were extremely overworked:

Every bucket of water must be carried out to the country. The grocery stores are far away, shopping consumes lots of time. The settlement is predominantly families with three, four, or more children, who claim the mother from early to late. Besides that, she should care for the house and animals, work in the garden and laundry. Some of them simply cannot manage this.<sup>121</sup>

Completing the probationary period proved very challenging under these conditions. Some simply gave up, while others were removed for varied reasons.

In Schottenheim, for example, a failed probation could result from any expression of political opposition or even dissatisfaction, as well as from drunkenness, quarrelsomeness, a sickly wife, or simply making a poor impression. Complaints seemed more likely to emanate from neighbors than from Party officials. In that sense, the Schottenheim settlement policed itself to a certain extent. This pattern was repeated across Germany. The overall results are unclear, but one regional study of 1,800 homesteads conducted in 1937 found that only 40 percent of households successfully completed probation, 40 percent received extended probation, and 20 percent were evicted.<sup>122</sup> Another report of 11,500 households across Germany found that only around 22 percent received extended probation and around 12 percent were evicted. Yet some localities appeared significantly less stringent. By the end of the first probation period in Munich in 1936, for example, only 14 out of 400 households were evicted, mostly for failure to tend their gardens satisfactorily.<sup>123</sup>

Homesteads remained the nominal preference for housing in Nazi Germany, but the numbers signaled different priorities. The Homestead Office took credit for producing 820,000 new dwellings by 1937. Around one-third of these derived from renovating or subdividing existing residences. Of the 570,000 residences the Homestead Office claimed as new construction, only 110,000 were homesteads. By the outbreak of war, the total had increased to around 147,500, but this accounted for as little as 7.5 percent of new residences. The final total may have reached slightly more than 161,000 by 1942, with an annual peak of only around 30,700 in 1938.<sup>124</sup> Despite these meager results, the Homestead Office remained the most prominent outlet for housing propaganda until the DAF's building program experienced a broad reorganization in support of the Four Year Plan.

The Aachen coal-mining settlements were the first tangible indication that housing policy would henceforth serve the regime's burgeoning military-industrial complex, instead of simply providing emergency relief for the unemployed. As the nominal representative of the working classes, Ley gained from this overall shift in priority and quickly set about building professional

capacity within the DAF. As Feder and the Labor Ministry jostled for control during the summer of 1934, Ley established a Building Department that, unlike the Homestead Office, was solely under the purview of the DAF. Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, a product of the Stuttgart School tradition, headed this new department. Schulte-Frohlinde's position as a municipal building official in Nuremberg brought him into contact with Speer, which may account for his appointment. In his new position, Schulte-Frohlinde had nominal oversight of the DAF's disparate building programs, but his greatest impact was on residential construction. Specifically, he sought to develop a comprehensive program for settlement policy, design, and layout that reconciled Party ideology with the priority of expanding industrial production.<sup>125</sup>

Backed by the growing might of the DAF, Schulte-Frohlinde launched a program of "model" settlements to set a clear direction for the regime's official housing policy. An extensive propaganda campaign promoted the work of the Building Department through a series of exhibitions and publications. Schulte-Frohlinde also appointed lower-level housing officials, architects, and planners, ensuring that a cadre of like-minded professionals staffed the regime's housing apparatus. Despite its modest start, the DAF managed to establish itself as the lead authority for screening, educating, and supervising settlers by the end of 1934. The DAF also moved to exert greater influence over housing design and settlement planning, effectively relegating the Labor Ministry to arranging financing. Propelled by Ley's drive for power, the DAF rapidly became an influential force shaping housing policy in Nazi Germany.

### **Model Nazi Settlements**

In a 1935 speech, Rosenberg noted significant progress in residential planning but also observed that "the new settlements unfortunately suffer mostly because they lack a spiritual center. Despite the economic emergency, builders and architects must find the ways and means to lay out settlements really as settlements, and not as random, endlessly expanding rows of houses."<sup>126</sup> These early settlements also appeared to undermine the Party's rhetoric about social unity and community, since they were often tailored for specific segments of the population, such as unemployed laborers in Schottenheim, middle-class professionals in Ramersdorf, or coal miners in the DAF settlements. There were other efforts to showcase the regime's ideas, most notably through a series of exhibitions, including the Settlement Exhibition Schleswig-Holstein in 1935, the Reich Garden Show in Dresden in 1936, Reich Exhibition of a Productive Nation in Düsseldorf in 1937, and the Rhine-Main Settlement Work in Frankfurt in 1938, but these tended to be local initiatives with varying degrees of involvement by the Homestead Office and DAF and followed the pattern of early settlements heralded as models (Kochenhof, Ramersdorf, Adolf Hitler Koog) and then largely forgotten.

A variety of factors converged to make Braunschweig an ideal location to reconcile the practical and ideological demands put upon housing by the regime. Braunschweig suffered from an overall housing shortage and poor-quality building stock, but the region was a Nazi stronghold well before 1933. In addition, its energetic minister president, Dietrich Klagges, championed a range of new building projects to elevate his provincial capital into a major power center. Peripheral garden-type settlements would house those displaced from the city center. Finally, the Four Year Plan put Braunschweig at the geographical center of a burgeoning industrial complex. These factors necessitated a massive residential building effort, and the DAF and its burgeoning Building Department under Schulte-Frohlinde were eager to set the tone.

Situated around a kilometer northwest of Braunschweig, the Lehndorf settlement was one of the earliest of these new suburbs and touted as the “first large settlement of the Third Reich.” It also introduced a new concept, the idea of a “community settlement,” that would unite all socioeconomic classes into a race-based nation, a basic idea that had been endorsed by Feder, Ludowici, and members of the Stuttgart School. In contrast to previous programs focusing on work creation and providing housing, Lehndorf would incorporate a “political demand that namely the new settlement should be a community settlement in which all strata and professions of the population shall live in order to make possible the formation of a national community in this new district.”<sup>127</sup> There was little remarkable about Lehndorf’s actual buildings, a mix of single-family homes and duplexes set alongside streets and two-story apartment buildings along the main thoroughfare, for a total of around 1,200 residences. City planners launched a design competition in May 1934 to create a central square as a focal point for community life. The winning entry featured a triangular commons surrounded by businesses and a church.

Construction on the residences began in July 1934, and everything seemed on track until Hitler made an unexpected visit in July 1935. Klagges outlined for Hitler the various building projects underway in the area, no doubt hoping to impress his Führer, and only mentioned the Lehndorf settlement as something of an afterthought. Hitler seemed unaware of the project and asked to visit the site. According to secondhand accounts, Hitler grew quite angry upon learning that a church was planned for the central commons and ordered a new community and Party structure instead.<sup>128</sup> Plans were quickly revised for a new, L-shaped building that served multiple purposes, including a school, event hall, restaurant, rooms for Party youth groups and officials, and even an air raid shelter. The front of the building was dominated by a six-story “Party tower” (figure 4.9). While the building conveyed a sense of monumentality, its awkward alignment and muddled purpose suggested another early clumsy attempt to translate Party ideology into architecture and urban design. The overall project moved forward, but Reich





**Figure 4.9. The School and Community House in the Lehdorf Settlement in Braunschweig** Instead of initial plans to build a church at the center of the neighborhood, the tower of the combination school and community house provided the architectural focal point for the Lehdorf settlement in Braunschweig. Lehdorf was one of the first “model settlements” to be planned and constructed by the Nazi regime. The building houses the same general activities today.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

financial support ended soon after Hitler’s visit.<sup>129</sup> The project’s exact influence is unclear, but to the extent Hitler had any interest in housing policy, his intervention with the Lehdorf project illustrated well the desultory nature of housing policy in Nazi Germany.

Braunschweig continued building peripheral settlements, but the DAF soon became directly involved, perhaps in an effort to avoid the problems that had arisen in Lehdorf. Specifically, Ley ordered the construction of a model settlement. By the end of 1935, the first public reporting of this project declared that it would “represent the ideas of the Homestead Office in practical implementation for the first time in the Reich.”<sup>130</sup> The settlement would “contain houses and apartments for all social classes; it is a com-

munity settlement. . . . The settlement should not only in its structure and in its layout, but rather also in its social structure in some sense serve as a model installation and as a first experimental construction project."<sup>131</sup> The settlement would also be comprehensive in terms of shopping and other amenities. The DAF cast its efforts in Braunschweig as a national precedent for residential design that "above everything shall again bind the working people with the homeland."<sup>132</sup>

The project site was around a kilometer southeast of town on some marshy land known as Mascherode, which lent the settlement its name. The location fit with the general ideas of lowering urban densities and reconnecting to nature, yet it remained close enough for residents to work in the nearby railroad yard and other industrial facilities south of town. Rudolf Rogler, a student of the Stuttgart School and a deputy director in the DAF Building Department, was placed in charge of designing the settlement under the close supervision of Schulte-Frohlinde. In keeping with Stuttgart School doctrine, Rogler's design resembled a traditional medieval village with a prominent central square, irregular layout, and gently curving streets. Rogler also arranged the varied housing styles to instill a sense of enclosure and spatial hierarchy into the actual settlement structure. Homesteads, single-family homes, and duplexes were located along side streets and the settlement's edges, while two-story row housing and apartment buildings lined the main streets and central square. Schulte-Frohlinde argued that "through the incorporation of rental apartments, it is easier to structure an enclosed center or a broad thoroughfare street as a backbone through the settlement."<sup>133</sup>

Construction began in earnest in July 1936. This first phase housed around 2,500 people in roughly 150 homesteads, 240 family homes, and 110 apartments. Four long buildings with shops on the ground floor and small apartments above defined the settlement's main square. The exteriors featured a rustic half-timbered appearance. A massive community house, discussed later in the chapter, dominated the main approach to the square. A school was built on the settlement's southern edge, but the planned kindergarten never materialized. According to DAF officials, "there will be everything available in the model settlement that a small town requires."<sup>134</sup> Noticeable in its absence, however, was any provision for a church. Work proceeded rapidly with the central square largely completed by July 1937 and most of the residences finished by April 1938.

The buildings relied heavily on standardized designs to reduce costs but still proved expensive. Even after residents contributed their own labor, homesteads cost between 6,000 and 7,000 Reichsmarks. A family home cost a minimum of 8,500 Reichsmarks and ranged as high as 22,000 with a required 25 percent down payment.<sup>135</sup> Homesteaders were eligible for government loans, but private sources financed most of the work, especially local industries whose workers would reside there.<sup>136</sup> The apartments were reserved for

the lower-income households, but rents still ranged between 20–25 Reichsmarks.<sup>137</sup> Beyond the income requirements, officials also subjected prospective residents to the standard political, social, and racial screening procedures.

Even before the first phase was complete, a second phase commenced that would more than double Mascherode to a total of around 1,200 residences and 6,000 people. Schulte-Frohlinde took direct charge of the second phase. In response to increased demands for labor and material for military-industrial production, these newer additions, mostly located in the southeast and north, consisted mostly of duplexes, row housing, and two-story apartment buildings. This meant significantly smaller lot sizes and the jettisoning of the illusion of workers tilling the soil after a full day in the factory. As one official explained, “today the deployment of the settler at his place of work with all his energy unencumbered by gardening is of crucial importance.”<sup>138</sup> The imperatives of industrial expansion and wartime preparations soon became the main drivers of housing policy. Construction proceeded at full speed until 1938 but then slowed considerably until finally grinding to a halt in 1943.

The centerpiece of the Mascherode settlement was a massive “community house” on the main square designed by Speer and Schulte-Frohlinde. The community house resembled contemporary church architecture in its overall design, orientation, and rough masonry facade (figure 4.10). The main entranceway, topped by a large eagle clutching a swastika, faced toward the west and marked the terminus of the main road leading from town into the settlement. The front gable featured a bell room embellished with six semi-circular openings, while a speaker’s balcony faced the square so that Party officials might address public rallies. A smaller side wing extended perpendicular from the main wing to enclose the square’s eastern side. The use of stone and wood reinforced the square’s rustic aesthetic and continued inside the building. The main entranceway led through a foyer honoring the Party’s martyrs to a large festival room capable of accommodating around 1,000 people for various types of cultural and political events. The room opened upward to massive oak trusses and wrought-iron chandeliers. Wrought-iron wall sconces provided additional lighting. The main festival space was augmented by several auxiliary rooms, while the side wing housed Party offices along the ground floor and Party youth organizations in the attic space.<sup>139</sup>

Instead of a church or town hall, the “Village Model Settlement” Mascherode was literally built around a community house that embodied the Party and its vision of a race-based national community.<sup>140</sup> The community house provided the Nazi Party with practical and symbolic spaces to fuse Germany’s diverse social classes into this imagined people’s community. Given its importance, as well as a probable lack of interest among private funders, the DAF financed the structure directly through its Beauty of Labor section. Dedicated in 1939, the house featured prominently in trade journals. As a writer in a leading architectural journal proudly proclaimed: “In this building, the sense of the life of the national community is fulfilled.”<sup>141</sup> The



**Figure 4.10. The Community House in the Mascherode Settlement in Braunschweig**

The Nazi-era Mascherode community house loomed over the neighborhood's central square. The building's design, scale, and location put the Party at the center of everyday life—much like a town hall or cathedral would have done in older communities. The building has served various purposes over the years. The outline of the spread-winged eagle clutching a swastika is still visible above the main entranceway on the center right.

Source: Joshua Hagen.

DAF's architects drafted plans for similar community houses, such as for the Nordhausen settlement in Thuringia, but no other community houses were completed other than the Horst Wessel Hall in Erwitte.

The idea of building model settlements had been around for some time, but Ludowici quickly recognized that the Homestead Office lacked the resources to sponsor a widespread building program. Instead, he turned his attention to building "examples as milestones along the way to a better Germany."<sup>142</sup> Apparently satisfied with the results at Mascherode, Schulte-Frohlinde later declared that similar "teaching settlements" would be constructed across Germany, each slightly modified to the particularities of its region.<sup>143</sup> In reality, most of the houses built by the Nazi regime relied heavily on standardized, mass-produced designs and components dressed up with relatively small vernacular embellishments. Beyond Mascherode, the idea of a community settlement with a community house remained more aspirational than operational. The DAF simply lacked the resources to finance

a large number of comparable projects, while the demands of war preparations curtailed new housing construction. DAF planners hoped that others would emulate Mascherode's community house, but disputes over financing between municipal authorities, provincial agencies, and private lenders meant that few civic facilities were realized. The housing that was completed was overwhelmingly in the form of rental apartments, perhaps accounting for around 75 percent of all new housing completed during 1938.<sup>144</sup> Yet the idea of physically building the Party's political hierarchy into the spatial fabric of residential areas persisted even as the demands of war intensified.

## STANDARDIZATION AND IMPROVISATION

The outbreak of war had little immediate impact on housing policy, since the construction sector had been shifting toward a wartime footing since 1935. In many ways, the first war years simply accelerated trends already in place, including movement toward multistory apartment buildings with smaller rental units, the primacy of military-industrial concerns, efforts toward standardization, and ultimately central planning.<sup>145</sup> Housing construction slowed substantially following the outbreak of war, including most projects associated with the Four Year Plan, but largely as a result of labor and material shortages rather than any central directive. The tempo of planning and construction rebounded slightly during 1940, but the regime's various housing authorities were often moving in different directions. Some focused on measures to address the emergencies of war, while others cast their gaze toward expanding German living space into newly conquered territories, and still others chased utopian visions for finally solving Germany's housing crises.

### Promises and Prototypes

Germany's housing shortage only worsened following the emergency construction of the West Wall in response to the Sudetenland crisis in 1938. General housing construction largely ground to a halt. Even priority housing projects associated with the Four Year Plan and military were greatly curtailed, so the housing shortage worsened. In Frankfurt, as many as 1,000 families applied for 102 planned new apartments in 1938, even though the builder had not yet started advertising.<sup>146</sup> The regime's security agencies soon registered broad public discontent. A 1937 Gestapo field report from Bremen noted that workers were perplexed by the inconsistency of state and Party propaganda calling for more marriages and births while at the same time failing to meet the demand for residential space.<sup>147</sup>

Leaders acknowledged this discontent but were unwilling to shift resources from armaments production. Instead, the regime offered promises

of a brighter future. Already in 1936, Ley defended the immediacy of rearmament but promised that "after this time, according to the will of the Führer, about five million homesteads and apartments will be built across the entire Reich."<sup>148</sup> By July 1940, the Labor Ministry estimated that around 2 million households still lacked a residence, while some private government estimates in 1939 put the figure at around 2.5 million households.<sup>149</sup> Perhaps hoping to dissipate some of this frustration, broad discussions in professional and policy publications began in early 1940 to focus on the need to prioritize the housing crisis after the war. The traditional farmstead, village, and old town, as well as their newer incarnations as homesteads and community settlements, remained the ideal, but there was a growing realization that smaller, simpler, and more standardized alternatives would be needed to meet postwar demand. It was imperative to begin planning now, as one writer proclaimed, since "after the war, an accumulation of household formation and residential demand must be reckoned with."<sup>150</sup>

In early 1940, Ley renewed his battle against Seldte and the Labor Ministry. If there was to be a massive residential construction program after the war, Ley wanted control. Sensing this, Seldte tried to reassert the Labor Ministry as a prominent player in housing, issuing his ideas for a postwar housing program tied to "the creation of a unified and comprehensive Reich construction law."<sup>151</sup> This effort was as ineffectual as his previous attempts. The matter might have remained just the latest episode in a long-running feud until the sudden defeat of France suggested the war's end was close at hand and increased the urgency of outlining a postwar housing program. In September 1940, Hitler approved a decree drafted by Speer and Martin Bormann establishing a working group, including most of the regime's top leadership, to develop a concrete program.<sup>152</sup>

The DAF could move quickly, because it had already devoted considerable effort to amassing information and commissioning studies to justify expansive social programs, including housing, all of which would of course fall under its jurisdiction. This, in turn, provided the basis for an interim report outlining steps to achieve the development of the Nazi Reich into a social state after the war. The report argued that the lack of available and affordable housing had significant demographic, socioeconomic, and geopolitical implications, including a deficit of around 300,000 births annually due to parental decisions to delay or limit reproduction.

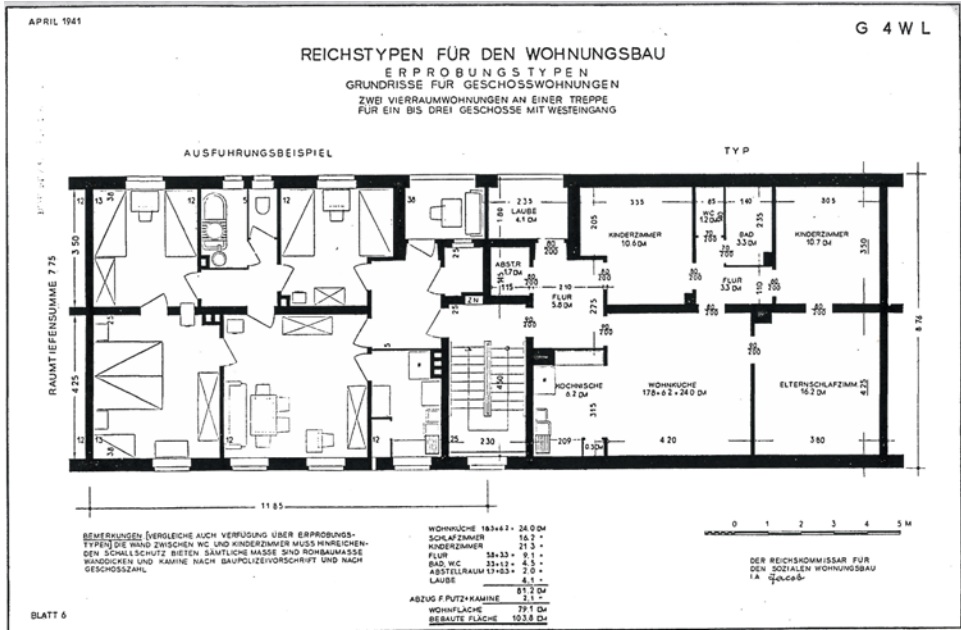
Moreover, the regime needed to settle millions of people in the eastern territories. An expansive housing program totaling around six million residences was deemed necessary to guarantee both social peace and facilitate the demographic growth necessary to colonize newly conquered territories. This would cost between 60 to 80 billion Reichsmarks, estimated to be roughly comparable to the combined costs of the regime's armament program leading up to 1939 and would basically mean doubling construction activity from its previous high point. Such a feat could only be

accomplished, the DAF concluded, through total central planning, which happened to be the DAF's long-standing objective.<sup>153</sup> Predictably the DAF's power grab generated significant opposition from the more technocratic and market-oriented elements within the regime, including the Labor, Interior, and Finance Ministries, as well as from Speer and Fritz Todt.

In November 1940, Hitler tried to resolve the situation through his Decree for the Preparation of German Residential Construction after the War. The decree adopted the general tone of the earlier DAF report by noting that Germany would face a number of postwar challenges, which included the need to replace war losses, that could only be overcome through the demographic imperative of population growth. "It is therefore essential," the decree noted, "that the new German residential construction program in the future corresponds to the prerequisites for a healthy life for large families."<sup>154</sup> The decree did not specify the total amount of housing to be built, but the promise of six million new units built over ten years was widely publicized. The decree did, however, specify that around 80 percent of all postwar units would be four-room apartments with seventy-four square meters of floor space (figure 4.11). The remaining 20 percent was split evenly between three- and five-room apartments of sixty-two and eighty-six square meters, respectively. The layout and type of individual projects would depend on their location, but Hitler's decree indicated preference for multistory apartment buildings, continuing the shift away from homesteads.<sup>155</sup> The main difference was that the regime promised to provide relatively spacious apartments after the war, rather than tiny people's apartments.

Hitler created the post of Reich Commissar for social housing construction to begin preparations.<sup>156</sup> The position promised a great deal of authority and influence, but there seemed little enthusiasm among Hitler's other lieutenants given the implicit threat that more power would flow to Ley and the DAF. There also seemed to be some level of consensus that some type of Ministry of Construction, most likely headed by Todt, should form after the war. In the meantime, the fact that the DAF was already heavily involved in residential planning through the Four Year Plan assured that Ley got the job. Nonetheless, Ley still fell short of gaining total control as Hitler's decree failed to set clear areas of authority or jurisdiction. Ley still had to contend with Göring and Todt and their control over the allocation of labor and materials. Additionally, the decree appointed the Gauleiters, who had their own agendas, as regional housing commissars. Finally, the authorities in charge of the proliferating number of redesign cities (Speer in Berlin, Giesler in Weimar and Munich, etc.) were exempted.<sup>157</sup> A member of Ley's staff later noted that the new Reich commissar faced numerous "disputed competencies" in his new post.<sup>158</sup>

The decree also left financial questions unresolved, beyond stating that municipal governments and nonprofit associations would be responsible, while private funding would be utilized whenever possible. As Hans Wag-



**Figure 4.11. Blueprints for Two Standardized Four-Room Apartments in a Multistory Building**

These blueprints show the floor plan for two standardized four-room apartments in a multistory building. As the demands of war increased, the Nazi regime shifted residential construction to prioritizing standardized, multifamily, multistory apartment buildings.

Source: Jacob, "Erprobungstypen," 299.

ner, one of Ley's chief deputies, duly noted, the broad scope of the proposed program combined with the huge financial hurdles meant the regime would have to achieve "three times the performance for half the price."<sup>159</sup> To reduce costs and speed construction, the decree called for widespread standardization, rationalization, simplification, and mechanization of materials, components, and techniques. These imperatives now became the central drivers of social housing, compelling the development of common floorplans and building components for the duration of the initiative.

Todt, who was perhaps the individual most responsible among Party leaders for promoting the importance of efficiency, argued that "significant savings can be achieved through simplification in residential construction" while simultaneously avoiding "bleak egalitarianism."<sup>160</sup> Hitler reportedly endorsed the concept enthusiastically, remarking during a private discussion in October 1941:

What's the point of having a hundred different models of wash-basins? Why these differences in the dimensions of windows and doors? You change your apartment, and your curtains are no longer any use to you! . . . What economies one could achieve by standardization in this field! The wish we have to give

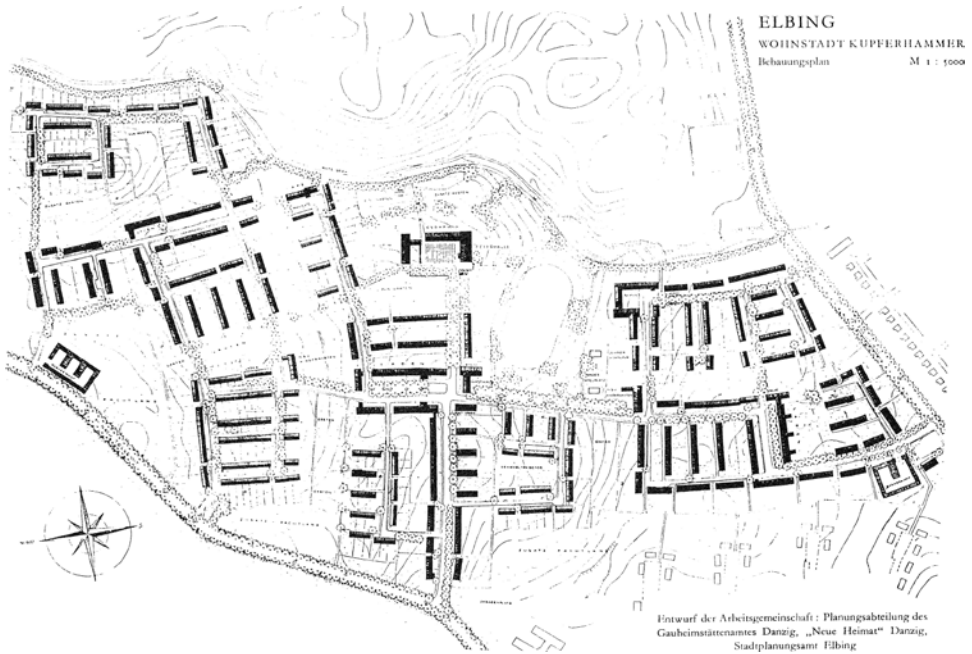


millions of Germans better living conditions forces us to standardisation, and thus to make use of elements built to a norm, wherever there is no necessity for individual forms. If we make things uniform, the masses will be able to enjoy the material amenities of life.<sup>161</sup>

Various agencies soon launched efforts to develop a model apartment based on the premise that standardized and interchangeable dimensions, materials, and components would maximize efficiency in terms of cost, resources, and labor. Ley and his staff proceeded as if they were solely responsible, but Speer appointed widely respected architect Ernst Neufert to work on housing standardization, while Schulte-Frohlinde went to work on those same issues for Todt. Schulte-Frohlinde made clear that practicality and necessity were the major driving factors: "The multistory building as an economic solution will play an even greater role in the future than previously. . . . It is not to say that now the apartment in multistory buildings is the best residential form."<sup>162</sup>

Simon, now Ley's chief of staff as Reich Commissar, developed a relatively comprehensive perspective on the postwar housing program, or at least Ley's understanding of it. The program was to be Hitler's way of thanking returning soldiers and a testament to his determination to transform Germany into the world's first, truly socialist state. Social housing, according to Simon, would promote sufficient procreation to colonize Germany's newly annexed territories. The occupied territories would also provide a ready source of slave labor to help build those colonies. Yet, while they toiled on social housing for their new masters, Polish and other foreign workers would be housed in segregated barracks to prevent "the danger of them becoming settled, the related racial mixing, and ethnic infiltration."<sup>163</sup> Standardization would be compulsory, but Hitler, Speer, and others would avoid rigid regulations that might compromise the beauty of the homeland. Ley followed up on Hitler's decree with his own order in November 1940, instructing the Gauleiters to implement the policies issued by the DAF.

Various agencies quickly developed prototypes, culminating in the unveiling of the "Four Room Apartment" at the Düsseldorf building exhibition in July 1941. This model, which provided nearly eighty-three square meters of livable space, a significant improvement for many families, illustrated what Hitler's decree promised for Germans after the war. The display was reportedly well attended and "both professionals and laypersons were pleasantly surprised by the spaciousness of the planned people's apartments."<sup>164</sup> In fact, the promised apartments were larger than some homesteads. There was also general consensus around the overall form of the neighborhoods. The Homestead Office retained its preference for single-story homesteads and family homes but acknowledged the necessity of higher-density settlements of multistory rental apartments, generally in the form of long, rectangular structures of two or three stories with slightly pitched roofs (figure 4.12).



**Figure 4.12. Layout for a Settlement of Larger Apartment Buildings near Danzig**

Despite the shift toward larger apartment buildings, the Homestead Office still tried to arrange those structures in an organic layout in harmony with the topography. This map shows the layout for a settlement near Danzig.

Source: Brunne, "Die Groß-Siedlung Elbing-Kupferhamer," 569.

It was soon apparent that in order to realize the scale and efficiencies envisioned by Hitler's ambitious decree, rationalization and standardization would need to extend far beyond common floorplans. The DAF established an office called Beauty of the Dwelling charged with approaching interior design and furnishings as a "political problem."<sup>165</sup> The new emphasis on rationalization and standardization also necessitated "the creation of construction companies that are exclusively active in residential construction and always build the same type from predetermined standard prices."<sup>166</sup> The regime's previous emphasis on craftsmanship soon gave way to unskilled and youth laborers toiling toward "the mechanization of the building process."<sup>167</sup>

Through these means, the DAF came up with the improbable claim that rationalization would lower the overall cost of a four-room apartment from around 14,000 to 7,000 Reichsmarks.<sup>168</sup> Darré was sponsoring a similar effort through a contest to create a standard farmstead design in 1941 and 1942, reasoning that advances in farming technologies and transportation would erase regional differences in farming practices, so a simplified standard design would be applicable throughout Germany.<sup>169</sup> Yet the move toward

standardization generated resistance. Builders feared that cost controls and state regulation would squeeze profits. Small construction firms worried that rationalization would put them out of business as government contracts favored larger firms capable of mass production. Architects, preservationists, and skilled craftsmen worried that standardization would stifle creativity resulting in monotony.

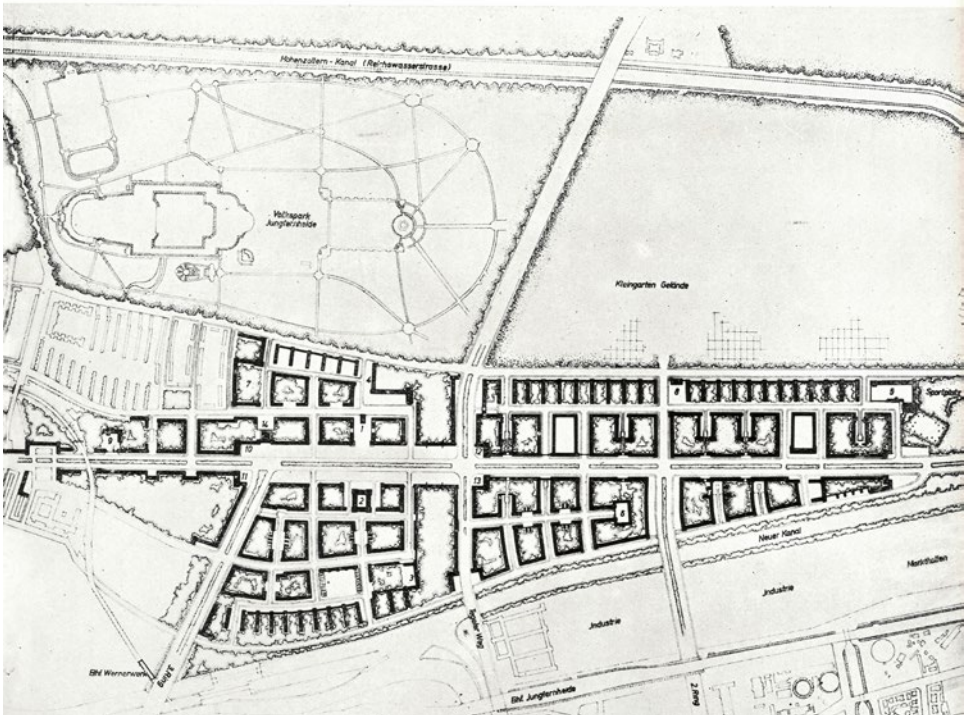
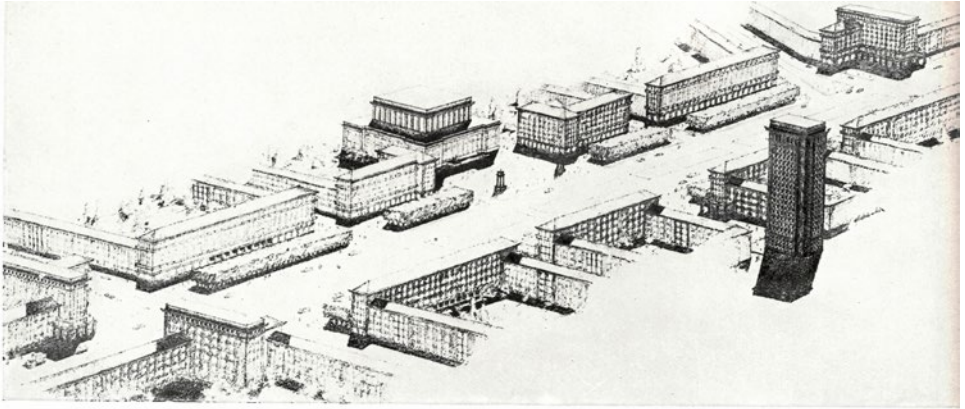
The end result was much debate and myriad prototypes but little progress. Schulte-Frohlinde proposed a generic standard apartment block of three stories that could be used across the Reich but allowed for possible regional variations utilizing local building materials to reduce transportation costs.<sup>170</sup> On the surface, developments seemed to confirm the proclamation of Paul Steinhauser, then director of the Homestead Office, that "social housing connects to the concept of new German housing, which must sooner or later trigger a total order of housing character."<sup>171</sup> Yet even this compromise failed to generate consensus. Neupert derided the regime's inability to exert central control, exclaiming "in the design of architectural form, the Party cannot limit itself to exhibitions and proclamations of certain guidelines."<sup>172</sup> The following year, Wagner lamented "our completely incoherent residential and settlement essence."<sup>173</sup> A few months later, Simon declared in exacerbation that "there will certainly be no floorplan against which the so-called experts could not object to something. But concerning these continual objections, we will come to no practical solution. We must for once finally decide!"<sup>174</sup> This inability to make decisions had been previously noted. In 1938, Ernst von Stuckrad, Steinhauser's predecessor at the Homestead Office, acknowledged that the DAF was subject to frequent complaints about an "over-organization, a bureaucratization of homesteading procedures."<sup>175</sup> Planning for Hitler's postwar housing program faltered amid the demands of war and political infighting. Relatively few prototypes were completed, most of them to house armaments workers.

Officials resorted, as a result, to desperate ad hoc measures, such as confiscating Jewish residences. Although there were not enough remaining Jewish homes to make a significant difference, their confiscation served to deflect blame. Officials also began converting office spaces into residences and subdividing apartments into ever smaller units. Subdividing apartments accounted for around 129,000 new units in 1934, but this dropped to around 29,000 by 1938, likely reflecting the fact that most large apartments had already been subdivided. The conversion of attics was also touted as a partial remedy, although officials acknowledged that "attic apartments generally do not correspond to the desired residential culture; even under favorable conditions, they tend to be especially cold in winter and especially hot in summer."<sup>176</sup> Ironically, these efforts increased population densities just as the threat of Allied bombing increased.

Efforts toward standardization and rationalization soon intersected with plans to redesign the Führer and Gau cities, since the adornment of these cities necessitated widespread demolition, reorganization, and reconstruction of residential areas. As the plans of Speer, Giesler, and others grew more ambitious, it became clear that thousands of new homes were needed for displaced families. In Berlin alone, more than 52,000 residences were slated for demolition. Demolition proceeded apace, but little substantive progress was made on completing replacement housing. Already in 1938, only 12,000 of the planned 30,000 apartments were finished for the initial stage of Berlin's redevelopment.<sup>177</sup> Even the relatively modest forum in Weimar entailed the demolition of more than 500 residences and businesses.<sup>178</sup> Berlin would need even more residences as total housing demand was projected to eventually increase by around 650,000 units. To meet this need, Speer and his staff would rely on people's apartments, featuring two or three rooms and ranging from around 43 to 73 square meters in floor space.<sup>179</sup> Yet unlike the apartments incorporated in smaller settlements like Mascherode, the apartment complexes in Speer's Charlottenburg North and South City neighborhoods would be mammoth blocks, four to six stories tall and sometimes stretching 500 meters in length (figure 4.13). The imperative to create monumental, axial corridors linking Speer's showpiece spaces overrode the idea of rooting Germans into organic communities.

Speer's authority was relatively unchallenged in Berlin, but the situation was more contested elsewhere. In Munich, Giesler planned a new South City district to accommodate up to 20,000 residents. The development featured a rigid grid layout around a broad boulevard stretching over three kilometers. Most residences would be standard four-room apartments built in massive blocks. As concerns over air raids grew, Giesler decided to add air raid shelters to the corners of the blocks.<sup>180</sup> Giesler simply informed the city without any prior consultation that his redesign projects would entail the demolition of around 17,000 residences. City officials reacted angrily and sought financial assistance from Schacht unsuccessfully.<sup>181</sup> Only one test building was partially completed, but it would have provided a possible path for residential construction in the Führer and Gau cities had Germany won the war.

Disputes continued to proliferate as architects, planners, and Party officials eagerly mapped out expansive redesign programs while demonstrating little interest in the corequisite replacement housing. Various government officials, including Speer, soon noted that it was simply impossible to meet all the regime's building objectives simultaneously, even freed of the demands of war. Despite the growing housing shortages, Speer noted with dismay that many new redesign plans called for tearing down 10 percent of a city's residences without planning for replacement housing.<sup>182</sup>



**Figure 4.13. Drawing of Planned Residential Areas in Berlin's Charlottenburg District**

Residential areas planned to accompany Hitler's redesign of major cities abandoned all pretense to vernacular architecture and blood-and-soil rhetoric. Instead, Albert Speer and his colleagues designed larger, multistory apartment blocks arranged in axial formations. This drawing shows a residential boulevard planned for Berlin's Charlottenburg district.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 86.

## **The New East and the New Town**

Victories over Poland and across Northern and Western Europe opened new horizons for the regime's planners, but they still faced constraints from property owners and long-established settlement and transportation infrastructures. In contrast, the newly conquered eastern territories were regarded as a blank slate, begging for systematic reorganization as new living space.<sup>183</sup> Here, planners, architects, and engineers were supremely confident that they could put National Socialist principles into action unencumbered by established interests. In October 1939, Hitler appointed Himmler as Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of German Nationhood, giving him overall responsibility for the administration of occupied Poland. Himmler quickly set about building an expansive bureaucracy to transform these areas. Himmler's lieutenants drafted a so-called General Plan East, which entailed brutal demographic change as Jews, Poles, and other non-German groups were expelled or killed to make way for ethnic German settlers, primarily relocated from other regions across Central and Eastern Europe.

This demographic upheaval was to be accompanied by a comprehensive building program to create suitable living spaces for German settlers. A cadre of planners and builders soon flooded the region. As was typical for the regime, the organizational hierarchy remained relatively opaque. Himmler was generally in charge, but a number of other agencies and individuals were also involved. The professional press was soon filled with reports from the occupied territories. These reports invariably centered on two themes. The first was that these lands were essentially German in origin, despite the clear presence of non-German majorities. The second was that foreign influences, mostly Polish, Jewish, or communist, had caused great but not irreparable harm. In terms of housing, this meant that most historical city centers could be redeemed, but more recent construction would be demolished and reorganized.

In December 1940, the Reich Office for Regional Planning organized a conference of key planners and builders. Himmler's attendance made clear the importance of the event. One of the top planners for the east, Ernst Jarmer, spoke of the need to expedite the transformation "of the new eastern territories into a land settled by Germans in the shortest time."<sup>184</sup> Most established urban areas would be retained, but their populations significantly reduced and Germanized. A new settlement pattern of small towns and farms would accentuate the region's agrarian character. The overall effort required comprehensive planning. As Konrad Meyer, a professor of agronomy, SS colonel, and principal author of the General Plan East, noted, National Socialism would bring order and comprehensive planning to all aspects of everyday life, resulting in the "total organization of space and economics."<sup>185</sup> Settlement policy would play a key role. Returning to Meyer, "the goal of the settlement strategy is to Germanize the region

totally to the smallest thing.”<sup>186</sup> Planners focused much of their attention on towns, but Himmler was more interested in the countryside, so Meyer devoted resources early on to initiatives that would directly support the creation of new farmsteads and villages, like reforestation, wetland drainage, field reclamation, and energy and transportation infrastructures. By December 1940, Himmler and several other government ministries issued Guidelines for the Care and Improvement of Townscapes in the German East, heralding a “profound reorganization” of these territories as everything deemed ugly, unclean, and useless gave way to useful, simple, and beautiful things.<sup>187</sup> Josef Umlauf, a DAF architect who transferred to become chief urban planner on Himmler’s Reich Commissar staff, drew heavily from Walter Christaller and Feder as he drafted successive directives on Himmler’s behalf for reordering the eastern territories.<sup>188</sup>

Before long, the scathing reports of squalid conditions gave way to celebratory accounts of rejuvenation. One account detailed how the newly refurbished and renamed Adolf Hitler Square in Kraków “again shows a German cityscape” as homeowners were obliged to undertake “necessary aesthetic improvements.”<sup>189</sup> Another report noted that homes, stores, and roads were being repaired to accommodate the influx of German merchants, bureaucrats, and settlers, so that “entirely German residential areas are emerging.”<sup>190</sup> In cooperation with the SS, Austrian professor Werner Knapp produced a handbook of design principles for rural areas. The purpose, according to Knapp, was “to build farms, hamlets, villages so that they become German communities in a new homeland, that is our unequivocally clear task. Blood and soil are the cornerstones our new world, space and people therefore become the starting point for architectural design creations.”<sup>191</sup> Builders and planners were busily renovating and constructing farmsteads in the east well into 1943.

In the broadest sense, these housing projects provided another mechanism for the transformation of the eastern territories. Dietrich Reiser, a landscape architect and contributor to the General Plan East, explicitly acknowledged the role of housing construction as a national-political weapon in his report on the annexed Zichenau region. Reiser decried the squalid living conditions and chaotic residential development resulting from racial mixing and Jewish greed. To reverse this decay, Reiser argued that older housing stock that was German in origin should be renovated and reserved for Germans. “The task, to transform the area into German ethnic territory, is essentially a total mission,” Reiser declared, requiring the “cleansing of the land of all elements that do not belong here.”<sup>192</sup> Ewald Liedecke, the director of the planning section of the Homestead Office in Danzig, concurred. Beyond just renovating homes, planners would endeavor to “reshape these towns into symbols of German character . . . and also to document the National Socialist world order in space for centuries

. . . the goal must always remain to structure the towns of the east as symbols of our political will and our cultural achievements."<sup>193</sup>

These early efforts were rather piecemeal, but soon more systematic approaches emerged. Professional planners reached a general consensus that a relatively dispersed network of small towns scattered among farms and nature areas constituted the ideal settlement pattern. Architects and engineers worked to rationalize housing, while another cadre of planners endeavored to structure these new towns. Gottfried Feder, the former Reich Commissar, made a surprising contribution to this effort. In March 1939, Feder and Fritz Rechenberg published *The New Town* to set out an empirical and scientific basis for the spatial reordering of German society in support of the regime's socioeconomic, demographic, political, and racial objectives. The book was to be a "complete tool for the artistic design of the new towns of the Third Reich" capturing "totality in settlement thought."<sup>194</sup> The main organizational principle of this new Germany would be the new town:

These new towns of a new world view will be the most visible and lasting expression of a new community will. They will and must organically grow out of the social structure of the population. . . . The towns of the future must be in planning and construction, in their harmonious integration in the landscape and surroundings, in their relationship to district, region, and Reich, a living expression of the new spirit of the age and the will to live and work in the new Greater Germany created by Adolf Hitler.<sup>195</sup>

Feder provided a basic blueprint for an ideal settlement in which "the social structure of the population must emerge as the new structuring principle in the field of vision of future town builders."<sup>196</sup> Feder argued that these new towns should have around 20,000 people, making them "large enough to lead an independent social, cultural, and economic life," yet small enough that everything could be reached easily without mass transit.<sup>197</sup> These towns would avoid the disadvantages of city and village while retaining the advantages of both.

Feder envisioned new towns composed of cells corresponding roughly to a primary school district of 500 to 600 students, or around 3,500 people. Each cell would be primarily residential but contain enough businesses to provide for residents' daily needs. The cells form a circle around a town center since, as Feder explained, "basically, the round town form is also the more organic."<sup>198</sup> The town center would host government and Party offices, a post office, a bank, and other services people utilize less frequently. Feder's idea resembled the notion of the "neighborhood unit" then circulating in Anglo-American planning circles, but instead of being relatively self-contained, Feder's cells provided the foundations for a nested urban hierarchy extending upward, eventually reaching the Reich capital. "The integration of the individual cells must be designed so that the life of each

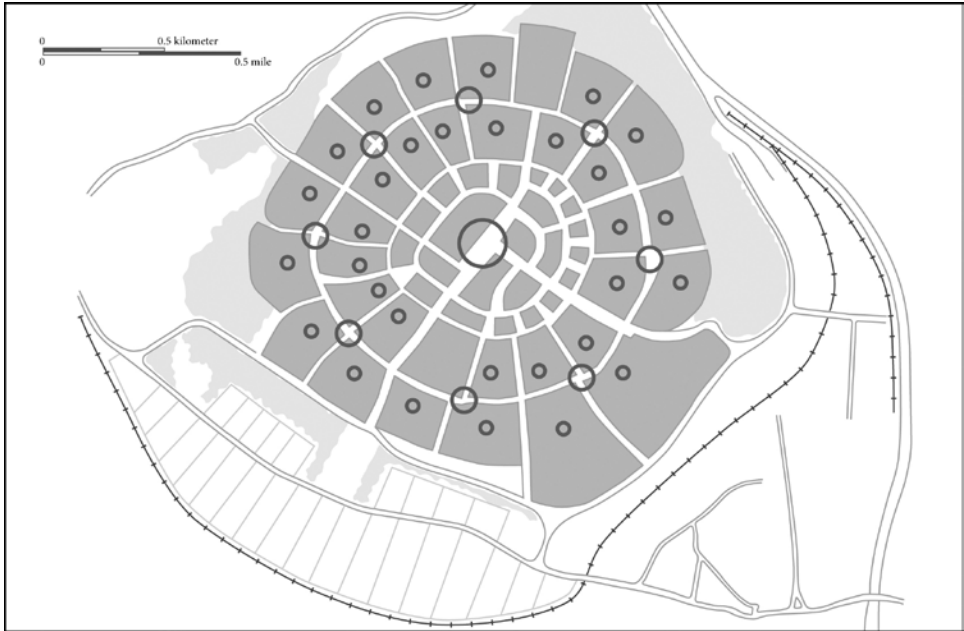


local place orientates itself clearly toward its center and from there can flow to the next higher level up to the town center," Feder maintained. "From here, the town must first be connected to the sequentially higher organism of the province and the Reich."<sup>199</sup>

The bulk of housing would be single-family homes on plots between 500 and 800 square meters. Rental apartments would comprise about one-quarter of housing units, mostly in three-story buildings in the town center with businesses along the ground floors. To maintain their connection with the soil and simultaneously produce some of their own food, apartment residents would be allotted gardening space on the town's edge.<sup>200</sup> Here, Feder was trying to balance between competing imperatives within Nazi Germany—namely, the desire to build a sense of community, enclosure, and monumentality into the regime's new settlements versus the belief that dispersed populations were necessary for meaningful connections to nature, higher fertility rates, greater economic security, and reduced danger from aerial attack. These new towns were to be dispersed and merged harmoniously into a landscape of farms, forests, and lakes that would root the community in nature and provide self-sufficiency in basic necessities, but they were not intended to be completely autarchic. Instead, they would adopt different specializations, such as mining or manufacturing, as determined by Reich central planners. Feder emphasized the primacy of state interests, reminding his readers that "the ideal always remains the construction of new settlements entirely according to the new political considerations in terms of defense policy, transportation, economics, and demography as they result from the reorganization of the German living space for the Reich."<sup>201</sup>

Feder noted that his hierarchical town model based on small cells exhibited a "striking resemblance to the structure of the Party." The new town's basic spatial structure of neighborhood, subcore, and core corresponded to the Party's basic administrative structure of block, cell, and chapter, so that each new town and its adjacent hinterland constituted a Party district (figure 4.14). "So arises here a gratifying correspondence between the structure of basic provisions, administration, organization, and transportation," Feder concluded. "One can say that our town is complete in every sense."<sup>202</sup> By linking to the Party hierarchy, Feder goes beyond the idea of cells as basic organizing principles. Instead of self-sufficient settlements, these new towns would be interlinked and integrated into highly ordered and expansive networks and hierarchies. In that sense, Feder's concept drew from the garden city ideas propagated by Howard and Fritsch, but rather than being relatively isolated and geometric, Feder's new towns would be interconnected, organic, and embedded in a nationwide hierarchy. To signify this general concept, Feder helped popularize the term *Stadtlandschaft*, which roughly translates as city or town landscape.<sup>203</sup>

Feder assumed the state and its central planners would force people, businesses, and investment into his new towns, since "only superior leadership



**Figure 4.14. Schematic for an Ideal Town of 20,000 Inhabitants**

Reich Housing Commissar Gottfried Feder believed that the ideal town should have around 20,000 inhabitants, and its spatial layout should correspond to the hierarchical structure of the Party. In this example, the smallest circles represented neighborhoods where residents could meet their daily needs that corresponded to Party blocks; medium circles represented neighborhoods that provided weekly needs and corresponded to Party cells; and the largest circle was the entire town that provided for monthly needs. The town and its surroundings constituted a Party district.

Source: Feder with Rechenberg, *Die neue Stadt*, 461, adapted by Melissa Baker.

and the concentration of all power in one hand make such building projects possible at all."<sup>204</sup> Indeed, the Nazi dictatorship seemed a prerequisite for a comprehensive spatial reorganization of German society, economics, and demography. Feder reiterated his vision of a comprehensive reorganization of German living space shortly before his death. The end result, Feder argued, would be the collaboration and integration of Germany's professional builders, planners, engineers, and other scholars into an interdisciplinary cadre dedicated to the comprehensive spatial reordering of Germany, the German people, and beyond. Indeed, Feder concluded: "He [Hitler] has carved the borders of the new German living space with a brazen pen on the map of Europe; to fill this in with the flourishing of German life in his spirit is the task of German engineering."<sup>205</sup>

Feder's book was received well in the trade press. Although admittedly biased, the judgment of one of Feder's students was typical in describing his mentor's general concept as representing a "totality of thought" in planning for a "total city."<sup>206</sup> Wilhelm Wortmann, a city planner in Bremen and later

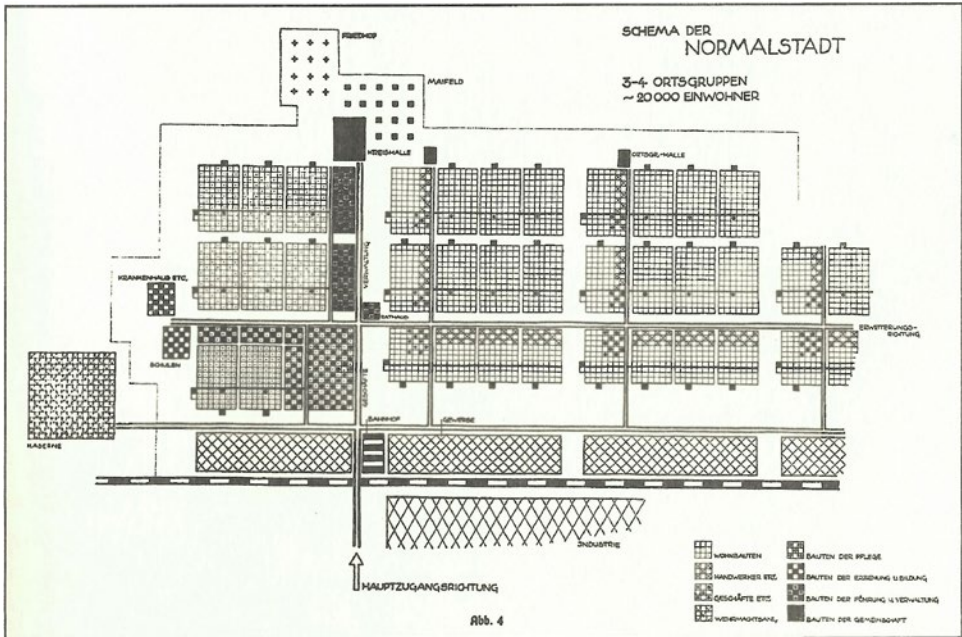
contributor to Himmler's General Plan East and Speer's reconstruction staff, echoed that sentiment: "The city-landscape will be a new cellular-based structure of the city deliberately modeled on the political organization of our people."<sup>207</sup> The idea of structuring new settlements as a hierarchy of cells that paralleled the Party hierarchy influenced residential planning for some high-priority projects, such as the housing associated with the Reich Works Hermann Göring in Linz. The concept was more clearly evident in the later work of Speer's reconstruction staff to plan the postwar rebuilding of Germany's bombed-out cities.

The task assumed its greatest immediacy with vast new territories incorporated into the Reich, especially in the east. Prominent urban planner Hans Bernhard Reichow, for example, envisioned a new Germanized east characterized by the "uniform alignment of the settlement cells in the sense of the new ideological and political structure of our Reich."<sup>208</sup> These settlement cells would be structured as towns along the "new town" model and then further organized into a hierarchy of networked towns. "As a part of this total organization, the settlement form develops from a cellular-based structure, which corresponds to the new political structure and simultaneously takes into account the perspectives of defense and air raid protection," Reichow explained. "The relationships among the cells as well as to the higher-ranking communal facilities can become, through optics, traffic, green areas, or otherwise, like a natural disposition."<sup>209</sup> Carl Culemann, a government planner in West Prussia, made the linkage between settlement cells and Party structure most explicit:

The structuring of life in space is part of the general task of structuring the life of the people and runs parallel to the structuring of the people through political organization. And the laws, according to which the masses are to be structured, are necessarily the same for the ordering of residences in the urban settlement and for the ordering of men in the organizations of the party or in the armed forces.<sup>210</sup>

Culemann argued that forty to sixty households constituted a block and four to eight blocks made a cell. The local chapters of the Nazi Party would contain three to ten cells, depending on local circumstances (figure 4.15). Regardless of the specific ratios, a clear trend was the progressive blurring of the distinction between the settlement cell and the Party cell; community and Party would become one and the same.

Walter Christaller, a geographer famous for developing central place theory, also moved to put his theory into practice in the east.<sup>211</sup> Central place theory was an attempt to explain settlement patterns as largely a function of population, distance, and the provision of goods and services to market areas of varying size. Based on his theory, Christaller envisioned a nested hierarchy with farmsteads as the basic units, clustered successively into hamlets, village groups, and finally a district capital of 20,000 to



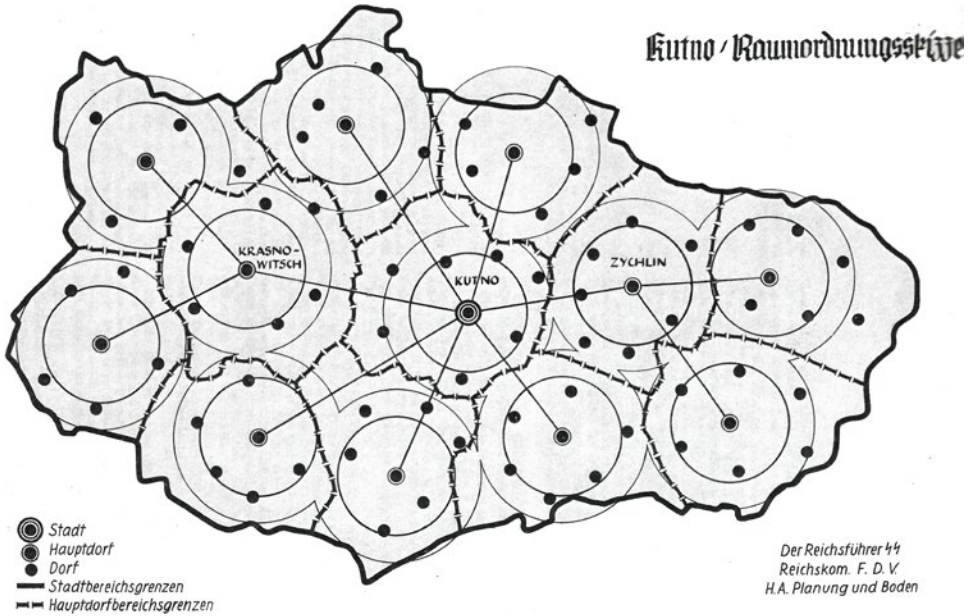
**Figure 4.15. A Residential Layout That Mirrored the Party's Structure**

This schematic reflected a growing acceptance that new residential areas should be structured to mirror the organization of the Party, as well as a shift away from more rustic, organic street layouts to more rigid geometric formations. The smallest squares represent individual households, which are organized into the larger rectangular blocks corresponding to Party cells within a town of 20,000 people.

Source: Culemann, "Die Gestaltung der städtischen Siedlungsmasse," 130.

30,000 people.<sup>212</sup> Like Feder, Christaller produced estimates for the number of various occupations needed, although focusing on the village group instead of the district city.<sup>213</sup> The overall result would be "the cell-like structure of the state" based on a "unified comprehensive plan, in which every detail from the beginning can be systematically put in the correct and necessary location."<sup>214</sup> The conceptual efforts of Christaller, Feder, and others contributed to what Umlauf characterized as a "summarized plan for the complete spatial order" of the eastern territories (figure 4.16).<sup>215</sup> Meyer expressed this impulse toward planning: "The ideal task of the state is and remains, instead of steering and promoting, to intervene and to act so that the individual members of the nation are made capable of helping themselves and of shaping their future."<sup>216</sup>

Speer was also eager to put his stamp on the colonization of the occupied east. His staff was already making city plans by the end of 1940 that expanded progressively as Hitler's armies advanced. One noticeable development was the growing acceptance of town plans with rigid geometric



**Figure 4.16. Central Place Theory Applied to the Kutno Area in Wartheland**

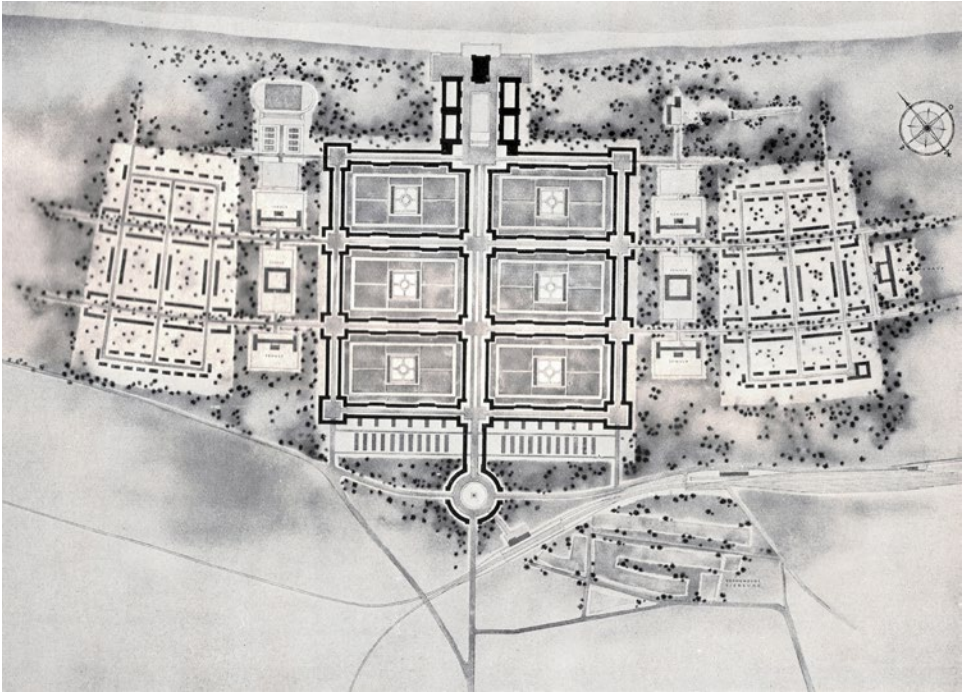
Produced by Heinrich Himmler's staffers as they planned for the widespread reorganization of the eastern territories, this map applies the idea of Central Place Theory to delineate a spatial hierarchy of the Kutno area in Wartheland. Centered on Kutno, the region was to be structured around main villages and villages, each with their own hinterlands, spaced roughly evenly.

Source: Frank, "Raum- und Flächenordnungsskizzen als ersten Planungsgrundlagen," 7.

layouts as exemplified by the "Town X" schema produced by Speer's office and the DAF Architecture Bureau (figure 4.17). The design was intended as an example for a new city in the east of around 20,000 residents. Rudolf Wolters argued that each new building in the new Reich should fit into a comprehensive whole and that urban planners must

always make every effort to impress the new order of nation and Reich onto the new city plan. It contradicts our contemporary view to artificially give a city plan the picturesque look of a city "grown" during the Middle Ages, to curve streets without a real purpose, to lay out contorted places with all kinds of romantic motifs. . . . Only a city plan that is the clear, soldierly-strict, and focused on a strong structural center can be the mirror of the tremendous political will and the military happenings of the Greater German Reich.<sup>217</sup>

This represented a significant departure from the traditionalist, Stuttgart School model, which favored gently curving streets following the contours of the landscape. As architect Erich Böckler noted, "the foundation of urban planning is reality; self-indulgence in picturesque motifs is profoundly alien to its essence."<sup>218</sup>



**Figure 4.17. Design for a New Settlement in the East Featuring Geometric Layouts**

Designs for new settlements in the eastern territories increasingly resembled geometric abstractions. Supervised by Albert Speer's office, this plan transposed Hitler's vision of grandiose boulevards, monumental architecture, and broad public spaces from the city to the town.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 89.

Himmler, with the acquiescence of Ley and Seldte, eventually asserted authority by issuing a series of directives for the eastern territories. Himmler emphasized the need for comprehensive, centralized planning with the SS naturally making the final judgment. Although acknowledging the necessity of some larger urban areas, Himmler envisioned a predominantly agrarian landscape of farms and villages situated within an orderly yet organic hierarchy. Villages of 400 to 500 people provided the basic building blocks. These villages would be roughly equidistant to a main village with around 800 to 1,000 people. Around ten main villages would be similarly oriented around a small town of 15,000 to 20,000 people, which itself was organized to correspond to the Party's structure of cell, chapter, and district with community houses as the focal points for civic life. This basic organizing principle ensured, according to Himmler, the organic relation between town and countryside and ultimately secured German rule over these territories. Himmler's directives basically codified the planning principles endorsed by Feder, Christaller, and many of their colleagues and gave a fairly clear picture how Hitler and Himmler envisioned the new east.<sup>219</sup>

The issue largely remained conceptual, but the Warthegau region witnessed some concrete action. Warthegau received priority for several reasons. First, about half of this region had been German territory until 1919. Second, it was home to a significant German minority. Third, the regime saw the region as occupying a strategic location between Silesia to the south and the provinces of East and West Prussia to the north. To fill this gap, Himmler ordered the region emptied of non-Germans and resettled by ethnic Germans from Italy, the Balkans, and the Soviet Union. "We not only want to administer the land, but also especially to structure it," announced Gauleiter Arthur Greiser, and "that within these demands, the design of your own home and your own apartment is and will remain the first of all requirements."<sup>220</sup> By summer 1941, planners had produced relatively extensive proposals for at least eighty-five towns and cities across the region.<sup>221</sup> The DAF hoped to play a central role in providing housing, as one planner noted: "As in the west of the Reich where bunker after bunker arises through tireless work in order to build the West Wall, one day our East Wall will arise from houses and homesteads, from villages and towns, that no longer allow a liberal or Marxist specter to grow indiscriminately, but rather the National Socialist idea will construct an East Wall that will secure this space forever."<sup>222</sup>

Another focal point of activity was around the small town of Oświęcim, soon renamed Auschwitz, in Polish-annexed Upper Silesia.<sup>223</sup> Himmler and Göring aspired to transform the region into a major center of military-industrial development. To attract private investment, and the war-critical IG Farben chemical conglomerate in particular, Himmler promised to build a model residential district. Hans Stosberg assumed direction of the project in December 1940 and completed plans for a model German town by February 1941.<sup>224</sup> Stosberg proposed refurbishing the medieval town core to reflect its German origins purged of any Polish influences. New neighborhoods of around 35,000 people would support IG Farben's operations. Another 11,000 settlers would disperse to satellite villages with ample greenbelts separating these new neighborhoods and villages, the industrial areas, and of course the nearby SS camps, perhaps bringing the total population to 80,000 people. Most of the residential areas would consist of two-story row housing with three-story structures along the main roads, similar to Mascherode. In essence, Stosberg combined the basic residential designs of Schulte-Frohlinde and the Homestead Office with the spatial planning practices of Feder and Christaller. Little of Stosberg's plans came to fruition before he departed for military service in early 1943, in stark contrast to the feverish building activity underway at the adjacent military-industrial-extermination facilities.

#### **CODA: RESIDENCES OF THE NAZI ELITE**

The notion of collective responsibility pervaded Party rhetoric. "Residential and settlement construction in the future will no longer be a private economic

matter,” explained Ley’s chief deputy Wagner, “it has become a communal task under the leadership of the Party.”<sup>225</sup> Yet few in the Party’s leadership practiced what they preached. Göring’s Carinhall hunting estate northeast of Berlin was the most notorious example, but Ley and several other leaders acquired posh mansions scattered across Germany. The Party’s leadership was hardly known for exercising restraint, but it is somewhat notable that many top officials lived in relatively conventional villas. Speer’s initial residence in Berlin—a home of around 125 square meters built in 1935—was a rather typical upper-class house and certainly out of reach for the vast majority of Germans, but it was easily surpassed in size and grandeur by the mansions and palaces of Germany’s leading industrialists and noble families.<sup>226</sup>

Not surprisingly, the homes of top Party leaders followed conservative and traditional lines. Hitler’s mountain estate above Obersalzberg, for example, mixed vernacular styles, materials, and techniques with expensive decorations, furnishings, and all the latest conveniences. The end result was a monumental domesticity that impressed without the bombastic gigantism that animated Hitler’s projects in Berlin and Nuremberg. Hitler purchased the modest alpine farmhouse in 1933. By 1936, he had greatly expanded the house and rechristened it as the Berghof, or Mountain Farm. Hitler designed the house with political calculation regarding his public persona. Party propaganda emphasized the rather simple and modest nature of the Führer’s residence as a testament to his modest roots, humble character, and connection to the common people. Hitler’s chalet was even featured in foreign publications; for example, the British magazine *Homes and Gardens* ran a fawning piece featuring Hitler as a country squire presiding over a relaxed, genteel, and unpretentious alpine estate.<sup>227</sup>

Hitler’s home was soon surrounded by chalets for Bormann, Göring, and Speer, guest quarters, and various security and administrative facilities. Roderich Fick designed most of the structures, including the modest, circular teahouse, one of Hitler’s favorite places and destination of his routine afternoon walks. This is commonly confused with the reception house on the Kehlstein summit also designed by Fick. Inaugurated to mark Hitler’s fiftieth birthday in 1939, the Kehlstein house is often referred to as Hitler’s Eagle’s Nest because of its dramatic panoramas, but ironically, it might have been Hitler’s least favorite place in Obersalzberg. He rarely visited.

Under the supervision of Hitler’s private secretary, Martin Bormann, the Obersalzberg grounds expanded into a sprawling governmental complex masquerading as a quaint alpine resort, including an alpine-themed Reich Chancellery branch office completed near Berchtesgaden in 1937. Bormann had construction continue almost to the moment the American army arrived. The banality of Hitler’s private spaces is striking when juxtaposed with the grandeur he demanded for his public spaces (figure 4.18). In a conversation with Speer, Hitler tried to reconcile these disparate impulses: “You see, I myself would find a simple little house in Berlin quite sufficient. I have enough power and prestige; I don’t need such luxury to sustain me. But believe me:





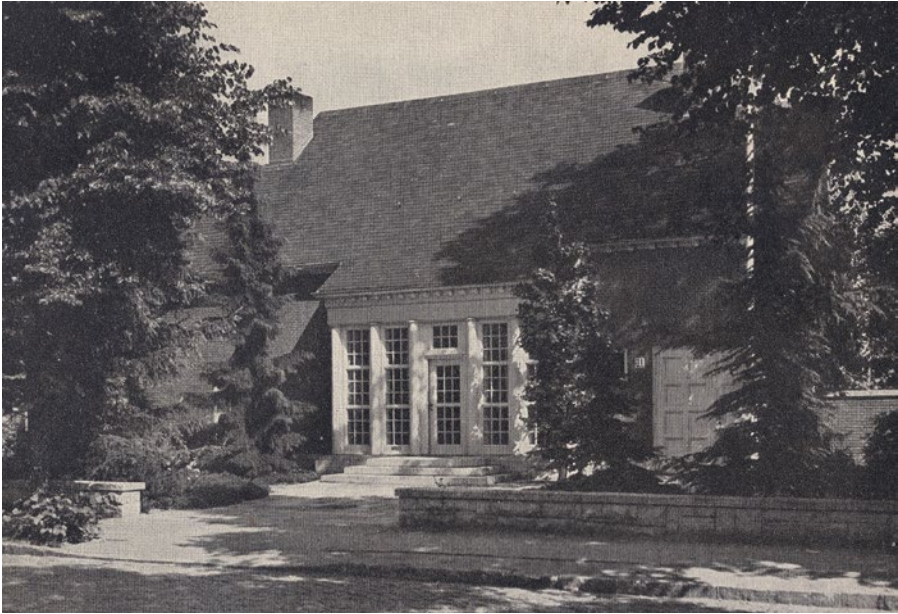
**Figure 4.18. The Living Room of Hitler's Chalet in Obersalzberg**

Hitler's private spaces were luxuriously furnished but oddly mundane, especially in comparison with the monumental spaces he dreamed of for Berlin and other major cities. Photos of Hitler's residences, like this one showing the main living room of Hitler's "modest" chalet in Obersalzberg, painted Hitler as a refined but ordinary man. The large window could be lowered into the wall, affording Hitler and his guests unobstructed views of the surrounding mountains.

Source: Hoffmann, *Hitler abseits von Alltag*, 16.

those who come after me will find such ostentation an urgent necessity."<sup>228</sup> It is easy to dismiss Hitler's statement as self-serving and dishonest. It was undoubtedly calculated, yet it is worth noting that while Hitler's offices and work spaces in the new Reich Chancellery building were grandiose, Hitler's private quarters were fairly unassuming rooms in a second-floor suite. Hitler's private spaces were certainly well apportioned and finely furnished, yet they still managed to convey a rather bourgeois domesticity.<sup>229</sup>

There were signs this facade of modesty would soon give way. Hitler's planned Führer Palace was the most obvious example, but Speer was also moving toward more substantial accommodations (figure 4.19). He acquired several properties, in large part by dispossessing Jewish owners, in Berlin's fashionable western lakes district and in the Tiergarten embassy district where he planned to build a house and studio, respectively. Speer never found time to build the house but managed to complete the new studio by



**Figure 4.19. Speer's Rather Unassuming House in Berlin**

The regime presented Albert Speer's rather unassuming house in Berlin as a sign of his modesty and middle-class respectability, but he quickly developed a taste for more lavish properties. Source: *A Nation Builds*, 92.

consolidating and renovating several existing buildings. The finished structure had more than 5,000 square meters of floor space and various amenities, including a private movie theater. The studio was finished in fall 1943 and then promptly destroyed by an Allied air raid on the day of its official completion. Speer even purchased a country estate northeast of Berlin in 1941 where he planned to build a castle-like villa, estimated to cost more than 2.5 million Reichsmarks, after the war.<sup>230</sup> Hitler also ordered a new residence with spacious studio space built for Speer at Obersalzberg, giving Hitler's top architect a rather impressive list of properties, despite attempts in his later autobiography to project an aura of humility.<sup>231</sup>

The homes of Party leaders were generally less vulnerable to Allied bombing, since they tended to be situated in lower-density neighborhoods. That does not mean they were immune, though, and some officials took steps to safeguard themselves and their families. Hamburg was a priority target for Allied bombers due to its industrial and naval facilities and was subjected to numerous attacks, culminating in the Operation Gomorrah raids of July 1943 that killed around 37,000 people and destroyed or damaged more than 60 percent of all residences and hundreds of businesses.<sup>232</sup> German living space was rapidly contracting in a very literal sense. In the wake of these devastating attacks, Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann and other local officials schemed

to import wooden homes from Norway, which would be assembled on the outskirts of Hamburg nearly twenty kilometers from the city center and afford a greater level of protection.

The details are murky, but Kaufmann apparently dispatched a local architect to Norway to negotiate the details. By mid-October, an agreement was reached, financed through municipal coffers, to purchase building materials for thirty to forty homes. Most homes were single-family structures that utilized traditional Norwegian techniques to build a structure that resembled a log house with a sod-covered roof. Despite worsening conditions, there appeared to be minimal trouble delivering the building components, despite some objections from German authorities in Norway. By April 1944, the first homes were assembled using foreign “guest workers” and prisoners of war. Work continued through the remainder of the war, even as later shipments of materials and even household furnishings were destroyed or captured by Allied forces. Kaufmann likely used the pretext of emergency housing to get his shipments through, even as the price per house rose above 70,000 Reichsmarks by December 1944. Kaufmann apparently sold some of the properties and rented others, although there is no indication that any money returned to the city. In addition to Kaufmann, other residents included his chauffeur, his brother-in-law, Alfred Rosenberg, and assorted military officers and local officials.<sup>233</sup>

Celebrating ten years of Nazi social policy, an anonymous writer in Göring’s flagship journal for the Four Year Plan touted “the radical change from social to socialist housing policy, which today includes all elements of building design from the provision of the land to the exterior building form.” This statement nicely captures housing seen from a totalitarian perspective, as did the article’s subtitle “from chaos to order.”<sup>234</sup> Yet the regime’s housing policy was anything but orderly. Indeed, the timing of the article’s publication in early fall 1943 coincided with the general abandonment of any semblance of order in residential planning and housing policy in the Third Reich. Soon even the regime’s top officials were scrambling for safe housing—for safe living space—as Nazi Germany rapidly slid into chaos.



# Turning Germans into Nazis

## *Mind, Body, and Heart*

During a dedication speech in April 1936 for the Party's new Order Castle Crössinsee, Adolf Hitler reflected on his visit three years earlier to one of the Party's first training academies: the Reich Leadership School in Bernau, which was actually a former union training academy confiscated by the German Labor Front (DAF). The school's building possessed the requisite facilities to train new Nazis and was only three years old. Yet its avant-garde Bauhaus style clashed with the Party's cultural conservatism. Hitler recalled that during his visit he "expressed the hope that we would get our own schools and educational places suitable for ensuring young leaders for the movement and thus the German people."<sup>1</sup> This aspirational statement unsurprisingly translated into an imperative to build massive structures and expansive infrastructures in support of the regime's educational objectives: a task that required an approach both extensive and comprehensive in order to tackle what Alfred Rosenberg characterized as "the problem of total education."<sup>2</sup>

The imperative to instruct through architecture, urban design, and spatial orientation was evident in Hitler's megalomaniacal dreams for the Führer and Gau cities. Not only were these massive structures, boulevards, and plazas to awe and inspire; these spaces were also intended to educate the masses, and indeed the entire world, on the greatness of the German nation, the Nazi movement, and Hitler's leadership. The regime also sought to intervene more directly by controlling and reforming the school system. Reflecting its totalitarian compulsions, the regime regarded nearly every conceivable leisure or cultural activity, from sports and tourism to theater and museums, as an opportunity to educate the nation and therefore of vital concern to the Party. Hitler touched on this in a January 1939 Reichstag speech: "National Socialism establishes a timeless goal in its national community which can only be sought, achieved, and preserved through

continuous and lasting education."<sup>3</sup> New building programs would be part and parcel to that cause.

Like other Western democracies, the Weimar Constitution affirmed a system of compulsory education through state-funded schools while maintaining the alternative of attending private or religious schools. In keeping with the Weimar Republic's decentralized federal structure, provincial governments took responsibility for educational policy. Education reform did not play a prominent role in Nazi electioneering efforts, but the topic was mentioned in the Party's official platform. But even this statement did little more than make a vague call for greater state control with increased emphasis on practical experiences, civics, and patriotism.

Hitler is often characterized as anti-intellectual, and by his own accounting, he was a poor student. Yet Hitler seemed genuinely interested in certain aspects of history, science, technology, engineering, and of course architecture, in addition to his well-known enthusiasm for classical music and opera. Hitler rarely spoke about education, but he did outline a general approach in *Mein Kampf* foreshadowing the regime's later education programs. Hitler elevated education to a primary state concern, proclaiming that "the folkish National Socialist state sees its chief task in *educating and preserving the bearer of the state*."<sup>4</sup> In contrast, Germany's current educational system

was afflicted with an extraordinary number of weaknesses. It was extremely one-sided and adapted to breeding pure "knowledge," with less attention to "ability." Even less emphasis was laid on the development of the character of the individual—in so far as this is possible; exceedingly little on the sense of joy in responsibility, and none at all on the training of will and force of decision. Its results, you may be sure, were not strong men, but compliant "walking encyclopedias."<sup>5</sup>

To remedy this, Hitler argued that education must extend beyond the mere acquisition of knowledge to place comparable emphasis on physical training and moral character:

Realizing this, the folkish state must not adjust its entire educational work primarily to the inoculation of mere knowledge, but to the breeding of absolutely healthy bodies. The training of mental abilities is only secondary. And here again, first place must be taken by the development of character, especially the promotion of will-power and determination, combined with the training of joy in responsibility, and only in last place comes scientific schooling.<sup>6</sup>

Only then would the nation's youth be worthy and strong enough in mind, body, and heart for inclusion in Hitler's new Germany.

One regime propagandist went so far as to claim that "the designing of modern school houses has become one of the most important branches of Germany's building program."<sup>7</sup> Such statements overstate the importance

of educational, leisure, and cultural projects in the regime's building program, especially compared to the massive investments in monumental showpiece projects and military-industrial expansion. Yet the propagandist was perhaps unintentionally correct, because a great deal of designing and planning work went into educating the nation in a manner commensurate with Nazi ideology. These assorted places, structures, and geographies, like so many other manipulations of the built environment by the Nazi regime, were to become integral parts of a vast enterprise in social engineering dedicated to inculcating a politically correct ideal of mental and physical toughness among the masses, of turning Germans into Nazis.

## TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

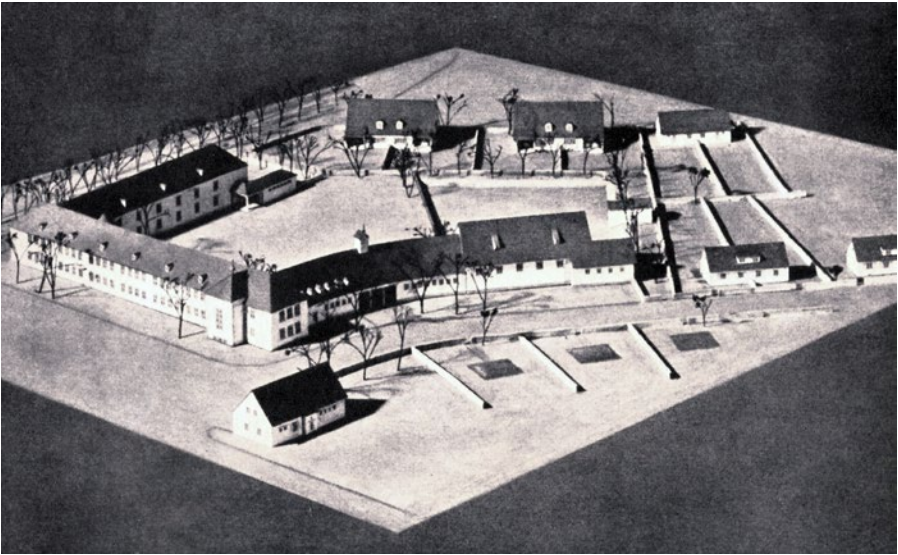
Speaking to a group of foreign reporters and diplomats in 1934, Bernhard Rust outlined his plans for a new education system in Nazi Germany that blended elements of military academies and monasteries. Rust seemed well positioned to make this happen. He was a high school teacher, decorated veteran, longtime Party member who had risen through the ranks to Gau-leiter, and appointed by Hitler to lead the newly created Reich Ministry of Science, Education, and National Culture in 1934. The post gave him nominal responsibility over Germany's schools, universities, museums, and various research institutions and training academies. Rust soon set about bringing these diverse organizations to heel and purged "undesirable" teachers, administrators, and eventually students. He also made steady progress in simplifying and standardizing instruction, and later in closing private schools.<sup>8</sup> Yet as was often the case in the Nazi regime, what appeared as a rigid and centralized hierarchy was actually a fluid and diffuse hodge-podge of top officials jockeying for power. An array of powerful figures set about undermining Rust's authority, including Heinrich Himmler, Robert Ley, Rosenberg, and Baldur von Schirach, each with their own ideas and priorities. And each of whom soon launched their own building initiatives to create places and spaces for educating the nation.

### **From Kindergartens to Adolf Hitler Schools**

Germany's educational system was highly regarded and relatively conservative in orientation, and it enjoyed broad popular support despite Hitler's withering criticisms. As a result, the regime retained much of the existing school structure, albeit newly infused with racist and nationalist content. The basic pathway of kindergarten and primary school remained largely unchanged. The most substantive changes occurred at the secondary school level. Germany's secondary schools generally funneled lower-performing students into trade schools, while higher-performing students entered college

preparatory schools. The regime reduced both tracks by one year to boost the pool available for labor and military service. The regime also segregated boys and girls and geared instruction as much as possible toward their expected roles as adults: sports and physical activities for boys; homemaking and crafts for girls. Beyond basic literacy in core subjects, boys and girls prepared for their idealized roles as soldier or mother. As Hitler explained: "The shortening of the curriculum and the number of hours thus achieved will benefit the training of the body, of character, of will power and determination."<sup>9</sup>

These pedagogical changes entailed relatively minor changes to school facilities, such as adding training kitchens so girls could cook. Expanding sport and exercise facilities, which doubled as venues for assemblies and celebrations, gained importance. It also became increasingly common to include air raid shelters. In terms of their overall aesthetic, new school buildings generally drew from vernacular styles. The most common form was a relatively austere two-story building topped by a simple pitched roof with larger schools having some type of clock cupola. Top Nazis showed little interest in these projects, perhaps because they were funded by local governments. More substantive changes occurred in the location of new schools. Most school construction shifted to the urban periphery, reflecting the regime's residential building program (figure 5.1). These schools were usually named after some Party hero, like the Hans Schemm School



**Figure 5.1. A New School on the Outskirts of Cologne**

This new school was part of a larger residential district on the outskirts of Cologne. Schools were generally two or three stories tall and followed traditional styles. Clock towers added a sense of monumentality, but most schools were smaller than this example.

Source: *A Nation Builds*, 83.

in Schottenheim, named after the local Gauleiter and head of the National Socialist Teacher's League. The regime did order the establishment of thousands of new kindergartens during the war years so that more women could work outside the home, but this was mostly accomplished through relatively minor remodeling.<sup>10</sup>

Although hesitant to proffer radical structural reforms, the Nazi leadership quickly concluded that the Party needed a lot more skilled people to staff their totalitarian state, and neither the existing school system nor relying on old fighters would suffice. The Nazis needed processes and places suitable for the recruitment and training of legions of new staffers, managers, and administrators. Within months of seizing power, Rust established the first National Political Education Institution. These schools, known colloquially as *Napolas*, were elite boarding schools that groomed boys between the ages of ten and eighteen as the next generation of Party leaders. The earliest *Napolas* were former military academies. This was highly advantageous for Rust, since many were Prussian state institutions already under his purview. Rust expanded the program rapidly by renovating dilapidated or unused state properties, especially historic palaces, castles, and monasteries. Initial enrollments surged, although it is unclear if this was a sign of enthusiasm for the regime or simply eagerness on the part of parents and students for the revival of military academies. There were already eleven *Napolas* in operation by the end of 1935. By 1944, this had grown to around forty-one schools, including thirteen located in occupied territories and three for girls.<sup>11</sup>

Mornings were generally filled with classroom instruction; afternoons were devoted to sports and other types of physical activity. Party officials, especially those of the Hitler Youth (*Hitlerjugend*, or *HJ*), *DAF*, and Rosenberg's office, soon began chipping away at Rust's authority. Ley was the most aggressive challenger, arguing that any training for Party officials belonged under his purview as the Party's national organizational leader. Ley proposed that promising students be sorted out of regular schools after third grade and sent to a *Napola* for three years. Students would then proceed to so-called *Kreis Castles* and *Gau Castles*, taking them to age eighteen assuming they passed increasingly strict selection procedures.<sup>12</sup> Rust was overmatched and sought an alliance with Himmler, whose *Schutzstaffel* (*SS*) assumed general responsibility for the *Napola* program by 1936 with some success. According to one estimate, around 13 percent of *Napola* graduates applied to join the *SS* compared to less than 2 percent from regular schools.<sup>13</sup>

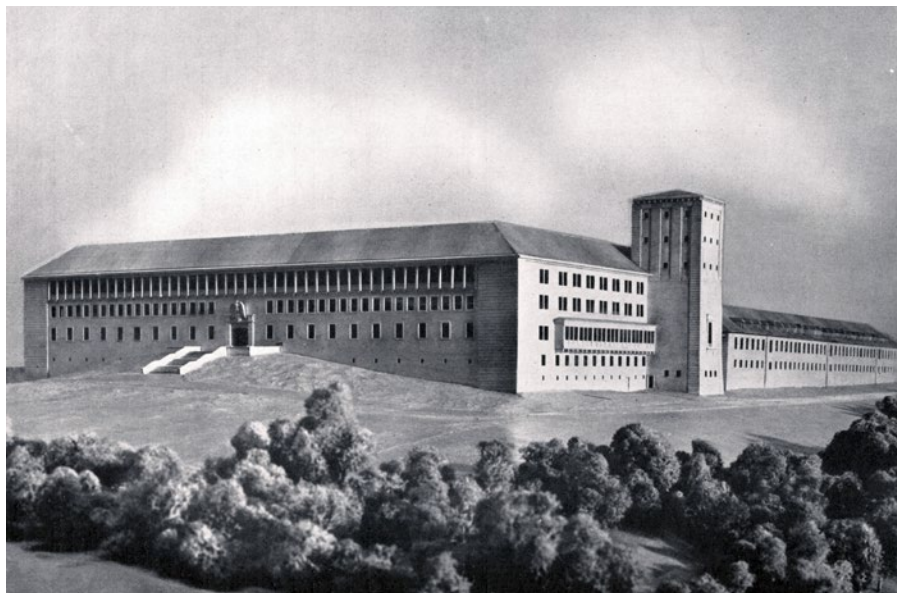
The building program was relatively modest since the first academies were already in operation and already possessed most of the required facilities. Renovating historical buildings as academies was more involved and often involved gutting the structure. The *Bensberg Palace* east of Cologne was typical. Built in the early eighteenth century as a hunting lodge for the local duke, the palace was renovated as a cadet academy during the nineteenth century. The school was closed after World War I and then used as



a barracks for foreign occupation troops and later a homeless shelter. This left the complex dilapidated but also available. Rust approved extensive refurbishments, and the complex reopened as a *Napola* in 1935.<sup>14</sup> These types of arrangements seemed cost effective, and the use of historical buildings was thought to reinforce the goal of cultivating a soldierly disposition but suffered from several deficiencies. First, these buildings were initially designed for other purposes, and second, they were often located in urban areas. As a result, there were limitations on the space available for sport and physical fitness facilities and outdoor activities. Later plans called for *Napolas* to be established on “open locations with views of a great, vast, and unique landscape.”<sup>15</sup> These purpose-built *Napolas* never materialized, partially because of wartime conditions and perhaps more significantly because the idea was superseded by educational building programs sponsored by more powerful Nazi leaders.

Ley remained undaunted by Himmler’s seizure of the *Napola* program and found a strong ally in Schirach, who hoped to establish the Hitler Youth as the key gateway organization into the sprawling Party-state-military bureaucracies. Together, they successfully lobbied Hitler to approve the construction of a series of schools dedicated to producing a cadre of political soldiers determined to lead the Nazi movement. In January 1937, Hitler announced, to the apparent surprise of his other top lieutenants, the Adolf Hitler Schools program, declaring that these new National Socialist schools serve as the preparatory schools for the National Socialist Order Castles (figure 5.2).<sup>16</sup> Schirach and Ley soon circulated an internal informational booklet to Party leaders down to the district level defining these Adolf Hitler Schools as elite boarding academies for boys in grades seven through twelve, approximately ages twelve to eighteen. Students would be selected; no applications accepted. As a promotional brochure from 1941 proclaimed: “One does not come to an Adolf Hitler School, one is called to an Adolf Hitler School.”<sup>17</sup>

Hitler Youth officials served as the initial screeners in the selection process. Students could come from any socioeconomic background but had to demonstrate full health, upright character, leadership potential, a minimum score on the Reich Sport Competition, good grades, proof of pure racial ancestry dating back to 1800, proof of familial genetic health, and finally parental activity in the Party. After the Gauleiter made the final selection of applicants from his district, parents basically turned their sons over to the Party, aside from three visits home per year: “Certainly entrance in an Adolf Hitler School means that the parental house must withdraw its claims on the lives of the young.”<sup>18</sup> The Party provided students with all their basic needs, including lodging, uniforms, food, medical care, and a monthly allowance. Parents could donate to the schools but were discouraged from providing anything directly to their child. Parents could withdraw their child only in exceptional cases, but poor performance could lead to immediate expulsion.



**Figure 5.2. The Adolf Hitler School Planned for Hesselberg in Franconia**

Hitler sponsored the construction of several dozen elite high schools across Germany. These Adolf Hitler Schools were to help train and indoctrinate the next cohort of Party leaders. Each school featured a unique design, but they tended, as a rule, to follow closer to Hitler's aspirations for monumental architecture. This model of the Hesselberg school in Franconia gave the appearance of a hilltop fortress.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:57.

The first official cohort began instruction in April 1937 even though staffing, curriculum, and facilities were lacking. Once in school, traditional subjects like math, science, and foreign languages occupied about one-third of instructional time. The core subject was *Volkskunde*, a racially infused combination of history, philosophy, social studies, and folklore meant to cover "everything which proves the accuracy of our National Socialist ideology."<sup>19</sup> The remaining instructional time was divided between physical education and various Hitler Youth activities designed to foster a sense of comradeship, including service work in the HJ, field trips, and even excursions to foreign countries.<sup>20</sup> Instruction was cross-disciplinary whenever possible, for example, English classes could be followed by participation in sports and other activities while speaking English. There were no exams or grades. Students were simply evaluated on whether their attitude and abilities demonstrated the potential to become a political leader. Around 10 percent of students failed or withdrew during the first year.

Unlike the Napola program, which relied on existing buildings, the Adolf Hitler Schools would occupy buildings expressly built for this purpose. This

fit a general pattern in which Hitler was reluctant to allow existing places to be renamed after him, preferring instead that any places bearing his name be new. Planning for new school complexes was soon underway, and Hitler approved the first plans by the end of 1937. The architects were drawn from the cadre already engaged with the HJ or DAF, including Hanns Dustmann, Hermann Giesler, Clemens Klotz, and Julius Schulte-Frohlinde. Amid great fanfare, Hitler laid the symbolic cornerstone for ten new Adolf Hitler Schools in January 1938.

Most schools would accommodate between 350 and 500 students, but the two largest facilities near Potsdam and Plauen would host 600 and 780 students, respectively.<sup>21</sup> The designs varied, but they resembled the stark, neo-classicist designs that dominated the Führer and Gau city projects. The buildings were generally symmetrical and centered on some type of assembly hall with classrooms and other support rooms arranged in flanking positions. Athletic facilities typically adjoined. The building sites varied, but prominent locations that offered scenic views were favored. Most schools were located in border regions, reflecting official perceptions of border regions as less integrated into the national community. Parochial interests were likely a factor as well. One school would be located in Waldbröl, near Ley's hometown.

The number of Adolf Hitler Schools would grow until every Gau had its own school, which would entail thirty-two schools within Germany's 1937 borders (figure 5.3). Construction began for several schools by March 1938 with the first scheduled for completion by fall 1939.<sup>22</sup> In reality, little work got underway, and construction had halted at some locations by spring 1939. The war was a major delaying factor, but finances were a larger complication. Ley and Shirach hoped the Party would fund the schools and, as an inducement, offered Gauleiters control over student selection. This arrangement created confusion between the DAF, HJ, and other Party agencies as to who was really in charge. Franz Xaver Schwarz was not convinced of the program's merits, and neither the HJ nor other agencies had independent sources of financing. Ley was left to fund the work but never delivered sufficient money, either because he lost interest or more likely because other projects took precedence.

Given the lack of facilities, the first Adolf Hitler School cohort began at the Order Castle Crössinsee until relocating to the Order Castle Sonthofen in June 1937. The castles were some of the few substitute facilities available, but overcrowding became an issue as the number of Adolf Hitler School students increased from around 300 in 1937 to roughly 1,700 in 1941. The Hitler Youth gradually assumed greater control over the schools after 1939 but soon realized that new buildings could not be expected for some time. The solution was to use existing buildings that could be remodeled with little expense. In May 1942, Schwarz agreed to fund this compromise. Renovations actually began in several places, but no Adolf Hitler Schools were ever finished.



**Figure 5.3. Map of Prominent Educational Facilities**

The Nazi regime launched a parallel educational system to prepare carefully selected youth to become Party functionaries. This map shows the extent of the regime's schooling system, although few of the facilities were ever completed.

Map by James Leonard.

Graduates of the program received a certificate and the promise of bright futures in Party or state careers. Like other eighteen-year-olds, these students faced obligatory duties in the Reich Labor Service (RAD) and military. In some exceptional cases, graduates could be accepted into the Sturmabteilung (SA), SS, some other Party organization, or possibly admitted to a university. The main objective, though, was that they form a pool of entrants into the Party's Order Castles. Wherever their careers might lead, graduates were assured that they would be in demand. Reality would prove otherwise. The first Adolf Hitler students graduated in March 1942, their schooling shortened by one year. Nearly all became military conscripts, drafted either directly into an armed service or temporarily into the RAD and then the military.

Graduates of the Adolf Hitler Schools would constitute, according to Ley and Schirach, "the best leadership corps" in the world: "great in knowledge, blind in obedience, fanatical in belief!"<sup>23</sup> Instruction continued into 1944 until the military simply conscripted many of the remaining students along with other youngsters into hastily organized, makeshift units. Surprisingly and irrelevantly, in December 1944, Hitler directed Himmler to ensure that

all future officer candidates for the army and Waffen-SS be educated through one of the Napolas, Adolf Hitler Schools, or the Reich School at Feldafing, although little came of Hitler's order so late in the war.<sup>24</sup>

### Castles for a New Order

The Adolf Hitler Schools promised to address the regime's needs at the secondary school level, but the regime also needed postsecondary education to train Party functionaries and officials. Hitler reportedly acknowledged this challenge in public as early as 1933: "However, I have a concern that really worries me. That is the concern of whether we will succeed in educating young leaders for the political leadership of the NSDAP!"<sup>25</sup> The eventual solution called for several new academies, later known as Order Castles (*Ordensburg*). This building program first emerged in 1933 as Ley took initial steps toward Hitler's wish that the Party have its own educational facilities, instead of reusing existing buildings like in Bernau. As Ley later explained:

I did not want to renovate old castles and palaces. For I am of the conviction that one cannot preach and learn this new, powerful ideology of Adolf Hitler in old, musty, and dusty buildings. Just as new as these earth-shattering thoughts are, so must be the surroundings in which these ideas are proclaimed to the people.<sup>26</sup>

As in most other Nazi building programs, Ley believed in the intrinsic importance of space, place, and architecture in advancing the Party's ideology.

In December 1933, Ley outlined his initial idea to conduct fourteen-day summer courses in "training camps," consisting of transportable barracks sited at picturesque locations across Germany. In addition to being relatively easy and inexpensive to build, these camps could house vacationers from Ley's burgeoning Strength through Joy program when not hosting training sessions. Ley had already commissioned Clemens Klotz, a freelance architect based in Cologne, to begin planning two camps by the end of 1933, and work commenced in March 1934. As an established architect and personal acquaintance, Klotz received several high-profile commissions from Ley.<sup>27</sup> The program had barely started before experiencing its first dramatic change in April 1934 when Giesler, then a minor building official in Bavaria, presented Ley with plans for a third, more monumental, training complex. Ley quickly approved the concept and, in so doing, launched Giesler on the road to becoming one of Hitler's most trusted architects, charged with numerous other Party projects.

By the end of 1934, Ley had concluded that the Party needed a more robust training regimen, so the building program shifted from constructing relatively modest "Reich training camps" to permanent "Reich training castles." The program continued evolving as construction proceeded feverishly at all three sites. By the end of 1935, Ley announced that the schools would function as year-round academies to train new Party officials, instead

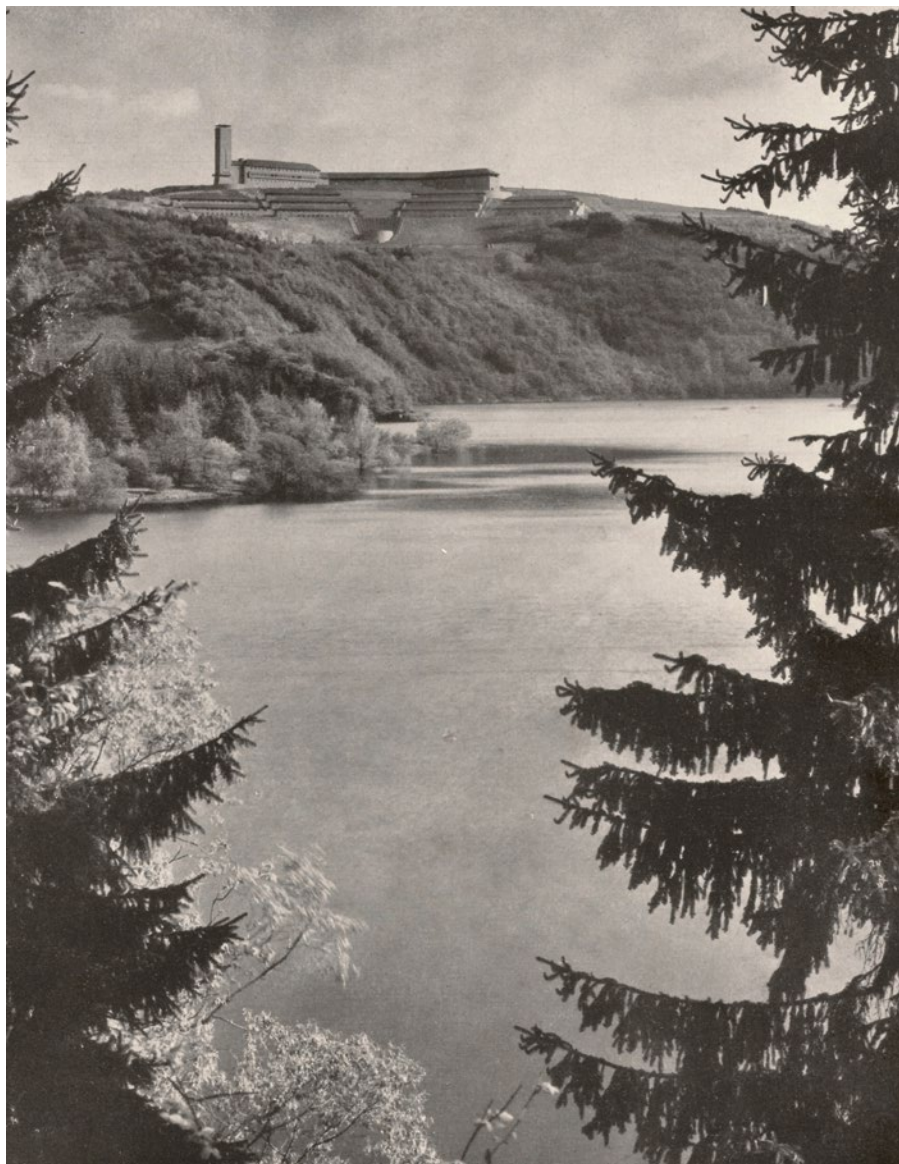
of providing summer courses for existing officials. Each school also doubled its capacity to accommodate 1,000 students. A new official name, Order Castles, was introduced. The new name was linked to the crusading orders of medieval knights. Hitler suggested these parallels in his closing remarks at the 1934 Nuremberg rallies when he declared the Party would be “unchanging in its teachings, hard as steel in its organization, flexible and adaptable in its tactics, but in its overall appearance like an order.”<sup>28</sup> The Party press was more ambiguous about the connection. Many reports did not refer to medieval orders or castles, while others did so explicitly. One prominent chronicler of the Nazi building program suggested that “these buildings stand entirely alone and proudly command the landscape like knightly strongholds of old. In symmetry and proportion they are severe, manly and monumental”<sup>29</sup> (figure 5.4).

The program underwent further shifts after 1936 with the addition of ever more monumental structures and spaces. These later additions greatly expanded the scale of the program and also indicated that the castles would become multipurpose facilities rather than dedicated training academies. As a result of these shifts, Klotz and Giesler reconfigured their plans repeatedly while work proceeded. These changes highlight once again the erratic and fickle nature of the regime’s building programs. Ley admitted as much: “I began the construction of these three enormous castles far more intuitively than from intellectual knowledge.”<sup>30</sup> The professional press repeated that admission. As one writer explained, the Order Castles, especially Vogelsang and Crössinsee, were

in contrast to all other great buildings of the Party, not the result of a clearly defined program by nature and scope or a single creative act. As its final purpose and even its name represents the last stage of a stormy, continuous development, so the original modest building projects grew sporadically during the planning and even after the beginning of the work to the form visible today, which in turn appears as only a piece, certainly a core piece, of a much greater future ensemble.<sup>31</sup>

Construction proceeded despite these challenges, and each school began basic operations by 1936. Progress slowed considerably and eventually stopped by 1942 as military-industrial projects took precedence.

Ley wanted the Order Castles located in areas of natural beauty, but Nazi ideologues attributed mystical qualities to almost any rural or natural landscape. As a result, site selection was highly contingent. The Order Castle Vogelsang was located on an embankment overlooking the Urft River in the Rhineland, which was Klotz’s native region. The Order Castle Crössinsee sat alongside a small lake in Pomerania near the hometown of the camp’s future commandant. Finally, the Order Castle Sonthofen was located at the foot of the Alps in the district where Giesler was a building official. Although seemingly arbitrary, these locations did represent three distinct idealized German



**Figure 5.4. The Order Castle Vogelsang in the Eifel**

The name and appearance of the Order Castle Vogelsang, shown here perched above the Urft River, both associated the facility with medieval crusading orders and their citadels. Instead of instruction in traditional subjects, the Order Castles prioritized knowledge of Party ideology, unquestioning obedience, and physical fitness.

Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 29.

landscapes—namely, the northern plains, central uplands, and southern mountains. The locations were also relatively rural and poor border regions where the economic benefits of a large-scale construction project offered a mechanism to further tie the local population to the regime.

Each castle featured a distinct design intended to complement local topography, vernacular building materials, and traditional craftsmanship while still including the same basic components. Klotz's initial designs for Vogel-sang called for a roughly rectangular space open to the south. Two large eagle statues guarded the space and gave it its name, the Eagles Courtyard. The space measured around fifty by thirty-five meters, relatively small in comparison to the regime's other monumental projects. The other three sides were defined by the main school building with long wings extending diagonally from the corners. The monumental northeastern extension, which contained a grand lecture room and ceremonial dining hall, dominated the structure. The entire wing was capped by a fifty-meter-tall tower, which somewhat resembled a watchtower but actually held a memorial room for the Party's martyrs and also served as a water tower. The other wings contained classrooms and other instructional areas, as well as various support facilities. The impression from above was of an X-shaped building with a three-sided box at the center. Klotz staggered ten barracks, an amphitheater, athletics field, swimming hall, and gymnastics hall down the slope below the main building. These structures appeared to follow the natural topography, but extensive excavations were necessary.

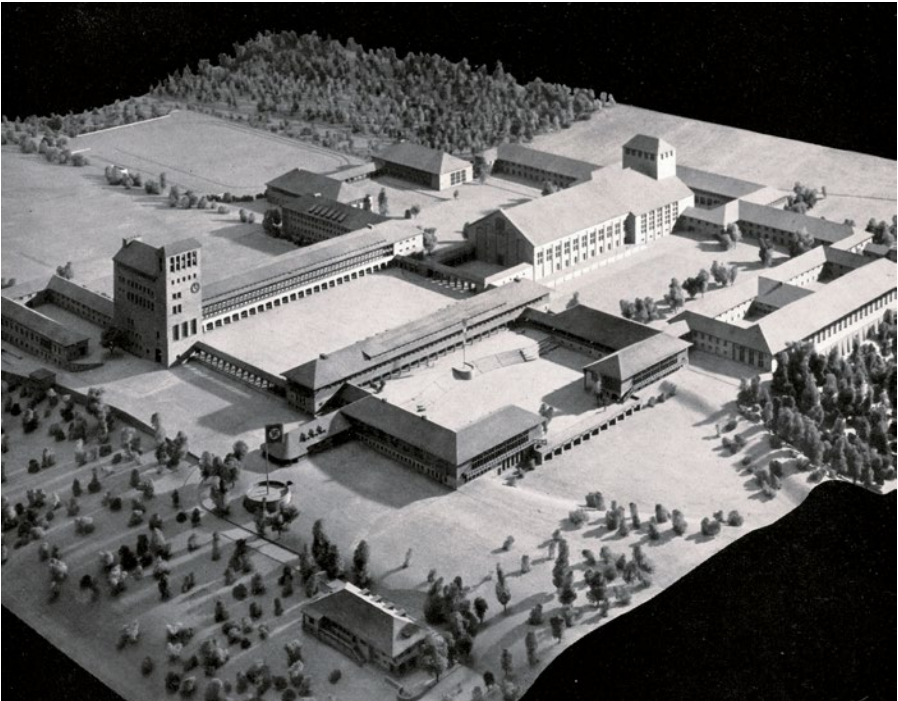
The imperative to achieve monumentality increased exponentially as Ley ordered capacity doubled. Four larger barracks were added along the slope, but most of the additions occurred on the top of the hill. A new entrance gate flanked by a motor pool, riding hall, and drill hall defined a new axis leading into the complex. A monumental House of Knowledge, measuring somewhere around 200 by 300 meters with its own festival hall to seat 2,000 people and clock tower around 38 meters tall, could have easily sat along one of Albert Speer's grand boulevards in Berlin. The structures were built of brick with rough-hewn stone facing, while the interiors featured stone and wood to create an austere, rustic impression. Some buildings used concrete and steel, but care was taken to hide modern materials lest they disrupt the rustic impression. The overall trajectory at Crössinsee was similar as a complex of relatively nondescript barracks, classrooms, and support facilities continually expanded, culminating in plans for a massive fortress-like House of Knowledge punctuated by four corner towers.<sup>32</sup>

The situation was slightly different at Sonthofen. Instead of barracks camps as Ley originally proposed, Giesler suggested a single structure consisting of three wings surrounding a rectangular assembly space. This building would have to be two to three stories tall to contain all the necessary teaching, lodging, and support facilities. Because of this, Giesler's design had a more enclosed, monumental feel and looked more like a castle or monastery than



a camp. Giesler's prominent use of wood and other traditional elements reinforced this historical aesthetic, although the complex's infrastructure utilized steel, concrete, and modern building techniques. By early 1936, the project's footprint had roughly doubled and then easily quintupled by 1939. This expansion reflected the decision to enroll larger student cohorts, but many additions went beyond the practical needs of a training academy.

The most dramatic addition was the so-called *Pallas*. Measuring around forty-two meters tall, this structure towered over the interior courtyard (figure 5.5). Its imposing dimensions, rough stone exterior, and bell tower recalled a Romanesque church or medieval castle, especially given its hill-top location. The other new structures formed a spatial axis leading from the *Pallas* courtyard to a forum-like space, centered on a Hall of the Community with a capacity of 2,500 people and flanked by a theater and concert hall.<sup>33</sup> The rigid geometric layout and the inclusion of these cultural and assembly buildings, which had little direct link to the complex's educational



**Figure 5.5. Model of the Order Castle Sonthofen in Bavaria**

This model shows the extent of planned construction for the Order Castle Sonthofen. The *Pallas* tower, seen toward the center left, drew from neo-Romanesque influences to bolster the militaristic aura of the Order Castle program. The *Pallas* and buildings surrounding the two central courtyards were open for instruction by 1939, but little progress was made on the grand assembly hall and adjoining structures toward the upper right.

Source: Hoffmann, *Deutschland baut*, 15.

objectives, clearly drew inspiration from the Gauforum program. In many ways, Sonthofen evolved into something resembling a rural version of the Gauforum projects. Instead of isolated, monastic-type schools, these castles were becoming multipurpose facilities for cultural events, conferences, and even attractions for vacationers, or as Ley claimed, "the spiritual and ideological focal point of our Party."<sup>34</sup>

The first Order Castle buildings were largely finished by 1937, and work had commenced on many of the later additions by the start of the war. By that time, foundation work for the House of Knowledge at Vogelsang had begun, while the comparable building at Crössinsee had advanced further with two towers completed. At Sonthofen, the main school complex was finished, but little progress was made on the later additions. Planning had probably not reached its final state either. Ley had already expressed his desire to add massive hotels with as many as 2,000 beds, believing that the hotels would help keep students in contact with regular people, perhaps even allow for sexual encounters with female visitors. Each facility also needed additional housing, schools, and other services to support staffs of several hundred people, including administrators, instructors, cooks, nurses, janitors, and an SS honor guard. A new village with as many as one hundred new houses was accordingly planned near Vogelsang for staff and their families, although little was built due to the war. Improved transportation infrastructures were also required so castles could assume greater roles as regional cultural centers and vacation destinations.

Ley commissioned a fourth Order Castle to provide an additional six months of training. Klotz sketched out a general concept for a massive complex adjacent to the Teutonic Knights castle in Marienburg, East Prussia (Malbork, Poland), an indication that allusions to a crusading order were gaining prominence. The planning euphoria occasioned by Germany's early military victories was also evident as Klotz began preliminary planning for a fifth Order Castle named Weichselburg to be located near Kraków in the occupied General Government district. Neither project progressed beyond the design stage. Tellingly, amid all these grand plans, there was never any thought of incorporating a church or chapel into the Order Castles, although each complex had some type of memorial space for Party martyrs.

In April 1936, Hitler traveled to Crössinsee for the official dedication of the three Order Castles. Ley symbolically presented the castles to Hitler as gifts from the DAF. Hitler proclaimed his acceptance was "with the obvious conviction that these schools are only the forerunners, the beginning of a very large school system of the political leaders of the German people for the future."<sup>35</sup> The castles were nowhere near completion, but enough was finished to begin instruction. Admission was open to German males of all socioeconomic backgrounds and regions, but potential students faced a rigorous selection process. Successful applicants had to demonstrate leadership potential and character, as well as have completed their compulsory service

in the RAD and military. As a result, they would be twenty-three to twenty-six years old. There were also physical and racial requirements, including Aryan ancestry, healthy family genetics, and absence of any disabilities (including glasses). If married, the applicant's wife was subject to the same requirements. Notably, prior academic performance was not a consideration. Gauleiters screened candidates from their regions based on recommendations from lower officials. Ley made the final determination as to which applicants were accepted as "Junkers" into the Order Castles.

The course of study was free and consisted of three years spent successively at Crössinsee, Vogelsang, and Sonthofen capped by six months at Marienburg. The curriculum was never final but focused on race and ideology, as well as practical administrative training. Traditional subjects like history, philosophy, and biology were covered if they supported Party ideology. Afternoons featured sports and other physical activities. Swimming, calisthenics, gymnastics, and marching were customary, but each Order Castle incorporated its distinct location into its regimen. Rowing and boating were prominent at Crössinsee, Vogelsang had a large stable for horseback riding and a nearby airfield for flight training, and Sonthofen offered skiing and mountain climbing. Many of these activities were specifically designed as tests of courage. In a private speech to the Gau and Kreis leaders at Sonthofen in November 1937, Hitler emphasized the importance of these trials:

That is also the future task above all of these schools: to conduct this test of courage over and over again, to break with the opinion that only the soldier must be brave. Whoever is a political leader is always a soldier, too! And whoever lacks bravery cannot be a soldier. . . . Because if he is not brave, he is of no use to us.<sup>36</sup>

Students occasionally interned at Party offices, and there were frequent field trips, such as to the Nuremberg rallies. There were no tests or grades, but students faced continual evaluations of their character and leadership.

Instruction of teachers and staff began at Vogelsang in May 1936. The first cohort of Junkers, largely drawn from low-income families, began at Crössinsee in October 1937 and then advanced to Vogelsang in October 1938. Around 10 percent of students withdrew or were dismissed during the first year; an even higher percentage tried to leave the program unsuccessfully. The classes never reached their planned size, perhaps because the screening process was too rigorous. Officials relaxed the entrance requirements prior to selecting the second Junker cohort. A bigger problem was the uncertainty of career prospects. Graduates received little more than a certificate and notation in their personnel file but no guarantee in terms of a position or salary.

Some Party leaders soon questioned the quality of the Junkers. The School Director for the Gau Cologne-Aachen issued a scathing report noting that the emphasis on sports meant Junkers had few practical administrative skills. As a result, Party officials reported great difficulties integrating the

Junkers into the Party's basic bureaucracy, since most of them expected placements as Kreis leaders or higher.<sup>37</sup> The report conceded that many Junkers were incredibly ambitious but then noted that the most capable of them would likely enter the Party leadership without attending an Order Castle. Perhaps, this was also apparent to the Junkers. The report noted that many Vogelsang Junkers, still only in their second year, were trying to leave the program. These impressions were also present among the regime's top leadership. In his memoirs, Speer commented on the Order Castles and Adolf Hitler Schools claiming that "even in Party circles the products of such schools were occasionally regarded as too ruthless and arrogant . . . their arrogance and conceit about their own abilities were boundless."<sup>38</sup> It was also telling that few top Nazis sent their sons to the Order Castles.

The war prevented Junker instruction at Sonthofen, but the facility served as the provisional base for the Adolf Hitler School students. The Order Castles were also frequently used for training seminars and Party conferences, including private speeches by Hitler to Party officials. The castles' role as a venue for Party gatherings may have actually been their greatest contribution. Ley suggested this would become a central purpose. In a forward to a souvenir picture book for attendees of a conference at Sonthofen in November 1937, Ley expressed the hope that the Party's political leadership would meet annually at the Order Castles. Recalling their times as old fighters, Ley hoped: "May the Order Castle become our true home as it earlier was our local Party tavern."<sup>39</sup> The Order Castles also made major contributions as propaganda instruments. The professional press detailed the building plans and progress at each site, while the popular press focused more on the activities and achievements of the Junkers. By mid-1940, most Junkers had been transferred to a variety of minor administrative posts in the occupied eastern territories until pressed into combat units as the tide of war turned. Around 2,000 people were accepted as Junkers; roughly two-thirds did not survive the war.

### **Academies for Functionaries**

It was soon apparent that the Order Castles and Adolf Hitler Schools would be insufficient for the Party's needs. First, as we have seen, both school systems focused heavily on ideology and sports but provided little in terms of managerial or administrative training. This was intentional. The Party encompassed vastly different organizations that required specialized training and expertise. Top Nazis were also reluctant to let another agency, especially Ley's ambitious DAF, train their deputies and staffers. As a result, nearly every Party organization wanted its own dedicated training facilities. Hitler showed little interest in these schools other than making sure that the core ideological schooling remained in the Adolf Hitler Schools and Order Castles.

Ideally, those aspiring to leadership roles in the Party would have already completed the Adolf Hitler Schools and Order Castles programs, but in practice these specialized academies trained officials already rising through the ranks of the Party's agencies or functioned as officer candidate schools for the Party's paramilitary organizations. By January 1939, the Party's cadre of "political leaders," from the lowest block leader up to the Reich leader level, easily numbered more than half a million. Additionally, the Party's various auxiliary and paramilitary organizations mimicked the Party's bureaucratic hierarchy down to the chapter level. The DAF alone claimed to have 35,000 paid staffers, one-third of them women, and perhaps as many as two million volunteer personnel.<sup>40</sup> Even if such claims were greatly inflated, the Nazi movement undoubtedly had hundreds of thousands of "leaders" to train and indoctrinate.

The DAF built the most expansive training system for a number of reasons. First, the DAF had its own revenue streams, as well as numerous properties confiscated from labor unions. Second, Ley successfully positioned himself as a major influence in the Party's general ideological training through the Adolf Hitler Schools and Order Castles programs. To further this effort, Ley proposed a system of Kreis, Gau, and Reich-level "training castles" that paralleled the Party's administrative divisions and served basically as an alternative secondary school system.<sup>41</sup> Ley's proposed system never materialized, but the DAF managed to establish a number of continuing education and training academies. Ley's chief of staff Otto Marrenbach claimed the DAF operated a total of seventy-seven specialized training academies by 1941, including twelve Reich-level facilities.<sup>42</sup> It is unclear how many DAF officials attended these various schools, but Marrenbach claimed 148,810 participants attended one of 1,899 courses offered through the Gau schools and 15,348 people attended 242 Reich school courses during 1938. During the same year, Marrenbach reckoned that the DAF's entire educational system served nearly 1.7 million people.<sup>43</sup> These numbers are plausible, especially since individuals could be double counted. The total likely also included regular members participating in workplace training. Whatever the actual numbers may have been, the DAF shared the Party's goal of providing training "geared primarily toward political decision-making and the shaping of personal character."<sup>44</sup>

Most of these training castles were simply repurposed buildings, like the facilities established in Erwitte and on the island of Rügen. These facilities were the first major projects undertaken by the DAF's new Building Department under Schulte-Frohlinde. As a popular travel destination, Rügen was ideal for retreats and conferences, so the DAF purchased a hotel overlooking the small resort town of Sassnitz. Schulte-Frohlinde renovated and expanded the building. Completed in 1935, this new Palace Sassnitz accommodated around 200 DAF officials for training courses generally lasting around two weeks. The facility also served more generally as a DAF conference and resort facility.<sup>45</sup>

The story was similar in Erwitte in Westphalia where the DAF purchased a dilapidated seventeenth-century palace in 1934. Schulte-Frohlinde explained that “the Training Castle Erwitte would serve the ideological and physical education of the political leaders, especially the office holders of the German Labor Front. Naturally, the entire facility had to be designed so that the exterior impression of the buildings and the rooms are worthy of the National Socialist movement.”<sup>46</sup> The exterior was refurbished and largely unchanged, but Schulte-Frohlinde gutted and reorganized much of the interior to create a mix of ceremonial and educational rooms, including a grand hall, large lecture rooms, libraries, and reading rooms.

Some sleeping quarters were added in the attic, but there was insufficient space to reach the planned capacity of 400 students and all the necessary support staff, even after the similar conversion of an adjacent outbuilding. As a result, Schulte-Frohlinde designed a new L-shaped administration building and a second, smaller building to house the commandant and teachers. Additional quarters for trainees were included in the attic spaces of both buildings. Both buildings were two-story structures with rustic, folksy designs closely resembling the main square in Mascherode. The first buildings were finished in 1936, and plans for expansion were soon in the works. The main addition was a new assembly hall. Dedicated in July 1938, this Horst Wessel Hall resembled a smaller version of the Community House at Mascherode and brought an element of the Speer’s heroic monumentalism to the complex.

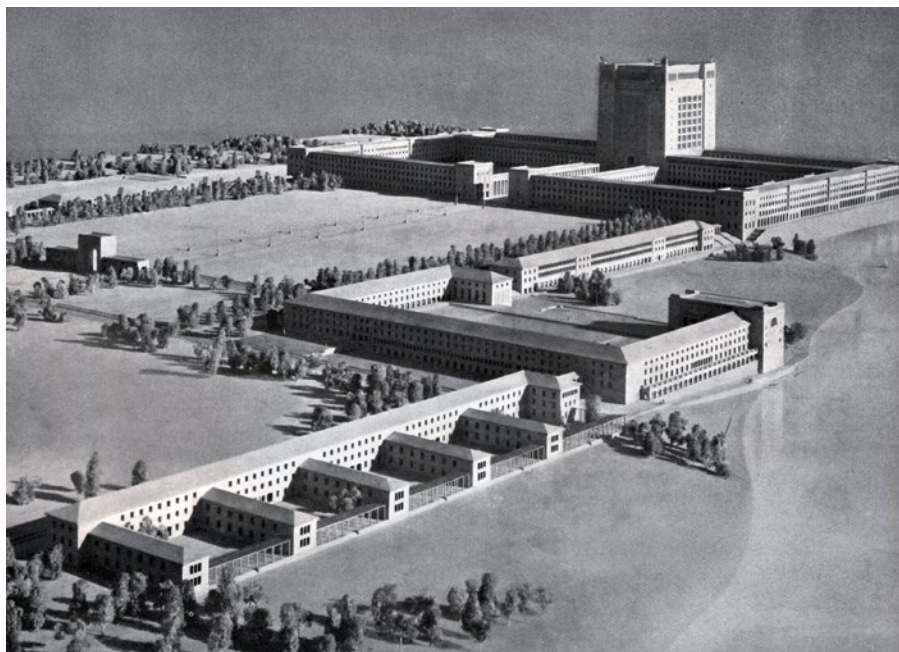
Few Party organizations could match the DAF’s resources, but they nonetheless tried to establish their own training systems. Most of these were repurposed buildings, such as the regional leadership school established by the Hitler Youth in the medieval Teutonic Castle in Marienwerder in East Prussia or the renovation of the Renaissance palace of Varenholz in Westphalia into a leadership school for the League of German Girls. There were roughly a hundred comparable facilities with each Party organization trying to establish at least one training facility per Gau. Each organization also desired a larger, more monumental Reich-level academy. These were also mostly repurposed buildings, such as the Reich School for German Technology established by Todt in the medieval Plassenburg castle in Kulmbach or the RAD’s Reich School in the New Palace in Potsdam. In most cases, the locations of these training facilities reflected expediency, urgency, and competition among Hitler’s lieutenants for prestigious buildings. The RAD was typical. By 1939, it had established an extensive educational hierarchy including a Reich-level school, five district schools, five field chief schools, and nineteen troop leader schools. A separate network of around twenty schools trained female officials.<sup>47</sup>

The regime did build a few new national schools, but most were the result of ad hoc circumstances. For example, the National Socialist Teachers’ League, the Party’s auxiliary organization for grade school teachers,

constructed the House of German Education in Bayreuth from 1933 to 1936 as its central administrative and training facility. The building's exterior was a rather odd mixture of representative and rural. The structure's smooth stone facade and columns, as well as its size, certainly foreshadowed the regime's later representative projects. In contrast, the building's steeply pitched roof resembled forms common to the regime's rural settlement projects. The House of German Education provides another example of the uncertainty that characterized early building projects. Its location also highlights the regime's parochialism; the league's leader, Hans Schemm, happened to be a native of Bayreuth.

The regime's architectural ambitions had little impact on the traditional university system. A few new university buildings were constructed, such as the sleek main building of the University of Cologne, but the biggest changes involved non-building matters, especially personnel. Universities experienced substantial drops in enrollments, with the exception of medical schools that benefited from the regime's emphasis on racial health and hygiene. The architectural programs in Weimar under Paul Schultze-Naumburg and in Stuttgart under Paul Bonatz and Paul Schmitthenner also received a boost and could claim the two largest student bodies in Germany by 1939.<sup>48</sup> Rosenberg initiated the closest to something that could be called a Nazi university. Hitler appointed Rosenberg as his representative for the Party's ideological training in 1934, a position that put him in competition with Ley. Rosenberg criticized the Order Castle program as lacking rigor and structure, and so lobbied Hitler to approve the establishment of a High Academy of the National Socialist German Workers' Party. Its central tasks were to promote "National Socialist ideological research, to examine and supply the spiritual educational material, and finally to train the teachers and educators of the Party and all its subdivisions."<sup>49</sup> In short, Rosenberg hoped to put Nazi ideology and education on a "scientific" footing while also assuming control of instructional materials, teacher training, and overall pedagogy.

Rosenberg's efforts bore fruit. In February 1938, Hitler instructed Giesler and Klotz to submit ideas. Hitler reviewed both plans in May and selected Giesler's concept. Unlike the relatively modest initial designs for the Order Castles, Giesler's first plan called for a sprawling complex that placed three distinct functions within a roughly symmetrical layout.<sup>50</sup> The focal point would be the academy building, which would house the main research activities. Measuring around 450 by 350 meters at its base and dominated by a 120-meter-tall skyscraper capped with four large eagles on the corners, the structure made no pretense of fitting into the landscape or allusions to traditional building styles. A main axis extended north from the academy building for around 1,700 meters flanked by a guesthouse, training camp, and Adolf Hitler School (figure 5.6). The school provided a place to experiment with new teaching techniques, while the camp allowed



**Figure 5.6. Model of the High Academy of the NSDAP Planned for Chiemsee in Bavaria**

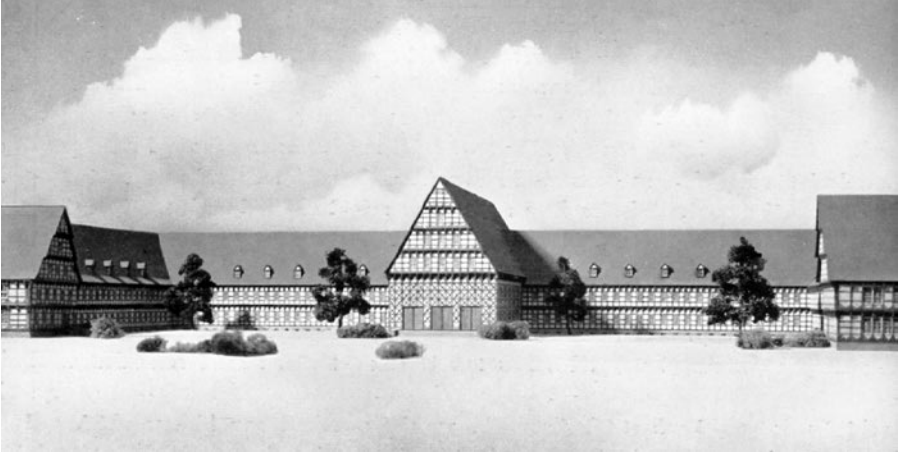
Hitler commissioned the construction of this High Academy of the NSDAP on the shores of the picturesque Chiemsee in southern Bavaria. This academy was to function much like a university dedicated to the systematic and scientific advancement of Party ideology and corresponding pedagogical and curricular initiatives.

*Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 78.*

teacher training to disseminate the academy's work to other schools. The entire complex would have its own new railroad line. Hitler reportedly selected the location along the Chiemsee, a lake in Upper Bavaria. There is no solid evidence explaining Hitler's decision other than the area was renowned for its natural beauty, and Hitler knew the region through his trips between Munich and Obersalzberg.

Financial questions delayed the project. The Party finally agreed to come up with the money, and Hitler officially ordered Rosenberg in January 1940 to begin preparations so construction could commence promptly after the war. Rosenberg began amassing a humongous collection of books, documents, and other artifacts, including anything that might support his interpretation of Jewish history. The collection grew to hundreds of thousands of items plundered from across Europe. Rosenberg also established a number of research institutions at existing universities, possibly suggesting a larger Party presence there after the war, much to the chagrin of the Ministry of Education. Rosenberg continued these efforts well into 1944, although construction of the academy never began.





**Figure 5.7. Model of a Training Academy for the League of German Girls in Braunschweig**

The Nazi regime sponsored the construction of numerous schools, academies, and institutes that offered more specialized training for Party bureaucrats. The League of German Girls commissioned this facility in Braunschweig to prepare young women for leadership roles within that organization.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:50.

A cursory glance at the city of Braunschweig highlights the scope of the Nazi school building programs. By 1939, the regime had established in or near Braunschweig a RAD leadership school, a HJ Regional Leadership School, the Academy for German Youth Leadership of the HJ, the Bernhard Rust High Academy for Teacher Training, and a Reich Hunters Lodge named after Hermann Göring. A Reich Leadership School for the League of German Girls was planned but never built (figure 5.7). The SS established an SS Junker School in a local palace. Additionally, Lehdorf, Mascherode, and other Nazi-era settlements received new primary and secondary schools, as well as the new Dieter Klagges School in the city center. The Order Castles and High Academy received enormous attention, both during and after Hitler's reign, but these less prominent schools, academies, and institutions were undoubtedly more impactful in indoctrinating people to the ideas and practices of National Socialism.

## MAKING LEISURE WORK

The Nazi regime's concept of education went far beyond traditional schooling and professional development. The regime considered leisure activities and free time to be further arenas for achieving their goal of total education. Once again, Ley and the DAF led the charge. Ley established the Strength through Joy (Kraft durch Freude, or KdF) program within

the DAF in November 1933. Modeled on leisure programs established in Fascist Italy, KdF's name made its purpose explicit—namely, to sponsor leisure, cultural, and travel opportunities that would appropriately foster and strengthen a sense of National Socialist community.<sup>51</sup> In 1937, one DAF official claimed that KdF had recorded 155 million participants since its founding.<sup>52</sup> The claim seems unbelievable, but it is plausible since some individuals participated multiple times. Even if the claim is exaggerated, millions of individuals did participate in KdF events, whether out of dedication to the Party or simply for fun. As in other areas, the imperative to structure, indeed dominate, Germans' leisure and free time ultimately led to expansive and expensive building programs.

### Homes and Hostels

The Hitler Youth (HJ) was the Nazi Party's second-oldest suborganization after the SA. The HJ was the Party's youth wing, as the name suggests, consisting of four sections: the German Youth for boys ages ten to fourteen; the Hitler Youth for boys ages fourteen to eighteen; the League of Young German Girls for ages ten to fourteen; and finally the League of German Girls for ages fourteen to eighteen. Each troop generally met once on a weekday evening for instruction focused on current events, racial education, or the history of the Nazi Party. A second meeting involving athletic or outdoor activities occurred on Saturdays. By the end of 1932, HJ membership totaled around 100,000 before climbing to around five million members by the end of 1936, largely by absorbing other youth organizations.

Hitler issued his Law on the Hitler Youth in December 1936, which made membership mandatory for all Germans aged ten to eighteen, excluding some groups like children with Jewish heritage or children with disabilities. The law signaled a greatly expanded role for the organization. As Hitler decreed, "the entire German youth is to be educated, besides at home and school, in the Hitler Youth, physically, mentally, and morally in the spirit of National Socialism to serve the people and the national community."<sup>53</sup> The decree also promoted Baldur von Schirach to the new national-level position of Reich Youth Leader reporting directly to Hitler (figure 5.8). Schirach joined the Party as a teenager and attended college to pursue art history and German studies before dropping out to dedicate himself to the Party. HJ membership may have reached nine million by 1940, but it is difficult to determine the number of active members, especially as the regime began pressing ever younger teenagers into different types of labor and military service.

There was little central direction initially, but the general expectation was that every Party chapter would have its own HJ meeting place. Most commonly, these new Hitler Youth "homes" were dilapidated and/or underused castles, palaces, or former religious properties. This was convenient and inexpensive, but the imperative to build stirred the HJ as well. Schirach



**Figure 5.8. Hitler Sketching Plans in the Dirt at His Berghof Estate with Schirach**

In this photo, Hitler is reportedly drawing an architectural sketch in the dirt, most likely during one of his frequent strolls around his Berghof estate, while Baldur von Schirach observes intently.

Source: Hoffmann, *Hitler abseits von Alltag*, 69.

declared 1937 to be Construction Year of the Hitler Youth.<sup>54</sup> One of Schirach's top architects linked the urgent building program to the HJ's new role in educating the youth: "As family education needs the parental home and schooling needs the school house for the fulfillment of their assigned tasks, so community life requires the Hitler Youth homes in which the youth come together for serious work and cheerful games."<sup>55</sup>

Although some communities already had HJ homes, Schirach avowed "this is only a small beginning. Many thousand Hitler Youth homes must still be built! The home of the Hitler Youth is a symbol of the uncompromising camaraderie of the new generation."<sup>56</sup> Schirach tasked Hanns Dustmann, the HJ's chief architect, with coordinating the program.<sup>57</sup> Hitler also reviewed plans for every HJ home, at least according to Schirach. Schirach probably exaggerated, but it is quite likely that Speer and his staff reviewed the plans and kept Hitler informed, especially since these buildings carried Hitler's name. Given the goal that every settlement with more than 1,000 residents needed a dedicated HJ home, one estimate claimed the program

would build roughly 40,000 new homes in Germany alone and another 12,000 once the occupied territories were included.<sup>58</sup>

Schirach issued detailed guidelines emphasizing that these homes would be new, single-purpose buildings that symbolized the values of the Nazi movement, like monumentality, heroism, and purity. In doing so, they would provide “the spatial prerequisite for the work of political education of the German youth.”<sup>59</sup> Local building materials and craftsmanship would accentuate linkages to nature and tradition. Dustmann and his staff promoted the effort with dozens of blueprints, drawings, and scale models publicized through various exhibitions and publications. The sizes and styles of the buildings corresponded to the size of the community, but the typical home was relatively small with a maximum capacity below 500. Ideally, the home would be located on a hilltop or some other prominent site on the outskirts of town that offered abundant green space, scenic views, and room for assemblies, sport facilities, and other outdoor activities.

The typical home was two stories tall topped by a pitched roof. Traditional motifs and materials, like half-timbering and stone, were prominent in the designs and furthered a rather rustic look (figure 5.9). In addition to multiple



**Figure 5.9. A Hitler Youth Home in Cologne's Vogelsang Suburb**

Every community was expected to have its own Hitler Youth home. These were typically relatively modest buildings following local vernacular styles. Aside from prominently displaying its 1939 completion date, there is little today to suggest this unassuming building sitting adjacent the market square of Cologne's Vogelsang district originally served as a Hitler Youth home.

Source: Joshua Hagen.

classrooms, each home would have a larger assembly hall. In some exceptional cases, Schirach and Dustmann acknowledged that more monumental neoclassicist styles were required, mostly in larger cities where HJ facilities contributed to the regime's Führer and Gau city programs, but the preference remained for smaller homes. In the smallest towns and villages, the homes often resembled modest cottages. Yet even these unassuming homes, according to Dustmann, acquired political and cultural importance for the "artistic-soldierly education of the young generation."<sup>60</sup>

Hitler issued several statements directing all relevant agencies to assist with this effort, but progress was slow. Perhaps because of this lack of progress, Hitler promulgated a law in February 1939 ordering municipalities to finance HJ homes from their regular budgets or to begin escrowing money to do so.<sup>61</sup> There are varying estimates of the number of homes begun or completed, likely reflecting the vague definition of what actually constituted an HJ home. According to one official, around 1,200 homes had been finished by March 1939.<sup>62</sup> That number is plausible if all repurposed buildings and rooms are included, which in some instances meant merely adding some Nazi Party decorations. If limited to only those HJ homes that entailed significant architectural effort, whether remodeling or new construction, it is probable that only around 650 homes were finished by 1941.<sup>63</sup>

The biggest obstacle was financial. Municipalities simply lacked the resources, and the Party and state had other priorities. The program was probably going to be altered significantly regardless. In 1941, Speer and Schwarz issued guidelines, with Martin Bormann's blessing, for the construction of "community houses" for each local chapter. If localities did not already possess an HJ home, those functions were to be incorporated into a centrally located community house, probably as an extension of the main building as at Mascherode. This was quite a departure from Schirach's original idea for dedicated Hitler Youth buildings on the edge of town. In a sign that this could represent the final decision on the HJ building program, Speer supervised the effort, and the Party now agreed to bear the costs.

The Nazi regime also sponsored a youth hostel building program. Germany's youth hostel movement emerged in the years leading up to World War I. It was a diffuse and decentralized movement, but the basic idea was to establish a network of inexpensive hostels, mostly in rural areas, to accommodate young people hiking across Germany while seeking adventure, self-discovery, and connections with nature. The idea enjoyed broad popularity across Germany, and the back-to-nature idea was compatible with the historical mysticism and agrarian romanticism of Nazi ideology. HJ officials set about incorporating the hostel movement into their purview. As one official remarked, "hostels served in the time before the seizure of power as cheap overnight accommodations for traveling youth" but now "the German youth hostels received under the Führer Adolf Hitler their purpose as places of education."<sup>64</sup>

Most projects were local initiatives that involved renovating existing hostels or converting historical buildings into hostels, but some assumed greater importance. The former imperial stables adjacent to Nuremberg's imperial castle, for example, were converted into a hostel. The hostel opened amid great fanfare for the 1938 Party rallies as one of Germany's largest with a capacity of 450 guests.<sup>65</sup> This conversion was indicative of a broad tendency to utilize medieval castles, which were well suited to emphasize martial valor and soldierly discipline. Max Kochskämper, the official leading the effort, exhorted other officials to "take possession of all types of military fortifications, towers, mills, castles, and convert them to youth hostels. In them one feels the spirit of the valiant knights and citizens who defended their land and their town against attacks by foreigners with the sword and blood."<sup>66</sup>

HJ officials soon incorporated new hostel construction into their construction year initiative. Kochskämper emphasized that every building would be a unique work of art but nonetheless issued very detailed guidelines since "the hostels must be artistic achievements, visible expressions of our ideology, life turned to stone, and testaments to later generations of the greatness of our time."<sup>67</sup> In practice, this meant that the new hostels generally mimicked vernacular farmhouse architecture, emphasizing local materials, traditional craftsmanship, and harmony with nature (figure 5.10). The typical hostel was two stories tall with a pitched roof and accommodations for 60 to 500 guests.

Ideally, the hostels occupied scenic locations while remaining easily accessible. Border locations were also important, so hikers could experience the front lines of the nation. New hostel designs also featured classrooms, exercise rooms, and some type of parade ground, in addition to sleeping quarters and other support rooms. Hostel stays were rather structured, for example, with morning reveille and flag-raising ceremonies. Additionally, HJ troops were frequent visitors. Organized marches became the norm in place of small groups of young hikers ambling through the countryside. An English-language propaganda piece on the Nazi building program acknowledged as much by noting the hostels were now "given a quality of order and discipline."<sup>68</sup>

The volume of hostel construction is unclear. Kochskämper claimed that 339 new hostels were finished from 1933 to July 1937, while in 1943 an HJ press officer reported only 288 new hostels built between 1933 and 1938. The discrepancy may reflect different meanings of "new," but the difference is largely irrelevant. The Nazi regime probably sponsored around 300 new hostels contributing to a total of around 2,000 across Germany. The HJ spokesman explained that the grand total remained roughly stable, because new hostels roughly matched the number of older hostels closed. There is no doubt that hostel use increased significantly. Total overnight stays in hostels topped 4.6 million in 1933 but neared 9 million by 1938.<sup>69</sup>



**Figure 5.10. A Rustic Hostel near Husum in Northeastern Germany**

The regime sponsored the construction of several hundred new youth hostels. Generally located in picturesque locations, the hostels provided accommodations for young hikers exploring Germany's natural landscapes and countryside. This hostel, located near Husum in northeastern Germany, featured thatched roofing common to that region.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:49.

The regime featured these hostels extensively in its propaganda campaign despite their rather modest contribution. The Adolf Hitler Hostel near Berchtesgaden, not far from Hitler's retreat at Obersalzberg, was the most prominent example. Resembling a traditional alpine chalet, the hostel allowed youths to experience the region's natural beauties while also vacationing, at least in spirit, with their Führer. The names of many other prominent hostels honored top Nazis to demonstrate the regime's commitment to the nation's youth.

The regime also sponsored a significant number of tent camps that basically functioned as hostels but at significantly less cost. Many of these camps supported regional HJ jamborees, as well as long-range hikes to Party rallies. The Party established 450 tent camps hosting around 100,000 HJ participants in 1934 to support these marches. By 1936, the initiative encompassed nearly 2,000 camps with more than 560,000 participants.<sup>70</sup> Like the homes and hostels, planners sought camp locations thought to have special historical or scenic value.

Taken together, these HJ buildings created a hierarchical network of educational sites across Germany. As Gerdy Troost declared, the buildings of the

Hitler Youth blanketed “the entire Reich with a thick net of homes, which after the completion of comprehensive planning shall have none more than twenty-five kilometers distance from the next.”<sup>71</sup> Through this archipelago of homes, hostels, and camps, German youths gained direct experiences of their homeland, its people, and the connections between blood and soil. In the words of Schirach:

Whatever we build, whether in the political or cultural arena, it must represent the ideology of this time that we carry and are filled with. The Hitler Youth is the first total National Socialist generation. . . . So is the young Germany of today pure, true, clear, and one in thought, feeling, and action. But also one in artistic attitude and taste. That is what the buildings of the youth proclaim to us. Each home and each hostel is an allegory of the belief of our youth, a symbol of their loyalty to the Führer, and thus to themselves.<sup>72</sup>

### **Rest and Relaxation**

True to its totalitarian impulses, the Nazi regime attempted to control the nation’s leisure time, even to the extent of creating a new roster of national holidays. The regime subsumed the basic concept of rest and relaxation into a larger ideological framework by promoting vacations, travel, and numerous leisure activities as means to create a healthy, strong, and productive national community. From the regime’s perspective, leisure represented an opportunity to satisfy public expectations for improved standards of living that was relatively cheap in terms of labor, money, and materials. Leisure also represented a worker benefit that did not increase wages.

Ley and Joseph Goebbels vied for control. As noted previously, Ley created the Strength through Joy program within the DAF. As head of the Reich Chamber of Culture and the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Goebbels acquired broad authority over theater, opera, and the arts, in addition to oversight of the Reich Tourism Association. Both men regarded cultural and leisure policy as their rightful domains and soon sponsored building projects to support their claims.

Much of the regime’s initial cultural policy focused on censoring objectionable content and pushing regime opponents from their professions. Top officials then moved to ensure that appropriate venues were available. Despite initial enthusiasm for the Thingstätte program (discussed later in the chapter), the regime’s building program eventually turned to traditional high-brow tastes. Hitler ordered the renovation of numerous theaters, galleries, and museums. Hitler also incorporated cultural facilities into his monumental building program. For example, Hitler ordered that Munich have the world’s largest opera house; Linz would have a grand art gallery.

Relatively little came of these plans, but new theaters were built in Saarbrücken, Dessau, and Zittau. The theaters in Dessau and Zittau were largely



local initiatives, although both buildings generally followed the stark neoclassicism of the regime's other early projects. The theater in Saarbrücken was different. Following the plebiscite that returned that region to Germany, Hitler commissioned this Gau Theater as a gift to the people. Featuring smooth Doric colonnades along its main facade, the building adapted the motifs of Troost's projects in Munich to theater design (figure 5.11). Paul Baumgarten, architect of the theater, declared that the Nazi revolution heralded "the beginning of a new age for German theater."<sup>73</sup> It is possible Hitler



**Figure 5.11. The Theater in Saarbrücken Commissioned by Hitler**

Hitler had a keen passion for opera and commonly incorporated opera and theater buildings into his urban redesign projects. Few were constructed, though. One notable exception was the theater in Saarbrücken, commissioned by Hitler to commemorate the plebiscite that returned the region to Germany.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:86.

intended to commission a comparable theater in each Gau. He was certainly passionate about theater and demonstrated substantial knowledge of contemporary theater design.<sup>74</sup>

This pattern was present regarding other cultural institutions and leisure facilities. Numerous new history museums opened across Germany, but these were mostly local matters that converted underutilized historical buildings. Open-air museums were partial exceptions. The Museum Village Cloppenburg, located on the edge of its namesake village around sixty kilometers southwest of Bremen, was one of the most extensive projects. The idea of an open-air museum documenting traditional folk life had circulated locally for several years, but financial constraints blocked progress aside from collecting antique farming equipment and household items. The project got an unexpected boost from the new Nazi regime and Gauleiter Carl Röver, who was eager to enhance the importance of his region and, of course, his own prestige.

The basic idea was to relocate antiquated buildings, machinery, and household items from around the region to form a little museum village that documented a traditional agrarian way of life reflecting the ideals of blood and soil. The project was relatively inexpensive, since the buildings were relocated instead of built anew. RAD furnished most of the workers and many of the antiques were donated, which further lowered the cost. Work began in earnest in 1934. By 1939, the museum village counted around twenty structures, including barns, storehouses, a mill, some homes, and even a windmill. The structures were mostly timber framed with thatched roofs.<sup>75</sup> As far as monumental, urban museums, the additions to the German Museum in Munich were the most prominent projects completed.<sup>76</sup> There were various museum projects in the Führer cities, but again little was ever realized. The situation was similar for art galleries with the House of German Art reaching fruition, while other plans remained on the drawing board.

Curiously, the regime paid relatively little attention to cinemas. Hitler enjoyed watching movies privately, and Goebbels certainly recognized the power of film to influence public opinion, especially by staging lavish premieres for movies like Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935). Yet this did not translate into a sustained building program. The regime made some half-hearted attempts to standardize designs, but private builders and local authorities enjoyed relatively free reign. Cinemas in smaller towns tended to mimic vernacular forms; cinemas in larger cities tended toward the stark neoclassicism evident in theaters and other prominent Party buildings. For example, Speer's theater planned for the Round Plaza was to seat around 2,200. There were preliminary discussions for cinemas in Berlin that might have quadrupled that capacity. In all, there were at least 600 new cinemas built across Germany between 1933 and 1938, in addition to around 1,500 remodelings. Indeed, thirteen new cinemas opened just in Cologne from 1933 to 1942. Access to films surged in some cities.<sup>77</sup>

The regime had more success staging exhibitions and fairs. The most prominent was Speer's German Pavilion for the Paris International Exposition of 1937, which helped introduce Hitler's new style of architecture to the world (figure 5.12). The German Pavilion faced the Soviet exhibition hall, and after learning of the Soviet plan, Speer modified his pavilion so that its height exceeded its Soviet counterpart. In the end, both buildings received awards at the exposition. Back in Germany, the regime sponsored a number of national and regional exhibitions to highlight the movement's achievements. Other than the Olympics, the highest profile exhibition was the Reich Exhibition of the Productive People staged in Düsseldorf in 1937. The exhibition produced what basically amounted to a new city district with its own housing exhibit. Nearly every Party and government organization contributed some type of exhibition hall to showcase their accomplishments.

The Germany Hall built for the Berlin Olympics was the most prominent of these multipurpose buildings. The building's monumentality and austere facade resembled a modified form of the people's halls incorporated into the various Gauforum projects. The KdF Town, a series of five wooden halls designed by Schulte-Frohlinde to serve guests to the Olympics, provided a folkish contrast. Dominated by a massive eagle clutching a swastika, the main hall stood twenty-eight meters tall and could hold 3,500 guests.<sup>78</sup> The complex functioned so well that it was relocated to a site adjacent to the Nuremberg rally grounds. Other Gauleiters and mayors wanted their own facilities but obviously had to settle for lesser structures, like the wooden Swabia Hall in Stuttgart. These projects were mostly local initiatives and highly dependent on the ambition of mid-level officials. Nothing resembling a centralized program materialized, perhaps because there was nobody with a vested interest and sufficient resources to pursue such a program.

Vested interests and sufficient resources did, however, come together to promote tourism. Ley moved aggressively to establish the DAF as the chief agency coordinating tourism, travel, and leisure through its burgeoning Strength through Joy program. KdF swiftly massed a cadre of officials to structure recreational activities. In 1938 alone, KdF claimed to have organized 5,291 concerts, 12,407 operas, 19,523 plays, and 54,813 folklore events with a total attendance of more than thirty million people. KdF's highest profile activity involved sponsoring low-cost vacations. The organization achieved these lower costs by organizing vacationers into large groups, often 500 to 1,200 people. KdF prided itself on sponsoring trips that took city dwellers to small historic towns, health and sport resorts, and areas of natural beauty. Officials believed vacationing in these areas strengthened the bonds between blood, soil, and nation, as well as demonstrating the regime's commitment to higher standards of living. Additionally, vacationers would return more productive workers, thereby achieving strength through joy.

Many established tourist destinations, especially those catering to more exclusive clienteles, were hesitant about hosting KdF vacationers, who were



**Figure 5.12. The German Pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exposition**

The German Pavilion at the 1937 Paris International Exposition was designed to showcase the ascendancy of Hitler's Germany. An imposing tower topped with a massive eagle gripping a swastika wreath was lit up by searchlights at night.

*Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 18.*

generally less affluent. As a result, many KdF trips went to Berlin, Munich, and other larger cities, which seemed generally popular with travelers anyway. KdF claimed to have sponsored vacations for nearly 1.5 million people, in addition to sending more than 6.8 million people on shorter excursions, more than 131,000 people on cruises, and nearly 2 million people on organized hikes. Combined with numerous smaller events, KdF reported a grand total of approximately 55 million participants during 1938 alone.<sup>79</sup> It is impossible to verify this fantastic total, especially since KdF officials had reason to inflate the numbers. Yet there is no doubt that millions of Germans participated in KdF events. Indeed, KdF was probably the most popular Party organization during the 1930s. Even Germany's exiled Social Democratic Party admitted that KdF's travel program "continues to play by far the largest role in the consciousness of the people."<sup>80</sup>

The regime's determination to transform tourism into an instrument of social and cultural control catalyzed wide-ranging building campaigns. Some of the first steps involved improving travel destinations. In early 1934, KdF organized a much-publicized Fight Week to Clean up the Image of the Homeland. This and subsequent initiatives focused on the restoration and purification of villages and rural landscapes. In practice, this meant removing billboards and other forms of modern advertising, promoting half-timbering, and a general tidying-up of the countryside. The following year, the DAF established a working group for village beautification that sponsored a steady stream of initiatives and semi-voluntary contests for localities to earn the title of "model village," with the initial intention of having one such village for every Party district.

The village of Eimke south of Lüneburg, for example, earned the distinction by sprucing things up to look "practical, clean, pretty." Judges declared, "we know order prevails here."<sup>81</sup> In addition to beautification, villages were asked to build swimming pools and other sports facilities, parks and green spaces, and finally hotels, all of which promised recreational opportunities for tourists, as well as locals. Ley and his subordinates claimed that more than 5,000 villages had participated by 1938. The ideological objective was that "the village, the home of millions of German people, must be clean, orderly, and beautiful, ideologically, socio-politically, economically, and culturally exemplary."<sup>82</sup>

Werner Lindner provided much of the practical and rhetorical inspiration for these efforts. A prominent advocate for preservation and conservation causes, Lindner had served since 1914 as the managing director of the German League for Heimatschutz, a loose affiliation of local and provincial organizations. In numerous speeches and publications, Lindner called for a thorough purification of rural landscapes emphasizing folk architecture, traditional craftsmanship, and local materials. Lindner believed the Nazi regime would finally champion the cause. In 1936, Lindner published a manual, *Exterior Advertising: A Guide in Examples and Counter Examples*, illustrat-

ing his recurring polemics against billboards, neon signs, and other modern signage. Lindner cooperated with some mid-level DAF officials to expand this into a comprehensive manifesto titled *The Village: Its Care and Design*. The book was richly illustrated with pictures of “good” and “bad” examples to show how “the village in its future form can again become imaginable as a perfect living space of the village community.”<sup>83</sup> The volume disavowed any programmatic inclination, but its specificity was unmistakable with attention given to the seemingly minutest of details, like the proper appearance of signposts and window flower boxes.

Party officials launched complementary efforts. Gauleiter of Upper Bavaria Adolf Wagner, for example, issued a decree on Cleanliness and Beauty in City and Country in November 1935. The unnamed author promulgating the decree extolled how “blood and soil are merged into a living whole in the landscape of the homeland. . . . Architecture is our mirror image of the inner constitution of a people. . . . The National Socialist cultural landscape must become the mirror image of the inner renewal of our people.” This new organic landscape would replace “the built liberalism” where “buildings sins were dragged to the countryside like a contagious disease.” As the decree explained:

It is my [Wagner’s] firm intention to ensure that the beauty of our homeland in nature and in architecture will be maintained. The buildings that are built new must take into account the character, the cultural feeling, and the aesthetic feeling of our nation and our time. Everything ugly and unclean, every disfigurement of our landscape must disappear. Just as the housewife at certain intervals thoroughly ransacks and cleans her residence, we want to subject the entire country, cities, villages, streets, and farms to an extensive and thorough cleansing.<sup>84</sup>

The overall thrust was consistent with the vision espoused by Lindner and other preservationists for the restoration of German villages and countryside. Tourism was also a significant motivating factor as the 1936 Olympics would bring record numbers of visitors. These efforts may have succeeded in creating an “old German” aesthetic but failed to reverse the well-established shift of rural populations toward urban centers. In fact, the regime’s industrial policies accelerated rural depopulation and undermined the objective of food autarky.

Towns and smaller cities underwent similar beautification campaigns. Those municipalities already serving as KdF destinations, or aspired to such status, had significant incentive to create the appropriate ambiance. These smaller municipalities focused on beautifying and historicizing their city centers with an “old German” atmosphere by restoring the facades of older homes and renovating modern buildings to give them an aged look. Removing plastering to expose underlying half-timbering was a favorite means of projecting authenticity and rootedness. Historical neighborhoods were further purged of neon lighting, billboards, Latin script, loanwords, or other

elements deemed modern or foreign. Efforts to provide greater direction and coordination for these beautification projects gradually emerged.

Again, Lindner offered an overall framework in his 1939 book *The City: Its Care and Design*. Lindner provided numerous photographs illustrating the denigration of German cities through tasteless modern designs juxtaposed to more appropriate alternatives inspired by traditional architecture and craftsmanship.<sup>85</sup> The German Heimat Association sponsored a traveling exhibition that highlighted the various beautification campaigns underway across Germany. The exhibition, titled “The Beautiful City, Its Restoration, and Design,” began touring in summer 1938 amid great interest. According to Lindner, the exhibition illustrated how “to bring valuable old town cohesion in order architecturally and socially.”<sup>86</sup> These efforts resonated among planners and preservationists alike and were well received among middle-class and conservative households. They also had the advantage of being relatively inexpensive, since a large share of the existing building stock was retained and provided direct or indirect inspiration for numerous beautification campaigns.

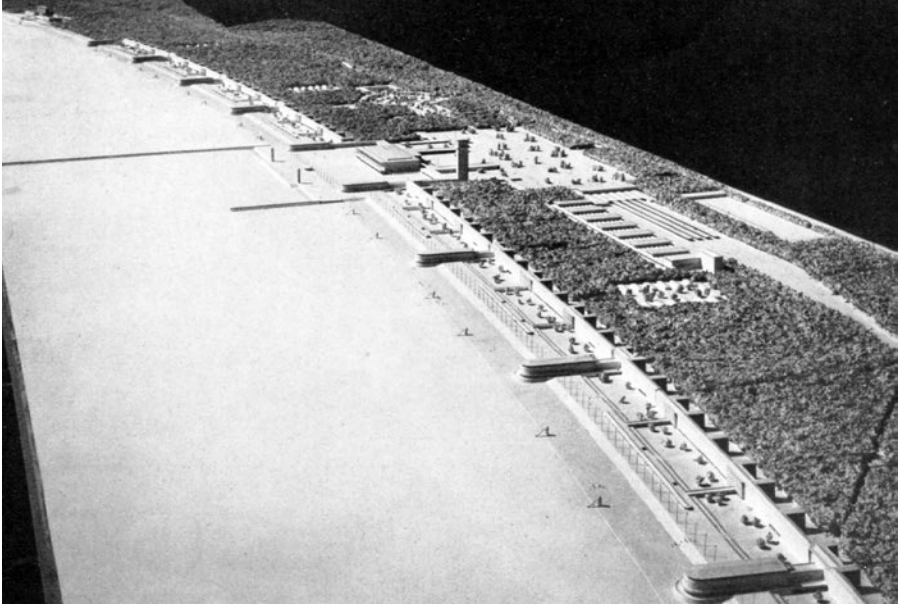
The small Franconian town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, a favorite KdF destination, witnessed one of the earliest and most thorough of these campaigns. Regional and national officials lauded local authorities for their zeal in “the cleansing of the streetscapes, above all wiping out advertisements,” and the overall effort was “declared as exemplary for all German cities.”<sup>87</sup> Other municipalities followed suit, for example, with the “purging of Lübeck’s cityscape” and a “thorough cleansing of the cityscape” in Hildesheim.<sup>88</sup> Officials in Nuremberg attacked the “building sins” of previous decades, most notably the local synagogue, while their colleagues in Mainz, Stralsund, and likely dozens of other cities framed their work around the word *Entschandlung*, which connotes the process of repairing or restoring something that has been defiled, disfigured, or dishonored.<sup>89</sup> The mayor of Braunschweig launched a beautification campaign that systematically reviewed around 7,800 homes, carefully recording the condition and overall aesthetic of each structure. As a result of the survey, officials judged 2,137 homes to be “in need of beautification.” The city further tallied 1,517 objectionable signs, 26 storefronts requiring renovation, 1,140 buildings needing a fresh coat of paint, among other deficiencies.<sup>90</sup> These initiatives were generally well received but not without problems. One official from Trier reported that property owners agreed to that city’s cleansing campaign “only after prolonged hesitation” due to costs.<sup>91</sup> KdF’s promise of tourism sponsorship motivated many of these initiatives. As one building official noted, the purpose of the conservation action in the small Rhenish town of Meisenheim am Glan was “in addition to the creation or rather the revival of pure ideal and cultural values, the substantial improvement of tourism and thus achieving additional income of the town.”<sup>92</sup>

Lindner and his colleagues provided a ready and eager cadre of experts the regime could deploy to cleanse the towns, villages, and countryside of the occupied territories. In collaboration with Schulte-Frohlinde, Lindner prepared a third installment, a book simply titled *The East*, following the basic model as the two previous books.<sup>93</sup> This work helped provide the foundation for Himmler's own Guidelines for the Care and Improvement of Townscapes in the German East in late 1940, promising a "profound redesign and for the most part complete rebuilding to obtain their final German form." Places and buildings deemed German would be refurbished, while other places and buildings would simply disappear. To achieve this, the directive encouraged lower-level officials to pursue the speedy creation of "pioneering, exemplary model achievements at remarkable locations" to "awaken ambition and competition."<sup>94</sup>

KdF was quite adept at restructuring existing destinations, but Ley eventually set to creating new resorts at Hitler's behest. In 1935, Ley announced plans to establish five new beach resorts along the Baltic Sea near Kolberg (Kołobrzeg, Poland), Danzig (Gdańsk, Poland), Travemünde, Königsberg (Kaliningrad, Russia), and the island of Rügen. These resorts would host fourteen million vacationers annually, as well as support the DAF's fleet of cruise ships. The Baltic coast was a popular travel destination, and many of these areas were relatively poor and strongholds of Nazi support. Ley was eager to proceed, as was Hitler apparently, so in early 1936, Ley ordered a design contest for the Prora beach resort on Rügen among a select group of architects invited by Speer.<sup>95</sup> Rather than a genuine competition, it is likely that Ley, with approval from Hitler and Speer, had already promised the commission by the end of 1935 to Klotz, who had already publicly displayed initial plans. The competition called for a massive resort for 20,000 vacationers and 2,000 staff centered on a huge festival hall. All rooms would have a seaside view, requiring some type of elongated structure running along the beach. Additionally, the resort needed all the necessary support facilities. The cornerstone was laid in May 1936, but Klotz was not named the official winner of the design contest until August. While Klotz's victory was probably predetermined, the contest may have still served the purpose of soliciting ideas from other architects, as was so often the case. In this case, Hitler accepted Klotz's concept but ordered that the festival hall be built according to the design of another entrant, Erich zu Putlitz.

Prora would be a sprawling complex stretching nearly five kilometers in a slightly bent line that paralleled the coast, allowing each guest approximately 5 square meters of beach space (figure 5.13). A central reception and assembly area separated two thin housing wings. Each wing was divided into four segments around 500 meters long, six stories tall, but only 7 meters wide. Each segment had its own restaurant protruding out toward the sea and ten extensions toward the rear that housed stairs, staff quarters, janito-





**Figure 5.13. The Prora Seaside Resort on the Baltic Island of Rügen**

The regime touted construction of the Prora seaside resort as evidence of its commitment to raise standards of living. The massive scale of the resort combined with the small size of the individual rooms would provide accommodations for up to 20,000 vacationers, as well as support and leisure facilities, such as restaurants, lodging for staff, a railroad station, and port capable of handling large cruise ships.

Source: R., "Wettbewerb für ein K.d.F.-Seebad auf Rügen," 819.

rial areas, and communal bathrooms. Each wing also had near its center an attached indoor swimming pool and gymnastics hall. The ground floor contained day cares, various shops, and additional staff quarters. The guest quarters, measuring a mere 12.5 square meters, had enough room for two beds, a sink, a dresser, and little else. Each wing also had an attached reception building, administrative offices, and a café on their centermost ends. The festival hall stood between these two reception buildings with a port on one side and an assembly square with a large theater on the other side. Additionally, Prora would have its own railway station, school, hospital, and additional staff housing.

Klotz's design featured a rather austere functionalism aimed at serving throngs of vacationers as efficiently as possible. Descriptions of the project emphasized its innovative and technological prowess. Gerdy Troost proclaimed Prora was "an absolutely new work."<sup>96</sup> Her choice of wording was apt as Ley's concept applied Fordist ideas of mass production to vacationing. And like most of the regime's other monumental projects, Prora's buildings used a combination of steel-reinforced concrete and brick structures, and the festival hall mimicked the typical Hitler-Speer neoclassicism. Work

proceeded at a feverish pace with around 2,000 workers employed on-site. By the time work stopped in September 1939, the shells for five of the eight housing segments were mostly complete, and work had begun on the restaurants, pools, and reception buildings. Prora never hosted a single guest, although it had a variety of provisional uses during the war. The various KdF hotels planned for the Führer and Gau cities, Order Castles, and other places never even made it that far. Despite this, Prora and other leisure projects received lavish press attention as they embodied the regime's promises of a brighter future including vacations for all.

### Sport and Spectacle

Given the regime's rhetoric of health, fitness, and beauty, it is not surprising that the regime's educational building programs emphasized the importance of sports and physical activity. Nearly every type of educational or leisure facility had some type of sport component. Hitler helped establish this precedent early. In his memoirs, he claimed:

above all, in our present education a balance must be created between mental instruction and physical training. . . . In our educational system it has been utterly forgotten that in the long run a healthy mind can only dwell in a healthy body. . . . Physical training in the folkish state, therefore, is not an affair of the individual, and not even a matter which primarily regards the parents or only secondly or thirdly interests the community; it is a requirement for the self-preservation of the nationality, represented and protected by the state.<sup>97</sup>

The Party's platform even called for the establishment of compulsory gymnastics and sport training. Beyond the public health dimensions, National Socialism also operationalized sports and athletics as tools for training and disciplining the masses and public space. The epitome of this impulse was the highly choreographed displays of rhythmic gymnastics featured during the Nuremberg rallies and other Party events.<sup>98</sup>

The regime required more sports in schools but also sought to change the nature of sports. Specifically, sports would focus on pre-military activities, like hiking, marching, swimming, climbing, throwing, and of course boxing, which Hitler singled out for special praise in *Mein Kampf*. The regime also expanded sport and athletic opportunities for adults. The National Socialist Fighting Games were the pinnacle of Nazi sport. The games originated in the early Weimar years as an alternative to the Olympics, from which Germany was banned. The Olympics readmitted Germany, but the Nazi regime eventually morphed the idea of an alternative Olympics into the Fighting Games. Held during the Nuremberg rallies, participants from the Party's various paramilitary wings, especially the Hitler Youth, competed in events like hand grenade throwing and distance running while wearing fatigues and backpacks. The goal of these and other sporting events, as Hitler declared

while speaking to the HJ during the 1935 rally, was to create “men and girls who are fit as a fiddle, who are strung taut. What we want from our German youth is different from what the past wanted of it. In our eyes, the German youth of the future must be slender and supple, swift as greyhounds, tough as leather, and hard as Krupp steel.”<sup>99</sup>

The regime cultivated and integrated sports and pre-military athletics into daily life in order to improve the overall fitness of the masses, including for military service. The Party’s paramilitary wings each organized their own athletics programs, but KdF assumed the task of organizing sport and physical training courses for the general adult population with gymnastics and swimming among the more popular. From 1934 to 1939, KdF claimed more than twenty-one million people participated in sport courses, mostly during the evenings.<sup>100</sup> Even allowing for double counting, there were undoubtedly millions of Germans participating in KdF’s sport programs. Even the exiled Social Democratic Party admitted, “KdF-Sport still receives lively interest.”<sup>101</sup> KdF’s shift away from pre-military activities in favor of basic skills for beginners contributed to its popularity. KdF also touted the fact that it brought to the masses a variety of relatively exclusive activities, like horseback riding, sailing, skiing, and tennis.

Ley’s efforts were assisted by Hans von Tschammer und Osten as leader of the KdF Sport Office. Appointed by Hitler as Reich Sport Leader in 1933 and then to head the National Socialist Reich League for Physical Exercise in 1938, Tschammer und Osten quickly closed or merged most of Germany’s preexisting sporting groups. As the main governing body, the Reich League organized a variety of national events, the last and probably largest being the German Gymnastics and Sports Festival in Breslau in 1938. The festival’s venue, a stadium completed in 1928 but renovated and renamed Hermann Göring Stadium, was typical in that the regime simply used existing facilities. This was also the case regarding the Municipal Stadium in Nuremberg, which coincidentally also opened in 1928 and was then remodeled as the venue for the Fighting Games and other HJ events during the Party rallies.

These types of sport facilities were in short supply, though, and virtually nonexistent outside larger cities. To remedy this, the regime proclaimed that every community should have its own sport venues. Ideally, there should be a gymnastics hall for every 25,000 people, an indoor swimming pool for every 30,000 people, and even the smallest communities would have a track and field venue. All sports were encouraged, but the regime prioritized swimming. In fall 1937, the regime announced its determination to build 3,600 new swimming pools over the next six years.<sup>102</sup> Richard Walther Darré proclaimed that “every German boy and every German girl shall be able to swim. . . . Therefore we call on the villages and municipalities, the local farming communities and the local chapters of the Party: Create swimming pools for the German youth!”<sup>103</sup> Despite these exhortations to get in shape, the regime provided little funding for swimming pools or other sport facili-

ties, aside from those attached to schools, HJ projects, or the Olympics. Not surprisingly, relatively little actual construction occurred. The DAF was able to report the opening of only 124 new swimming pools by 1940.<sup>104</sup>

These sport facilities tended to follow functional, modernist designs, although some projects in larger cities, such as the North Swimming Hall in Munich, reflected the neoclassicist pomp of the regime's monumental buildings. That was certainly the case for the Olympic grounds in Berlin and to a lesser extent at the Winter Olympics complex in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Here, the regime commissioned a new festival hall and a new town hall, in addition to the requisite sport facilities, that blended traditional alpine styles and modern sports design. Hitler imagined the Nuremberg rally grounds as the future pinnacle of this burgeoning Nazi sport hierarchy. Its centerpiece German Stadium would, as we have seen earlier, dwarf its Olympic counterpart and host all future Olympics after the scheduled 1940 games in Japan. The stadium's extreme size made it ill suited for sports as spectators would be so far away that it would be nearly impossible to see the actual events. It may not have mattered since "sporting contests here will be given an entirely new and special form; there will be fewer individual athletic achievements demonstrated as battles of teams and organizations."<sup>105</sup> Work on the German Stadium had barely commenced before it was idled, but the Olympic Stadium in Berlin hosted an assortment of athletic, HJ, and military activities after 1936. Tragically, the Olympic grounds witnessed some of the fiercest fighting in the closing days of the war when around 2,000 Hitler Youth "soldiers" died retaking the area from Soviet forces. Originally intended as a venue to display the athletic prowess and racial superiority of the German people, the site devolved into a battlefield in which German teenagers sacrificed in a futile attempt to save Hitler's Reich.

### REARRANGING SACRED SPACES

Hitler and his henchmen drew from religious imagery, symbolism, and ceremonies in creating and staging Party rituals. For example, as we have seen, Speer likened his use of aircraft searchlights to frame the nighttime space above the Zeppelin Field as a "cathedral of light."<sup>106</sup> Hitler's exact attitude toward religion remains a matter of debate, but he clearly regarded establishment churches as obstacles to the regime's totalitarian aspirations. Yet these churches had millions of devout followers, including many Party members, so the regime fluctuated between apathy and hostility toward established religion. Hitler's building program indicated that religion, at least in the traditional sense, would have a greatly reduced visible presence in the new Reich. Troost's lavish picture books, for example, included seemingly every other conceivable category of architecture except churches. Instead, Troost proclaimed the Führer cities, the Order Castles,

and other monumental projects to be “buildings of faith.”<sup>107</sup> Speer seemed to concur when he later acknowledged that Hitler’s planned Great Hall in Berlin “was essentially a place of worship.”<sup>108</sup> Religious and sacred architecture was not completely abandoned though, and a new set of sacred sites gradually emerged across Nazi Germany.

### Unification of Church and State

The Nazi Party platform endorsed Positive Christianity, which might be best described as an attempt to create a German version of Christianity that was simultaneously pan-denominational and infused with racial ideology. Beyond that, the Party promised to support religious freedom for the major Christian denominations, so long as that freedom did not undermine the German race. The regime appeared to honor its promise by signing agreements with the Catholic and Lutheran churches in 1933 guaranteeing their right to conduct religious activities. For their part, the churches found some comfort in Nazi denunciations of communism and liberalism. This apparent truce merely delayed the inevitable. Within a couple years, the regime began absorbing or closing religious organizations and institutions. The regime never tried to close or outlaw churches entirely, although there were clearly some Nazis who wanted to replace Christianity with the new religion of National Socialism, most notably Goebbels, Himmler, and Rosenberg. Goebbels even confided in his diary in April 1937 that the regime’s new community halls would become “the churches of the future.”<sup>109</sup>

The regime’s early years saw a rather unexpected spurt of church construction, reflecting pent-up demand as the economy recovered following years of war, inflation, and depression. Churches also fit into the initial work creation programs, both in terms of restoration work on existing churches and building new churches to serve homestead settlements. The number of new churches across Germany totaled around 560 with about two-thirds being Catholic and the rest Lutheran, in addition to nearly 100 other chapels, congregational houses, and parsonages (figure 5.14). There were around 450 existing churches that underwent significant renovation as well. As one prominent journal editor noted: “Everywhere in town and country, churches are currently again being built.”<sup>110</sup> The volume of construction grew steadily through 1937 before dropping quickly. For example, forty-eight new churches were completed in Bavaria in 1937 alone before declining to one or two per year by 1941.<sup>111</sup>

The professional press covered these projects and generally praised them, although in no way comparable to the coverage afforded to the main Party buildings. The mass media paid little attention. One notable exception was a propaganda book from 1940 aimed at American audiences. The author noted trends that worked against church construction but proclaimed that



**Figure 5.14. The Evangelical Lutheran Melanchthon Church in Nuremberg**

Despite the hostility of many Party leaders toward established religions, church construction was rather robust during the Nazi period. Dedicated in 1940, the evangelical Lutheran Melanchthon Church in Nuremberg featured vague neo-Romanesque decorations and the minimalist brick walls typical of church construction of the period.

*Source:* Robert C. Ostergren.

in spite of this, Germany has built an impressive number of modern churches in which a severe simple design, the elimination of ornament and the emphasis on structure and space succeed in conveying a more authentic spirit of reverence than do the pseudo-gothic or romanesque structures of the late 19th century.<sup>112</sup>

The author was fairly accurate in describing the overall aesthetic tendencies but skirted the fact that these churches were generally the product of efforts by local congregations with little or no government support.

There were scattered instances where designers incorporated Nazi motifs, but most churches were relatively modest structures that made faint allusions to local building traditions. For example, the simple church included in the Schottenheim settlement outside Regensburg looked very much like a typical village church. The design was actually similar to the church proposed for the Lehndorf settlement in Braunschweig. Hitler, as we have seen, had vetoed the idea of locating the church at the center of the settlement, so the church was relegated to a more peripheral location

and eventually dedicated in October 1940. In contrast, the much larger Church of St. Georg was included in Braunschweig's Donnersburg settlement without any apparent fuss.<sup>113</sup>

In contrast to nineteenth-century historicism, these styles were presented as "creative conservatism." German Bestelmeyer, influential architect, professor, and president of the Bavarian Academy of the Visual Arts, was the most prominent church architect with close ties to the regime and often credited with developing this style. Beginning in the 1920s, Bestelmeyer designed a number of monumental churches, mostly in southern Germany, featuring rather stark brick and masonry exteriors somewhat resembling a combination of vernacular and neo-Romanesque architecture, while his smaller churches tended to have modest plastered exteriors. Through his leadership in The Ring architectural society and the Fighting League for German Culture, as well as his official positions, Bestelmeyer exerted significant influence in preparing a young cadre of architects for the regime.<sup>114</sup>

The most prolific church architect of the time was Albert Boßlet, who built more than one hundred Catholic churches before the war. Boßlet mostly worked in the Saar, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Franconia-Main regions. Boßlet continued working through the 1920s and 1930s with no apparent connection to the regime. No doubt he was afforded some level of protection through his close affiliation with the church. Boßlet's largest church, and likely the largest church built during the Nazi period, was the Benedictine Abbey of Münsterschwarzach near Würzburg. The abbey was approximately eighty-eight meters long and thirty-one meters wide. Each end was capped by a pair of square towers with the tallest pair reaching fifty-three meters high. Overall, the structure was indicative of general tendencies in church design with its sharp geometry and stern facade resembling a modernist, neo-Romanesque interpretation of the cathedrals in Speyer or Worms.<sup>115</sup>

This is not to suggest that church architecture was standardized or that Party officials took no interest. Nuremberg's Protestant community had been working toward a new church for several years, but financial obstacles blocked the project. The idea found an unexpected supporter in the city's new Nazi mayor, Willy Liebel. The congregation was wary of government and Party involvement, but Liebel was able to meddle nonetheless. Bestelmeyer won a seat on the competition jury, which ultimately selected one of his students as the winner. This new Reformation Memorial Church featured a twelve-sided body encircled by three towers and an exterior composed of roughly hewn stone (figure 5.15).<sup>116</sup> The overall impression is rather odd; it is vaguely reminiscent of Byzantine religious architecture and clearly influenced by Bestelmeyer's recently completed Church of the Redeemer in Bamberg. Some architects experimented with more modernist designs during the Weimar years, but it was soon clear that more traditionalist approaches would be a *de facto* requirement after 1933.<sup>117</sup>



**Figure 5.15. The Reformation Memorial Church in Nuremberg**

The Reformation Memorial Church, completed in 1935 in Nuremberg, featured an unorthodox twelve-sided body and three towers, but the rough stone facade and neo-Romanesque elements were common to many such structures.

*Source: A Nation Builds, 44.*

There were some sporadic efforts to harness historical churches into the regime's burgeoning network of propaganda sites, although these projects usually stemmed from the ambitions of local officials, rather than through directives from senior Party leaders. Local authorities in Worms, for example, laid out a small space paved with stone slabs, sort of like a rally square, adjacent the cathedral. Finished in 1936, this "national memorial square" never amounted to much in terms of propaganda value.<sup>118</sup> Various



other proposals circulated for memorial sites, parade grounds, and assembly squares focused on churches, crypts, and tombs thought to buttress the Nazi interpretation of German history. For example, there were serious discussions about renovating the Speyer cathedral and its crypt in which the Holy Roman Emperors of the Salien dynasty were interred. Disagreements between authorities—namely interior minister Wilhelm Frick and Bavarian president Ludwig Siebert—as well as resistance from local church officials, prevented anything substantive from happening.<sup>119</sup>

The situation followed a slightly different course in Braunschweig. Ever the energetic Nazi, Minister President Dietrich Klagges hit upon the idea of excavating and renovating the crypt under Braunschweig cathedral to locate the remains of Heinrich the Lion. Heinrich was a powerful Duke of Saxony in the twelfth century, perhaps best known for his unsuccessful quarrels with Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa, but Klagges saw Heinrich's crusades against the Slavs as distant precursors to Hitler's contemporary calls for eastern expansion. Turning a relatively minor historical figure into a mythologized national hero also furthered Klagges's efforts to build his own little fiefdom within the Nazi state. In June 1935, Klagges ordered work to begin and soon discovered Heinrich's purported remains. Whether intentional or coincidental, Hitler made a surprise visit to town the next month and intervened as usual.

Hitler entrusted Berlin architects Walter und Johannes Krüger to redesign the crypt.<sup>120</sup> Hitler knew the Krüger brothers through their work on the Tannenberg Memorial. The Braunschweig project started small but expanded rapidly once further excavations revealed major structural problems throughout the church. Instead of just the crypt, the entire cathedral needed renovation. Church authorities went along reluctantly, but Klagges eventually confirmed their fears when he informed the congregation that the altar, pews, and other religious elements would not be returned to the church as they were incompatible with the building's new function as a "state cathedral."<sup>121</sup> The crypt closely resembled the Krügers' work at Tannenberg, while nearly all the interior decoration was purged to create an austere, monumental, but empty atmosphere. Most dramatically, the upper portions of the nave featured a new series of murals valorizing Heinrich's eastern conquests, and a large eagle and swastika emblem above a forest of swastika flags replaced the main altar. This was arguably the highest-profile church project undertaken during the Third Reich, although Hitler never returned to Braunschweig or exhibited much interest in the project's progress.

This general apathy toward churches was common among Nazi officials, but there was one notable exception. Himmler took a keen interest in the Abbey of Quedlinburg as the burial place of Heinrich I, popularly regarded as the first king of Germany and father of the Ottonian line of Holy Roman Emperors. Himmler seemed genuinely fascinated by Heinrich, mythologized as

Germany's first "Führer" and for his determination to secure eastern territories for German colonization at the expense of Slavs and Magyars. Himmler decided to mark the thousand-year anniversary of Heinrich's death in 1936 by searching for his remains. In October 1935, SS officers began excavations, which gradually evolved into plans to renovate the church. A new crypt was created similar to those at Braunschweig and Tannenberg, and the interior of the Gothic apse was walled over to create a Romanesque appearance. The SS eventually discovered some bones, probably not Heinrich's, but Himmler nonetheless dedicated the new sarcophagus as Heinrich's resting place in July 1937. By the next February, Himmler closed the church to religious services and claimed it as state property.<sup>122</sup>

Events in Braunschweig and Quedlinburg were undoubtedly dramatic but not the norm. The regime's leadership simply lacked significant and sustained interest in framing Party spaces and places around churches. And while the regime generally tolerated the construction of new churches, albeit not in prominent locations, momentum was gradually shifting in the opposite direction. Hitler's insatiable ambition to restructure German cities would have meant the demolition of untold numbers of churches. The Protestant St. Matthäus Church, torn down as part of the initial efforts to redesign Munich, foreshadowed the likely fate of many churches. Churches could reasonably expect some level of compensation, but, as Speer noted, Bormann had pointedly instructed that churches would not be afforded space to rebuild within designated redesign districts.<sup>123</sup> The Party's antipathy to churches was non-denominational. Giesler's redesign plans for Augsburg called for the demolition of a Catholic church and cemetery, as well as a synagogue.<sup>124</sup> The regime later pressed many religious structures into military service. The military confiscated Münsterschwarzach Abbey in 1941, for example, for use as an infirmary.

The regime's plans for the newly conquered eastern territories offered a glimpse of the future of church architecture in Hitler's Reich. While explaining the regime's overall approach for redesigning these areas, Josef Umlauf acknowledged that, during medieval times, "the church was unquestionably the built high point of the settlement. It was at that time the symbol of a truly comprehensive community."<sup>125</sup> Churches had lost considerable significance since then, according to Umlauf, and would therefore be included sparingly in the new east, if at all. Instead, the Party's new community houses, as at Mascherode, would dominate these new settlements. If the regime's attitude toward churches was rather ambivalent, its dealings with synagogues were relentlessly hostile, climaxing in the Night of Broken Glass (*Kristallnacht*) in November 1938. During that night, Nazi troopers rampaged across Germany destroying more than 1,000 synagogues and prayer rooms. Thousands of Jewish businesses and institutions were also destroyed, and dozens murdered, as Hitler took a decisive step toward his final solution.<sup>126</sup>

## Shrines and Sanctuaries

The regime's apathy or inconsistency toward church construction reflected uncertainty about what types of community structures and spaces might serve as replacements. Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry endorsed the idea of constructing open-air folk theaters, or *Thingstätte* (Thing sites or Thing places), as part of its efforts to rejuvenate cultural life.<sup>127</sup> The word *Thing* referred to a communal assembly practiced by ancient Germanic tribes, but these new Thingstätte provided venues for political theater. A few of the larger facilities, such as the Annaberg Thingstätte (near Góra Świętej Anny, Poland), could accommodate 20,000 to 30,000 people, but most had capacities under 10,000 (figure 5.16). The Thingstätte usually featured spectator seating set into a hillside and were generally located in relatively isolated rural or natural areas, or occasionally city parks, where forests, rocky cliffs, or expansive views offered a scenic backdrop.

Thingstätte proposals quickly multiplied with as many as 400 planned. Many of these projects, like those mentioned previously, were basically stand-alone sites, but some projects envisioned more expansive complexes. The city of Braunschweig laid out a processional route leading from the city center through a city park to a Thingstätte in a wooded area more than two kilometers away.<sup>128</sup> In contrast, local officials in Koblenz constructed a Thingstätte in the middle of the city where the main facade of the neoclassical Elector's Palace provided a backdrop.<sup>129</sup> The city of Stuttgart considered building a Thingstätte as the focal point for a new "forum" featuring a House of Labor for the DAF, stadium, and swimming hall.<sup>130</sup>

The overall thrust of this Thingstätte movement complemented several basic tenets of Nazi ideology. Goebbels went so far, while dedicating the Thingstätte at Bad Segeberg in Schleswig-Holstein in 1937, as to characterize these amphitheaters as the "political churches of National Socialism."<sup>131</sup> According to Ludwig Moshamer, a Breslau-based architect who designed several Thingstätte and later administrative buildings in Berlin including the Japanese embassy, these structures were built so that they appeared to grow out of the natural landscape. Stone was the primary building material with forests and cliffs providing a sense of enclosure. The Thingstätte also blurred the spatial distinction between spectator and performer. This type of "participatory" theater would bring large numbers of Germans together for communal experiences in a natural setting. The benefits seemed so great that Moshamer speculated that the Thing movement might very well become the dominant form of German theater.<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, the actual performances would have significant propaganda value, since the content would naturally idealize the Party, its values, and achievements. The form of the Thingstätte also offered some practical benefits. Material costs were low since there were minimal freestanding structures. Labor costs were low since unemployed, unskilled workers performed much of the necessary excavation work.



**Figure 5.16. The Annaberg Thingstätte Amphitheater in Silesia**

The Annaberg Thingstätte amphitheater made use of a rocky cliff as a dramatic backdrop. The fortress-like structure atop the cliff is a war memorial by the German War Graves Commission.

*Source: Troost, Das Bauen im Neuen Reich, 1:45.*

Despite initial promise, the regime largely abandoned the Thingstätte program after 1936 with less than one-fifth of the planned theaters actually built. The reasons for this failure are part practical and part political. On the practical side, the Thingstätte were often in remote locations difficult to reach for much of Germany's urban population. Beyond that, the plays suffered from lighting and acoustical problems, and public reception was tepid at best. On the political side, the Thingstätte idea complemented the rural romanticism championed by Darré, Himmler, and Rosenberg, but Hitler and Goebbels paid little more than lip service to this cause. Goebbels soon centralized cultural policy within his ministry while largely marginalizing Rosenberg and his supporters from decision making. Many proponents of the Thing movement had previous associations with the Socialist Catholic movement and were purged. For Goebbels and likely Hitler as well, the propaganda potential of radio, film, and mass rallies also brought the practical deficiencies of the Thingstätte into sharper focus. Indeed, after declaring the Thingstätte as "political churches" at Bad Segeberg, Goebbels wrote in his diary: "The ceremony site itself is quite passable. No work of art, but still bearable."<sup>133</sup>

Hitler and Goebbels also wished to disassociate the Party from any cult-like connotations and banned using the word *Thing*, preferring instead festival or celebration. Fritz Schaller, architect and prominent Thing supporter, acknowledged the movement's shortcomings but felt that the shift from summer theater to folk festivals and Party rallies ordered by Hitler and Goebbels would rectify this:

The historicized name "Thingstätte" has already been filed away. And that is good. The attempts to produce open-air theater in these places have largely failed, while festivals have become true celebrations. . . . The masses flow together and first form a community in which every individual experiences themselves as a member of the greater community, which is fatefully connected to its native soil. Community—landscape—celebration—these are the three keywords that approximate the forces awaiting design.<sup>134</sup>

This idea of melding the masses into a community certainly resonated with Nazi loyalists. Yet, the themes of community, landscape, and celebration omitted any obvious role for Hitler and the Party, certainly in comparison to the "one Volk—one Reich—one Führer" slogan. Indeed, Hitler's cultural speech at the 1938 Party rally erased any doubts concerning the place of Thingstätte in the regime's building program:

In its organization, National Socialism is above all a people's movement, but under no circumstances a cultic phenomenon. . . . National Socialism is simply not a cultic movement but rather a mature folkish-political teaching from exclusively racial insights. . . . We therefore have no cult spaces but rather exclusively people's halls; also no cult places but rather assembly and proces-

sional places. We have no cult groves but rather sport arenas or festival areas. And the characteristics of our assembly spaces are not the mystical darkness of cultic sites but rather the brightness and light of an equally beautiful and functional assembly hall.<sup>135</sup>

A few additional amphitheaters were commissioned after 1936, often attached to HJ facilities, but most Thingstätte drifted into obscurity.

The Stedingsehre project provides an interesting closing note on the Thing movement. Stedingen was a swampy area northwest of Bremen. The area's residents fell out of favor with church authorities in Bremen during the Middle Ages. This exact reason is not clear, but the church incited a crusade against the Stedingers and massacred them in 1234. The affair remained a topic of local interest but was not broadly known beyond the region. Discussions of marking the 700th anniversary of the massacre had been underway for a few years, but little happened until Gauleiter Röver took up the cause and commissioned an amphitheater devoted to commemorative reenactments of the Stedingen conflict near the village of Bookholzberg. The complex consisted of a semicircle of bench seating for around 7,800 people. Unlike most Thingstätte, where the seating was arranged around some type of natural feature, Stedingsehre was centered on a mock peasant village complete with a church, mill, and roughly a dozen thatched-roof cottages. A small "moat" separated the village from spectators.

Darré, Himmler, and Rosenberg, the project's chief sponsor, attended the foundation stone ceremony for this Cult Site Stedingen in October 1934. Work proceeded rapidly, and the first performances of the Stedingen saga opened in 1935. The first ten performances were immensely popular, reportedly drawing 80,000 spectators, slightly above seating capacity. In spring 1936, Röver began planning to add a Gau school complex, complete with its own assembly square, clock tower, congress hall, HJ training school, and even an Adolf Hitler School. Little came of this planned expansion. Neither Röver nor Rosenberg could finance the project, so progress was dependent on donations and ticket sales.<sup>136</sup>

Rosenberg, Himmler, and Darré were also active creating cultic sites related to the Widukind, an eighth-century leader who resisted Charlemagne's efforts to conquer and convert the Saxons to Christianity. Widukind ultimately failed, culminating in the Massacre of Verden in which Charlemagne ordered the execution of several thousand Saxon prisoners. Widukind was not among the victims, but his story was later mythologized as a valiant German leader defending his people against a foreign invader and religion. Widukind was also thought to be an ancestor of Heinrich I's wife. The purported location of the massacre became known as Sachsenhain, or the Saxon Grove. Rosenberg proposed that the site be marked with 4,500 boulders, one for each Saxon executed, and arranged to create a pathway through the grove. Some type of Thingstätte would be included. The

amphitheater was never built, but the Reich Food Corporation relocated three large farmhouses to create a small hamlet in the middle of the grove. The SS donated money to pay for the work. Sachsenhain was dedicated in June 1935 with Rosenberg and Himmler in attendance, although the project was not finished until 1937.<sup>137</sup> Himmler's interest in Widukind also led him to the town of Enger. Beginning in 1934, the SS staged various ceremonies around Widukind's tomb. Apparently, Himmler considered renovating the church, but church authorities managed somehow to dissuade him. Instead, the SS renovated a nearby half-timbered merchant house into a Widukind Memorial to host SS ceremonies after 1939.<sup>138</sup>

The German public held medieval castles in high regard as cultural icons and very popular travel destinations. Unsurprisingly, some Party officials hoped to harness these sites for their own purposes, including training facilities, HJ homes and hostels, and other assorted Party spaces. Other Party officials viewed castles as another opportunity to establish quasi-religious sites. Ludwig Siebert, for example, launched an ambitious campaign to restore and repurpose government-owned castles in Bavaria. Siebert ordered the medieval imperial castle in Nuremberg purged of later additions and redecorated to capture an idealized, pure form. Several other castles and palaces experienced similar cleansing actions. The Trifels Castle in the Rhineland was somewhat different. The fortress was once an imperial castle of the Hohenstaufen dynasty and housed the imperial regalia. Eventually abandoned, the structure collapsed over the centuries. Siebert decided to rebuild the castle, more or less from scratch since information on its original design was very limited. Siebert proclaimed the new Trifels would become a "national holy place" that would serve as a "symbol of the inner connection of the new Reich with the old and thereby a symbol of the immortality of the German spirit."<sup>139</sup> War interrupted the project, but it was finished largely according to the original plan after the war, absent the Nazi symbols of course.

There were other sporadic attempts to associate the Nazi movement with pagan, Neolithic, or medieval sites, but little came of these. Hitler was dismissive of these initiatives and even reportedly critical of Himmler's archeological forays into Germanic prehistory. Speer recounted Hitler as saying:

It isn't enough that the Romans were erecting great buildings when our forefathers were still living in mud huts; now Himmler is starting to dig up these villages of mud huts and enthusing over every potsherd and stone axe he finds. All we prove is that we were still throwing stone hatchets and crouching around open fires when Greece and Rome had already reached the highest stage of culture. We really should do our best to keep quiet about this past.<sup>140</sup>

Little wonder that these various Thing and cult places largely disappeared from Party propaganda. The Lorelei Thingstätte, for example, opened in 1939 on the cliff over its namesake section of the Rhine. Various public

events continued there into the war years, but the focus was on tourism and entertainment, instead of political theater or mystical experiences. Tellingly, Troost's bulky picture books, first published in 1938, showcased the breadth of the regime's building program from monumental government and rally complexes to modest suburbs and farmsteads, yet no "Thing" sites appeared.<sup>141</sup> It was clear that the regime would focus on building new urban centers and residential-industrial-military complexes, rather than natural settings or pagan sites.

The Wewelsburg Castle deserves special mention here. The seventeenth-century castle became public property and served alternatively as a museum, hostel, and local multipurpose center during the 1920s. The castle gradually fell into disrepair, especially its main tower to the north. In 1934, Himmler took possession of Wewelsburg with the intention of renovating the castle as the SS Reich Leadership School. It is unclear why Himmler selected this location. Many attribute his decision to some occult beliefs, but there were other pragmatic considerations, such as its relative proximity to the sight of the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest, or simple expediency and availability. In any case, restoration work got underway quickly. The exact purpose was unclear and Himmler ordered strict secrecy, but his overall goal seemed to be a retreat for high-ranking SS leaders. The work was fairly typical of other projects during the period, with the exception that pagan and runic motifs were incorporated as decorative elements. Some SS researchers worked in the castle, but no other type of instruction took place. Himmler visited the castle occasionally, but it was not really a major hub of SS activity. The secrecy surrounding the castle only fueled speculation of occult rituals and conspiracies. Conversely, it is quite possible that Himmler simply had not yet decided upon an exact use for the complex.

All speculation aside, Himmler decided to expand the project greatly. Hermann Bartels, also responsible for the redesign of Münster, began developing a series of plans for a sprawling SS facility in 1939. In July 1940, Hitler issued one of his redesign decrees placing Himmler in charge of all planning and building matters for the Wewelsburg area.<sup>142</sup> The plan continued to evolve into 1944, but the basic concept called for sprawling barracks, ceremonial halls, and other support facilities. The adjacent village would be leveled. When viewed from above, the overall impression is one of a series of concentric circles centered on the castle's north tower, although the western side, which slopes downward, remained open. The diameter of this complex would have stretched more than a kilometer. The castle's triangular shape would extend back to link with this new perimeter, almost resembling the tip of a spear with the north tower as the point. Himmler never specified the purpose of this massive complex and surviving plans only indicate the general dimensions and locations of buildings, not their specific purpose. Yet there can be little doubt that Himmler intended Wewelsburg to become a central node in his far-reaching SS empire.



## Heroism and Martyrdom

The themes of heroism, sacrifice, and death pervaded the Nazi movement's rhetoric and rituals. Initially, the movement focused on those who died fighting in World War I and its aftermath. The Party gained its own "martyrs" during its failed putsch. The pantheon of fallen Nazi heroes expanded over time as every death became a gallant sacrifice on behalf of the Party and its Führer, most notably SA trooper Horst Wessel killed in Berlin in 1930. The commemoration of these various martyrs, often marked by silence, provided a counterpoint to Party rallies, where much of the time was otherwise consumed by rabble-rousing speeches, cheering, and other boisterous activities. The Nazis soon sought tangible anchors for these commemorations, but as an opposition Party with limited resources, they made do with existing memorials, such as the Hall of Honor built by the city of Nuremberg to honor local soldiers killed during World War I. The most the Party could achieve on its own was to design small commemorative spaces in Party offices, usually something modest like a plaque or an inscription in an office vestibule.

Once in power, the regime moved quickly to establish places of memory for its fallen heroes.<sup>143</sup> The Temples of Honor on Munich's Königsplatz square and the memorial plaque added to the Field Generals Hall were the most prominent, but some type of memorial space was incorporated into nearly every major Nazi commission, again the entrance foyer or vestibule being the most common choice (figure 5.17). Numerous "Horst Wessel" monuments and place names popped up across Germany, largely resulting from local initiative. Generally, these were modest structures, often small obelisks or stone slabs bearing an inscription. Hitler and the regime leadership seemed generally content to use existing monuments that emphasized heroism, victory, or sacrifice, like the Monument to the Battle of Nations commemorating Napoleon's defeat near Leipzig. Memorials that contained explicit antiwar messages or emphasized grief, suffering, or loss were generally refurbished to convey the desired messages, such as the New Guardhouse memorial in Berlin.

The German War Graves Commission organized the closest thing to a systematic memorial-building program. Established in 1919, the commission supervised the location, identification, and proper burial of Germany's dead from World War I. Under the direction of its top architect Robert Tischler, the commission established dozens of war cemeteries and memorials across Europe.<sup>144</sup> By the 1930s, the commission's work had gained a more monumental guise as Tischler added ever larger chapels and memorial structures. These cenotaphs were generally roughly hewn stone structures heroically perched atop a hill, giving the appearance of a fortress, or "castle of the dead" (*Totenburg*) as Tischler and his colleagues began to reference them around 1934.<sup>145</sup> The deceased soldiers were interred in mass graves surrounding the cenotaph, instead of individual graves under markers, to emphasize the notion of



**Figure 5.17. The Two Temples of Honor Adjacent the Königsplatz Square in Munich**

Two identical Temples of Honor were key components of Hitler's redesign of the Königsplatz square in Munich. The temples contained the sarcophagi of the Party martyrs from the 1923 failed putsch and soon became important places of pilgrimage for Party faithful.

*Source: Troost, Das Bauen im Neuen Reich, 1:15.*

national belonging and sacrifice. Perhaps because these designs were largely compatible with National Socialist tastes, the commission operated throughout the 1930s largely free from government interference.

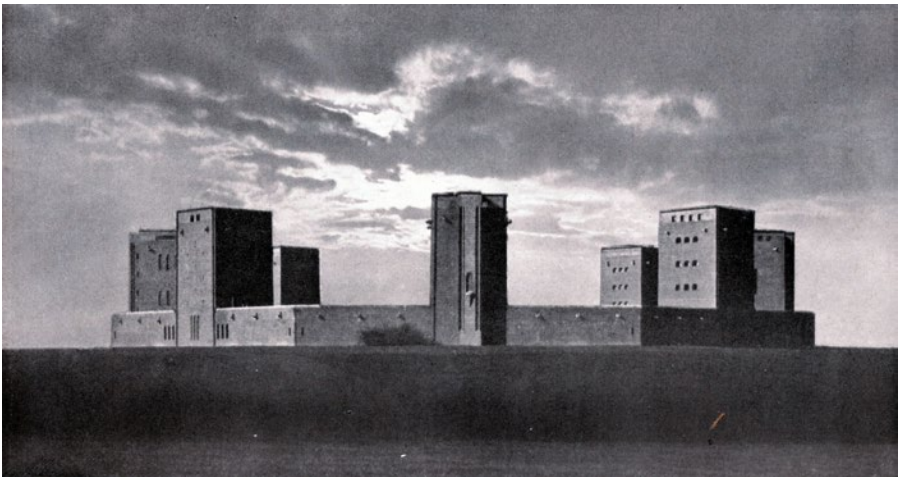
In contrast, the regime intervened directly in the Tannenberg Memorial. The 1914 Battle of Tannenberg was a decisive victory for German forces commanded by General Paul von Hindenburg over Russian forces invading East Prussia.<sup>146</sup> A movement to commemorate the battle arose in the early 1920s and culminated in a monument designed by Johannes and Walter Krüger. The design consisted of an octagonal stone enclosure with eight square towers in the middle of each side, reaching around twenty meters in height. The interior space was a grassy area divided into four sections by paved walkways. The walkways met to form a square centered on a small platform topped by a large bronze cross. The bodies of twenty unknown German soldiers were interred beneath the platform.

Largely completed by 1933, there was little indication the regime planned anything further for the memorial until Hindenburg died in August 1934. Hindenburg wished to be buried at his estate next to his wife, but Hitler decided to inter both at Tannenberg. Hitler consulted closely with the Krüger

brothers as they modified the memorial. The interior was sunk by around two meters, leveled, and paved with granite slabs with some darker pavers forming an iron cross in the center. The sunken floor allowed for a crypt for Hindenburg, his wife, and the unknown soldiers, guarded by four-meter-tall stone soldiers, under the tower opposite the main entrance. Previously, the towers had a variety of uses, including a youth hostel, but these more mundane functions were expelled to create a dedicated memorial space as each tower now fulfilled some specific commemorative function. As a result of these renovations, Gerdy Troost claimed that this “great castle of the dead” had finally achieved an honorable form.<sup>147</sup>

The spatial arrangement of this new Reich Memorial Tannenberg, as well as many of Tischler’s memorials, deviated from previous national monuments, which tended to feature some type of tower, obelisk, statue, or other central structure that people gathered around or in front of. In contrast, visitors at Tannenberg gathered inside the memorial, achieving in that sense something similar to the effect realized at the Luitpold and Zeppelin fields in Nuremberg (figure 5.18). As historian George L. Mosse noted, “the result was a monument which surrounded a vast ‘sacred space,’ rather than being surrounded by it.”<sup>148</sup>

The idea of “castles of the dead” carried over into the war years. Wilhelm Kreis assumed the position of general building inspector for the design of German war cemeteries in 1941. Kreis had a long career stretching back to the turn of the century, including the design of several Bismarck monuments. Despite this background, Kreis’s age made him an unlikely choice



**Figure 5.18. The Tannenberg Memorial in East Prussia**

The Tannenberg Memorial reflected the clear trend in war memorial design toward fortress-like structures with foreboding appearances. Although the memorial had been constructed before the Nazi regime seized power, Hitler ordered it redesigned following Chancellor Paul von Hindenburg’s death.

Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 66.

since Hitler favored younger architects. Speer seemed to respect Kreis, and indeed, the number of architects not already committed to regime projects or serving in the military must have been rather small. Kreis set to his task and published his initial ideas in March 1943 to mark his seventieth birthday. Kreis sketched out a series of around thirty-six massive cenotaphs, officially labeled Warriors Memorials, which would mark and defend the imagined borders of Hitler's new empire.

Friedrich Tamms, one of Speer's closest colleagues, described how these new monuments—these “truly godly buildings”—would stretch “from Narvik to Africa, from the Atlantic to the plains of Russia, beginning at the borders of the Greater German Reich and ending on the front lines of the greatest battle in the world.”<sup>149</sup> The monuments would generally be perched on a hilltop or other prominent location and presumably be surrounded by cemeteries. Each structure had a distinct design that utilized local building materials, mostly stone. It was also important that each incorporated some elements of the region's traditional architecture. For example, the Africa memorial was clearly intended to resemble an ancient Egyptian *mastaba*. The memorials would also be located where the fighting “was the most tremendous, where it reached its wildest point,” so it is not surprising that the largest of these structures would be a “massive mountain of stone” rising to a peak of more than 165 meters above the Russian steppe with an interior crypt 100 meters tall (figure 5.19).<sup>150</sup>



**Figure 5.19. One of the Giant Cenotaphs Hitler Ordered Built across Europe**

Hitler approved the construction of a series of giant cenotaphs that would mark the territorial extent of his new Reich. Planned to occupy prominent locations near critical battlefields, these war memorials existed only as drawings, such as this one to be built on the Russian steppe following Hitler's expected triumph over the Soviet Union.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 74.

The Soldier's Hall in Berlin, also designed by Kreis, would serve as the symbolic center for these memorials scattered to the ends of Europe and beyond. But in many ways, the Soldier's Hall had a different purpose. As Tamms noted, the hall's massive vaulted interior would be flooded with light so the building would speak "more of the vows of the living as of the legacy of the dead . . . a new, true German cathedral born of the sacrifices of all who gave their dearest so that the future lives" (figure 5.20).<sup>151</sup> In that sense, the Soldier's Hall encouraged the living to give over their lives to their Führer, instead of paying tribute to the memory of the deceased. Gerdy Troost counted these symbolic tombs among the "noblest monumental buildings of the new Germany" where "the meaning of struggle, sacrifice, and victory will find in them eternal form in lasting stone," but her earlier formulation of castles of the dead seems a better fit.<sup>152</sup>

#### CODA: ALT REHSE

The Nazi movement was hardly unique in its interest in public health, eugenics, and even euthanasia. These ideas, influenced by social-Darwinist assumptions, found receptive audiences across Europe and the United States, where dozens of states passed popular eugenics laws forcing the sterilization of tens of thousands of people with mental disabilities, criminal records, or other "asocial" characteristics. Once seizing power, the regime worked quickly to coordinate health professionals, and Hitler ordered the establishment of district health offices within the Party bureaucracy in July 1933. Yet the regime's emphasis on public health resulted in little new construction, and most of the new hospitals and infirmaries served the military. The regime's other health initiatives generally made do with existing buildings. For example, the Action T4 euthanasia program used existing hospitals, psychiatric wards, and sanatoriums. Unlike later death camps, the T4 facilities entailed relatively minor construction, generally just small gas chambers and crematorium ovens in cellars. The first gas chamber at Hadamar measured just over twelve square meters. Most facilities could only gas a dozen or so victims simultaneously, and cremation of the corpses took even longer. These factors generally limited their murderous capacity to fewer than 100 people daily, but T4 doctors still managed to kill roughly 70,000 people deemed unfit for life due to physical and mental disabilities by late 1941.<sup>153</sup>

The regime realized early on that it lacked a facility to train enough medical professionals to implement its agendas in public health, eugenics, and "racial hygiene," so in 1934 an association of German doctors acquired a modest knightly estate in the village of Alt (Old) Rehse in Mecklenburg at the behest of the National Socialist League of German Health Professionals.<sup>154</sup> The intent was to convert the estate into a national leadership school, similar to the Order Castles, but the focus here would be on doctors, pharmacists, and other



**Figure 5.20. The Main Lobby of the Soldier's Hall in Berlin**

Dominated by a vaulted ceiling reminiscent of medieval cathedrals, the cavernous main lobby of the Soldier's Hall in Berlin was meant to overwhelm visitors with a sense of awe for duty and sacrifice on behalf of the Party.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 53.



**Figure 5.21. The Alt Rehse Medical Training Facility in Northeastern Germany**

The Alt Rehse training facility served to provide supplemental instruction, based on Nazi ideology, for Germany's medical professionals. In addition to classrooms, lodging, and offices, the facility included a new village, allowing opportunities for practical experience.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:61.

medical professionals. Classes were underway by May 1935, although construction continued into 1938. A new community hall that housed the main instructional rooms and library could hold around 300 people (figure 5.21). Four additional buildings provided lodging for thirty-two people each, while the renovated manor house contained the administrative offices. Housing for school staff and various sport facilities were also added. Most of the adjacent village was torn down and rebuilt as a model village of twenty-two rustic, half-timbered homes by 1939.

Alt Rehse was not intended for regular medical instruction. Rather, the focus was on supplemental courses in genetics, racial hygiene, and folk medicine to prepare doctors for supporting roles in the Party or state administration. Each training cohort generally lasted one to two weeks. It is unclear how many medical professionals participated because the school's records were lost, but it appears the courses enjoyed robust enrollments, perhaps allowing around 10,000 doctors to seek training on the latest in Nazi health science. Instruction was suspended in 1939, so the facility could be used as an infirmary, but courses eventually resumed and continued until 1943. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote: "Important as the type of physical and mental education will be in the folkish state, equally important will be the human selection."<sup>155</sup> Through Alt Rehse, Hitler and his henchmen trained a

cadre of experts to carry out this selection in support of the regime's objectives of physical fitness, racial purity, euthanasia, and ultimately genocide.

The regime's building programs for education, leisure, and religion all tried—in various ways—to shape selected Germans into a master race, but genuine leadership was never the goal. One American newspaper published an article titled "Hitler Teaches Cream of Youth to Be Dictators" while reporting on a speech given by Ley concerning the Order Castles.<sup>156</sup> The goal, in fact, was never to create a bunch of little Hitlers. Rather, the aim was to create a mass movement of followers, a nation strong in body, unquestioning in ideology, and blind in obedience. Hitler stated as much before a huge gathering of his troopers in July 1933: "Today we are not leading a mere thirteen or seventeen million, but the entire Volk, and hence the gigantic task accrues to us of training the millions of people who do not yet inwardly belong to us to become soldiers of this Third Reich, to become soldiers of our ideology."<sup>157</sup> If residential construction programs aimed to naturalize certain norms of gender and familial relations through the calculated use of architecture, space, and relative location, as we saw in the previous chapter, then the regime's building programs related to education, leisure, and religion deployed similar assumptions, strategies, and spatialities to condition among the German masses strong bodies, obedient minds, and courageous hearts, to turn Germans into Nazis.





# The Machinery of Conquest

## *The Military-Industrial Complex*

Adolf Hitler withdrew from public view following the Party's disappointing results in the 1928 Reichstag elections. He attributed the poor showing to mischaracterizations of his foreign policy promulgated by his rivals, so he decided to set the record straight by detailing his view in a sequel to *Mein Kampf*. But Hitler decided against publishing this second book, perhaps because it was too forthright in detailing his thinking on international relations. In Hitler's view, the ultimate geopolitical threat to Germany was a conspiracy of "international Jewry" primarily organized through the actions of the United States and the Soviet Union with the goal of destroying the German race.

Hitler's first objectives were to overcome the inherent domestic weaknesses of the Weimar state and the restrictions imposed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles, especially the division of ethnic Germans among multiple states and the prohibitions placed on the armed forces. With these obstacles surmounted, Germany would be positioned to overwhelm France and its allies in Central and Southeastern Europe, which in turn would allow Germany to conquer sufficient territory at the expense of the Soviet Union to sustain the German nation. Hitler reasoned that with German territorial ambitions clearly directed toward the east, Italy and Britain would be logical allies, or at least neutral parties, since their natural geopolitical spheres of interest lay in the Mediterranean and overseas, respectively. At this point, Germany would be strong enough to weld Europe's squabbling nations into an unbreakable coalition, dominated by German stewardship and capable of prevailing in its ultimate battle with the United States. As Hitler rationalized:

In the distant future, one could then perhaps imagine a new association of nations—composed of individual states of superior national quality—that would then perhaps challenge the imminent overpowering of the world by the Ameri-

can union. Because it seems to me that the existence of England's world domination inflicts less suffering on the nations today than would the emergence of an American one.<sup>1</sup>

So effectively, Hitler reasoned that he first needed to gain living space at the expense of the Soviet Union in order for Germany to eventually confront the ultimate challenge, the United States.

It is difficult to gauge how the public would have reacted to Hitler's second book, but it is telling that Hitler decided against publishing it, or even referencing it, even though it would have generated tremendous sales after 1933. Hitler likely came to regard the book as counterproductive, because it was too explicit. It would have also undermined campaign promises made to what became a significant block of the movement's core constituency after 1929—namely, the rural vote. Winning the rural vote was indispensable to the Nazi Party's rise to power, reflected in the newfound prominence of the blood-and-soil slogan and vague electioneering championing land reform and other issues salient to small-town and agrarian communities. Some top Nazis, and certainly a larger portion of the regular membership, sincerely believed that the future of the German people depended on returning to traditional farming practices and small-town communities.

Yet Hitler's strategic considerations left little room for agrarian concerns beyond the imperative of self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs. Simply put, Hitler realized he would never establish Germany as a continental hegemon capable of defeating the Soviet Union and the United States if the Nazi regime transformed Germany into a country of yeoman farmers. Instead, Hitler required highly integrated, flexible, and efficient infrastructures to realize his goal of aggressive territorial expansionism; in short, all the resources of Germany, as well as any lands under its control, had to be marshalled into a colossal military-industrial complex capable of supporting a massive and modern mechanized fighting force. The regime's strategy—as was its penchant in most cases—was to embark upon a series of wide-ranging and overlapping building programs to create the industrial, transportation, and military infrastructures and networks necessary for conquest. And as was so often the case, the planners, architects, military officers, and Party officials guiding those programs paid great attention to questions of space, place, proximity, accessibility, and scale.

## MANUFACTURING VICTORY

Germany's agricultural and industrial sectors reached full capacity by 1936, based on available materials, labor, and industrial facilities. Hitler grew frustrated that these barriers limited his military buildup, so he concluded the government needed greater control.<sup>2</sup> Hitler drafted a secret memorandum

assessing Germany's political, economic, and geopolitical position during summer 1936. His underlying assumption was that war against the Soviet Union, and likely France and several other countries, was inevitable in the near future. Yet Germany's armed forces and economy were ill prepared. Hitler concluded the memo by stating:

One has now had enough time, in four years, to determine what we cannot do. It is now necessary to carry out that which we can. I thus set the following task: I. The German armed forces (*Armee*) must be ready for action in four years. II. The German economy must be ready for war in four years.<sup>3</sup>

Hitler did not necessarily intend for hostilities to commence in four years and, in fact, acknowledged that he could not predict the exact timing of the looming conflict, but the memo put Germany on a clear path toward war.

Hitler announced this Four Year Plan (*Vierjahresplan*, or VJP) at the Party rallies that September but omitted any reference to approaching war. Hitler instead defined the goal as achieving agricultural and industrial self-sufficiency: "In four years, Germany must be completely independent of foreign countries with respect to those materials which we are capable of obtaining ourselves in any way with the aid of German ability, with our chemical and engineering industries, and with our own mining industry!"<sup>4</sup> Hitler's call was not exactly unprecedented—the Soviet Union had launched its first five-year plan in 1928. And Hitler had made similar statements during the 1934 rallies, for example, proclaiming that "in order to combat the world boycott, the substitution of raw materials was begun and the initial preparations undertaken to make Germany independent of this need."<sup>5</sup> These efforts continued through 1935, so Hitler's statement did not reflect a new priority but rather the creation of a new quasi-governmental ministry—the Office of the Four Year Plan headed by Hermann Göring—to assume control over broad swathes of Germany's economy.<sup>6</sup> Reminiscent of the top-down economic corporatism employed in Fascist Italy, Göring asserted seemingly limitless authority while speaking to municipal officials in 1937: "We no longer limit ourselves to administering only economic things that the economy cannot arrange itself, but rather we are undertaking a methodical economic management in the whole Reich and nation."<sup>7</sup>

Göring knew little about economics or finance, and confused competencies and competing agendas plagued the program from the start. Hitler worsened the situation by repeatedly shifting priorities, or at times seemingly declaring everything a priority, which effectively made nothing a priority. As was his penchant, Hitler tended to view the whole process as merely a matter of setting output targets (tons of steel to be produced, numbers of planes to be manufactured, etc.) without giving much thought to the input side of the equation, especially labor. Hitler's basic assumption was that any production quotas could be willed to fulfillment. The result was a series of ad hoc and piecemeal initiatives in industry, worker housing, and transportation.

## Old Industry and New Towns

Rapid industrialization during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries transformed Germany into an economic powerhouse. The territorial losses of World War I; the ensuing reparations, occupations, and hyperinflation; and finally the Great Depression had certainly diminished the country's resource and productive base, but Germany still possessed some of the world's most innovative industrial corporations, a robust sector of smaller-scale manufacturers, and a skilled blue-collar labor force. An uneasy truce held between the Nazi movement and German industrialists in the early 1930s. The business community was generally sympathetic to the conservative-nationalist impulses of the movement but extremely wary of its revolutionary-socialist rhetoric. After all, the Party's official program called for the nationalization of industry. Hitler realized that he needed the support of business elites to realize the goal of a Greater German Reich and privately reassured them of his support for private property rights and other basic free market principles. Some businesses could also expect to gain considerably from Hitler's ambitions, especially those with interests in metals, machinery, petrochemicals, transportation, construction materials, munitions, and explosives. As a result, the relationship between the business community and the Party leadership was part self-interest and part mistrust.

Compared to its treatment of labor unions, the regime's efforts to coordinate business were rather hesitant. Some top Nazis pressured major corporations to add Party members to their executive boards, but these efforts were piecemeal. Businesses generally resisted adding outsiders to their management teams. In other cases, it was unnecessary since businesses stood to profit from the regime's rearmament and construction programs. The Party made greater inroads organizing the factory floors and daily work routines. The German Labor Front (DAF) established its Beauty of Labor (Schönheit der Arbeit, or SdA) office in November 1933 to create safe, efficient, and attractive workplaces.<sup>8</sup> The regime banned strikes and lockouts and introduced labor exchange offices in 1934 to control the supply and movement of skilled workers and to ensure adequate numbers of farm workers, who always seemed in short supply.

Albert Speer assumed control of SdA in early 1934, but his growing responsibilities left little time for anything other than loose supervision, so Julius Schulte-Frohlinde exercised operational control of the agency. The SdA's most immediate task was designing barracks for Autobahn workers, but the agency soon expanded its purview. SdA's ultimate goal was to reorganize workplaces, especially factories, to overcome class distinctions and ultimately create a national community, much as Strength through Joy (KdF) sought to reorganize leisure time. The SdA viewed work from the perspective of morale and morality, emphasizing the dignity and honor of those who labored on behalf of the nation. Instead of viewing businesses as

functional entities focused on providing products or services, SdA conceived of companies as communities of people structured to serve the needs of the nation as defined by the regime. As Speer noted in his later memoirs: "One and all devoted themselves to the cause of making some improvements in the workers' living conditions and moving closer to the ideal of a classless People's Community."<sup>9</sup> The SdA had no legal authority over businesses but nonetheless succeeded in placing a representative in most factories, normally by recruiting a current employee. Regular inspections assessed working conditions and areas for improvement. Employers tended to regard these measures as undue interference but still better than having real unions.

The office's work drew from reformist movements stretching back to the late nineteenth century aimed at improving workplace safety, efficiency, and amenities like locker rooms and cafeterias. SdA launched annual campaigns highlighting areas for improvement, like Fight against Factory Noise in 1935 and Good Light, Good Work in 1936. Estimates vary, but SdA claimed in 1938 to have improved more than 33,700 workplaces.<sup>10</sup> Another author tallied around 26,000 improved working areas, 17,000 green areas and courtyards, 24,000 washing and changing rooms (in keeping with the 1937 theme of Clean People in Clean Factories), 18,000 cafeterias and worker lounges (Hot Food in the Workplace in 1939), and finally around 3,000 sport facilities by 1941, with total costs estimated at around 900 million Reichsmarks.<sup>11</sup> That claim is plausible and consistent with earlier DAF figures but impossible to verify since businesses "voluntarily" paid for these projects. Like most subsequent industrial architecture, these projects were generally rather functional, modernist structures devoid of the neoclassicist pomp or rustic embellishments found in other regime-building programs. Despite the emphasis on efficiency and ergonomics, SdA designers gave special attention to aesthetics by landscaping factory grounds with flowers, shrubs, and other forms of greenery (figure 6.1).

Nazi pundits had denounced industrial architecture with vehemence but now argued that technology, rationalization, and efficiency could be reconciled with tradition, aesthetics, and nature.<sup>12</sup> In other words, technology could be beautiful. This notion stretched back at least to the formation of the Werkbund and trendsetting buildings like Peter Behrens's monumental AEG turbine factory in Berlin. Throughout the 1920s, Werner Lindner argued that properly designed infrastructure, transportation, and industrial facilities could be integrated into landscapes in such a way as to overcome the apparent dichotomy between nature and culture. In practice, this meant simple, utilitarian structures exhibiting high levels of planning, expertise, and craftsmanship.<sup>13</sup> These approaches perhaps found their fullest expression in Paul Bonatz's designs for a series of locks, dams, and weirs along the Neckar River during the 1920s and early 1930s. Bonatz's melding of functionalism, monumentality, and technology presaged a general aesthetic for industrial and infrastructural architecture during the Nazi period (figure



**Figure 6.1. A Modernist Factory near Berlin**

Architects designing new industrial facilities tended to favor rather sleek lines and modern materials, as seen in this razor blade factory near Berlin owned by Roth-Büchner, a subsidiary of Gillette. SdA designers prodded companies to augment their factories with ample greenery, benches, and other amenities thought to contribute to a pleasing, tidy, and safe workplace.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:112.

6.2).<sup>14</sup> Hitler expressed an appreciation for modern industrial design as well, reportedly remarking to Speer upon visiting a major steel mill near Linz featuring a design of steel and glass:

Do you see this facade more than three hundred meters long? How fine the proportions are. What you have here are different requirements from those governing a Party forum. There our Doric style is the expression of the New Order; here, the technical solution is the appropriate thing. But if one of these so-called modern architects comes along and wants to build housing projects or town halls in the factory style, then I say: He doesn't understand a thing. That isn't modern, it's tasteless, and violates the eternal laws of architecture besides. Light, air, and efficiency belong to a place of work; in a town hall I require dignity, and in a residence a sense of shelter that arms me for the harshness of life's struggle.<sup>15</sup>

The SdA also sponsored annual competitions beginning in 1936 for businesses to earn the moniker "model enterprise," demonstrating the highest standards of productivity, efficiency, and cleanliness. The SdA judged firms on whether they added new worker amenities, improved training and safety,



**Figure 6.2. The Opel Factory in Brandenburg an der Havel**

Industrial architecture was notable for the extensive use of glass and other modern materials, a tendency evident in other industrialized economies. This photo shows the Opel factory in Brandenburg an der Havel. Opened in 1935, the factory produced around 130,000 heavy-duty military trucks before the end of the war.

*Source:* Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:113.

provided worker housing, and subsidized KdF events for their workers (figure 6.3). Noticeably, paying higher wages was not a consideration since the regime pressed hard to contain labor costs. Hitler awarded the final designations based on recommendations from the SdA. Around 80,000 companies entered the first round of competition in 1937–1938. This surged to around 290,000 companies in 1940–1941, but Hitler had only designated roughly 300 model enterprises by 1941.<sup>16</sup> While the SdA's initiatives probably achieved marginal gains in worker productivity, worker morale remained low largely because of stagnant wages and housing shortages. It is unclear if the costs in time and money justified whatever meager gains in productivity occurred. It is even entirely possible that the SdA was a net drain on the regime's efforts to increase overall industrial output.

Hitler's rearmament program advanced initially by reactivating industrial capacity idled during the Depression, but the VJP's ambitious targets required substantial investments in new mines, mills, and factories. Most firms were hesitant to invest, fearing they would be stuck with excess capacity once the rearmament program ran its course. Nor was the regime especially generous in its pricing, so profit margins would be narrow even if the



**Figure 6.3. Worker Housing and Community Center at Heinkel's Oranienburg Complex**

SdA also pressured businesses to provide cantinas, locker rooms, community centers, and subsidized housing for their workers. The Heinkel aircraft company invested heavily in such amenities for its Oranienburg workforce and was accordingly afforded a high profile by the Party press. This image shows standardized worker housing to the right and a community center to the left provided by the company.

Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 127.

government's promises came true. Yet one way or another and with varying degrees of coercion, most of Germany's large corporations, like Krupp, MAN, Siemens, and Thyssen, invested in expanding and modernizing their facilities. In most cases, these initial gains in production reinforced existing industrial concentrations.

The aircraft industry was a special priority. The Treaty of Versailles prohibited Germany from having an air force, but the country had a civilian aviation industry, most notably Focke-Wulf in Bremen, Heinkel in Rostock, Junkers in Dessau, and Messerschmidt (officially called Bavarian Aircraft Works) in Augsburg. These and other firms transitioned to military production in short order. These manufacturers expanded their home plants greatly while also adding new assembly lines elsewhere, such as in Oranienburg for Heinkel and in Regensburg for Messerschmidt. Messerschmidt's Augsburg plant increased employment from 82 employees in 1933 to more than 7,300 by the outbreak of war, eventually peaking at nearly 21,000. Such expansion exacerbated housing shortages, causing the Ministry of Aviation to order the construction of more than 34,000 new residences by the end of 1940.<sup>17</sup>

Herbert Rimpl designed Heinkel's Oranienburg complex to be one of the more comprehensive endeavors, including worker housing, schools, stores, sport facilities, and other amenities. The production and ancillary facilities





**Figure 6.4. The Heinkel Aircraft Works in Oranienburg, North of Berlin**

The Heinkel Aircraft Works in Oranienburg, north of Berlin, was a key component in Hitler's drive to prepare the country for war. The complex touted the latest in aircraft manufacturing facilities, such as this assembly hall with walls of glass to let in ample light. Note also the inclusion of trees and flower beds, another SdA point of emphasis.

Source: Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart*, 143.

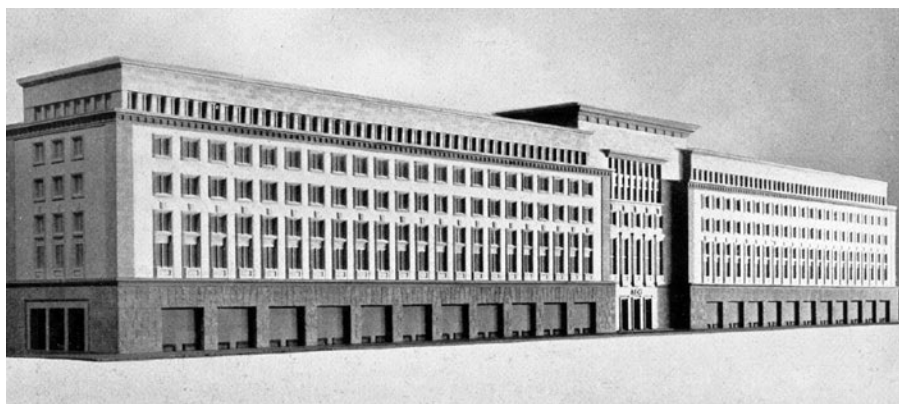
stood as marvels of efficiency, modernity, and technological prowess following a “firm style that is strongly rooted in pure technology.”<sup>18</sup> Rimpl's designs for the Oranienburg facilities proved trendsetting for the application of modernist architecture to the regime's industrial building projects (figure 6.4). Rimpl soon assembled an expansive design bureau that contributed to priority industrial projects across Europe.

These companies received much attention because they manufactured the final products, but each had hundreds of subsidiaries and suppliers that also modernized and expanded their facilities. In fact, much of the VJP's initial emphasis was on building the infrastructures necessary to produce and sustain supplies of critical materials like coal, iron ore, aluminum, steel, fuel, rubber, and explosives, rather than direct production of military equipment. The small town of Geretsreid in southern Bavaria, for example, became a major center for producing explosives. Beginning in 1938, two large complexes emerged. The first, known as Valley I and owned by the Dynamite Nobel Corporation, produced explosive compounds, which were shipped the short distance to Valley II, owned by German Explosive Chemistry, to be manufactured into actual munitions. The combined com-

plexes had around 600 aboveground and belowground structures scattered across 700 hectares crisscrossed by more than 100 kilometers of roads and rails. Dynamite Nobel was involved in more than thirty other explosive and munitions facilities, including what may have been Germany's largest encompassing around 650 buildings spread over 1,000 forested hectares outside the village of Allendorf in central Germany. This munitions complex required its own utilities, transportation connections, and a workforce of around 1,000 prisoners housed in twenty-six barracks.<sup>19</sup>

Many of these new armaments facilities were situated in forested locations in southern and central Germany that would be hard to identify and attack by air. The Allies only discovered the Allendorf facility when ground troops arrived there in 1945. Like the cantinas and washrooms promoted by SdA, these new production facilities took the form of iron-framed structures clad in brick exteriors with ample windows. Storage facilities were typically basic concrete structures featuring a rather severe modernism that still managed to align with the regime's rhetoric of simplicity, functionality, and monumentality. New administration buildings were partial exceptions as they tended to mimic Speer's official style, especially company headquarters in larger cities (figure 6.5).

Hitler and Göring grew impatient as key businesses hesitated to make the investments necessary to meet the VJP's target. Steel was a vital material for military equipment and industrial infrastructures and a source of particular consternation, since Germany imported the vast majority of its iron ore, much of it from countries that would likely be opponents in any



**Figure 6.5. Model of the Headquarters of Electrical Conglomerate AEG Planned for Berlin** Company headquarters adopted a more monumental style that would allow them to fit into Hitler's redesigned cities. This allowed Hitler to shift financial responsibility for large chunks of his planned ceremonial boulevards to private sources. The electrical conglomerate AEG, for example, benefited greatly from the regime's commitment to rearmament and so dutifully planned to build this massive headquarters as its contribution to Hitler's plans for Berlin.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:78.

coming war. Göring pressured domestic mills to move toward greater self-sufficiency by developing low-grade ore deposits near Salzgitter, a small town southeast of Braunschweig. Mill owners resisted, believing the ore too expensive to process.

Göring shocked the industry by announcing the formation of the state-owned Reichswerke Hermann Göring in July 1937. Even worse for private mills, Göring's venture went beyond just mining the ore to also producing steel, making the government a direct market participant and competitor. Continuing the regime's drift toward economic statism, Göring's enterprise rapidly expanded into a far-flung conglomerate absorbing most of the coal, steel, munitions, and weapons industries in the occupied territories, possibly making it the world's largest company by 1941.<sup>20</sup> The shift toward state intervention was by no means limited to Germany. In the United States, for example, proponents of publicly owned utilities, especially electricity generation, gradually prevailed as evidenced by the construction of Hoover Dam and the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Salzgitter remained the centerpiece of this sprawling empire. Construction began in December 1937 on what was to be a showpiece of German industrial engineering and technology. Ernst Sagebiel supervised the project. At the heart of this new industrial agglomeration would be thirty-two blast furnaces in an integrated series of coking, milling, casting, and rolling factories, covering around twenty-one square kilometers centered in the middle of four mining complexes. The sprawling complex included a variety of other support buildings, such as storage facilities, a power plant, and a nine-story-tall administration building. The mines and factories also required extensive infrastructure, including new rail lines, roads, a canal, waterworks, and gas and electrical lines. Sagebiel's highly utilitarian design still managed to convey a sense of monumentality. One secret project summary claimed the rolling mill covered nearly 150,000 square meters, making it the largest roofed area in continental Europe.<sup>21</sup> The entire project was scheduled for completion in seven years, although the first blast furnace began limited operations in October 1939.

The regime soon decided to build a new model town—named the City of the Hermann Göring Works—to provide the necessary residential, leisure, educational, and government buildings.<sup>22</sup> Göring charged Rimpl with designing a new town that could have reached a population of 300,000. Rimpl's initial concept followed the basic Gauforum template with a People's Hall situated midway along a two-kilometer east-west axis. In something of a deviation, though, Rimpl made provision for ample green space, reflecting the idea of dissolving dense urban centers into dispersed satellite settlements, but around 70 percent of housing would still consist of multistory apartment buildings. The city was located to the northwest of the steelworks in order to allow prevailing winds to carry away emissions (figure 6.6). Nearly 18,000 residences and a few schools were completed, but little else



**Figure 6.6. Map of the Salzgitter Complex and City of the Hermann Göring Works**

The Salzgitter complex demonstrated Hitler's commitment to increase the production of war-critical materials—in this case, steel—even in the face of reluctance from the private sector. Much of the industrial complex, the nexus of rail lines on the right, went into operation. In comparison, there was little progress on the so-called City of the Hermann Göring Works.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 2nd ed., 85.

of Rimpl's planned city came to fruition for a variety of reasons. First, the importance of the entire project declined greatly as Germany absorbed the mines and factories of the occupied territories. But perhaps most important, Hitler showed little interest in the project, and he later rejected naming the new city after Göring. On balance, the project was a typical example of Nazi mismanagement as the Reich Works proved highly inefficient and ran at a loss throughout its existence. Yet the establishment of new aircraft, munitions, and industrial agglomerations—especially in smaller towns and forested locations in central and southern Germany—were initial steps toward reorienting the country's economic geography toward war.

### **From Model Settlement to People's Apartments**

The Four Year Plan had obvious implications for housing, since it meant that Nazi Germany would continue along the trajectory of an industrializing and urbanizing state, rather than becoming the nation of yeoman farmers

envisioned by Richard Walther Darré, Alfred Rosenberg, and other reactionaries. This planned military-industrial expansion entailed an ambitious residential construction program. Joachim Fischer-Dieskau, a deputy director in the Labor Ministry, noted the importance of housing for the success of the VJP: "Job satisfaction and productivity are to a large extent dependent on good living conditions." Point number five in Göring's stated goals for the VJP noted the importance of worker housing. Many of these new neighborhoods needed to be built from scratch, since many critical industries were sited away from established population centers and border regions in order to reduce their vulnerability to aerial bombardment. This entailed a greater level of central control and appeared to be a logical mechanism for disseminating a more uniform housing model across Nazi Germany. For Fischer-Dieskau, housing policy under the VJP "to some extent represents the continuation of previous policy with other and more effective means."<sup>23</sup> In reality, however, the VJP eventually devolved into a series of reactive, ad hoc measures driven by practical expediencies and shifting wartime conditions.

The VJP shifted additional power to Robert Ley as Göring gave the DAF overall responsibility for industrial worker housing. The DAF welcomed this since, in the words of one DAF propagandist, "building can no longer be in the future a matter of the individual; it must rather be directed to the needs of the entire population."<sup>24</sup> Ley created a new Architecture Bureau in response. Directed by Schulte-Frohlinde, the bureau had a relatively small cadre of architects, largely tied to the Stuttgart School. This new bureau basically replaced the old Building Department but now incorporated the DAF's Beauty of Labor and Planning sections. The bureau generally supervised projects directly commissioned by the DAF, such as its administrative and training facilities. Speer and his staff retained final approval over higher-profile projects. Direct involvement in residential construction was largely limited to high-priority projects, like the Mascherode settlement. By 1938, the bureau established its own educational programs for architects and planners using the DAF's training academy in Erwitte, which offered architects a chance to earn the title of Trusted Architect of the Labor Front and promises of lucrative commissions. This advanced the DAF's goal of absorbing housing into its jurisdiction. The deputy director of the Architecture Bureau actually acknowledged in an official DAF journal that the agency "saw its goal as eliminating private architects as such."<sup>25</sup>

The Architecture Bureau also absorbed the Homestead Office. Johann Wilhelm Ludowici's outspoken support for homestead construction was generally consistent with the regime's initial housing program, and he managed to survive Gottfried Feder's dismissal. Yet the practical demands of the VJP for apartments for industrial workers eclipsed the ideological attraction to homesteading, and Ludowici was eventually eased out of office. The Architecture Bureau claimed the most prestigious projects, leaving the Homestead Office responsibility for the bulk of housing construction and to serve as a

type of central liaison between the various state, Party, and business actors. The official *Organization Book of the NSDAP* confirmed expansive powers for the Homestead Office, including the review of all proposals for non-farming settlements; selection, training, and monitoring of settlers; promoting settlement philosophy including settlement propaganda, exhibitions, and contests; and occasionally implementing its own projects.<sup>26</sup> By 1940, the DAF claimed that it supervised more than 10,000 "settler consultants" and operated six settler schools through the German Settlers League, with the first dedicated in Erlangen in 1936.<sup>27</sup>

By 1935, it became clear that homestead settlements were too expensive, time consuming, and impractical to alleviate Germany's housing shortage. The VJP magnified these shortcomings and set homesteading at odds with war preparedness. In many ways, the VJP merely formalized established government policy since public funding for homesteads had already dropped from around 77 million Reichsmarks in 1934 to 23 million in 1935.<sup>28</sup> Ironically, the ascendancy of the Homestead Office corresponded with the decline of homesteads and the growing prominence of the "people's apartment." Franz Seldte and the Labor Ministry launched the people's apartment initiative in 1935, but the Homestead Office ended up with responsibility. The people's apartments were much cheaper than homesteads and geared toward low-wage factory workers. Through the standardization and prefabrication of building components, the people's apartments saved time, materials, and labor. Unlike other apartments, these were rental units, allowing workers to shift easily from location to location. Designers still preferred single-story buildings, but in practice, around two-thirds of people's apartments were situated in buildings two to four stories tall.<sup>29</sup>

The Architecture Bureau maintained its preference for community settlements composed of homesteads but acknowledged that practical considerations necessitated smaller apartments.<sup>30</sup> This also reflected the business community's determination to invest minimally in housing. The shift generated considerable discontent among some Party ideologues. Walter Groß, director of the Party's Racial Political Office, delivered a strong message explicitly conditioning the regime's pronatalist goals upon housing conditions. "If we constrict housing space, especially giving young married families too little space," Groß reasoned, "then the reduction in the number of children and with it the demographic-political decline of the nation is the inevitable result."<sup>31</sup> A member of Groß's staff later confirmed these fears by estimating that a healthy family with four kids needed a minimum of four rooms and seventy square meters of living space, but around two-thirds of residences built during 1938 had less than three rooms; in other words, "residences in which the space is in no way sufficient for the propagation of a family capable of developing normally."<sup>32</sup>

The DAF quickly launched its own VJP housing program, although many organizational and administrative details remained unclear. This program

resembled earlier homesteading projects by favoring locations away from existing cities but also differed in a number of ways. First, these new settlements were limited to new worker housing supporting critical military-industrial facilities. Second, multistory buildings of people's apartments predominated over detached and semidetached homes. Third, the importance of gardening faded, because workers needed to devote their full energies to factory work. Rental apartments, as opposed to home ownership, facilitated a more mobile workforce that could be relocated easily and further diminished the rhetoric of rootedness. Finally, private firms gradually assumed most of the financial responsibility for housing their workers, often under some degree of government pressure. This moved housing policy toward "company towns," an idea harshly criticized by Party ideologues as undermining the ideal of community settlements. Yet this shift was necessary since banks and other sources of private capital had little interest in financing working-class housing given that the return on investment took too long and was modest compared to investment in military-industrial production. The regime furthered this trend by progressively restricting credit for residential construction in favor of military purposes.

The village of Sontra in Hesse was one of the first VJP settlements. The area supported small-scale copper mining for several centuries, but the imperative of autarky soon led to expanded operations. The area lacked adequate labor, so miners were relocated from other regions, perhaps doubling the local population to around 5,500. This necessitated new housing, supposedly underway in less than six weeks. The plan called for around 625 new residences in a mixture of apartments and row housing in two- and three-story buildings (figure 6.7). This design was in keeping with the community settlement idea of mixing housing types to suit a range of households, but there was no apparent effort to include Party or civic buildings. Even in instances where planners made efforts to include Party centers in VJP settlements, such plans were postponed in favor of meeting the immediate demand for worker housing.<sup>33</sup>

Despite these practical realities, planners, architects, and officials still professed allegiance to the Party's blood-and-soil rhetoric and attempted to reconcile the conservative, small-town idealism of the Stuttgart School with the regime's demands for breakneck industrialization. Karl Neupert would become an influential figure within VJP housing programs. Neupert had studied under Paul Schultze-Naumburg before joining the Homestead Office's branch in Saxony and eventually becoming leader of the Architecture Bureau's urban planning section. Neupert lacked a direct tie to the Stuttgart School but followed its basic precepts emphasizing comprehensive planning that used the natural contours of the landscape to accentuate representative communal buildings and spaces. Neupert believed detailed planning could achieve an "organic structure of the total space [that] arises from the fulfillment of the political task asked of the entire German nation." Planning



**Figure 6.7. The Sontra Settlement in Central Germany**

The Sontra settlement was one of the first neighborhoods constructed as part of Hitler's Four Year Plan to prepare Germany for war. Despite the rustic cottage-like appearance, these homes actually accommodated miners and factory workers.

*Source: Troost, Das Bauen im Neuen Reich, 1:166.*

assumed great political importance, since only these types of settlements could guarantee the survival of the German nation.<sup>34</sup> Neupert and other regional officials set about applying the general principles developed by the national office to the rapidly growing number of housing projects across Germany. Neupert's design for the Mittweida settlement near Chemnitz called for 1,000 residential units that followed the contours of the landscape. Arranged around a central square with a community house, the plan bore clear similarities to Mascherode. Typical of other VJP settlements, construction focused exclusively on housing with little effort given to Party facilities or other amenities.<sup>35</sup>

The Architecture Bureau, as discussed previously, had worked out a general model in Mascherode, and the regional branches of the Homestead Office offered a mechanism to replicate this across Germany; however, the DAF lacked the personnel to supervise the rapid expansion of VJP settlements effectively. In addition, the Reich was diverting all possible funding into war-essential production. To fill this void, the government pressured employers in the military-industrial sectors to finance housing for their workers. Initially, these industrial concerns were wary of the additional costs but soon realized that housing shortages limited the willingness of workers to relocate, potentially threatening profits, especially after reaching full employment. To save time and money, employers favored multistory



apartment buildings and increasingly barracks-style housing. The Homestead Office opposed this tendency since workers became mere renters in company-owned housing, rather than property owners rooted in their native soil. The Architecture Bureau and the Homestead Office continued to promulgate their conservative brand of housing, but the realities of war forced ever greater compromises and limitations.

The Göringheim settlement in Regensburg illustrated the growing role of industry in residential construction. The regime commissioned Messerschmidt, based in Augsburg, to ramp up production. Planners wanted dispersed production facilities, so parts of the production line for the new Messerschmidt planes moved to Regensburg. The firm initially estimated that its workforce would need around 1,000 residences, but there was nowhere near enough available housing. A new settlement seemed the most practical solution. The project was financed through a private bank loan funneled to a recently established quasi-public corporation, which basically functioned as a Messerschmidt subsidiary. This new corporation became the effective owner of the settlement and collected rents to repay the loan to the parent company. The city building office under Albert Kerler handled planning and design, while the DAF played a minor role.

The settlement was located southwest of town some distance from the new factory. Construction began in November 1936, and the first section of 608 residences was finished by October 1937. This included 152 duplexes and 76 quadplexes for a total of 228 buildings, as well as a few stores and a school. In summer 1939, work started on 1,400 additional residences, but the project was limited to only around 240 rental units split almost equally between quadplexes and eight-family homes. In a telling sign of the lack of DAF involvement, there appears to have been no effort to even plan any Party facilities, although a church was built. In that sense, the project was more like the earlier Schottenheim project modified to meet a different employment situation, rather than the later DAF "model community" settlements.<sup>36</sup>

The DAF's planners and architects tried to adapt their Stuttgart School ideals to these new realities with limited success. To accommodate workers for a nearby steelworks, the tiny village of Pulsen in Saxony reached 2,000 people in 1939 from less than 200 original residents. The Homestead Office tried to remain true to the community settlement idea, but designers had to arrange long two- and three-story apartment buildings, instead of single-family homes, into an "organic" community. A simple Hitler Youth building was the only direct Party presence.<sup>37</sup> Similar buildings dominated the DAF's Stolzenberg settlement near Danzig. Begun in June 1940, the plan called for around 2,500 residences in long apartment buildings arranged to form semi-enclosed rectangles. Designers still tried to maintain larger apartments, and Stolzenberg was relatively spacious for the time. Roughly 65 percent of apartments would be four-room varieties with around sixty-four square meters of living space, while only 26 percent would have three

rooms totaling almost fifty square meters. The remainder would have only two rooms of forty-eight square meters.<sup>38</sup> The Volkswagen auxiliary factory in Braunschweig was mostly composed of two-room apartments, with eight to a building. There was no effort to integrate other types of housing as in a community settlement nor did the plan make any effort to suggest organic origins, opting instead for a straight grid layout. The design did include a little central square with a community house and Hitler Youth home, but they were deemed nonessential and never built.<sup>39</sup>

Even these types of projects became unfeasible as labor and material shortages intensified, and the VJP and other organizations fell far short of their goals. Ernst von Stuckrad, one of Ludowici's successors, claimed a maximum of 5,000 VJP residences underway by the end of 1937.<sup>40</sup> It was readily apparent that war preparations and housing could not advance simultaneously, with the latter clearly downgraded. Rudolf Schmeer, a senior official who worked on housing issues for the DAF before transferring to the Economics Ministry to support the VJP, estimated that Germany's housing shortage totaled at least 1.3 million dwellings in 1937. There were another 400,000 inhabited dwellings that were condemned and many more that suffered severe deficiencies. The result, according to Schmeer, was a total unmet demand of around three million small, inexpensive residences. Price controls precluded most wage increases, so working-class families could afford only the bare minimum, making single-family homes simply unfeasible. "These numbers also reveal that multistory residential buildings cannot be foregone," Schmeer continued, "after all it is far more important to cover the housing demand than to meet the ideas of more or less clever theoreticians."<sup>41</sup> The practical realities of autarky and war preparations now trumped the ideological aspects of housing (figure 6.8).

Göring presaged this eventuality in 1937. Hitler was determined to solve Germany's housing crisis, Göring explained, but the demands of national security took precedence. In the meantime, authorities should merely

accomplish the preparatory work for the tremendous settlement program planned by the Führer that shall be put into effect after the implementation and full realization of the Four Year Plan. I think it is important to make clear already the fact that this intention will be tackled with seriousness and merely its implementation in a large fashion is postponed for the time being.<sup>42</sup>

Promises to finally address Germany's housing crisis resurfaced amid the heady days following France's surrender in summer 1940, but they remained promises. As Germany's exiled Social Democratic Party previously noted in 1938: "It [residential construction] has lost the character of welfare and has become a component of National Socialist power politics. . . . Residential construction is now only promoted so far as demanded by military and economic mobilization."<sup>43</sup>



**Figure 6.8. A Massive Four-Story Apartment Building in Nuremberg**

While continuing to regard low-density neighborhoods of single-family homes as the ideal, Nazi planners reluctantly shifted toward multistory apartment buildings as a practical response to Hitler's drive toward war. Finished in 1939, this massive four-story apartment building in Nuremberg typifies this drastic change from the regime's initial focus on semirural homesteads. Note the slight hints of neoclassical ornamentation in the lighter colored central section.

Source: Joshua Hagen.

In that sense, the public announcement of the VJP merely institutionalized changes already underway. Journal editor W. Gebhardt noted as early as 1935 that "settlement and housing construction [were] the most urgent tasks next to building up the military."<sup>44</sup> In a similar review one year later, Gebhardt lamented that, instead of showing improvement, the results for 1936 indicated "not only a decrease in the proportion of homesteads in total housing production but an overall decline in housing construction."<sup>45</sup> The VJP only worsened the situation. As Fischer-Dieskau concluded: "The residential construction industry has really proven that it can also cope with the greatest difficulties; but still, somewhere a point is reached one day where it simply goes no further and where then strong repercussions in residential construction activity are to be feared. We are alarmingly closer to this point at the end of 1938."<sup>46</sup> Seldte was one of the few pushing the issue among the regime leadership. In a March 1939 letter to Hans Lammers, Seldte cautioned that "Germany suffers from the most difficult housing emergency it has ever

had. In the old Reich [Germany before 1938], 1.5 million households are without their own residence. Many hundreds of thousands have ‘residences’ that are not only inadequate but rather really must be designated as undignified and endanger the building of a healthy nation.” Seldte warned that the long-term prospects of this unending housing crisis could facilitate “difficult domestic political tensions and disturbances . . . a crisis of confidence and embitterment could easily be the result.”<sup>47</sup>

Regensburg provides a telling example of how housing construction grew incredibly scarce because of military-industrial expansion. The number of Regensburg households in emergency shelters, including barracks and even railroad cars, increased each year from 196 in 1933 to 326 in 1938.<sup>48</sup> Annual new residences peaked at just over 1,000 in 1937 but dropped precipitously to 557 the following year. Despite all the attention paid to Schottenheim and Göringheim, small apartments accounted for roughly two-thirds of new residences constructed in Regensburg during the Nazi period.<sup>49</sup> Internal government estimates put the housing deficit as high as 3,000 residences by 1938, increasing to 5,000 by 1940.<sup>50</sup> The situation in Braunschweig was similar. Most residential projects featured multistory apartment buildings for industrial workers, despite the rhetoric surrounding the model settlement of Mascherode. Even here, the regime failed to meet its targets, often falling short by around one-third. A municipal report in 1939 noted that Braunschweig only managed to complete 5,300 residences, of which 43 percent were people’s apartments, 40 percent small apartments, and 5 percent home-steads; 12 percent were family homes, mostly allocated to air force personnel.<sup>51</sup> Even before Allied bombers had a substantive impact in Germany, the demands of preparing for and prosecuting the initial war years were already reshaping the geographies of home life toward smaller residences, rental apartments, and multistory buildings, in addition to new locations paralleling the evolving geographies of Hitler’s rapidly growing and dispersing military-industrial complex.

### **Moving People and Things**

It was not enough to simply exploit new resources and build new industries for the Four Year Plan to succeed. The Nazi regime needed to tie all these places together. Germany had fairly robust transportation and energy infrastructures, although a great deal of regular maintenance had been deferred since 1914. Some of these needs were addressed through the work creation schemes of the early 1930s, but Hitler and his top lieutenants realized that more expansive infrastructures of transportation and power were necessary to modernize Germany and ultimately prepare the nation for war. As was so often the case, the answer was to build.

Hitler’s regime inherited a fairly modern railroad network but made little effort to expand capacity initially despite the obvious strategic value.

The German Reich Railway appeared to be a big beneficiary of the regime's work creation spending, but the agency actually had idle capacity and few maintenance needs. As a result, the money earmarked for railroads mostly went to military purposes either directly or indirectly. The situation changed suddenly in 1938 as a confluence of factors, including the VJP, the Führer and Gau city programs, the West Wall, military deployments to Austria and the Sudetenland, and the regular traffic of the fall harvest exerted tremendous pressure on the rail system. Serious bottlenecks formed, especially in coal and steel, hampering progress on priority projects.

The railway agency responded with a series of emergency building programs to meet these successive challenges, but work barely started before the next emergency arose. This shift is evident in the length of track, which increased modestly from 53,816 kilometers in 1933 to 54,522 in 1937. In 1938, this spiked to 62,942 and then 72,656 in 1939 before peaking at 75,763 in 1944. The rolling stock followed a similar pattern with 622,408 freight cars in 1933 declining to 574,996 by 1937 before spiking to 650,229 the following year and peaking at 987,864 in 1944.<sup>52</sup>

Hitler also ordered the development of a new, wide-gauge railroad system in 1941. Featuring mammoth, double-decker carriages racing along three-meter-wide tracks, these high-speed trains would link together Germany's major cities and eventually facilitate the flow of settlers to and resources from distant colonies in the occupied eastern territories.<sup>53</sup> Hitler's grandiose dreams were again at odds with reality. As he fantasized about a fleet of super trains, Speer and Giesler deployed their building staffs to the east in late 1941 in a desperate attempt to repair railroads and prevent the total collapse of Germany's push into the Soviet Union.

Railroads played an outsized role in Germany's war machine, but Hitler demonstrated little interest in the matter. The same could not be said for other forms of transportation, especially automobiles and airplanes. Hitler demonstrated keen interest in the motorization of German society. Promoting the automobile and aviation industries also had strategic value, since the line between civilian and military usage was thin. Once in power, Hitler became a regular visitor at the annual Automobile and Motorcycle Exhibition in Berlin. Speaking at the exhibition in February 1933, just days after taking office, Hitler declared: "In the past, one attempted to measure a people's standard of living in terms of track kilometers; in the future, road kilometers for motorized traffic will replace this yardstick. These are momentous tasks which are also part of the program for the reconstruction of the German economy!"<sup>54</sup>

Road construction soon benefited from an influx of work creation funding. The construction activity gave credence to the claim that the nation was on the move and became a central propaganda theme in Nazi Germany's heroic new saga of recovery and future greatness. It also placed a spotlight on stunning new achievements in technology and construction—perhaps best

exemplified by the building of a national Autobahn system—which played well to the credit of the regime. In a highly publicized moment—captured on newsreels and press release photos—Adolf Hitler, on September 23, 1933, hefted the “first spade” to officially inaugurate construction of Germany’s vaunted new Autobahn system. Although the Nazis would draw maximum propaganda mileage out of the construction of thousands of kilometers of new “superhighways” across the length and breadth of Germany, the much heralded construction program was not a new idea. A short dual carriage roadway, known as AVUS (*Automobil-Verkehrs- und Übungsstrasse*), which was used as a test roadway and also doubled as a race track, was begun on the west side of Berlin as early as 1913. It opened in 1921. Three years later, the first modern motorway was completed in Italy, a 120-kilometer stretch of *autostrada* between Milan and Varese.

Although conceptual planning began that same year for a modern German national highway system of more than 22,000 kilometers, it was not until 1926 that the HaFraBa (Verein zur Vorbereitung der Autostraße Hansstädte-Frankfurt-Basel), a public-private consortium that coined the term *Autobahn*, was organized to carry out the actual planning by industrialist and auto enthusiast Willy Hof. The HaFraBa vision, which drew support from municipalities as well as the construction and transport industries, focused on the idea of a north-south route from Hamburg to Basel via Frankfurt, based on the assumption that such a route would foster tourism and long-distance trucking and eventually gain widespread public acceptance. Construction of HaFraBa’s first project, a 20-kilometer stretch between Cologne and Bonn, began in 1929 and was completed in 1932, the year before the Nazis came to power.

The Nazis had, in fact, shown scant interest in building motorways until early 1933, but that changed quickly once Hitler officially embraced the idea. Spurred by the Führer’s avid interest in automobiles, the regime’s attention quickly focused on the idea of building a nationwide Autobahn network. A law passed in June 1933 created the Reichsautobahn Association (Gesellschaft Reichsautobahnen) to take charge of highway construction. Thereafter, the creation of the nation’s Autobahn system quickly became a prestige project. Indeed, the July 1933 issue of *Die Autobahn*, a glossy promotional HaFraBa publication, featured a photo of Hitler under the headline: “The Autobahn Network Is the Path to the Rebirth of Germany’s Rise and Glory.”<sup>55</sup> The project was ideal for the regime in that it combined so many positives. It had the potential to raise national prestige by showcasing German technological prowess and superiority, while at the same time serving as a means of combatting unemployment through job creation, promoting the motorization of transportation and tourism, and binding the country together both physically and symbolically with dual ribbons of concrete.

The project also quickly generated the usual bureaucratic infighting for control that so typified the regime. From the outset, the German Reich Railway

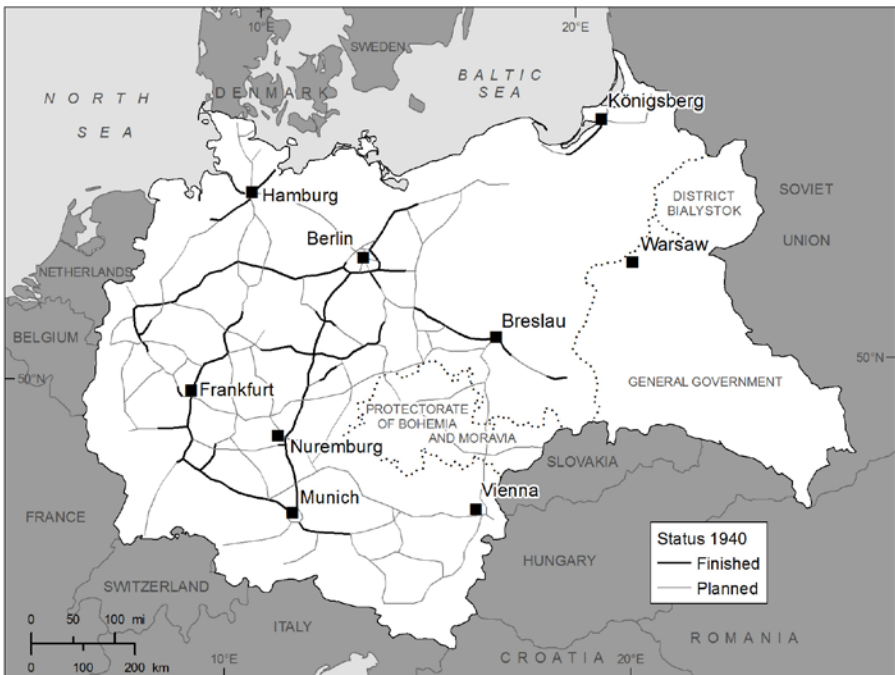
and its president Julius Dorpmüller strongly opposed the idea, fearing both the loss of funds and the serious erosion of the railroad's central role in the nation's transport infrastructure. Dorpmüller's opposition had to be appeased initially by incorporating the newly founded Reichsautobahn Association as a subordinate organization within the Reich Railway.

The HaFraBa vision, which focused primarily on the long-distance Hamburg-Basel route, was soon found wanting. Hitler was eager to extend Autobahns to all of Germany, and by August 1933, the HaFraBa had been dissolved and absorbed into a new planning organization based in Berlin, rather than Frankfurt, and called GEZUVOR (Gesellschaft zur Vorbereitung der Reichsautobahnen). The real winner in the competition for control, however, was Fritz Todt, the engineer and early Party enthusiast who had prepared an influential report extolling the benefits of building a modern highway network and upon whom Hitler conferred nominal responsibility for the project as Inspector General for the German Roadways in June 1933. Todt assiduously consolidated his hold on the Autobahn project, even publishing his own promotional periodical, *Die Strasse*, from 1934 to 1942. Through much of the project's history, though, frictions existed between the construction arm under Todt and the GEZUVOR planning arm, and conflicting interests between Todt and Dorpmüller's railways plagued the project until 1941, when Todt's Reichsautobahn organization officially separated from the railway.

Popularized as "the roads of Adolf Hitler," the Autobahn was strongly linked in the public imagination with Hitler. Hof was even pressured into resigning at the time of HaFraBa's dissolution so that the regime's propaganda machine could spread the myth that it was Hitler who had in fact envisaged a national highway system as early as 1924 while he was imprisoned for the failed Munich putsch. Todt himself was careful not to cast a shadow over his boss, even warning people in his organization to avoid giving the public the impression that anyone but Hitler was responsible for building the Autobahns: "They are to be reckoned as simply and solely the Führer's roads."<sup>56</sup> Hitler took intense personal interest in the planning of various segments of the system, intervening often on matters of route, design, and scheduling, another aspect that Todt was keen to emphasize.<sup>57</sup>

The Autobahn became a propaganda coup for the regime, possibly its greatest. Newsreels, glossy magazines, and extensive press coverage trumpeted each new ground-breaking ceremony, extolling the modernity and sleekness of the system, and shouting paeans to the "selfless" labor of the tens of thousands who worked on the project. Since one benefit of building the Autobahns was purportedly putting people back to work, much was made of visuals of armies of marching men bearing shovels or moving dirt. Propagandists portrayed the project in militaristic terms, seen as a battle with shovels as weapons. The slogan "We Are Building a Road," popularized in a 1933 radio broadcast, captured exactly the martial pride and spirit the regime wished to convey to the public.<sup>58</sup>

By early 1934, serious large-scale construction had begun, accompanied by ceremonies and much publicity, at more than twenty locations. The first Autobahn, a 22-kilometer stretch between Frankfurt and Darmstadt, opened with great fanfare in May 1935, including newsreel footage of Hitler passing before a crowd of 90,000 while standing in an open Mercedes-Benz 770. Completion of the first 1,000 kilometers was marked by celebrations in Breslau in September 1936. By 1938, 3,000 kilometers had been constructed nationwide, including a segment in recently annexed Austria, and a semblance of a complete network had been achieved. War preparations slowed construction after 1938 as labor and materials were diverted to other construction priorities, such as the building of the West Wall. After war broke out in September 1939, a final 500 kilometers were added. In total, a little more than 3,800 kilometers of Autobahn were completed by the time construction ceased in winter 1941—in large part because construction crews were desperately needed to support Hitler's eastern advance—leaving an additional 3,000 kilometers of a planned system of more than 7,000 kilometers unfinished (figure 6.9).



**Figure 6.9. Map of the Autobahn Network**

Construction of the Autobahn proceeded swiftly, in part because substantial preliminary planning was in place before 1933. The network was about halfway finished by the start of the war, although its economic, social, and strategic impact never matched the grand claims of the Party press.

Map by James Leonard.



Hundreds of thousands labored as Autobahn construction workers over the roughly eight-year life of the project, although the number directly employed in any one year never exceeded the 125,000 recorded in 1936. Initially, the emphasis was on drawing workers, at relatively low cost, from Germany's large pool of Depression-era unemployed. In fact, the use of machinery was limited early on to increase the use of human labor. Workers were housed near work sites in makeshift camps, usually in remote locations and typically offering few amenities. Conditions were generally far worse than the propaganda suggested. Low pay, long hours, isolation, and exposure to the elements, along with constant surveillance, led in some instances to unrest and even strikes, which had to be suppressed. Eventually worker housing improved, although the camps never evolved into anything more than rows of low wooden barracks. By 1937, rearmament and an improving economy had dried up the pool of unemployed willing to toil in the elements for minimal pay, so measures were introduced to press the remaining unemployed and then various kinds of forced labor into the ranks of Autobahn workers. After the outbreak of war, Himmler's Schutzstaffel (SS) became increasingly involved, and the vast majority of the labor force consisted of concentration camp inmates and prisoners of war.

By late 1941, more or less continuous Autobahn travel was possible on one of the major east-west routes, which ran from Cologne to Berlin, and beyond to Frankfurt an der Oder. A second east-west route, linking the industrial Ruhr region in northwestern Germany with its eastern counterpart in Silesia, was nearly half completed, particularly the stretch from Erfurt to Dresden. So too was a third route, running eastward from the Saar to Vienna via Munich. In the far north, Lübeck and Bremen had been linked via Hamburg. Continuous travel from Munich to Berlin via Nuremberg was possible, and one could continue north beyond Berlin as far as Stettin, but the original north-south HaFraBa route from Hamburg to Basel was only ready in stretches. The rest of the system was largely still under construction or on the drawing board, and plans were ambitiously being drawn up for extending the system into occupied territories in both the east and west, as well as in parts of Scandinavia.

The Autobahns were built to design parameters that evolved over time. The engineering specifications derived from those originally formulated under HaFraBa—namely, that the roadways should be dual carriage; have limited access, a median strip, and a common width; and adhere to strict limitations on grades and the radius of curves. Most prewar Autobahns were laid out with steady grades and long, straight stretches connected by short curves, generally mimicking railroad lines because, in fact, most of the planners were trained as railroad engineers (figure 6.10). Todt, in conjunction with Hitler, eventually opted for an alternate aesthetic that would perhaps come to define the new highways more than anything else. The Autobahns were to be things of grace and beauty, in addition to being monumental and



**Figure 6.10. A Straight Stretch of Nearly Completed Autobahn**

This straight stretch of nearly completed Autobahn was characteristic of the earliest motorways designed by railroad engineers. Planners tried to develop standardized blueprints for more repetitious features, like the overpass barely visible in the top center of this photo. Planners also devoted considerable attention to providing aesthetically pleasing landscaping along the Autobahn, represented by the workers to the bottom right.

Source: Reismann, *Deutschlands Autobahnen*, 224.

inspiring. To this end, Todt assigned the placement and design of roadways, bridges, overpasses, and ancillary facilities, such as service stations and rest stops, to architects rather than engineers. Moreover, architects and engineers were encouraged to work together in the interest of affecting the most pleasing results from local materials and landscape.

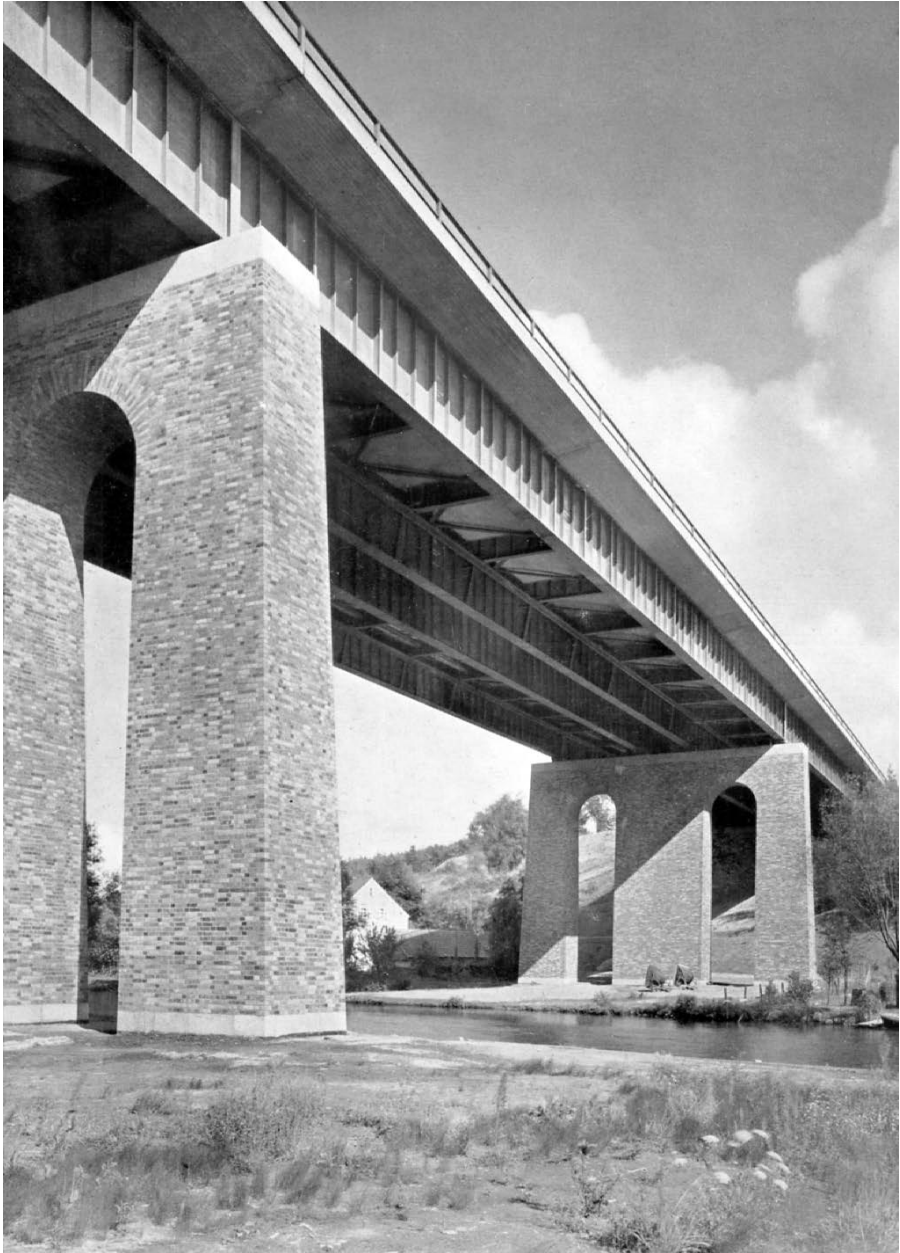
As early as 1934, Todt had hired the well-known German landscape architect Alwin Seifert to gather a team of landscape architects and plant sociologists. Drawing inspiration from the American parkways movement, Todt placed great emphasis on the visual. A laudatory article appearing in the August 1939 architectural journal *Die Baukunst* constantly used the words *harmony* and *art* to describe the highways and went to great pains to emphasize the idea that technology “should not be allowed to overpower the natural environment, but fit seamlessly within it.”<sup>59</sup> Roads were to be curved or sinuous in conjunction with the principle of “closeness to the landscape.”<sup>60</sup> Efforts were made to render roadsides attractive with local vegetation.

Indeed, the building of every segment was assigned a “landscape counselor” (*Landschaftsanwalt*) to ensure an organically perfect blend of roadway and scenery.<sup>61</sup> Some might even say that the purposeful linking of the modern Autobahns to an “authentic” German countryside coincided with the racial overtones of Nazi ideology.<sup>62</sup> In reality, a relatively small portion of Nazi-built Autobahns actually resembled the much-propagandized landscape idyll. Railroad engineers remained the chief designers and continued to favor their more utilitarian and economical approach, much to the frustration of the landscape counselors.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to long, graceful curves sweeping elegantly and seamlessly over an idyllic natural landscape, the other iconic image that appears again and again in the photos that filled promotional magazine articles and news-reel reportage was one of long, graceful bridges crossing rivers, valleys, and gorges. More than 5,000 bridges had been built in connection with the Autobahn by 1943.<sup>64</sup> Paul Bonatz was the single most important individual in setting the tone for Autobahn bridge construction. Todt appointed Bonatz as a consultant beginning in April 1935—mostly likely because Todt genuinely appreciated Bonatz’s civil engineering designs—and thereby began the rehabilitation of Bonatz’s career. Bonatz would review design proposals for bridges, but his most immediate impact came through a series of standardized designs for smaller bridges and overpasses published in 1934 and 1935. In fact, for every monumental bridge, the Autobahn needed dozens, if not hundreds, of these rather unremarkable structures.

Bonatz also designed several of the Autobahn’s most iconic bridges, usually in collaboration with other architects and engineers, that highlighted the main design variations.<sup>65</sup> Featuring a functionalist, steel-reinforced superstructure with a smooth concrete exterior, the Devil’s Valley Bridge in Thuringia, finished in 1938, sported a rather modernist and minimalist aesthetic that characterized many early Autobahn projects. Later bridges were increasingly built of local stone, often hand-carved, and employing Roman-style arching. These bridges were usually reinforced in steel, but the girders were typically hidden from view to avoid any clash with the natural landscape. The only visible metalwork appeared in the form of handrails and other accents, such as Bonatz’s famed Lahn Valley Bridge near Limburg completed in 1939. Others employed a more hybrid look, with sleek steel trusses, such as the Rodenkirchen Bridge over the Rhine near Cologne—the longest suspension bridge in Europe and the first in Germany at its completion in 1941—but even these modernist-inspired bridges were typically mounted on massive stone piers and pillars (figure 6.11).

Other Autobahn facilities reflected this equivocation between function, technology, and ornamentation. Gas stations were one obvious need. Bonatz estimated the Autobahn would require one station roughly every thirty-five kilometers, possibly meaning around 200 stations for the motorways that were completed or under construction before work halted.<sup>66</sup> Many more



**Figure 6.11. An Autobahn Bridge outside Berlin**

This Autobahn bridge outside Berlin combined stone-clad supporting arches with a functional modernist roadway. The blending of modern materials and traditional forms highlighted the potential to achieve a balance between technology and nature. This bridge was very much in the middle of the spectrum with other bridges featuring more traditional designs dominated by stone while others were decidedly modernist.

*Source: Troost, Das Bauen im Neuen Reich, 1:120.*



**Figure 6.12. An Autobahn Service Station**

The Autobahn also required extensive support facilities, including gas and service stations, maintenance depots, and rest stops. The styling of these facilities also vacillated between exceedingly modernist, functionalist designs to structures that mimicked vernacular architecture. Many of the initial gas stations, like the one pictured here wedged between on- and off-ramps, were purely utilitarian in design. Station attendants used the small billboard in the median to signal passing motorists if they had a phone message.

*Source:* Library of Congress.

stations would be required to realize Hitler's dream of pushing the Autobahn to the furthest reaches of colonial conquest far to the east. The first stations were small filling stations situated in a triangular space between an off-ramp, on-ramp, and the main Autobahn (figure 6.12). Their designs were intended to allow motorists to get fuel, use the restroom, and then leave as efficiently as possible. This highly functionalist perspective manifested in decidedly modernist designs with flat roofs and canopies, extensive glass windows, and curvy exterior surfaces. For example, one of the initial standardized designs, the model Fürstenwalde gas station designed by Friedrich Tamms, had a service building in the shape of a triangle with rounded corners. It and the refilling areas were covered by a sleek boomerang-shaped flat roof.<sup>67</sup>

Conservative designs accented by wood and rough masonry, instead of sleeker brick, metal, and glass, predominated later gas stations, giving the appearance of a single-family home with the pitched roof extended to form a canopy over the gas pumps. In addition to shifting styles, later gas stations also added repair shops and diners. Some gas stations evolved into larger

full-service rest stops featuring restaurants and overnight accommodations, especially at scenic locations. These facilities tended to follow more conservative designs, such as the rest stop built adjacent the Chiemsee in Upper Bavaria. Resembling an oversized chalet, the rest stop could seat around 350 people inside and an additional 1,300 on the outside patio with its panoramic views of the surrounding alpine scenery. The gas station could be easily mistaken for an alpine farm, if not for the gas pumps.

The Autobahn also needed an extensive network of road maintenance facilities. Bonatz estimated that one would be needed for every sixty kilometers, giving a grand total of around 250 facilities.<sup>68</sup> Each facility normally consisted of an office building, mechanics workshops, and a long garage arranged in a U shape around a central yard with a row of employee housing a short distance away. Designs varied but generally reflected local vernacular styles featuring brick, stone, and wood. Aside from the occasional eagle and swastika ornamentation, the facilities gave the impression of a little rustic encampment—not unlike the Reich Labor Service (RAD) camps and army bases but without the barracks—outfitted with the latest in road maintenance technologies.

The Autobahns, their bridges, and other auxiliary facilities also served the purpose of expressing Nazi themes of power and permanence. They were a clear and irrefutable demonstration of how the imperative to build could spatially bind together and nourish a nation, marry technology and nature, and leave an indelible imprint on the landscape that would stand for centuries. To reinforce this message, massive sculptures, pylons, and obelisks would mark important locations. For example, Speer designed a monument flanked by two tall pylons topped with eagles clutching swastikas to mark the former German-Austrian border near Salzburg. Speer's project became pointless once Germany annexed Austria, so Josef Thorak designed, as a replacement, a massive Monument to Labor statue featuring four naked men struggling to move a block up an incline. More modest monuments and markers would greet motorists as they arrived in Berlin and other important localities.

Most Germans and outside observers were duly impressed. One especially astute observer, Australian historian Stephen H. Roberts, saw the Autobahn as an embodiment of Hitler's Germany: "These straight white roads are very typical of Nazi Germany. They are needlessly grandiose but most impressive. Efficiently made and more efficiently managed, they somehow reduce the individual to insignificance."<sup>69</sup> But all this came at considerable cost. Estimates have put the total bill at something like 6.5 billion Reichsmarks, much of it somewhat cynically charged—despite contrary evidence to the claim that one of the primary benefits was job creation—to the government agency responsible for unemployment relief.<sup>70</sup> It is worth repeating that, despite the high-profile publicity and significant investments afforded the Autobahn, railroads remained the main mover of German society and

Hitler's war machine.<sup>71</sup> The Autobahn held great potential to reorganize how and where Germans worked, lived, vacationed, and generally experienced their country, yet vehicle ownership was too low and the network too incomplete to have a substantive impact on Germany's economic geography before the project halted in 1941. In fact, the paucity of traffic in publicity photos of completed Autobahns are often striking.

As the new Autobahn network took shape, Hitler lobbied auto manufacturers to mass-produce an inexpensive car for ordinary Germans, much like the popular People's Radios. Ferdinand Porsche developed a prototype, but executives were cool to the idea of a People's Car (*Volkswagen*). German automakers mostly focused on luxury vehicles and worried about the profitability of a low-cost, low-quality car. Hitler's patience finally gave out, and in May 1937, he ordered Ley to form a state-owned company to manufacture the car against the advice of Göring, who feared the project distracted from the Four Year Plan. After consultation with Speer, Hitler tasked a team of Germany's top industrial architects to design a factory and support facilities. The factory would cover around 170 hectares of sparsely populated land near the village of Fallersleben in central Germany.

Work began almost immediately with Hitler laying the foundation stone in May 1938 and christening the forthcoming car as the Strength-through-Joy Car. The first phase of construction was largely finished by spring 1939. The factory was a massive, four-story-tall, brick rectangle stretching roughly 1.5 kilometers along the Mittelland Canal and capped by a monumental power station. The complex was to employ around 10,000 workers producing around 500,000 cars annually. A later unrealized expansion would increase those numbers to 25,000 and more than one million, respectively. The war halted production before it really began, but the plant retooled and manufactured more than 66,000 light vehicles, around 22,000 V-1 flying bombs, and other assorted military goods.<sup>72</sup> Ironically, the pace of war soon revealed Germany's limited supply of trucks as a critical shortcoming, although the idea of promoting trucking did not figure into planning for the People's Car or the Autobahn.

As in Salzgitter, the new factory needed a new town since surrounding villages could not accommodate thousands of new workers. Hitler selected Peter Koller, an Austrian who had studied under Tessenow, to design this City of the KdF Car (known today as Wolfsburg), planned to reach an initial population of 90,000 people.<sup>73</sup> Just as the factory would be "the most modern and most beautiful automobile factory in the entire world," Ley's deputy Otto Marrenbach exalted, so too "in the immediate proximity a city arises, that in accordance with the will of the Führer will likewise be the most beautiful and most exemplary of the Reich."<sup>74</sup> Koller positioned the city on the south side of the canal across from the factory. The design centered on a Party forum atop a small hill ringed by concentric roads that generally followed the sloping topography (figure 6.13). A ceremonial boulevard with



**Figure 6.13. Map of the Volkswagen Factory and City of the KdF Car**

Amid great fanfare, Hitler announced the People's Car program as a means to provide an affordable car for the German people. The factory that would build the cars, represented by the collection of large square and rectangular shapes in the top center, was completed, while little progress was made on the associated new City of the KdF Car that would support the workforce. Despite the initial excitement, the factory shifted to wartime production, so few cars were ever delivered.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 66.

the city hall positioned midway along its course would parallel the forum. A DAF office complex and a stadium were also planned. The remainder of the city would consist of dispersed housing estates separated by clumps of forest. Interestingly, Koller devoted his energies to the residential areas and infrastructure while preparing little more than rough sketches of the Party



buildings or spaces, whereas housing tended to be an afterthought in most of the regime's showpiece projects.

Progress was hampered by a variety of factors. Material and labor shortages grew especially acute after Hitler ordered the hasty construction of the West Wall in 1938. A variety of regional officials and even Göring obstructed the People's Car project, so much so that Hitler placed it under a redesign decree controlled by Speer. Finally, the project faced significant financial delays as Ley assumed at first that Hitler's decree meant the Reich would cover the financing before realizing belatedly that the DAF was responsible. These problems hardly diminished the appetite among the regime's leadership to grab hold of whatever pieces of the economy they could. In March 1941, Hitler authorized Ley to build a factory near Ley's hometown of Waldbröl to mass-produce a People's Tractor, also designed by Porsche.<sup>75</sup> The tractor initiative was another attempt to reconcile the contradictions inherent in Nazi policy—namely, the need to mechanize agriculture since the growth of the military-industrial sectors had worsened labor shortages and hampered the strategic objective of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs.

Hitler's fascination with aviation matched his enthusiasm for automobiles. Hitler demonstrated the effectiveness of air travel during his 1932 presidential campaign by staging rabble-rousing speeches in multiple cities during a single day. Party propagandists promoted the slogan of "Hitler over Germany" to portray their leader as energetic, dashing, and innovative. Military aviation had much to gain from rearmament, but civil aviation also benefited. The distinction between military and civil aviation was rather arbitrary since most facilities and technologies applied to both sectors. The regime commissioned numerous airports, and even those specifically intended to be strictly civilian assumed military roles eventually. Many of these were little more than grass landing fields, but major cities called for something more monumental, most notably Tempelhof in Berlin, which featured a monumental ensemble of exterior and interior spaces intended to awe travelers.

In contrast to its showy reception areas, Tempelhof's boarding areas were highly functional. The boarding gates stretched out in a thin arc, not unlike the Prora resort. A canopy of steel girders and sheeting extending from the main structure created hangars that covered most of the boarding area, thus making the Tempelhof terminal one of the largest structures in the world. The interior spaces were only partially finished, but instead of impressing new arrivals to Hitler's grand capital, the main hall and several of the hangars doubled as airplane assembly lines after 1940.<sup>76</sup> Sagebiel replicated this mixture of modernist functionalism and traditionalist monumentality on smaller scales with his airports in Munich and Stuttgart. These new municipal airports, whether designed by Sagebiel or others, originally served for civilian uses as the Luftwaffe was constructing its own chain of airfields across Germany. In practice, the Luftwaffe eventually assumed control. Munich's

new airport, for example, was to open for civilian traffic in September 1939, but the Luftwaffe immediately incorporated the airport into its operations against Poland, rendering civilian traffic secondary.

In addition to roads and airports, the regime also expanded water and energy infrastructures. Most of these were ongoing initiatives that predated the Nazi regime, in some cases by decades. The Nazi regime promoted these projects, less out of concern for increasing efficiency or earning profit than the political imperatives of creating work, generating electricity, facilitating the Four Year Plan, and ultimately preparing for war. The Mittelland Canal, for example, begun in 1906 and completed as far as Braunschweig by 1933, stretched across north-central Germany linking the existing canal networks of the Ruhr industrial heartland with those around Berlin. Under the Nazi regime, the canal was extended by 1939 to open up additional areas around Braunschweig to industrial development. In addition to facilitating industrial development within Germany, canals also provided mechanisms for territorial conquest. Shortly after annexing Austria in 1938, Hitler ordered the construction of a new canal linking the Rhine/Main and Danube river systems. Planning and preliminary excavations began by the end of the year, but the project was abandoned by 1942.

The extension and improvement of other canals continued, including the Adolf Hitler Canal near Gleiwitz (Gliwice, Poland) in the coal and industrial region of Upper Silesia dedicated by Hess in December 1939. Germany had absorbed much of Czechoslovakia and Poland by this time, so Hess quickly announced that work should commence to extend the canal around 320 kilometers southward to link with the Danube near Vienna. Linking northern German rivers to the Danube was not only vital for transportation but also to bind Austria along with southeastern Europe, which was an important source of raw materials and a key export market, closer to Germany. The project constituted another grand scheme to weld the occupied lands economically into a Greater German Reich and eventually provide a conduit for the Germanization of conquered territories. Construction commenced from both ends and made modest progress before the realities of war precluded everything except preparatory planning, which Czech officials continued into spring 1945.<sup>77</sup>

Some of these projects would have been undertaken without the Nazi seizure of power, but the regime's work creation schemes, deficit spending, and labor conscription programs accelerated those time lines. Some energy infrastructure projects could, however, be regarded as unique to the regime. The power plants of the Volkswagen and Heinkel factories are examples, although their designs were rather utilitarian. The same cannot be said of the electrical substation adjacent the Nuremberg rally grounds. Clad in the same smooth granite facing and overall styling as the Zeppelin Field tribune, the substation was specially built in 1934 to relay electricity to the rally grounds for both routine activities and dramatic spectacles like Speer's cathedral

of light. The substation still mimicked the pomp and grandeur of Hitler's monumental buildings even though it was situated some distance behind the main grandstands and unlikely to be noticed by rally-goers.<sup>78</sup>

The immediacies of war made explicit the critical nature of water and energy infrastructures. Hitler created the ministerial-level post of General Inspector of Water and Energy in July 1941, headed first by Todt and then Speer.<sup>79</sup> Much of the effort involved upgrading, rationalizing, and repairing existing infrastructures. One exception was the Heating Power Emergency Program launched by Speer in early 1942. The program aimed to build a series of standardized power plants across Germany to satisfy the massive spike in demand for electricity caused by the war while simultaneously using as few critical materials as possible. Speer's staff completed plans for a prototype by the end of the year and set an ambitious goal of constructing fifteen massive power plants as soon as possible. The basic design was utilitarian and not unlike the Volkswagen power plant in appearance. This program, however, faltered rapidly amid the realities of war. Work on several plants began by 1943; none were finished.<sup>80</sup>

These infrastructure projects normally employed the latest engineering technologies and presented a functionalist, modernist aesthetic that one could have found in any number of countries. Yet to believe the Party press, the Nazis were the first people to come up with the idea of building a road, airport, canal, or power plant. It is not exactly clear what impact these expanding infrastructures had on meeting the objectives of the Four Year Plan. The City of the Hermann Göring Works and City of the KdF Car eventually produced war materials, but they also required tremendous investments since regime planners purposefully located them away from existing infrastructures. The KdF Car factory was situated directly on the Mittelland Canal, but the regime still had to build a new power plant, train station, and docking facility to deliver coal and other materials, along with further plans for road linkages to the newly finished Berlin-Hannover Autobahn. The City of the Hermann Göring Works needed most of the same infrastructures, plus a canal nearly eighteen kilometers long to link to the Mittelland Canal. Additionally, these and other projects required relocating tens of thousands of workers and their families and providing them with housing and other basic services. Ironically, both factories and their adjacent cities proved vulnerable to air attacks in the end despite their distance from established industrial centers.

## DEPLOYING FOR BATTLE

The Treaty of Versailles imposed strict limitations on the German military. The army could not exceed 100,000 men or possess heavy weapons, the navy was limited to a small number of minor vessels but no submarines, and air

forces of any kind were forbidden, as was conscription. Together with territorial losses, the war guilt clause, and reparations, many Germans regarded these military restrictions as intolerably unjust. The German military, with the tacit approval of successive Weimar governments, found ways within a few years to circumvent the restrictions, including working with various nationalist paramilitary groups and even sending German officers to the Soviet Union for training with equipment forbidden to Germany, purposely violating the spirit, if not the actual letter, of Versailles.

Hitler secretly accelerated these efforts, and informed observers were pretty confident by the end of 1934 that Germany was violating the treaty. Hitler continued to vehemently denounce, but did not openly challenge, Versailles. He could not risk foreign intervention while still busy consolidating power domestically. Hitler also had to resolve the domestic power struggle between the Sturmabteilung (SA) and the military. The SA far outnumbered the established military branches, and many SA leaders and troopers were eager to continue the Nazi revolutionary goal of sweeping away the old order, including the traditional officer corps. Ernst Röhm's assertiveness forced Hitler's hand, but the Führer sided with the military. Hitler ordered Röhm and several top SA leaders executed during the Night of the Long Knives in June 1934. With the military now appeased and sensing weakness among the Western powers, Hitler publicly announced the creation of the new German *Wehrmacht*, or armed forces, and the resumption of general conscription in March 1935.<sup>81</sup> The international response was negative but limited to verbal criticism. The treaty was essentially void beyond this point as Hitler would eventually violate most every clause of the Treaty of Versailles, not to mention the Geneva Conventions and basic norms of humanity.

### Mobilizing the Military

The military longed to regain status, influence, and resources after its defeat in World War I. Although expressly forbidden by Versailles, the military disguised its General Staff as an unassuming personnel office. This cadre of top officers continued developing and experimenting with new tactics, technologies, and strategies. Perhaps the military's most effective circumvention of Versailles was ensuring that, although remaining within prescribed troop limits, the small force allowed by the treaty contained a disproportionate number of officers and senior enlisted men, mostly seasoned veterans. Staff members were overwhelmingly conservative politically and in general outlook, hence although abhorring communism and Versailles, they remained wary of the Nazi movement and its paramilitary organizations, which seemed vulgar and undisciplined.

Despite these reservations, the military had significant incentives to set its misgivings aside as Hitler made rearmament a top priority. The regime's initial work creation programs, for example, contained many

“special” projects that channeled funding to military or dual-purpose, civilian-military infrastructures. By one estimate, Hitler increased military spending from less than 1 percent of national output in 1933 to nearly 20 percent by fall 1938, effectively putting the economy on a war footing.<sup>82</sup> Hitler’s top generals consistently advised against their commander’s risky gambits, but Hitler became convinced he knew better after Western powers failed to respond to Germany’s rearmament, reintroduction of conscription, and the remilitarization of the Rhineland.

Through a series of personnel and organizational changes, Hitler created the Wehrmacht Supreme Command, directly answerable to him, to replace the Ministry of Defense, basically completing the *Gleichschaltung* of the military. The Wehrmacht consisted of three branches: the army (*Heer*), navy (*Kriegsmarine*), and air force (*Luftwaffe*). Each branch had its own specific mission and institutional ethos. Each also established its own building office and construction battalions, comprising around 310,000 men by the start of the war.<sup>83</sup> The military had little interest in the nuances of architectural or urban planning, other than ensuring an ample supply of barracks, airfields, naval berths, and other military facilities. Military construction, as a result, ended up being rather standardized.

The army was the largest branch by far. Hitler’s 1935 decree authorized conscription, but the actual number of soldiers grew slowly at first while priority was given to the construction of new barracks, supply depots, training grounds, and other support infrastructures. These new facilities tended to be located on the outskirts of town near a rail line. To speed construction, the army’s central planning office in Berlin produced standardized templates for common buildings. The standard base consisted of at least three barracks and an administrative building, plus an assortment of ancillary structures like an armory, stables, and motor pool. Barracks were typically three-story rectangular buildings with sloping roofs, roughly accommodating an infantry company of around 150 soldiers. The administrative buildings, which usually housed the main cafeteria, looked the same except they often had a small clock cupola added to the center of the roof (figure 6.14). The buildings were arranged in rigid formation, centered on the dining hall facing the main parade grounds. The other support buildings were generally located in a separate area, so that most daily activities occupied a space distinct from the more technical functions.<sup>84</sup>

The overall result was that the central section of the base differed little in appearance from a preindustrial army base. Army planners assumed the highly ordered and regimented appearance of the buildings would impress those qualities upon common soldiers. These new bases were places of the “highest combat readiness and physical training,” as the director of the Army’s Building Office explained, where “this spirit must be expressed in structural form.”<sup>85</sup> The army established its own homebuilders association in 1935 to design small settlements of single-family homes for officers, normally just off the main base grounds. Mountain divisions constituted



**Figure 6.14. An Army Base in the Bavarian Alps**

The Nazi regime needed a host of new military facilities. Each service had a distinctive building program. The army, for example, needed a great many barracks. Army bases tended to look like oversized schools, like this one in the Bavarian Alps. The center building is a barracks, while the building topped by the cupola to the left houses the main administration offices and dining hall.

Source: Hoffmann, *Detuschland baut*, 55.

an exception to the high levels of standardization. These divisions basically functioned as the equivalent of special forces, often receiving the toughest combat assignments. Ironically, they had rather idyllic quarters during peacetime that mimicked the traditional architecture of their alpine surroundings. The Party press glamorized the mountain division bases while largely ignoring regular installations. In contrast to other aspects of the regime's building program, the army had largely completed its basic base-building program by 1939.

Germany's air force was at a disadvantage compared to the army and navy, since its existence was completely forbidden. Nonetheless, an incipient German air force existed in the form of nominally civilian "flying clubs" that trained military pilots. This pretense soon evaporated when the air force split from the army as an independent branch under Göring. Germany's existing civilian airports offered a temporary home, but these were located near major cities whereas commanders preferred more isolated bases. As a result, the air force constructed much of its infrastructure from scratch. The air force was, in many ways, the favored military branch and experienced a remarkably rapid expansion as new bases sprouted up across the countryside.

In August 1933, Göring ordered the establishment of eighteen new flight schools. The German Air Sport Club nominally commissioned these installations since the air force did not officially exist yet, but the military intent was clear from the start. Sagebiel supervised one of these projects near Celle, launching him to a leading role in aviation architecture. Nearly 200 air bases and schools popped up across Germany by 1939.<sup>86</sup> The air bases tended to be located adjacent to smaller communities in sparsely populated areas with ample space. Air force buildings tended to be one or two stories tall and arranged irregularly. Compared to the rigidity of army bases, air force bases often resembled small villages and were more difficult to identify from the air. Most of the buildings utilized local materials and techniques to mimic vernacular styles. This further precluded the standardized appearance of army bases.<sup>87</sup> Air bases typically had additional accommodations and amenities, like recreation halls and swimming pools, to emphasize their elite status. Most runways were simple grass fields, since the air force mostly flew light aircraft. In contrast to the rustic style of the rest of the buildings, the hangars and other maintenance buildings were generally very functionalist, similar to figure 6.4. The modernist impulses of the air force found their most forthright expression at the German Research Institute for Aviation in Berlin-Adlershof. The institute predated the Nazi regime, but its facilities were widely publicized as evidence of Germany's new prowess in designing research and science facilities.

Naval architecture followed a similar pattern although on a smaller scale. Barracks tended to be two- or three-story rectangular buildings, like those of the army, and followed traditional styles found along the Baltic and North Sea regions. Regardless of branch, most of these bases also included significant housing construction for officers and married soldiers, as well as civilian staff, most of which followed the Stuttgart School approach. In addition to Kiel, the port city of Wilhelmshaven was one of the largest naval concentrations where the buildup of facilities was to occasion around 20,000 new residences to support the burgeoning navy shipyards.<sup>88</sup> These and other strongholds across northern Germany and later along the coasts of Hitler's fortress Europe were interlinked by strings of thousands of artillery batteries, radar stations, minor ports, and other auxiliary facilities.

Hitler's relative disinterest in the navy reflected his initial strategic prioritization of conquest across continental Europe, during which he expected Britain to remain neutral. Hitler was less certain of British neutrality following the Sudeten Crisis and so ordered development of a massive surface fleet capable of challenging Britain's naval supremacy. This program made little progress, and Hitler abandoned it shortly after the outbreak of war in favor of submarines, which were ready for immediate serial production and capable of striking the British fleet and commerce. As the Allies gained air superiority, Germany's submarines became increasingly vulnerable in port. In November 1940, Hitler ordered the construction of a series of massive concrete bunkers in Germany, Norway, and France to protect submarines

during repair or refitting (see figure 6.19). Plans gradually expanded until these facilities reached a total capacity of around 180 submarines, depending on the specific model. Combined with smaller shelters for minesweepers, torpedo boats, and supplies, there were plans for nearly one hundred naval bunkers, of which slightly over half were completed by mid-1944.<sup>89</sup>

The largest submarine complex was located in Lorient on France's northwestern Brittany peninsula. In late June 1940, the navy and Organization Todt started work on what would eventually become three gigantic concrete bunkers. Combined with a couple small, provisional bunkers, the complex could shelter around thirty submarines. A planned fourth bunker that would have nearly doubled this capacity was abandoned in April 1944. The single largest structure was the submarine repair bunker begun in early 1941 in nearby Brest. The bunker measured around 330 by 190 meters and was 17 meters tall. The roof was thickened until eventually reaching roughly 6 meters. This massive structure protected ten dry docks and berthing spaces for another fifteen submarines, for a maximum capacity of twenty-five submarines depending on the model. Taken together, the initial submarine bunkers in Brest, Lorient, and Saint-Nazaire employed a workforce of around 45,000, only about one-fifth of them German. These hulking structures proved nearly impervious to aerial attack (figure 6.15).



**Figure 6.15. The Submarine Bunker at Saint-Nazaire, France**

Built between February 1941 and June 1942, the submarine bunker at Saint-Nazaire stretched nearly 300 meters long and 130 meters wide. This fortress of reinforced concrete—the roof is 8 meters thick—sheltered fourteen pens allowing the supply and repair of submarines in support of operations interdicting trans-Atlantic shipping. Hitler increasingly turned to these megastructures to turn the tide of war back in Germany's favor. The German garrison refused to surrender until the end of the war in May 1945, even though the liberation of France ended submarine operations.

*Source:* German Federal Archives.





**Figure 6.16. SS Barracks on the Northern Outskirts of Munich**

The SS tended to place emphasis on more monumental barracks, often a single massive building that gave the impression of a fortress. The SS barracks shown here were completed in 1936 on the northern outskirts of Munich.

Source: Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 1:63.

In August 1942, Hitler ordered many of these bases transformed into “fortresses,” surrounded by bunkers and integrated into the Atlantic Wall. They would be defended to the last man. The city of Brest, for example, was surrounded by a belt of 160 infantry bunkers.<sup>90</sup>

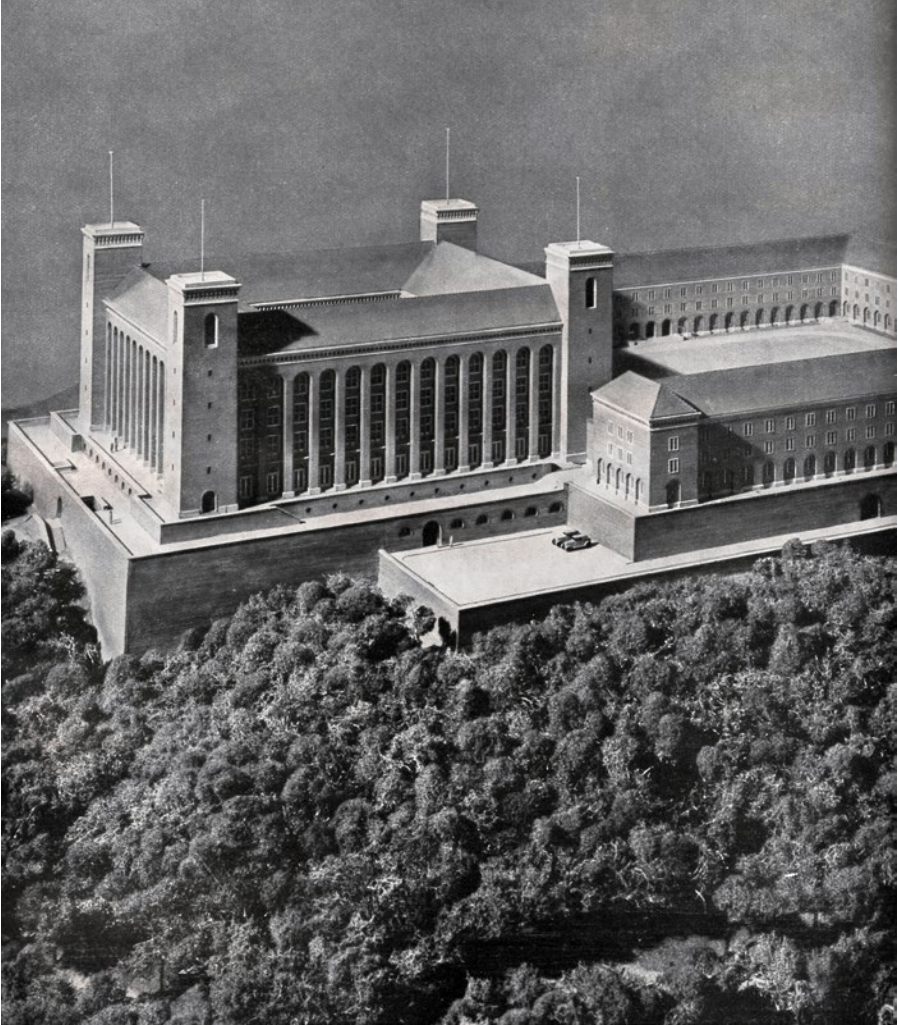
The SS also needed additional facilities to support its expanding role in Hitler’s new Reich, as did other police and security services. SS bases were distinct from those of the regular services, although they had similar functions and components. SS bases tended to be a single massive structure, rather than smaller separate buildings arranged in a formation, thus giving them a more enclosed, fortress-like appearance and conveying a greater sense of monumentality. The SS Junker School at Bad Tölz in southern Bavaria, for example, was a rectangular structure of three to four stories measuring around 300 by 500 meters with two sturdy, castle-like turrets guarding the main entrance leading into the central parade grounds. The complex included its own state-of-the-art support facilities and amenities. For those approaching Munich from the north, the sight of massive SS barracks topped by a nine-story tower also conveyed a sense of a fortress or maybe even a prison, albeit in a more modern form (figure 6.16). The SS quarters designed by Franz Ruff adjacent the Rally Ground were less imposing, but the three- to five-story-tall structure still aimed to impress. The redbrick facade,

pierced by white granite window casings and trim, stretched for around 300 meters along the street. The main entrance was likewise set off by white granite with a large eagle. The communal interior rooms featured mosaic ceilings and marble floors with inlaid swastikas.<sup>91</sup>

Hitler showed great interest in military buildings that intersected with his monumental building programs, such as the military high command buildings planned around the Great Square in Berlin, or those that promised to achieve gargantuan proportions, like the submarine bunkers. He showed little interest in buildings dedicated to everyday operations. Many aspects of Hitler's monumental building program eventually filtered down the chain of command to the design of military administrative buildings. Most new district headquarters appeared as slightly softened versions of Speer's stark monumentality, such as the Luftwaffe district command centers in Dresden and Munich. Designed by Wilhelm Kreis and German Bestelmeyer, respectively, the buildings combined the stark severity of Göring's ministry building in Berlin with more traditional allusions to neoclassicism. The Munich building is especially noteworthy. The main facade stretched around 250 meters, featuring stone friezes of helmets along the top row of window cornices with stylized swastikas worked into the wrought-iron window grills.<sup>92</sup>

There are indications that military designers were shifting toward the enclosed complexes favored by the SS. The planned Army War School, to be built on a prominent hilltop near Danzig, was a massive complex, including accommodations for cadets and officers, sport hall, motor pool, and stables. The main body of the school was a rectangular three-story building that enclosed a central courtyard on three sides. The fourth side was occupied by a square, five-story structure enclosing its own inner courtyard with square corner towers standing thirty-seven meters tall (figure 6.17). The overall concept seemed vaguely neo-Romanesque drawing inspiration from medieval castles, such as Marienburg (Malbork) Castle or the Order Castle Sonthofen. Describing the overall design as following a "monastery format," one writer explained, "this building is a fortified monumental design and the good organic, connection of its components will be an expression of truly soldierly attitude."<sup>93</sup>

The same trend was evident regarding barracks, as later projects showed greater concern for representation. The Greater Germany Infantry Regiment, an elite unit stationed near Berlin, was to receive new barracks but instead of conventional barracks, the army building office collaborated with Speer's staff to design a massive complex very similar in external appearance to the SS quarters in Nuremberg but perhaps twenty times larger in overall capacity and enclosed space (figure 6.18). Clearly, military installations were shifting from relatively austere, practical facilities toward increasing emphasis on monumentality and representation. Ironically, just as the German military embarked upon ever more ambitious campaigns abroad, eventually leading to its destruction, officials and planners were dreaming up ever more expansive and ostentatious accommodations and training facilities back home. In



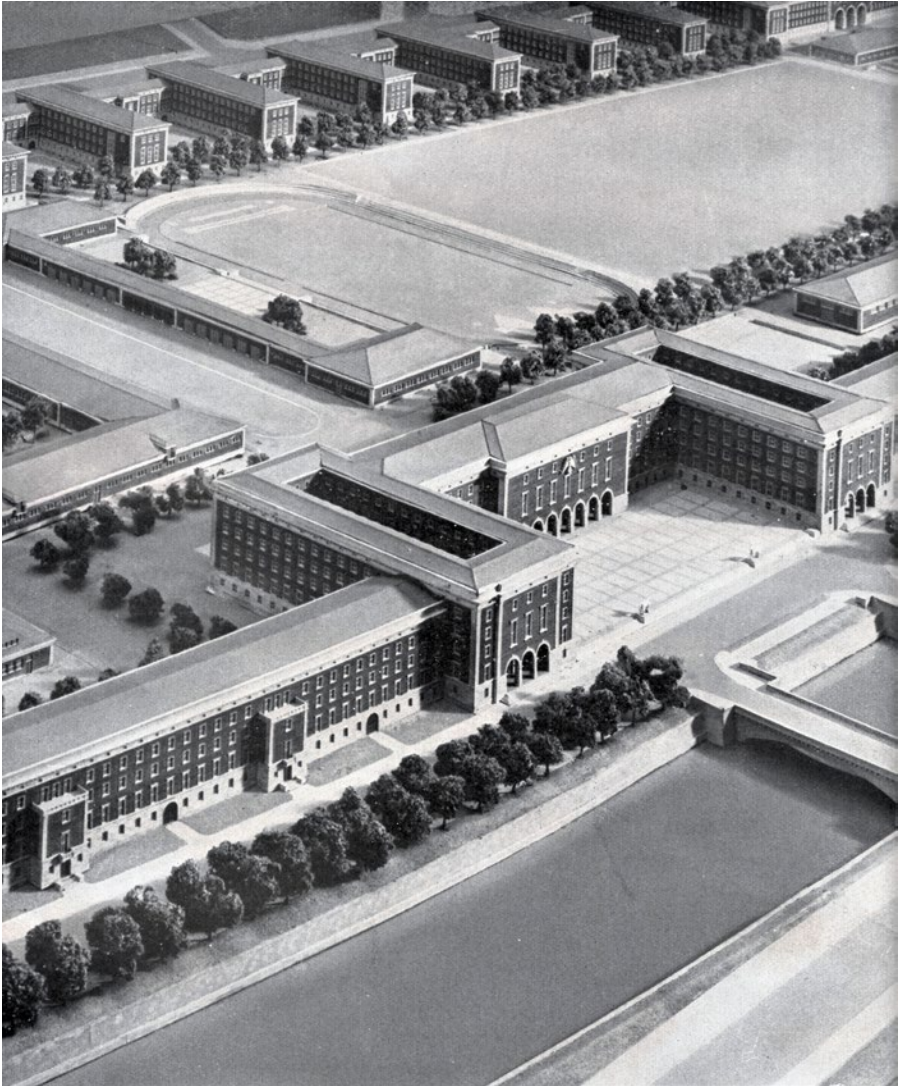
**Figure 6.17. Model of the Army War School Planned near Danzig**

This model shows the planned Army War School. Similar to the Order Castles, the plan drew from neo-Romanesque influences to give the appearance of a medieval fortress.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 80.

fact, Germany's burgeoning military-industrial infrastructures were a point of pride within the regime's building program as bases and barracks were prominently displayed in the Munich architectural exhibitions and in the architecture showpiece books produced by Troost, Speer, and others.

Fixed fortifications also played prominent roles in the regime's building program. Already in 1932, German leaders worried that worsening relations might lead Poland to launch a preemptive invasion and began preliminary planning for a series of fortifications between the Oder and Warta Rivers.



**Figure 6.18. Model of the Greater Germany Infantry Regiment Planned for Berlin**

This model partially shows the planned barracks for the elite Greater Germany Infantry Regiment based in Berlin. Like SS barracks, the complex was designed as a single continuous structure enclosing a large rectangular space and a few minor auxiliary buildings.

Source: Speer and Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 3rd ed., 60.

Hitler ordered work on this East Wall to proceed immediately, and later in 1934, he ordered preliminary planning for fortifications along the Neckar-Enz and Wetterau-Main-Tauber lines in western Germany. The latter two projects were abandoned after Hitler's remilitarization of the Rhineland rendered them obsolete, but the East Wall proceeded, and by 1938, a line of



**Figure 6.19. Map of Major Military Infrastructures and Hitler's Field Headquarters**

Hitler ordered the construction of seemingly larger and larger military infrastructures. The most famous were the much-touted Atlantic Wall, stretching from the Pyrenees to the Arctic Circle, and the infamous Führer Bunker, constructed beneath the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. Map by James Leonard.

bunkers, tank traps, and other obstacles stretched over roughly 110 kilometers. A network of tunnels and other underground facilities linked some of the bunkers. The wall was disjointed and did not provide an integrated defensive line, but military engineers and strategists gained valuable practical experience and developed some basic standardized designs.<sup>94</sup>

Germany's geopolitical situation improved considerably by 1938, and the country was militarily more than a match for Poland. In fact, Hitler was now looking to go on the offensive in the east but doubted France would back down and was increasingly unsure of British neutrality. Hitler's response was to order the immediate construction of a fortified West Wall, known among the Allies as the Siegfried Line, running more than 600 kilometers from the Swiss border to just north of Aachen (figure 6.19).<sup>95</sup> The military had already conducted extensive surveying and planning, even before the remilitarization of the Rhineland. Military engineers oversaw the initial stages of construction; however, progress was slow, and only 1,400 bunkers, mostly small pillboxes suitable for an infantry squad, were operational by early 1938. Hitler was displeased and in March 1938, no doubt with the

looming Sudeten Crisis in mind, ordered the completion of 5,000 bunkers by October. Hitler made clear the project was an absolute priority and so diverted thousands of workers and millions of tons of supplies from across Germany. One later estimate calculated that the West Wall consumed around 20 percent of Germany's total cement production from its start to the outbreak of war, as well as smaller but still significant quantities of iron, wood, and other resources.<sup>96</sup> Work proceeded rapidly despite almost crippling Germany's rail system.

Todt was a logical choice to lead the operation. He had already demonstrated his organizational abilities overseeing Autobahn construction, but the scale and speed of the West Wall were beyond his capabilities at that time. Todt had to enlist hundreds of private construction firms into building brigades. One senior official on Todt's staff claimed that 342,000 workers were on-site by October 1938, in addition to 90,000 members of the military's engineering corps, 100,000 RAD workers, and various military construction battalions.<sup>97</sup> Hitler was duly impressed and dubbed the enterprise *Organisation Todt* (OT). The wall was basically complete by early 1939, with a few later additions, extensions, and modifications.

In all, the West Wall encompassed more than 13,000 bunkers and pillboxes stretching nearly 260 kilometers. Planners deployed a number of standardized bunkers depending on whether the primary purpose was firing, command, observation, or artillery. The basic firing bunker was little more than a cramped box of steel-reinforced concrete with firing slits at the front and sides and an entrance at the back. These bunkers accommodated an infantry squad of ten to fifteen men and provided few amenities other than heat. The concrete ranged from one to two meters in thickness, sufficient to withstand most everything except the largest ordnance. Todt added rows of tank traps and other obstacles between the bunkers, including water-filled ditches and jagged concrete pyramids up to 1.5 meters tall, called dragon teeth, intended to impale vehicles.

In contrast to the East Wall, which was rarely mentioned, the regime's propaganda apparatus touted the West Wall as a testament to German efficiency, determination, and technological prowess. Exuberant progress reports emphasized the wall's design as contributing to a uniquely German cultural landscape that harmonized nature, culture, and military technology. Paul Schmittthener claimed that the wall was responsible for a military-political situation in the west that greatly reduced the dangers of war. Beyond these practical effects, the wall also fulfilled a representational role as the "external symbol of the inner indestructible unity of our people in peace and especially in war."<sup>98</sup>

As far as military effectiveness, the line had dubious value. Hitler's demand for speed meant that Todt opted for the simplest options, overriding the call of military engineers for more robust and time-consuming designs. Hitler also insisted that the line run directly along the border to defend

every bit of German soil, regardless of the defensibility of the terrain. Perhaps the West Wall's most tangible contribution to the German war effort was to catalyze the creation of the OT. After completing the West Wall, OT brigades fanned out to improve critical military-industrial infrastructures. The OT followed closely behind the Wehrmacht as it rolled across Europe, in addition to providing crucial contributions supporting later retreats and repairing damaged infrastructure at home. A relatively ad hoc conglomerate of private companies initially, the OT evolved into a critical component of the German war machine with its own paramilitary structure replete with uniforms, ranks, and even armed security for areas threatened by resistance movements. By August 1944, the OT commanded as many as 1.4 million workers, the majority of whom were foreign civilian conscripts, prisoners of war (POWs), and concentration camp inmates.<sup>99</sup>

The OT's single largest assignment was the Atlantic Wall. The Atlantic Wall began in 1940 as a string of coastal batteries between Calais and Boulogne in north-central France intended to provide cover fire for Hitler's planned invasion of Britain. Dozens of heavy cannons and hundreds of artillery pieces, mostly stripped from existing German batteries elsewhere or captured pieces, were deployed to the area. These initial emplacements were generally in the open because the threat of British air attack seemed negligible. The failure of the Luftwaffe to defeat the Royal Air Force and Hitler's decision to invade the Soviet Union signaled the end of offensive land operations on the western front, but work continued through 1941 on air force and naval strongpoints, especially submarine bunkers, to sustain offensive operations. In March 1942, Hitler ordered the construction of a fortified Atlantic Wall stretching nearly 5,000 kilometers from the Spanish Pyrenees to the fjords of Norway as part of the army's shift to defensive operations.

Hitler's initial priorities were fortifying Norway, the Channel Islands, and major ports along the English Channel, which he concluded were the most likely targets of an Allied invasion. He largely discounted open beaches as possible landing points. As a result, Hitler believed the impending invasion could be repulsed by clustering massive artillery batteries, some of which he sketched out personally, around the relatively limited number of landing spots. Progress was slow as the OT gave priority to submarine bunkers and, later, to facilities for the so-called wonder weapons and the growing need to repair bomb damage back in Germany. Construction activity still managed to peak at around 770,000 cubic meters of concrete poured during April 1943. When Hitler ordered General Erwin Rommel to inspect the Atlantic Wall in November 1943, Rommel was highly critical of the effort, regarding most of the work of little value. Hitler subsequently charged Rommel with bolstering the defenses and ordered a frenzy of construction along the northern French coast, which focused on deploying smaller bunkers, obstacles, and millions of mines between the major strongholds.

In the end, the Atlantic Wall consisted of a great variety of bunkers ranging from massive batteries to single-person machine gun positions, perhaps numbering more than 15,000 in total, manned by 300,000 troops.<sup>100</sup> In terms of numbers, the most common fortifications were passive defenses like mines and various types of steel, concrete, and wooden obstacles intended to obstruct and impale landing craft and amphibious vehicles. The Tobruk, a single-person fighting position, was also very common, with more than 8,000 prepared. Tobruks were basically foxholes created by setting concrete drain pipes into the ground and equipping them with a swivel-mounted machine gun. Most of the other bunkers were relatively modest in size and similar to those constructed along the West Wall.

Hitler declared key port cities to be “fortresses” and forbade their surrender. He ordered Todt to construct large coastal batteries encased in massive concrete bunkers to protect these ports and other strategic locations. Completed in January 1942, Battery Todt was one of the largest. It was located at the narrowest stretch of the English Channel roughly halfway between Calais and Boulogne. The battery consisted of four gun emplacements, each armed with a 380-millimeter naval gun, protected by more than three meters of concrete casing. Hitler’s insistence on massive artillery emplacements spoke to his proclivity for monumentality and also the harsh reality that the defense of the Atlantic coast would be afforded as little manpower as possible given the precarious situation on the eastern front. Most other emplacements were much less formidable, consisting of a hodgepodge of antiquated, captured, and salvaged weapons repurposed for coastal defense (figure 6.20). The actual value of these fortifications remains a matter of debate. The initial Allied invasion force at Normandy breached the Atlantic Wall in one day, although some units suffered heavy losses. This largely rendered the remaining stretches irrelevant. There is scant evidence that major batteries, like Battery Todt, ever managed to hit an enemy ship, although they consumed enormous resources. Later in the war, German forces scrambled to ready the West and East Walls as the Allies closed in, but both lines had been previously stripped of their weapons. Under intense Soviet pressure, the East Wall collapsed in around three days, while the West Wall fared little better.

These walls may have affected the course of events in less tangible ways. Goebbels ordered extensive propaganda of the West and Atlantic Walls to convince the public that Germany was ready to defend itself against any attack. Senior military commanders had little faith in the walls, but some top Nazis valued them highly. Goebbels confided in his diary in April 1943: “The English are in no position to strike us in our actual core. When I watch recordings of the Atlantic Wall, for example, I have the feeling as if we were sitting in Europe in an absolutely secure fortress.”<sup>101</sup> Many Allied commanders bought into the same theme of impenetrable fortified lines. In that sense, these fortifications may have served more of a psychological or





**Figure 6.20. Massive Gun Emplacements as Part of the Atlantic Wall in Normandy**

Hitler ordered massive gun emplacements, the crown jewels of the Atlantic Wall, built at strategic locations, such as these two in Normandy. Despite their formidable appearance in propaganda newsreels, they were largely ineffectual in action.

*Source:* Robert C. Ostergren.

representational function than a practical means for thwarting attacks. It is, of course, impossible to replay events, but the walls likely influenced decision making in subtle ways. Without the Atlantic Wall, or at least the myth of the wall created by Goebbels, it is possible the Allied invasion of France could have occurred a year earlier or could have landed near Calais or in Belgium to provide a shorter route into Germany. The myth of the West Wall also caused hesitation among some generals as they approached German territory, allowing time for Germany to regroup for a last-ditch offensive in December 1944. These walls may have extended the life of Hitler's Reich by a few months, but it remains debatable whether the investment of material, labor, funds, and weapons made strategic sense.

### **Defending the Home Front**

Life on the German home front retained some semblance of normality into early 1942, aside from occasional British air raids and various shortages, which had already begun before the war. Germany's rapid victories over

Poland and France and initial successes against the Soviet Union lent some credibility to the regime's promises of better days ahead. These illusions, however, crumbled in the face of increasing Allied air raids during 1942 and then the staggering defeat at Stalingrad in February 1943. The front lines crept steadily back toward Germany from that point, while ever larger formations of Allied planes filled German skies. Protecting the civilian population, or at least ethnic Germans, became a sudden imperative and was especially worrisome since any failure to do so threatened to undermine public morale and support for the regime. The collapse and disorder of the German home front in 1918 was front and center in the minds of Hitler and his cronies. Promises may have been sufficient during the early war years when things appeared to be going well, but more immediate steps were needed as the realities of war were brought directly home to the German people.

The threat of strategic bombing concerned German strategists and planners well before the Nazis came to power, but the new regime was slow to act. Hitler issued his Law on Air Raid Protection in June 1935, which basically put Göring in charge of implementing a civil defense program. Göring did not issue any substantive orders until May 1937, and there was little sustained action until early 1939.<sup>102</sup> There was a concerted effort to disperse factories and neighborhoods whenever possible, but this tended to impede industrial production given that expanding existing facilities would have been faster and more economical. Beyond broad objectives, local authorities were generally free to take whatever civil defense measures they deemed appropriate. Most major cities had installed air raid sirens by the mid-1930s. There were also some scattered efforts to integrate air raid bunkers into new schools and Party buildings; however, these were rather piecemeal efforts, and civilian shelters remained in short supply.

This is not to suggest that designers were idle. Leo Winkel, who patented an aboveground air raid shelter in 1934, was an example. The thick concrete and conical shape, somewhat resembling a rocket, was intended to deflect glancing bomb strikes. Winkel left his job with the Thyssen steel concern to form his own company. In total, around 200 versions of the Winkel bunker were built, mostly by the military for testing and by major manufacturers who reasoned their facilities were likely targets. Winkel and other designers continued experimenting, and the military kept testing, but few shelters were actually built until Hitler authorized emergency bunker construction for civilian populations in October 1940. Headed by Speer in Berlin and by Todt elsewhere, the program called for around 6,000 large civilian bunkers to protect roughly thirty-five million people, a completely unrealistic goal that would have more than consumed all available concrete production for many years. Only around 1,200 were usable by the start of the main air war over Germany in 1942 (figure 6.21).<sup>103</sup>

Many shelters were simply repurposed basements or cellars, but thousands of smaller bunkers were constructed in larger city centers. The total



**Figure 6.21. A Large Apartment Block with Attached Air Raid Shelters in Munich**

Completed in 1943, this large apartment block in Munich was around 170 meters long and five stories tall. Stout air raid shelters were attached to both ends, noticeable here by the lack of windows.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

number built is unclear, because multiple agencies were involved. The Ruhr industrial city of Bochum, for example, was an obvious target for bombing, so more than 12,500 shelters were built. Governments and businesses accounted for a relatively small share as more than 11,000 were private projects, with 10,700 of them being small basement shelters. Hamburg was also a frequent target. The city had 131 public bunkers and nearly 2,200 other types of shelters with a total capacity of around 600,000 for a city of 1.7 million residents. Again, most shelters were improvised and in practice regularly surpassed their intended capacities. One of Hamburg's largest bunkers was designed to accommodate 18,000 people, but more than 60,000 commonly crowded in because its massive concrete frame was deemed safer than smaller shelters.<sup>104</sup> Hamburg and Bochum, along with Berlin and other industrial centers in northern Germany, were exceptions. Other cities probably averaged enough shelters to accommodate only 15 percent of their residents.

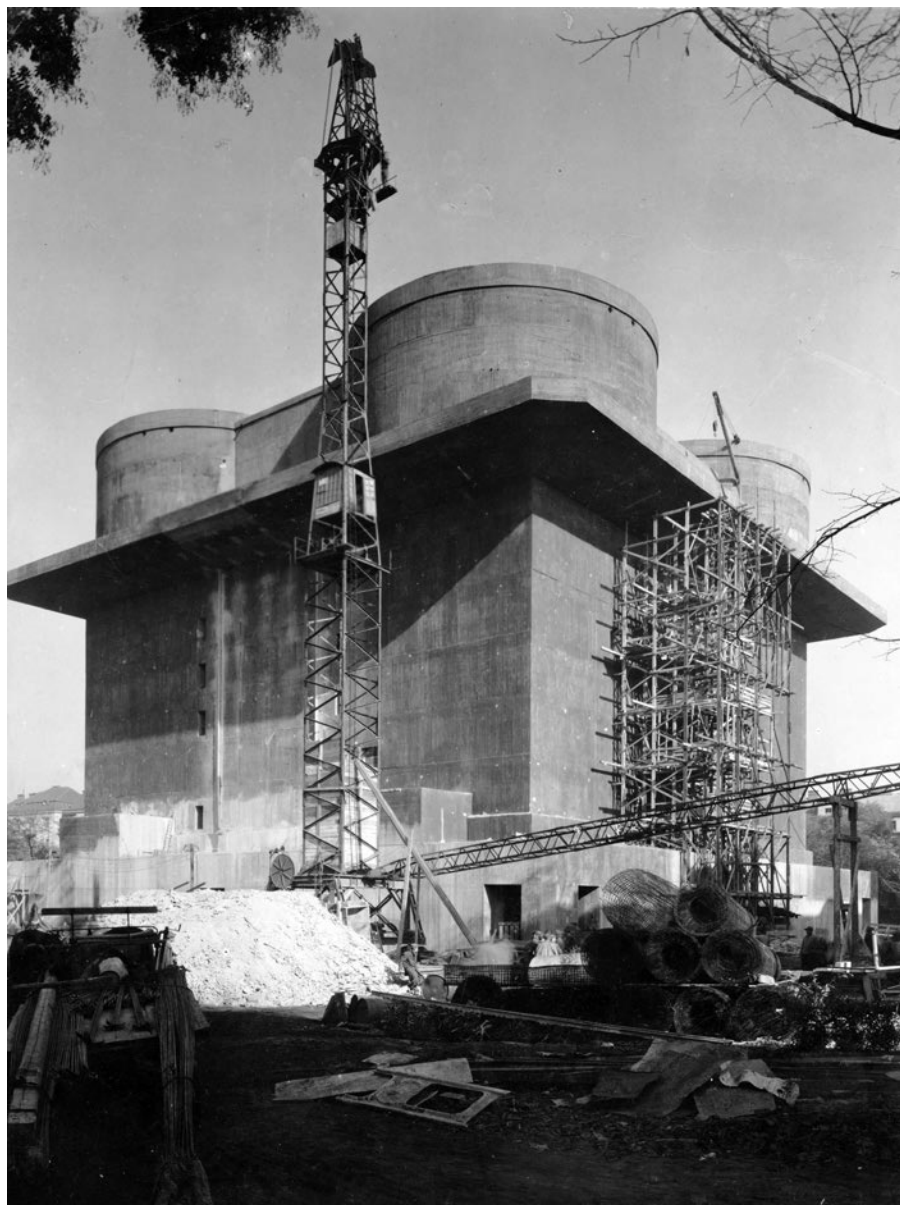
There was no single standard design, but purpose-built bunkers were generally aboveground, multistory, freestanding structures that could be sealed in case of poison gas attack and provisioned with water, electricity, and other

basic facilities. Many of the first bunkers featured historicized designs, perhaps to minimize the increased militarization of civilian life. The two bunkers designed by Munich city planner Karl Meitinger in 1941, for example, somewhat resembled medieval towers. The largest measured fourteen by fourteen meters and stood around six stories tall. Its walls and roof were up to two meters thick and could accommodate 1,200 people. Despite the attention to historicized ornamentation, one writer was adamant that many early bunkers were aesthetically unacceptable, because a skilled builder should be able to ensure air raid structures enriched their surroundings.<sup>105</sup> Regardless, the urgencies of war soon forced designers to abandon any pretense of decoration and adopt undecorated, concrete exteriors. These bunkers provided adequate protection during conventional bombing attacks, but firestorms caused by massive incendiary attacks could turn them into deathtraps.

After a relatively inconsequential British air raid on Berlin in August 1940, Hitler ordered the city defended by a series of concrete flak towers. Friedrich Tamms, a senior architect on Speer's staff, quickly produced the first designs for pairs of towers working in tandem.<sup>106</sup> One tower served as the firing tower with heavy anti-aircraft guns; a second smaller tower contained the detection equipment and command center. The first of three pairs was finished by April 1941. The base of the main firing tower was square and covered nearly 5,000 square meters. The tower stood nearly 40 meters tall and was topped by four main firing platforms at the corners along with several smaller firing positions. The tower housed a garrison of around 350 soldiers protected by nearly three meters of concrete. Additionally, the upper stories operated as a hospital and storage space for many of Berlin's art treasures, while the lower sections served as a public shelter that may have packed in as many as 30,000 civilians during raids. The towers were also largely self-sufficient with their own water, electricity, and heat.

Tamms built five additional pairs, two in Hamburg and three in Vienna, using modified designs (figure 6.22). The so-called third-generation flak towers in Vienna were the most developed and systematically arranged in a general triangle surrounding the city center. They supported the same basic firing capacity but took the shape of sixteen-sided cylinders with a diameter of forty-three meters and standing more than fifty meters tall, with slightly thicker concrete and more room for civilians. The last tower was finished in January 1945 in Vienna, while work never commenced on additional towers for Berlin, Bremen, and Munich.<sup>107</sup>

Tamms's imposing towers along with more conventional flak batteries took their toll on Allied planes but were unable to protect German cities. By spring 1942, British Bomber Command had concluded that military-industrial facilities were too difficult to strike accurately. The solution to disrupting Germany's military production was to "de-house" the workforce by bombing population centers and undermining public morale. The first 1,000-bomber raid on Cologne in May 1942 demonstrated the devastating



**Figure 6.22. The Nearly Finished Flak Tower VIII in the Arenberg Park in Vienna**

Designated Flak Tower VIII, this firing tower, along with its supporting command tower, towered over Arenberg Park in Vienna. Pictured here nearly complete in late 1943, the four circular structures on the roof enclosed firing pits for anti-aircraft artillery, while the body of the structure housed troops, ammunition, and shelters for civilians. Like later civilian air raid shelters, the flak towers made no pretense to blending into the cityscape but rather resembled brutish, hulking masses of concrete. Their massive size made their destruction a rather complicated and expensive affair after the war, so many were left in place and converted to a variety of uses, including apartment buildings, nightclubs, and museums. This particular flak tower currently serves as a depot for art work.

*Source:* German Federal Archives.

potential of mass bombings on population centers. Combined with the reversals along the eastern front, the escalating bombing offensive made the provision of housing a central concern in Germany's civil defense campaign.

Estimates vary widely on the number of residential units destroyed by bombing in Germany, but a general consensus ranges from 3.5 to 4 million units destroyed out of around 19 million total.<sup>108</sup> The main raid on Cologne noted previously destroyed roughly 13,000 residences and damaged more than 28,000. Such devastation threatened to disrupt German war production. Seldte and the Labor Ministry seized this opportunity to propose replacing housing through low-interest loans, reflecting the ministry's long-standing, market-oriented perspective. Speer complained that such efforts diverted funding, labor, and materials from his purview as Armaments Minister, yet he was in no position to assume additional responsibilities. Hitler tried to resolve the dilemma by naming Ley to the new position of Reich Housing Commissar.<sup>109</sup> This essentially charged Ley, in collaboration with Speer, with overall responsibility for all housing matters. As one of Ley's deputies stated confidently, "the path has been cleared for work unhindered by jurisdictional difficulties."<sup>110</sup> This largely fulfilled Ley's long-standing aspiration, although he proved totally inept at dealing with the rapidly deteriorating situation.

Reporting on his experiences serving in the military, Heinrich Dörr, a planner for the Reich Office for Regional Planning, observed that air power had made dense urban areas indefensible and obsolete. A new approach was needed since "total war, that is the integration of the homeland as the most important theater of the air war, necessitates the militarization of the entire area."<sup>111</sup> The general notion that dispersed, low-density neighborhoods reduced vulnerability to aerial bombing had been a recurring theme within housing policy circles even before 1933. By 1936 at the latest, some officials were beginning to pull together more comprehensive perspectives on the strategic role of housing. For example, Ludowici published his polemic *Total National Defense* highlighting the central role of housing in national security. Residential design would play a key role in terms of national demography, economic production, and food production so that, as Ludowici was keen to declare, "today, the entire nation is the military."<sup>112</sup>

The preference for dispersed, low-density housing located away from likely targets, such as military-industrial facilities, soon became an explicit planning objective, eventually intersecting with ideas for new cities and the excitement of postwar planning. Friedrich Nicolaus, a senior building official in Berlin, argued that "fortified urban planning" would be a guiding principle in designing new settlements. "Through the establishment of the new cities," Nicolaus clarified, "it can only be about the very simple task of creating productive residential spaces for large numbers of families in locations which are simply required by the necessities of national defense."<sup>113</sup> These calls for spacious cities and homestead settlements were no longer practical by 1943 as the regime's rhetoric shifted toward a total housing

policy supporting total war. Now serving on the Reich Commissar's staff, Fischer-Dieskau recounted Ley's directive assuming central control of all housing planning and construction. Housing policy would now focus on four general priorities: finish projects currently under construction, restart projects previously interpreted, continue subdividing residences and utilizing attics and commercial spaces, and finally build "wartime temporary accommodations" for those displaced by bombing.<sup>114</sup> The last two priorities dominated as the Allied bombing campaign accelerated through 1943.

One of Ley's first actions as commissar was to issue new regulations controlling residential space, which favored certain groups when assigning available housing, including veterans, families of soldiers, and families with many children.<sup>115</sup> These regulations followed Göring's August 1942 decree making it illegal to convert residential space to other uses.<sup>116</sup> These steps provided some additional housing, as did the deportation of Jewish Germans, which was nearly complete by mid-1943, but the gains were mostly in larger cities subject to increasing attacks. Nazi leaders were acutely aware of growing public discontent as realities forced people into smaller and smaller accommodations.

Hitler's promised postwar housing program offered an eventual solution, but some sort of replacement housing was needed in the meantime. Speer, Ley, and their staffs turned toward the complete standardization and rationalization of building components. As noted by Hans Schönbein, a section leader on Ley's housing staff, "the demand of the hour is the sharpest rationalization of housing construction with the goal of the mass production of all building parts and subsequently the entire house."<sup>117</sup> The first step in reaching this objective called for a single design mass-produced from materials not needed for wartime production and assembled by unskilled labor. Speer tasked Ernst Neufert, a highly respected expert on issues of standardization, to develop wartime accommodations. Neufert's design envisioned a two-story wooden apartment building housing sixteen families. The apartments were small, but as Neufert cautioned, "total war demands imperatively the limitation of our daily needs to the bare essentials."<sup>118</sup> The buildings were still arranged in a garden settlement layout, showing the hold that spatial arrangement continued to exert despite the shift away from single-family dwellings.

Even in the context of total war, Neufert's design drew criticism from cultural conservatives worried that a standardized design eroded regional variation, while some planners and strategists noted that the wooden structures were vulnerable to incendiary bombs. Neufert's design went into production but was hampered by deteriorating wartime conditions, shortages, and bureaucratic inertia. Ley claimed that 25,000 units had been finished by the end of 1943.<sup>119</sup> In reality, components for only around 6,000 units had been manufactured by then with a few more likely completed in early 1944 before the program was abandoned. These shortcomings were representative.

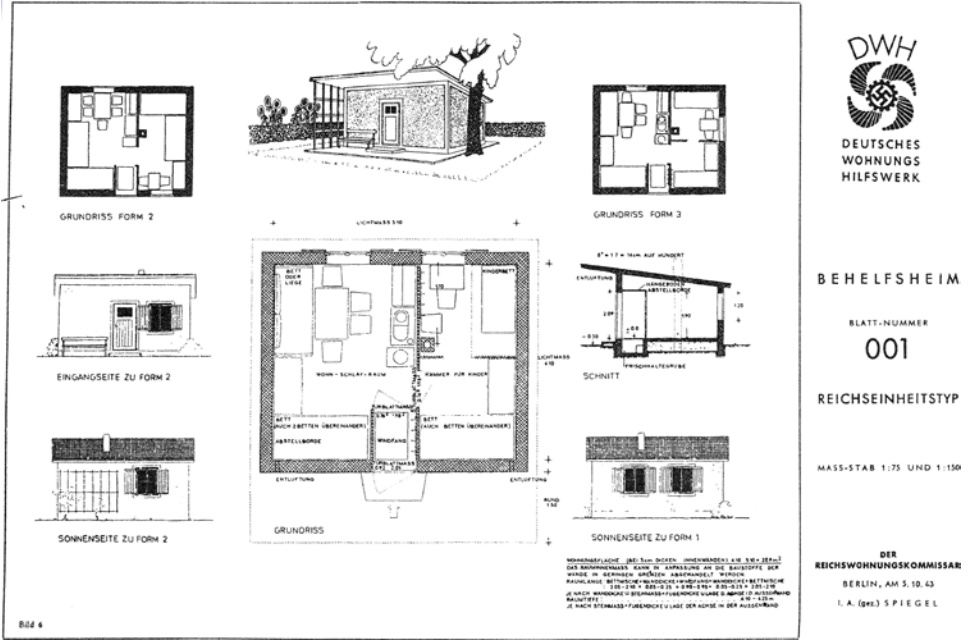
General estimates indicated completion of around 302,000 new residences in 1938. This level dropped to less than 30,000 during 1943, around a 90 percent decline. In contrast, rough estimates put the number of residences destroyed during 1943 at around one million.<sup>120</sup>

The regime realized the impossibility of producing enough replacement housing to keep pace with Allied bombing. This led to Hitler's decree in September 1943 creating the German Housing Relief program to provide emergency housing for those displaced by bombing through "the assembly of simple, makeshift homes in settlement form, which are completed through the utmost self-help and community help."<sup>121</sup> Makeshift homes were small, temporary houses—little more than shacks—built from prefabricated, mass-produced components. Regime leaders hoped these cheap and simple shelters would allow bombed-out families to remain within their locality and avoid the disruption of mass evacuation. Ley was in charge of this new building program, while Speer supervised the design and production of components.

Ley tackled his new assignment with typical zeal, exclaiming in December 1943 that "the Party is, as everywhere, so also here, the motor and the dynamic force."<sup>122</sup> In a speech to Gauleiters the following February, Ley positioned his task as central to the war effort: "The temporary housing program is a weapon in this war to be able to effectively counter the blockade of residential space that the enemy has intended for us."<sup>123</sup> Ley selected the design of Hans Spiegel as the standard model for this new initiative. Ley claimed this design was the bare minimum that designers could offer the German people. The design included two rooms covering just over 20 square meters intended to accommodate four or five people (figure 6.23). There would be no water, sewer, or other services, but each unit was to have approximately 200 square meters of garden space to grow food. As Spiegel explained, "the garden is necessary as an extension of the cramped residence, an additional 'green room.'"<sup>124</sup>

The components arrived in a large crate with instructions for people to assemble the unit themselves. The regime paid the builder 1,700 Reichsmarks per finished unit, and the occupants would own the finished structure. The regime was explicit in saying that although these structures were temporary, they would have to last five to ten years after the war even under the regime's most optimistic plans. Local officials determined the building sites, but Ley's staff advised that they be grouped into little settlement clusters along the edge of cities.<sup>125</sup> Germany's top landscape architect developed aesthetic principles for locating emergency housing, normally in little neighborhoods with the shacks positioned discretely under trees.<sup>126</sup> Even amid these dire conditions, the regime's planners still held fast to the spatiality of community. The regime was also keen to favor certain groups in declaring "in the first place makeshift homes for armaments workers, secondarily such for workers in transportation and public utilities, and third makeshift homes





**Figure 6.23. A Plan for Emergency Housing Composed of Standardized Prefabricated Components**  
 The devastation wrought by Allied bombers compelled the Nazi regime to launch a succession of programs to build emergency housing. This schematic shows one such program, which aimed to deliver a standardized kit of prefabricated components that could be assembled into a small shack.  
 Source: Spiegel, "Gestaltung und Ausführung des Behelfsheimes," 330.

for the remaining comrades."<sup>127</sup> This continued a general trend of selection that became increasingly stringent amid worsening shortages.

Ley's public embrace of the relief effort entered public consciousness as all forms of makeshift housing became known popularly as "Ley arbors." Ley approved production of one million Spiegel units in late 1943 but proved unable to reach this ambitious goal. By the end of 1943, a mere 5,000 Spiegel units were complete and only another 33,000 were underway. By late summer 1944, Ley claimed production reached around 300,000 units. The actual numbers were much lower. A Reich Chancellery report from January 1945 estimated that only 77,000 temporary units had been completed by October 1944, making a grand total of 100,000 units plausible.<sup>128</sup> Encompassing all housing programs, Ley claimed that 450,000 residences were finished from the start of the war to the end of 1943.<sup>129</sup> That claim is reasonable, but the regime's housing programs fell far short of replacing the estimated total of up to four million residences destroyed by May 1945, equal to roughly 20 percent of total prewar housing. Most makeshift homes were concentrated around larger cities. Hamburg appeared to have the largest concentration with around 15,000 units completed in the vicinity, most likely because of

proximity to camps that produced the components. Other cities had far fewer. Around 1,500 makeshift units were completed in Cologne, while Munich reported around 1,800 units by the end of October 1944. These totals fell far short of the need with Cologne reporting roughly 81,500 destroyed units, for example.<sup>130</sup>

In the face of severe shortages, scavenged materials were more common than Ley's prefabricated shacks. Labor was also scarce, so officials resorted to everything from teenagers to slave laborers, and at least some prefabricated components were manufactured in concentration camps near Hamburg and Bremen. The Gauleiters and other local officials largely built whatever makeshift accommodations they could with no real oversight. Meanwhile, Martin Bormann also seemed intent on checking Ley's rise. In early 1944, Ley publicly acknowledged as much: "Both the relevant authorities, as well as the architects and the construction industry, follow our demands only reluctantly."<sup>131</sup> The DAF had largely ceased to function by the end of the year as the military drafted most of its staff. Reporting on Ley's tour of emergency housing programs around Berlin in late 1944, one of his staffers quoted Ley as praising the ingenuity and tenacity of the German people: "We must only take away all the shackles that through regulation could hinder the campaign!"<sup>132</sup> Ironically, Ley was basically exhorting Germans to act on their own.

The overall situation in Regensburg was typical. Already by 1940, local officials had noted dire housing conditions: "We are today so far that one can no longer speak of a housing emergency but rather already of a bed emergency."<sup>133</sup> The city responded by beginning construction of 150 makeshift homes south of the Göringheim settlement. Progress was slow, so the city authorized the construction of wooden barracks using scavenged materials because few, if any, prefabricated components arrived. Labor was also in short supply, so city workers were required to work one day per week on construction crews. Soon students and slave laborers were deployed, but these steps barely kept the streets relatively passable and allowed some temporary repairs. The city's final report from March 1945 indicated that just 38 units had been completed with an additional 271 underway.<sup>134</sup> The situation was probably better in smaller towns and rural areas, but conditions deteriorated there as evacuees and refugees flooded in from the cities. Many of the same planners who a few years earlier had been dreaming up extensive plans for reordering entire cities and regions now informed people that makeshift homes could be fashioned from miscellaneous materials scattered around a typical farmstead: "In many regions of the Reich, clay is not especially difficult to procure with which one can help himself. Also almost every farmer has straw. Clay in combination with straw results in an excellent building material."<sup>135</sup>

As Reich Commissar, Ley could reasonably claim to be the central authority for housing and eventually assert jurisdiction over postwar housing

programs. Ley's failures in responding to the intensification of Allied bombardment weakened his position and ironically coincided with renewed interest in preparing ambitious postwar building programs, culminating in Hitler's decree for the postwar reconstruction of bombed cities. Hitler placed Speer in charge of this effort. This somewhat surprising turn of events affirmed Speer's rapid ascent through the regime's hierarchy following Todt's death in February 1942 and gave every indication that Speer would lead most of the regime's postwar building initiatives. This did not mean that Speer's ascent went unchallenged. In a speech to the Gauleiters in February 1944, Ley asserted that his position as Reich Commissar gave him responsibility for postwar reconstruction. Ley's vague but noteworthy speech outlined a general vision for future residential construction and, together with Speer's new appointment, represents an overall redemption of the city among the regime's leaders:

We are accustomed to regarding the city as a point of danger for the nation, as a focus of biological outbreak. . . . This appearance is essentially the result that our cities were built inorganically. When we, however, stand before the fact that we have cities and must build new cities, then we must also acquire a new positive attitude toward the city. I am convinced that a city, even a metropolis, when it is correctly planned, need not represent a potential for biological or political danger for a people. We must succeed in building our cities so that they can connect the advantages of rural life with its close-knit communal structure, the coexistence with nature, with all that has made the city worthy for us to date with its cultural and intellectual institutions. We must seek out in the village as well as in the city the mutual advantages, interconnect them, and so one day overcome the distinction between town and country.<sup>136</sup>

Ley provided few details other than repeating the established dogma of "a National Socialist city, built upon healthy residential cells."<sup>137</sup> As Ley's failures mounted, Hitler finally consolidated authority over all construction projects under Speer in August 1944. In a sign of his near-total detachment and irrelevance, Ley was still drafting guidelines to control postwar housing programs in February 1945.<sup>138</sup> Soon after seizing power, the Nazi regime launched various residential construction programs promising to improve and eventually greatly expand the nation's living space, but Germany's residential geographies progressively deteriorated, contracting to ever smaller apartments, makeshift shacks, and worse amid the calamitous war Hitler had unleashed.

### CODA: HITLER'S HEADQUARTERS

Hitler's living quarters were not especially lavish, mirroring his personal habits, which included a simple diet that largely abstained from alcohol,

tobacco, and meat by 1940. These private habits contrasted sharply with Hitler's public proclivity toward grandiose offices and massive ceremonial spaces. The new Reich Chancellery provided an appropriately intimidating venue for conducting affairs of state, but Hitler ordered a series of increasingly expansive Führer Field Headquarters (*Führerhauptquartier*, or FHQ) to suit his new role as warlord (see figure 6.19). Hitler could have issued orders and followed events from Berlin reasonably well given the technologies of the time, but he insisted on being relatively close to the theaters of operation. Hitler's motivations are unclear, but it fit with his carefully staged persona as a man of action. The first FHQ was actually a special train, but Hitler decided he needed a permanent compound for the invasion of France. Construction began in September 1939 on a command center in central Hesse code-named Eagle's Nest (not to be confused with Hitler's retreat at Obersalzberg). OT oversaw the construction of seven simple concrete shelters disguised as cottages. Hitler abandoned the project in early 1940—although he would return there to oversee the Ardennes offensive in December 1944—in favor of a location in the Rhineland closer to the border. Code-named Rocky Nest, this complex of four bunkers, two blockhouses, and three barracks was relatively modest, but it nonetheless served as the first FHQ during the invasion of France.<sup>139</sup>

Hitler eventually ordered the construction of eighteen FHQs in total. That total increases to twenty-one if Obersalzberg, the Chancellery, and Hitler's train are included. Of these, Obersalzberg was never a field headquarters in any sense of the term. In contrast, Hitler's train was deployed during the Polish and Balkans campaigns, and the Führer Bunker below the Chancellery became Hitler's de facto FHQ during the final Battle of Berlin. Thirteen of the eighteen intended headquarters were completed, but Hitler only used eight of them. His stays were generally short, seldom more than a couple weeks and occasionally a couple days, before he moved on.

With the exception of the Werewolf headquarters in western Ukraine where Hitler spent several months in summer and fall 1942, his main wartime headquarters was the Wolf's Lair from where he directed operations along the eastern front. Hidden in the dense forests of East Prussia near the Soviet border, the OT began work on the secret complex in late 1940. The complex consisted of relatively simple, functional buildings and hardened, concrete air raid shelters encircled by barbed wire and minefields. In total, there were around one hundred structures split roughly evenly between bunkers and all the other buildings necessary to support around 2,100 people, including an airfield and railroad link. The size of the bunkers increased enormously as Hitler grew increasingly concerned for his personal safety. Himmler and the Supreme Army Command established similar but smaller command posts nearby.<sup>140</sup> Hitler abandoned the facility in November 1944 when he left to oversee the Ardennes offensive and ultimately return to Berlin for his last battle.

Hitler authorized ever larger FHQ, despite growing labor and resource scarcity. Project Giant in Lower Silesia far surpassed the Wolf's Lair in most every measure. The complex consisted of five confirmed tunnel systems that would have provided just over 191,000 square meters of space accessed by 6.5 kilometers of tunnels. The tunnels under Książ Castle would become Hitler's new headquarters, replacing the Wolf's Lair. Other tunnel systems in the nearby Owl Mountains would house factories and perhaps as many as 27,000 personnel. Hitler charged Speer with the task in September 1943, but the OT soon took charge. At least 23,000 workers, many transferred from the Auschwitz and Gross-Rosen concentration camps, toiled there at a feverish pace by late 1944. Each tunnel system needed to be blasted out, reinforced, and equipped with basic services. The planned extent of the complex is unknown, because the project was abandoned and no blueprints have been found to date. Even less is known about the tunneling projects in the Jonas Valley in Thuringia, probably launched in fall 1943. Hans Kammler ordered the transfer of thousands of Buchenwald inmates to carve out a series of tunnels along the valley side. Code-named S III, its exact purpose remains disputed but was probably intended as an FHQ should Hitler decide to escape Berlin. Regardless, the entire project was abandoned in early April 1945 having accomplished little more than senseless death.<sup>141</sup>

The strategic value of these projects is debatable. It is possible Hitler's commanders, troops, and the general public were inspired by the notion of their Führer leading from the "front." Secret locations away from obvious military targets also reduced the danger of air attacks. Once back in Berlin, the safety of the Führer Bunker beneath the Chancellery enabled Hitler to continue the fight, perhaps prolonging the war by a few days. In all likelihood, the construction of Hitler's headquarters detracted from the German war effort. They consumed valuable resources sorely needed elsewhere. Speer reported to Hitler that work on his various headquarters consumed more than 28,000 workers, millions of Reichsmarks, and tons of scarce materials. As Speer wrote in a September 1944 memo,

these projects required 328,000 cubic yards of reinforced concrete (including small quantities of masonry), 277,000 cubic yards of underground passages, 36 miles of roads with six bridges, and 62 miles of pipes. The "Giant" complex alone consumed more concrete than the entire German population had at its disposal for air-raid shelters in 1944.<sup>142</sup>

Perhaps more important, Hitler's FHQ allowed him to intervene more directly in tactical military decisions, which, despite some early victories, often benefited the Allies. Regardless, the FHQ constituted the geographical nexus that bound together Nazi Germany's military-industrial complex.



# Working toward Genocide

## *Camps of Confinement, Enslavement, and Death*

Along with other phrases like “final solution” and “special treatment,” the words *Arbeit macht frei*, which translate as “work makes one free,” occupy a prominent position in the lexicon of the Holocaust. The phrase’s association with the Nazi regime stems from the decision of the Dachau concentration camp commander to incorporate it into the wrought ironwork of the main gate. It also appeared on several other camp entrances, including the main Auschwitz camp. It is not clear why the phrase was chosen. It had been around since the nineteenth century, but it was not terribly common nor was it the only adage extolling the importance of work. When one considers that the slogan was positioned to be read from outside the camp, perhaps it was intended to support the fiction that these were merely work camps intended to re-educate enemies of the state and assorted criminals. Yet the slogan was more than a simple ruse, because it also captured an element of Nazi ideology that emphasized the heroic nature of labor, especially working for the common good of the nation, as well as its potential to build and transform character. The Schutzstaffel (SS) staff at Dachau could hardly have imagined the phrase would become closely associated with genocide when the gate was first installed, because the road to Auschwitz was neither straight nor preordained. As in so many of the regime’s actions, the extermination of peoples emerged out of shifting constellations of Nazi ideology, power struggles, and eventually the pressing demands of total war. And as was its inclination, the regime embarked on a variety of construction programs to meet immediate challenges and achieve long-term objectives and, in doing so, created another lay of architecture, space, and place in the building of Nazi Germany.

## LABORING FOR THE REICH

As we have seen, the Nazi Party made tackling the country's crippling unemployment rate a top priority, second only to crushing political opposition. Yet reflecting the regime's statist impulses, simply getting Germans back to work was not enough. It was equally important that they worked toward the needs of the regime. In some instances, it was also important that certain people did not work. One of the regime's most immediate steps was boycotting Jewish businesses and expelling Jewish workers from government jobs. In a cruel irony, most of the Nazi regime's last work programs relied heavily on forcing Jews back into the workforce, albeit as slaves to be exterminated through labor. The Nazis inherited an economy with more workers than jobs, but through a series of overly ambitious and ultimately disastrous decisions and accompanying building programs decreed by its Führer, the regime was soon wildly overextended and ultimately overwhelmed.

### Getting Germany Back to Work

The Heinrich Brüning government created the Voluntary Labor Service in 1930 as part of its efforts to battle the Depression. The Nazi regime merged it along with other assorted work programs into the Reich Labor Service (Reichsarbeitsdienst, or RAD) in June 1935. The purpose, Adolf Hitler declared, was "to educate, in the spirit of National Socialism, the German youth into the national community and towards a true work ethic, especially due respect for manual labor."<sup>1</sup> Nominally under the Interior Ministry, the RAD and its leader Konstantin Hierl organized young men, normally eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds, for six months of compulsory work before military conscription. The RAD also had a suborganization for women, but it was not compulsory until 1939. The first cohort tallied 200,000 men but quickly expanded, while female cohorts remained below 40,000. By one reckoning, the RAD supervised around 400,000 laborers in 1939. The RAD, like the Hitler Youth, served as a paramilitary organization that provided a final stage of ideological and physical training before military service for men and motherhood for women. The regime shortened the length of conscription, down to only six weeks in 1944, so that men might enter the military sooner. By that point, the RAD was basically an auxiliary civil defense unit.

Workers were organized into construction teams and dispatched to military, agricultural, and infrastructure projects across Germany. The RAD was commonly the first to arrive at new construction sites, because its unskilled laborers were best suited for menial preparatory tasks, such as clearing trees or excavations. The first step was to establish a base camp, usually financed by local municipalities, to house the workers. Initially, the RAD requisitioned farmhouses, factories, or whatever other buildings were available but quickly moved toward establishing new camps. The camps were generally located in rural areas and typically consisted of simple wood-frame buildings that were quick, cheap, and simple to build, as well as relatively easy to

relocate (figure 7.1). Planners standardized these building designs as much as possible, so the unskilled work crews could assemble their own camps. Ideally, each work detail of 216 men would have its own camp consisting of three worker barracks, each divided into squad rooms. Standard barracks were single story and just over 8 meters wide. The standard length was 26.5 meters but could be longer or shorter depending on the situation. Slightly modified barracks served as administration, dining, and washing facilities, and occasionally an exercise hall.



**Figure 7.1. A Reich Labor Service Work Camp**

Work camps typically utilized standardized, wood-frame barracks, visible in the back, arranged around a central roll-call square, not unlike army bases but on smaller scales. This camp housed Autobahn workers, who tended to be civilian subcontractors rather than RAD workers. Planners made a point of embellishing the RAD and related camps with flower beds and other amenities, but camp life remained arduous and regimented. The construction of work camps with barracks foreshadowed the development of the concentration camp system.

*Source:* Reismann, *Deutschlands Autobahnen*, 112.



The barracks were arranged lengthwise around a roll-call space leaving one side open toward the countryside. Latrines, pens for small animals, and other auxiliary buildings were scattered behind the barracks opposite the main camp entrance. A fence or wall normally encircled the complex, and a sentry guarded the sole entrance. This was mostly for show as the fences generally resembled residential or field fencing, and the guard was typically a single RAD worker with a shovel. A sports field and gardens were often adjacent to the camp. The simplicity, orderliness, and cleanliness of the camps were to reflect discipline, comradeship, and willingness to sacrifice in service to the national community. As Wilhelm Schlaghecke, a top regional RAD official, outlined in an instructional handbook on camp design: "We want to give all our units a clear, honest line, as clear and as powerful as our entire life should be. Powerful, yes, I would like to say our accommodations should be 'monumental' regardless of whether it concerns a tent camp or a barracks camp."<sup>2</sup> Schlaghecke emphasized the importance of locating the camps in areas affording scenic views that might deepen the workers' attachment to their homeland. The RAD had perhaps as many as 1,700 male camps by 1939, with many of the later camps accommodating multiple work details. Female camps were much smaller and more likely to remain in converted buildings. There were around 830 female camps by 1939. Camp conditions were rather austere, but the *Schönheit der Arbeit* (SdA) office, in some of its first projects, tried to add a cheery veneer to the camps with recreation rooms, murals, and flower gardens.

The RAD worked hard to regiment camp life. Workdays usually began by 5:00 a.m. with sports followed by cleaning and breakfast. Workers marched to work at 7:00 a.m. and returned around 2:00 p.m. for lunch and rest. The time from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. consisted of a mixture of exercise, house-keeping, and instruction followed by supper and evening social events. Saturdays followed the same schedule, but laborers had free time after 5:00 p.m. to leave the camp. Sundays were generally free. The bulk of the men's work focused on forestry, land reclamation, irrigation and channelization, and transportation, while women did farm work and child care. As Hiel declared during the 1936 rallies:

When the male youths in the Labor Service help the German people secure freedom in food supplies through working the land, so is the female youth called to the Labor Service to help the fecund and needy German mother, namely the heavily burdened farm and settler wife. Labor service of the female youth is mother service.<sup>3</sup>

In reality, women probably did more farm chores than child care, especially during harvest times as more and more agricultural workers departed for industrial and construction employment.

Regime propagandists issued a steady stream of reports, newsreels, and publications romanticizing the comradeship and dedication among RAD

members “voluntarily” toiling on the Autobahn, West Wall, and other high-profile projects on behalf of the German nation. Ironically, high-priority projects seemed to have the worst work conditions. To support the work of the Organization Todt (OT) on the West Wall, the RAD established around 190 camps. Daily routines remained highly regimented, but workdays began as early as 4:00 a.m. and covered ten- to twelve-hour shifts. West Wall workers could only expect one day off every other week under the best of circumstances. Unsurprisingly, worker morale was very low. Desertion and even mutiny were real and persistent concerns. The authorities responded by threatening to deport malcontent workers to police or SS detention camps for “re-education.”<sup>4</sup> Detention camps near larger building sites, like along the West Wall or the Hermann Göring Works, blurred the line between the RAD’s network of labor camps and the SS’s network of concentration camps. The camps even took on similar appearances since the RAD’s standardized barracks were used widely.

By 1938, if not earlier, labor shortages had become the greatest obstacle to military-industrial expansion, partially a result of Hitler’s proclivity to order one emergency building program after another. A Labor Ministry report in July 1938 estimated that only 292,000 people, or around 1 percent of Germany’s workforce, remained unemployed.<sup>5</sup> The government tightened its regulation of labor markets, but there simply were not enough people available to do all the work Hitler demanded. As a result, priority projects and industries poached workers from other sectors, mostly from construction, leaving construction firms to then poach workers from other sectors. The end result was severe labor shortages in agriculture, the lowest-paying sector. War exacerbated the situation as military conscription reduced the German labor force from more than thirty-nine million in May 1939 to thirty-six million a year later. In response, the regime turned to a variety of programs to recruit foreign “guest” laborers. The promise of high wages initially attracted thousands of workers, mainly Italians. By January 1945, the number of foreign laborers in Germany had soared to around 7.6 million, accounting for around 20 percent of the labor force. The regime may have pulled as many as twelve million “guest” laborers into Germany during the war, while pressing another twenty million people in occupied Eastern Europe to labor for Hitler’s Reich.<sup>6</sup>

Most foreign workers had to live in barracks given Germany’s continuing housing shortage. At Salzgitter, for example, Germans received priority for the limited supply of new permanent housing. The area’s villages were soon overwhelmed as nearly 30,000 industrial workers, 7,000 miners, and 20,000 construction workers, as well as 12,000 prisoners of war (POWs), were laboring there by September 1941. In contrast, fewer than 8,000 new residences were completed by this time. As a result, many Germans, in addition to the foreign workforce, were housed in thirty-five barracks camps scattered among the work sites.<sup>7</sup> The situation was similar at the Volkswagen factory

and countless other locations across Germany and occupied Europe. Ethnic Germans working as skilled laborers and managers claimed what little proper housing was available, leaving the vast majority of workers to live in ramshackle barracks camps. Invariably, one of the barracks was modified to serve as a brothel.

The situation was probably somewhat tolerable for the first cohorts of guest workers, but the regime demanded longer hours and enlistments as Germany's situation worsened, quickly crossing the line between guest laborer and civilian conscript. Those who complained, broke their contract, or otherwise caused trouble were sent to detention camps. Unsurprisingly, the pool of voluntary workers dried up rapidly as word spread of the regime's prisoner-like treatment of workers. Hitler responded in March 1942 by appointing Fritz Sauckel as General Plenipotentiary for Labor Deployment. In this position, Sauckel organized the general conscription of civilians, especially from the eastern territories, to work in factories. These conscripts eventually constituted around one-third of all armaments workers, exceeding 40 percent at most aircraft factories and the Göring works. BMW was the single largest employer with more than 16,000 foreigners producing aircraft engines at its Munich facilities.<sup>8</sup> In the construction sector, total employment of all kinds dropped from around 2.5 million in 1939 to around 1.7 million in 1940 and 1941, with foreigners and/or prisoners accounting for around 26 percent. Total employment in construction declined to just over 1.1 million by 1944, but the share of forced laborers grew to 40 percent.<sup>9</sup>

The growing labor shortage resulting from the regime's policies led to an increased reliance on importing foreign laborers into Germany. This directly contradicted the Party platform, which called for a halt to all immigration and the expulsion of non-Germans. Nazi ideology gradually gave way to practicality as the regime turned to civilian conscripts, common prisoners, POWs, concentration camp inmates, and even German women, to fill its labor needs. Even Jewish inmates deemed capable of working would be spared from the gas chambers, at least temporarily, to work for Hitler's Reich. In some ways, the distinction between these various categories of workers seemed arbitrary as they could all be considered forced laborers at best, slaves at worst. Yet survival rates varied significantly across the groups with mortality among Jewish inmates and Soviet POWs far exceeding those of other groups.

### **The Architecture of Slavery**

The first concentration camps were generally small, ad hoc detention centers established by Sturmabteilung (SA) units as they took political prisoners into "protective custody." The total camp population likely totaled around 27,000 in one hundred or so camps following the first wave of arrests in 1933. Treatment was indisputably harsh, but the SA and SS

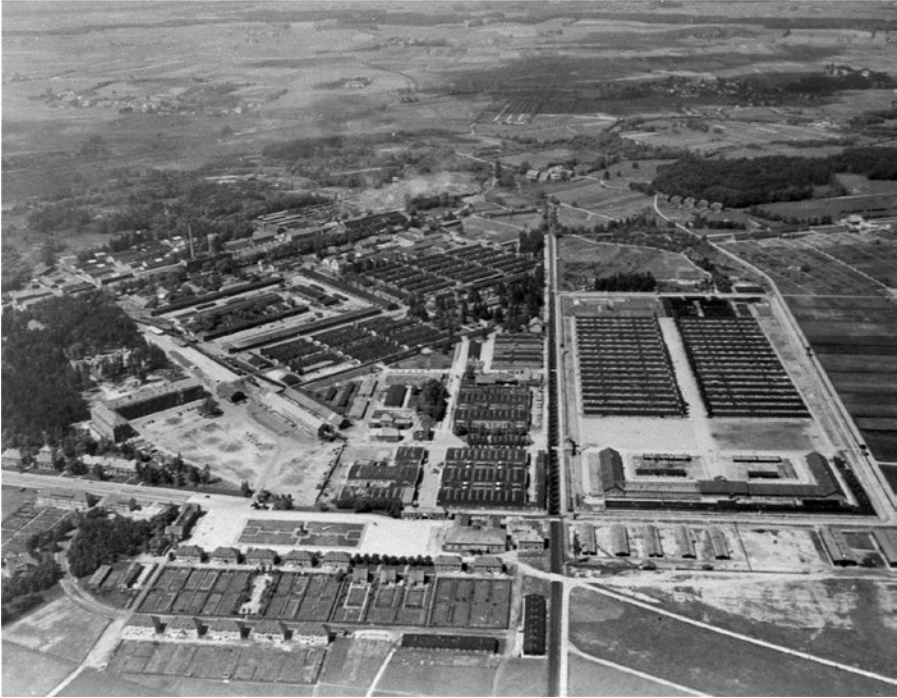
generally avoided outright murder as the movement consolidated policing power. Heinrich Himmler wanted control of these extrajudicial camps for several reasons, but his eventual success was hardly a sure thing given that the SA far outnumbered the SS.<sup>10</sup>

Himmler started slowly, establishing the first SS camp in March 1933 in Dachau, roughly twenty kilometers northwest of Munich. The SA's continued presence complicated Himmler's ambitions, but Himmler found a convenient opening thanks to the SA's clumsy and undisciplined behavior. In contrast to the SA, Himmler styled his SS as a professional security force, and after the Night of the Long Knives, Himmler's control of the camps was assured. Thereafter, the camp system underwent a thorough reorganization that closed smaller camps by 1936 and consolidated the remaining prisoners at Dachau. Many lower-profile prisoners were released as the number of prisoners dropped to around 3,700 by summer 1935 before climbing to around 7,500 by the start of 1937.<sup>11</sup>

Like most early camps, Dachau utilized an existing structure, in this case an idle factory, so that minimal construction was necessary initially, aside from renovating and modifying the building for prison purposes. In 1937, the SS forced prisoners to tear down many of the existing buildings and build a greatly expanded camp consisting of thirty wooden barracks plus four additional barracks for infirmaries, workshops, and a canteen (figure 7.2). These were arranged in a rigid formation astride a main axis leading to a roll-call square. A new administration building—containing the camp kitchen, laundry, and other support facilities—stood on the opposite side of the square. The so-called “bunker” of prison cells was hidden behind the administration building. The SS used the narrow courtyard between the two buildings for executions. Guardhouses, watchtowers, and barbed wire enclosed the camp.

The main grounds were rectangular, measuring around 580 by 280 meters, with a relatively small appendage adjacent the camp's northwest corner that provided an additional site for execution and cremation. The camp was intended to house around 5,000 prisoners but eventually swelled to more than 32,000 in April 1945. More than 206,000 people were imprisoned at Dachau at one time or another; nearly 32,000 died there. The SS built an extensive ensemble of workshops, guard barracks, training facilities, motor pool, and other support structures adjacent the camp, covering an area three or four times larger than the prisoner camp. The end result was the transformation of a simple prison building into a sprawling SS complex.<sup>12</sup>

It was not clear that the camps would be necessary once the Nazis fully consolidated control over Germany's regular penal system. Himmler, however, convinced Hitler that the camps were still needed to respond to any domestic unrest, especially in the event of war, and eventually won Hitler's approval to provide Reich funding for the camps after April 1936. Dachau would serve as the base camp and training center for Himmler's



**Figure 7.2. Aerial View of the Dachau Concentration Camp Complex**

This aerial photo shows the Dachau concentration camp shortly after Germany's defeat in 1945. The actual camp is the rectangular enclosure to the right with two rows of barracks to the top, roll-call space in the middle, and camp kitchen and prison at the bottom. The gas chamber and crematoria were located in the small clump of trees at the center of this photo. The other buildings to the left included SS barracks, factories, and other auxiliary facilities that supported the organization's activities.

*Source:* National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

burgeoning empire (figure 7.3). Beginning in 1936, the SS established additional concentration camps at Sachsenhausen by Berlin, Buchenwald near Weimar, Neuengamme by Hamburg, and finally the Ravensbrück camp for female prisoners north of Berlin. By the time Hitler launched his invasion of Poland in 1939, Himmler had a detention facility near Germany's three largest cities, as well as general coverage for southern, northern, and central Germany. This relatively small camp network provided the basic building blocks for an SS empire that would eventually stretch across most of Europe.

These later camps were comparable to Dachau in terms of overall capacity, layout, and types of buildings. The camps generally featured rows of barracks arranged in a rigid, geometric formation separated from a main administration building by an open-air roll-call space. In addition to providing the venue for public punishments, these roll-call spaces served as the nexus of camp life and death and bore macabre similarities to the central as-



**Figure 7.3. Map of Major Ghettos and Concentration, Euthanasia, and Death Camps**

The Nazi regime built a seemingly endless network of places to imprison, enslave, and exterminate various categories of “undesirable” people. This map locates only a small, but significant, sampling of these places, including concentration camps, which initially focused on imprisoning political opponents and soon evolved into forced labor camps; death camps built later for genocide; ghettos often serving as temporary holding camps before Jews were sent to forced labor or extermination; and, finally, facilities associated with the T4 euthanasia program.

Map by James Leonard.

sembly squares that dominated the regime’s urban redesign projects. There was no single standard for barracks design, but like the RAD, most were single-story, wooden structures ranging from thirty to one hundred meters in length, eight to ten meters in width, and around two to three meters in height (figure 7.4). Planners usually intended the barracks to hold between 300 and 700 inmates, but capacities often far exceeded that in practice. Most barracks had a stove for heating, but washrooms, latrines, and kitchens were generally in separate buildings.

Brothels were one of the last additions to the main concentration camps. The earliest brothels were simply modified barracks located within the main prisoner enclosure. Here, female prisoners, mostly selected from Ravensbrück, were forced to have sex with prisoner-collaborators and camp guards. In keeping with the idea that camps should be organized into distinct functional spaces, the SS soon decided to place brothels in peripheral locations, similar to infirmaries, execution sites, and other auxiliary facilities.



**Figure 7.4. Barracks at the Dachau Concentration Camp Shortly after Liberation**

Concentration camp barracks were generally prefabricated, wood framed, and modular. They offered few amenities other than partial protection from the elements. After the war, many of these camps, like Dachau shown here, housed refugees or even continued serving as political detention facilities in Soviet-occupied territories.

*Source:* National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

Flossenbürg probably had the first purpose-built brothel. Designed in July 1942, the rectangular building was divided into three distinct sections with two main entrances at opposite ends. One entrance led into an administration and reception space for the men, complete with offices for a doctor and brothel supervisor, a waiting room, and cashier. The other entrance led into a communal living space for the women that was reasonably well equipped, at least in comparison to regular prisoner barracks. These two ends were connected by a corridor with five small rooms on either side where male clients had sex with the female workers.<sup>13</sup>

Camp layouts were normally square or rectangular and surrounded by barbed wire and watchtowers. These perimeter security structures varied from camp to camp but generally became more elaborate over time. The Birkenau camp, for example, was ringed by double rows of electrified, barbed wire strung between stout, concrete posts standing 3.5 meters tall with their tops curved inward to further hinder escape. Camps normally had a strip of land running inside the fencing designated as no-man's-land where guards in watchtowers would immediately shoot any inmate even approaching the fence. Initially, the towers were little more than elevated

wooden platforms, but Hans Kammler's office ordered three standardized designs for more permanent towers prepared in mid-1943.

The new towers—the largest of which had a square base of 4.5 meters on a side and reached more than 11 meters tall—were still wooden but enclosed structures rather than just open scaffolding. The SS placed orders with private companies to deliver at least fifty-eight of these new standardized towers in prefabricated sections to Auschwitz, although it is not entirely clear how many were actually assembled. The reliance on wooden towers was a departure from prewar camps that generally featured standardized towers of plastered brick. Flossenbürg and Mauthausen were exceptions where quarrying operations allowed the construction of stone watchtowers. Kammler's office took considerable care to ensure these towers projected a certain aesthetic of austere craftsmanship.<sup>14</sup> Regardless of the specific style, construction relied on inmate labor to lower costs but still proved a financial burden, because Reich funding barely covered normal operating expenses and was insufficient to support a greatly expanded camp system.

Himmler's solution was to launch a series of commercial ventures exploiting prisoner labor. These independent revenue sources secured SS control over the camps and guaranteed organizational autonomy. The most ambitious enterprise was the German Earth and Stone Works (*Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerk*, or DES) founded in April 1938. Its genesis is unclear, but it likely originated out of the overlapping interests of Sauckel and Albert Speer, who both faced significant challenges in realizing their building programs, and Himmler, who possessed a captive labor pool that could help overcome those challenges. For Himmler, the DES promised financial autonomy for the SS and strengthened his position within the Party hierarchy. For Sauckel and Speer, the DES promised a reliable supply of materials as the Four Year Plan's military-industrial projects increasingly dominated private-sector labor and resources. One later accounting estimated that Speer would require two billion bricks annually for his projects, or around 18 percent of Germany's existing capacity.<sup>15</sup> Speer later portrayed these arrangements as SS infiltration, but he was in fact a willing collaborator and facilitator of the SS's rise within the regime.

The camps at Buchenwald, Sachsenhausen, and Neuengamme each supported a brick and tile factory. By 1941, the SS had established new camps to quarry stone at Flossenbürg in Bavaria, Mauthausen-Gusen in Austria, Natzweiler-Struthof in France, and finally Gross-Rosen in Silesia. The camp locations often originated with Speer, who sought specific types and colors of stone to please Hitler's tastes. Living conditions were so dire that many inmates literally worked to death as exposure, disease, and starvation took their toll, not to mention the wanton cruelty of guards.

The financial results ranged from disappointing to dismal. The stone from Flossenbürg and Mauthausen was of such poor quality that it was good for



little more than road fill and certainly not suitable for the gleaming facades of Speer's new cities. The quarries remained profitable, but that was not true of the brickworks. Himmler tried to utilize an untested and supposedly high-tech press to stamp out bricks, but the first runs of bricks crumbled. After repeated delays and cost overruns, the brickworks were generally functional by 1942, but output was disappointing. The SS promised to deliver 120 million bricks annually for ten years, but total production barely reached 10 percent of that target.<sup>16</sup> The brickworks at Neuengamme, for example, did not reach full operation until 1944 but only managed to produce twenty-two million bricks. By this point, the hopes of building gleaming Party buildings had long faded. Most of the bricks went toward repairing bomb damage.<sup>17</sup>

The Sachsenhausen concentration camp provides an example. Himmler wanted a new detention center near Berlin and found a suitable location adjacent the small town of Oranienburg, around twenty kilometers north of Berlin. The site's forested land provided some seclusion, while the town had a commuter train connection to Berlin. Work began in July 1936 with the arrival of the first inmates and was largely finished by the end of 1938. In a departure from most camps, Sachsenhausen was triangular with a total of fifty-three prefabricated barracks arranged in a semicircle around the main administrative building. Each of the forty-one prisoner barracks was to house around 150 prisoners, for a planned capacity of around 6,100 inmates. Other barracks served as washrooms, infirmary, mess hall, and workshops. A complex of SS barracks, armory, motor pool, and other auxiliary buildings ran along the southern side of the camp. A small settlement of thirty-three single-family homes and seven duplexes housed senior SS staff.<sup>18</sup> The inmate population swelled during the war, perhaps reaching 20,000 by 1945. The camp also dispatched prisoners to work in nearly one hundred subcamps, including twenty for women, bringing the total inmate population to a peak of nearly 48,000. Perhaps as many as 35,000 prisoners died in the Sachsenhausen camps, not counting the thousands who died in transit or on forced death marches.<sup>19</sup>

Various facilities were added to the east of the main Sachsenhausen camp, along a portion of the Havel-Oder Canal, as the SS expanded its business ventures. Some of these, like the bakery, supplied the camp and other SS facilities, while others focused more directly on generating profit, like the work yard that finished stone quarried in Gross-Rosen, Natzweiler-Struthof, and Scandinavia before delivery to Speer. The brickworks were the centerpiece of the operation and might have become the world's largest if completed as planned. The unassuming concrete building was to produce 150 million bricks that would travel via the canal to Berlin. Construction did not begin until July 1939 and advanced rapidly using prisoner labor, but again the brick presses performed badly. It took outside experts close to two years to get production in order.<sup>20</sup> As the brickworks finally got into operation, the complex experienced a further expansion as more than 370 structures for the

Waffen-SS, the organization's military wing, were added to the northeast. By May 1942, construction was underway on at least seventy-two troop barracks and a variety of other supply, repair, and communications facilities. Sachsenhausen's SS complex expanded from 76 to around 388 hectares by 1945.<sup>21</sup> The sprawling complex reflected the shifting priorities and contingencies of the SS as it oscillated between three overlapping areas of activity: concentration camps, commercial endeavors, and combat units.

### **The Camp-Military-Industrial Complex**

Himmler's business ventures rarely lived up to expectations, but the SS ironically profited as a direct result of Germany's worsening strategic situation during 1942 and 1943 and the accompanying growing scarcity of labor. German industry was already short by more than a million workers by the end of 1941 as the military continued calling up reservists. The regime reacted by pressing POWs into the workforce but squandered much of their potential. Around 3.35 million Soviet POWs were captured during the initial invasion, but 1.4 million were already dead by the end of 1941, mostly through starvation and exposure. Even after deciding to import this critical labor supply into Germany, a mere 166,000 POWs arrived in Germany capable of work.<sup>22</sup>

The utilization of concentration camp labor in the military-industrial complex was very limited at this stage, but by the end of 1941, the SS had begun leasing its inmates to work at the Volkswagen foundry, the Heinkel factory at Oranienburg, the Steyr-Daimler-Puch factory in Graz, and the IG Farben complex at Auschwitz. The SS had as yet little incentive to expand these arrangements for a couple of reasons.<sup>23</sup> First and foremost, the SS hoped to profit directly from its prisoners by utilizing them for SS-owned businesses and priorities, like providing construction materials, preparing the eastern territories for German colonization, and eventually running its own armaments factories. The SS had established the German Armaments Works (*Deutsche Ausrüstungswerke*, or DAW) in May 1939 for that very purpose. DAW soon had production facilities adjacent to most concentration camps. However, the situation evolved during 1942 as several businesses entered into negotiations with Himmler to lease SS prisoners. Speer and the Armaments Ministry initiated many of these discussions, although some businesses contacted the SS directly.

These prisoner "lease" programs expanded substantially, with Speer's active encouragement, during 1942. By summer 1944, Speer had effectively gained control over the allocation of foreign laborers and camp inmates within Germany.<sup>24</sup> Most businesses appeared hesitant to deal with the SS, preferring foreign conscripts instead, but Sauckel was unable to meet domestic demand through foreign labor and the supply of POWs dwindled rapidly.<sup>25</sup> Business had few remaining sources other than SS camps if they were to meet the staggering production levels demanded by Hitler. Most

critical military-industrial operations gradually began accepting prisoners during the course of 1943. Those industries subjected to the greatest pressures by the regime were generally the first to utilize SS slave laborers. By the end of 1944, Himmler commanded at least half a million factory workers, while another 140,000 workers were engaged in underground projects, 130,000 had been contracted to the OT, and 230,000 were leased to various private businesses.<sup>26</sup>

Speer later bemoaned the rise of the SS complaining by early 1944 that the organization was using its policing powers to divert 30,000 to 40,000 workers each month, mostly guest workers, from the general labor pool in order to fill lucrative SS contracts.<sup>27</sup> In reality, Speer was a willing accomplice as Himmler added a new function to the SS's portfolio, that of slave labor exchange. In fact, after assuming Todt's responsibilities, Speer agreed to provide the building materials required for the massive expansion of Auschwitz and its extermination facilities, code-named "Special Program Prof. Speer" by the SS. Speer simultaneously approved the large-scale relocation of military production into the main concentration camps.<sup>28</sup>

The aircraft industry, in particular, benefited immensely from Hitler's armament program. The entire sector employed around 4,000 people with an annual production of a few dozen planes in 1932. By 1938, the sector employed nearly 300,000 directly, while thousands more provided materials and components to support the production of more than 5,200 aircraft.<sup>29</sup> The aircraft industry was also the first sector to embrace slave labor wholesale. The regime placed tremendous pressure on aviation firms in 1942 to ramp up production to counter the gathering Allied aerial onslaught. This included increased production of existing planes, most of which were rapidly becoming obsolete, as well as speeding into production the first generation of jet fighters and missiles. The Heinkel Works in Oranienburg pioneered the integration of slave labor into industrial operations. Heinkel had been using POWs and conscripts since late 1939 on an irregular basis, and probably SS inmates since late 1941. The SS and Heinkel spent months formalizing these arrangements before Speer helped finalize an agreement for systematic use of inmates from nearby Sachsenhausen. The first cohort of 800 inmates began work in September 1942. The slave labor workforce eventually peaked there at nearly 7,000 workers in June 1944.<sup>30</sup>

The other major aircraft manufacturers, including Junkers, Messerschmidt, Steyr-Daimler-Puch, and BMW, soon followed and relied heavily on slave labor.<sup>31</sup> Yet unlike Heinkel, most were not so conveniently located near a concentration camp. One option was to outsource work to the camps. The Messerschmidt plant in Regensburg, for example, contracted to have inmates in Flossenbürg and Mauthausen manufacture parts. By summer 1944, SS subcontractors accounted for around 35 percent of the factory's output.<sup>32</sup> This model could reasonably be applied to certain parts, but it also entailed time and money to install new equipment in the camps. The alternative was

to bring the inmates to the factories. The SS reluctantly agreed to the latter option but insisted on transporting inmates back and forth daily between the camps and work sites. In the case of Mauthausen, inmates working at the Steyr-Daimler-Puch engine factory traveled a distance of roughly forty kilometers round trip daily, consuming valuable time and resources. The SS finally relented to practicalities and agreed to establish a subcamp near the factory in March 1942.<sup>33</sup> This set the stage for the proliferation of subcamps once the regime ordered the broad-based dispersion of key industries in summer and fall 1943. For example, German aircraft assembly and aviation engine production was scattered from 78 main factories into nearly 1,000 new, dispersed production sites, with each, invariably, supported by its own slave labor subcamp.<sup>34</sup>

Germany's biggest businesses were initially reluctant to embrace the regime's objectives, since the odds of profitability seemed dubious and any war meant certain loss of export markets and foreign assets. The cases of the Volkswagen and Salzgitter factories made clear that the government would take direct action if businesses did not fall in line. IG Farben, a massive conglomerate of chemical companies, avoided a similar situation by proactively embracing the imperatives of the Four Year Plan. The firm also stood to profit handsomely from the regime's demand for synthetic fuels, rubber, and other chemicals, all areas where IG Farben had significant investments.<sup>35</sup> IG Farben was well connected as some former executives occupied prominent administrative positions in the Four Year Plan. Nonetheless, production remained far behind schedule, even though IG Farben had already established several production lines for synthetic rubber to meet the regime's goals of self-sufficiency. The directors of the Four Year Plan ordered IG Farben to establish a new chemical facility beyond the range of British bombers in occupied Poland to address these shortcomings.

By the end of 1940, IG Farben's planners were evaluating the area around the small village of Auschwitz (Oświęcim, Poland) in German-occupied Upper Silesia. The area was relatively flat with ample water supplies, good rail connections, and nearby coalfields. Work was soon underway on what, at around 776 million Reichsmarks, would become the single largest investment of the Four Year Plan, a full-scale industrial complex to produce synthetic rubber, aviation fuel, and other critical chemical products. Situated just east of Auschwitz and measuring around eight by three kilometers, the chemical complex was purely functional in appearance, laid out in a rigid grid pattern with myriad pipes snaking from structure to structure.

The SS was already established in the area. Specifically, the SS had occupied a former Polish military base consisting of twenty-two brick barracks and assorted auxiliary structures adjacent to the town (figure 7.5). In early 1940, the SS fenced in portions of the base—and later fortified it with additional rows of fencing, wooden watchtowers, and a concrete wall that screened off views from the adjacent town—to create the Auschwitz



**Figure 7.5. Barracks and Fencing at the Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Poland**

The SS quickly occupied this former Polish army base near the small village of Auschwitz in southwest Poland. The preexisting barracks were substantial stone structures, unlike most concentration camp barracks. The electrified barbed wire strung from concrete fence posts that curved inward, seen on the center right, was a ubiquitous feature of concentration and death camps.

*Source:* Robert C. Ostergren.

concentration camp, the first SS camp on territory conquered by Nazi Germany.<sup>36</sup> Himmler initially intended to terrorize Polish dissidents at the camp, but he soon reenvisioned the camp as a labor pool for transforming the area into a model German region. The area was rather marshy so much of the initial focus was on drainage projects and farmland reclamation. Himmler also established an agronomy research center nearby that would develop the practical knowledge necessary for new German settlers to transition into Himmler's agrarian idyll.

Yet the SS could not afford to indulge Himmler's grand plans while maintaining its other responsibilities. Himmler had no alternative but to accept the partial industrialization of the region, most notably through IG Farben, which could bring significant investment to bear, and the DAW, which could generate revenue through defense contracts. Instead of being Himmler's model region, Auschwitz would generate the revenue, mostly through renting out slave labor to produce critical wartime chemicals or exploiting slaves directly in SS-owned factories. Himmler would use Auschwitz to capture

wartime spending to support his dreams further east. From this point on, the Auschwitz region was the scene of feverish construction activity right up to its abandonment by the SS in January 1945.

Accordingly, Himmler ordered plans drawn up for Auschwitz to house 40,000 inmates. The SS construction office for Auschwitz, led by August Schlachter, consisted of only six people and was soon overwhelmed by the scale of Himmler's order. Kammler replaced Schlachter with Karl Bischoff in October 1941.<sup>37</sup> Before transferring to head the central SS construction office, Kammler had been Bischoff's supervisor and was obviously familiar with his work. Given the daunting nature of Himmler's order, Kammler needed a trusted and proven deputy at Auschwitz, and indeed, Bischoff would exhibit a ruthless determination. The Auschwitz building office consisted of a main design office and five subsections responsible for implementation. The labor force swelled to encompass a core cadre of around three dozen SS members, as well as various civilian contractors and around one hundred prisoners skilled in drawing, surveying, and designing (figure 7.6).

The office commanded around 1,000 civilian laborers, but the bulk of the work relied on around 11,000 mostly unskilled prisoners. Bischoff's main deputies, architect Walter Dejaco and engineer Fritz Ertl, were already in



**Figure 7.6. Members of the SS Construction Office in Auschwitz Pose for a Photo**

Members of the SS construction office responsible for building the Auschwitz camp system appear in this grainy photo. They are posing before their studio on what appears to be an impromptu occasion.

Source: Archive-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, Oświęcim, Poland.

place. Both Austrians by birth, Dejaco struggled professionally during the 1930s and even spent a brief time in jail for membership in the outlawed Austrian SS, while Ertl relied on his family's successful construction business. Both joined SS military units in 1939 before joining the Auschwitz construction office by mid-1940. Dejaco and Ertl, both in their early thirties, would be directly responsible for planning and designing most of the SS facilities around Auschwitz. Engineer Josef Janisch, also an Austrian in his early thirties, headed the subsection responsible for building nearby Birkenau. Most of the design work was complete by the time Bischoff transferred out in October 1943. The central office gradually dissolved during 1944 and most of the remaining staff probably assigned to tunneling and bunker projects in Germany or military service.<sup>38</sup>

Bischoff and his team produced a series of progressively larger plans for Auschwitz in 1941 and 1942. The barracks of the former Polish base remained the camp's main, rectangular core, but the addition of more prisoner barracks, workshops, warehouses, a railroad siding, and other support facilities roughly quadrupled the size of the complex. The plans even called for a new SS residential development adjacent the camp with barracks for lower-ranking, single troopers and single-family housing for married and higher-ranking members. The central showpiece of Bischoff's proposed enlargement would be a monumental headquarters building enclosing a rectangular plaza centered on a grand hall. Overall, the complex would be a combination of the SS's established practices for designing concentration camps merged with the current norms of vernacular residential layouts centered on monumental assembly halls and squares promoted by the DAF's Architecture Bureau.

The camp headquarters and SS housing never progressed beyond the design stage, but many of the prisoner barracks and workshops were completed, mostly as nondescript, two-story brick structures with slightly pitched roofs constructed from materials scavenged from local Polish buildings whose owners had been systematically evicted from the area by 1942. The new prisoner reception center was the largest completed structure. New inmates were processed through various makeshift buildings, but Kammler ordered the design of a purpose-built replacement in June 1941. The center was situated just outside the prisoner barracks between the camp's rail siding and its infamous wrought-iron *Arbeit macht frei* gate. The structure's layout resembled something like a crooked and inverse "E." The three protrusions housed baths, delousing chambers, and laundry facilities while the main trunk consisted of a series of rooms where prisoners were registered, undressed so their clothes could be deloused, inspected, shaved, and showered before deloused clothing was issued to them and they exited to join the regular camp population. Construction was exceedingly slow, but the reception center was finally finished as the camp's final structure in December 1944.<sup>39</sup>

By February 1941, the SS agreed to deploy inmates to IG Farben's building site. The number of inmates was rather modest, perhaps reaching around 1,300 by the fall. As at the Steyr-Daimler-Puch factory, inmates initially traveled back and forth between the construction site and the main Auschwitz camp, a linear distance of around four kilometers.<sup>40</sup> IG Farben managers pushed the SS to establish a subcamp adjacent the building site. The SS relented by October 1942 and established the Monowitz camp, often referred to as Auschwitz III or Buna after a type of synthetic rubber. The camp followed a typical rectangular arrangement of barracks with adjacent guard quarters. Several other camps were established around the main building site so that the inmate population exceeded 11,000 by July 1944. The complex did little for the German war effort; it managed to produce some ingredients for aviation fuel but never any synthetic rubber, its primary purpose.

Steyr-Daimler-Puch and IG Farben led the way, but the number of subcamps exploded during 1943 and 1944 as the regime desperately and furiously tried to maximize production of war materials and equipment. By this point, the main concentration camps basically functioned as labor distribution centers for their respective networks of subcamps, which generally held more inmates than the parent camps. The construction of the subcamps became very improvisational in nature. Some new barracks were constructed, but their number dwindled rapidly through 1944. In some cases, concentration camp laborers moved into barracks previously used by POWs or foreign conscripts. In still other cases, no effort was made to provide housing of any sort beyond whatever ad hoc structures might be available. The SS even formed around a dozen mobile subcamps—each consisting of roughly 500 prisoners housed in railroad cars—to serve as roving construction brigades to repair bomb-damaged cities and other critical work sites.<sup>41</sup> After focusing on concentrating and isolating its prisoners, the SS was now sending prisoners far and wide, often in full view of the public.

### **The Architecture of Desperation**

After the disaster at Stalingrad, Hitler hoped to regain the initiative in 1943, but the year brought a string of defeats, including the Allied invasion of Italy, massive Soviet offensives along the eastern front, and growing Allied dominance of German skies. The tide of war was clearly shifting. Hitler concluded the situation called for desperate measures and pinned his hopes on a series of "wonder weapons" to turn the tide. German engineers had actually developed a series of technologically advanced weapons in several fields, including missiles (V-2), submarines (Type XXI), and jet fighters (Me 262). As was typical for the regime, Hitler ordered emergency building programs to deliver these weapons to the battlefield. Labor was in extremely short supply, so Hitler and his builders increasingly turned to



civilian conscripts, POWs, and concentration camp inmates as Germany's strategic situation grew ever more desperate.

The military research facility at Peenemünde on the Baltic island of Usedom was the nerve center of Germany's highly secretive rocket and missile programs focusing on the infamous V-1 flying bomb and supersonic V-2 missile. British bombers first struck the facility in August 1943, jeopardizing the development of Hitler's pet projects. Hitler approved Speer's suggestion to move the entire operation underground to the Kohnstein hill, near the town of Nordhausen in central Germany, where the military had been secretly converting some former mines into a fuel depot. Sauckel was falling far short of his quotas for foreign laborers, so Speer turned to the SS, which had become quite eager to lease prisoners by this point.

Kammler supervised the effort, gradually diminishing Speer's influence.<sup>42</sup> Under Kammler's direction, the SS quickly established the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp and dozens of subcamps to transform the tunnels into production facilities for the V-1, V-2, and Me 262. The main camp consisted of the typical arrangement of prison camp, SS quarters, and various workshops with the usual assortment of barracks, fences, watchtowers, and auxiliary structures. One noticeable change was that the buildings were arranged somewhat randomly, perhaps to obscure the complex's purpose from Allied reconnaissance aircraft. The SS contracted the prisoners to Central Works, a quasi-private corporation established to mass-produce Hitler's wonder weapons. The production facility consisted of two main tunnels that ran roughly 200 meters parallel to each other connected by several cross passages. Prisoners toiled under some of the harshest conditions imaginable, leading to an estimated 20,000 deaths. In fact, it is possible that the wonder weapons killed more people during their production than while actually deployed in battle. Kammler and his engineers had the complex partially operational by the end of 1943, but their haste led to quality problems, and the first successful Central Works missile launch was delayed until September 1944. The SS was undaunted and, in January 1945, worked up wildly delusional plans to build additional tunnel complexes that would have quadrupled the available floor space.<sup>43</sup>

The Kohnstein tunnels were massive but insufficient for Hitler, who had declared that Germany's entire military-industrial complex would go underground. Other caves, tunnels, mines, and underground spaces were soon pressed into service, such as a large brewery cellar in Austria converted into a liquid oxygen plant to fuel V-2s. The number of underground projects and their attendant subcamps proliferated rapidly as the regime scrambled to relocate vital facilities as Allied planes gained control of German airspace by early 1944. Eventually, plans were developed for around 93 million square meters of underground space just for aircraft production alone, maybe one-tenth of which actually went into operation.<sup>44</sup> The Mountain Crystal project was one of the largest. An estimated 10,000 prisoners from Mauthausen-

Gusen carved out this underground complex east of Linz in great secrecy starting in March 1944. The tunnels eventually offered around 50,000 square meters of space for building Me 262s. Production began sometime in late 1944 or early 1945, mostly using civilian workers initially, but SS inmates later continued tunneling work until the Allied advance overran the area.

Kammler also ordered the establishment of another subcamp near Ebensee in Austria in November 1943. Here, inmates drove tunnels as far as 250 meters into the mountain to shelter the development of successors to the V-2. Toward the end of 1944, the project switched to engine production and an oil refinery, which actually managed to begin operations in February 1945. This highlighted the increasingly critical state of aviation fuel supplies, which remained a priority Allied target. In response, Speer ordered the emergency construction of underground fuel plants, known as the Geilenberg Program after Speer's deputy leading the initiative. Some of these facilities were incorporated into existing projects, like the Central Works operation, but others needed new spaces. A quarry in the Hönne Valley in Westphalia, code-named Swallow I, for example, would be repurposed to house a jet fuel hydrogenation plant. At least twenty tunnels and connecting passages were begun between August 1944 and the end of the war.<sup>45</sup> Despite the toils of thousands of slave laborers, Swallow I and twenty or so other Geilenberg projects managed to produce only a small fraction of the Reich's fuel needs. Ironically, most of these massive tunneling operations made minimal contributions to the German war effort compared to the so-called forest factories. Hastily constructed beginning in fall 1944, these factories consisted of wooden shacks, tents, and invariably an affiliated prisoner subcamp, hidden from view in forested areas. They could be built cheaply and delivered significant returns in production, but regime leaders regarded them as temporary solutions.<sup>46</sup>

Tunneling was time consuming and suitable locations were limited, so in April 1944, Hitler ordered the OT to construct six massive concrete shelters, each covering close to one million square meters, for the most critical production lines. Speer worried these fortified factories would divert scarce resources and actually make military production more vulnerable by concentrating production in a few locations. But Speer was outmaneuvered by his OT deputy Franz Xaver Dorsch, who convinced Hitler that massive concrete shelters—which coincidentally the OT had unique experience constructing—were the best hope to withstand the Allied onslaught.<sup>47</sup> Hitler's decision to recentralize production also reflected his proclivity toward gargantuan scales. These massive bunkers and tunnels constituted another class of wonder weapons in Hitler's arsenal. Speer soon relented, and hereafter Dorsch and the OT basically operated as an independent agency again. OT swelled to command around 1.3 million workers by late 1944. Ethnic Germans accounted for only around 370,000; the rest were foreign conscripts, POWs, and slave laborers.<sup>48</sup>

Much of the effort clustered around three sprawling bunker complexes built in the woods around Landsberg in Bavaria to support Me 262 production. Only two, the Vineyard I facility near Mühldorf and Vineyard II near Kaufering, neared completion. The main bunker at Vineyard II was a 3-meter-thick concrete arc measuring 400 meters long, 85 meters across, and 26 meters tall, in effect creating an aboveground concrete tunnel. Around 40 percent of the bunker was sunk into the ground for additional protection. Both bunkers were more than halfway finished by the end of the war, but installation of the production lines had barely begun. That did not diminish the suffering of the roughly 20,000 slave laborers dispatched from Dachau to subcamps at each site. Many were housed in half-buried earthen huts, and as many as three-quarters of the workers died in short order.<sup>49</sup> These examples highlight the increasingly ineffectual nature of the regime's focus on creating gargantuan bunkers and fortified factories. Some, like the Central Works complex, managed to contribute something to Germany's war effort, but most of these initiatives simply squandered scarce labor, money, and resources.

The submarine factory code-named Valentin was highly illustrative of that. Hitler realized the Allies had gained the upper hand in the Battle of the Atlantic but hoped the next generation of submarines, specifically the Type XXI, would turn the tide back in Germany's favor. German shipyards were extremely vulnerable to Allied bombing, so Speer ordered the submarines constructed in sections at factories in central Germany and then shipped to the coast for final assembly. They would still be vulnerable to attack at that point, so Speer ordered the OT to construct a massive concrete bunker, code-named Valentin, to enclose the factory. Work began by May 1943 at a site along the Weser River north of Bremen. This fortified factory was to start production in May 1945 with the goal of finishing 150 submarines annually. The structure was around 426 meters long, up to 97 meters wide, and 33 meters tall. The concrete roof eventually reached a thickness of 7 meters. In total, the structure required more than 500,000 cubic meters of concrete weighing around 1.2 million tons.

Construction was more or less on schedule when Allied forces overran the area in March 1945. The project advanced as far as it did through the ruthless exploitation of slave labor. Perhaps as many as 12,000 slaves worked on the project over time with one-quarter to half of them dying. Despite the massive investment, the factory would have struggled to meet its production quota since Speer's idea of mass-producing prefabricated submarines went horribly wrong. The firms manufacturing the submarine sections were inexperienced in naval construction, so the sections required extensive retooling upon delivery before assembly. Only a couple of Type XXIs went into service shortly before the war ended, but none managed to sink an enemy ship.

Valentin's slave laborers were housed in seven camps scattered around the main construction site. The largest was the Bremen-Farge concentration camp. Established in fall 1943, Bremen-Farge became one of the largest

Neuengamme subcamps, housing more than 2,000 at its peak, mostly political prisoners and French POWs. Workers typically awoke at 4:00 a.m. and departed for the job site by 6:00 a.m. Their shift ran to 7:00 p.m. when they returned to camp, assuming they survived the day. Prisoners were initially housed in a large underground naval fuel tank, but a few aboveground barracks were added as the camp grew.<sup>50</sup>

Hitler's wonder weapons also needed logistical, supply, and launching bases to become operational. Beginning in summer 1943, more than 400 facilities, mostly supporting the V-1, were hastily built along the French and Belgian coasts, with one of the larger concentrations in the Pas-de-Calais region to maximize the amount of Britain within firing range. Launch sites shifted to the Netherlands and Germany after the liberation of France, but these were increasingly temporary and mobile facilities.<sup>51</sup> Many military leaders favored smaller structures that were easier to camouflage or disguise. Hitler followed his long-standing penchant for monumentality and favored concrete bunkers massive enough to protect the entire launching process.

In July 1943, Hitler compromised somewhat and approved the eventual construction of eight massive launch bunkers and at least one hundred smaller launch sites. The smaller sites needed around ten support buildings and a takeoff ramp. The ramps proved easily identifiable by aerial reconnaissance, so designers soon switched to temporary ramps that were disassembled when not in use. These small-scale sites proved reasonably effective, but the V-1 was so unreliable and inaccurate that it posed little more than a nuisance in the grand sweep of military operations. The larger sites, code-named Water Works, were completely futile. The launch facility near Siracourt in Pas-de-Calais offers a good example. Work proceeded rapidly on the squat concrete rectangle measuring around 215 by 36 meters that would protect crews and their V-1s until launching from the protruding ramp. The structure appeared around 90 percent complete when the project was abandoned after British bombers scored a direct hit that penetrated the bunker in June 1944. The other V-1 launch bunkers fared no better.

The V-2 was even more complicated and time consuming to launch as its liquid oxygen-based fuel required careful handling. This again caused considerable debate over how to protect vulnerable missiles during those pre-launch procedures. The military favored mobile launch trailers, which would be easier to hide and smaller targets for Allied pilots. Many of the technical experts recommended building massive bunkers where the missiles could be prepared in an assembly line process maximizing the rate of fire. In typical fashion, Hitler strongly favored the bunker idea and ordered Speer and the OT to begin at once, although he also allowed the military to develop the launch trailer.

Code-named Power Plant Northwest, construction began in March 1943 near Saint-Omer, France. The bunker incorporated a sheltered train station to deliver supplies and a liquid oxygen factory for on-site fuel production. The main structure was more than 90 meters wide and 28 meters tall so

missiles could be raised and readied for launch beneath 5 meters of concrete. The facility would store just over one hundred missiles with a daily launch capacity of around one-third of that. Once ready, the missiles would roll outside the bunker on tracks for launch. The entire complex consumed tens of thousands of tons of concrete and a great quantity of steel but never launched a single missile. British bombers rendered the facility inoperable in August 1943. Undeterred, Hitler ordered an immediate replacement. Dorsch proposed converting a nearby quarry into an underground launch complex. Code-named Gravel Works Northwest, a maze of tunnels would support a massive concrete dome with a circumference measuring more than 220 meters and weighing around 45,000 tons. The dome capped an octagonal hall for launch preparations. Around seven kilometers of tunnels would connect the launch hall with a liquid oxygen plant and other auxiliary facilities. Like its predecessor, the facility remained unfinished due to constant air raids.

The fate of the V-3 supergun follows a similar story. The V-3 would use sequenced charges to propel massive shells at London. Hitler ordered the construction of two underground batteries of twenty-five guns near the village of Mimoyecques in Pas-de-Calais. OT commenced work in September 1943. The plan called for setting the guns into shafts angled at 50 degrees and stretching 105 meters belowground to accommodate the extreme barrel length. A concrete slab more than 5 meters thick with firing slots protected by steel doors topped the facility. Additionally, the batteries were served by a network of tunnels and a connecting underground railway. A crew of around 1,000 men would operate the batteries, but British bombers ensured the batteries never became operational, although construction continued until the site was captured by Allied forces in September 1944.

In terms of sheer numbers, Hitler's builders made significant progress in constructing the military-industrial infrastructures necessary to take on the Western powers and eventually the Soviet Union, but Hitler was basically trying to build toward war on two different time lines. One time line envisioned an imminent conflict marked by a series of short, sharp engagements where the concentrated deployment of ground forces would prove decisive in establishing German hegemony across continental Europe. This effort prioritized immediate rearmament. The other time line called for a longer war for global supremacy fought in the air and at sea against the British and Americans. This effort prioritized self-sufficiency in raw materials and building Germany's industrial base. Hitler never managed to reconcile the differing time lines, if that was even possible within his worldview. Shifting resources into raw materials and factories slowed military production in the short term; shifting resources into military production brought a quick boost but soon faltered because of material, infrastructure, and labor shortages. In short, Hitler could have the military or the industrial, but Germany did not have the capacity to build both military and industrial complexes simultaneously given its peacetime financial, material, and labor resources.

Hitler was also unable to reconcile competing demands in development and procurement. Hitler's two wars called for vastly different types of equipment, but he constantly vacillated between prioritizing acquisition of ground versus air/naval forces. Hitler basically demanded that every type of military hardware be developed to the cutting edge and in massive quantities. He generally ended up getting neither quality nor quantity. The German army, for example, relied heavily on horses with perhaps 1.2 million employed during the war. Around 650,000 horses were deployed just for the invasion of the Soviet Union, compared to around 3,500 tanks.<sup>52</sup> Even when the regime managed to produce advanced military equipment, the results were often disappointing, in short supply, or too late to be decisive. German newsreels portrayed a highly mechanized juggernaut tearing across Europe. In reality, only a few spearhead units were fully mechanized, and the advanced jets, submarines, and rockets had little impact on the overall course of the war and may have actually had a net negative effect on Germany's war efforts.<sup>53</sup>

Hitler's solution was partly practical and partly ideological. In terms of the latter, Hitler proved remarkably consistent in his belief that great feats could simply be willed to reality by the power of his charisma and his subordinates' dedication. In a practical sense, Hitler resorted to various forms of plunder, beginning with the assets of Jewish Germans and gradually extending to encompass ever more peoples and places. Hitler took successively greater risks and obligations that may have helped resolve an immediate problem but worsened Germany's longer-term prospects in terms of resource consumption, labor shortages, and military equipment. One accounting estimates that theft of Jewish assets and other sources of plunder from across Europe generated around two-thirds of Germany's war revenue.<sup>54</sup>

Regardless of the exact amounts, plunder and racism were integral to Hitler's attempts to reconcile Germany's internal economic limitations and his aspirations for global hegemony. This also allowed the regime to shield ordinary Germans from bearing the full burden of the war effort until relatively late. In fact, it is possible that average standards of living for Germans were higher from 1940 to 1943 than in the 1930s or the immediate postwar years. Ironically, just as the regime was becoming increasingly reliant on slave labor from Jews and others, it was also shifting the machinery of extermination into high gear. Hitler's Germany started by plundering Jewish assets but ended up plundering Jews' lives as the regime sank into a maelstrom of destruction of its own making.

## **DYING FOR THE REICH**

The origins of the Holocaust are a topic of great debate. A rabid anti-Semitism permeated the Nazi movement from its beginnings, but those

hatreds did not necessarily entail genocide. In fact, the Nazi Party's anti-Semitism hardly placed it outside the mainstream of nationalist factions in Germany or even across Europe. Scholars continue to debate whether the path to the Holocaust followed a master plan carefully laid out by Hitler or whether the "final solution to the Jewish question" resulted from a series of ad hoc actions driven by Germany's changing geostrategic situation. The record suggests something of a middle ground where Hitler, Himmler, and several other top Nazis were vicious anti-Semites and provided the driving force leading to the Holocaust but were often developing policies as they went along rather than following some master plan. Many of their initial "solutions" focused on getting Jews to leave Germany but foundered because of other conflicting policies. For example, the regime's strict controls on transfers of wealth abroad undermined "voluntary" emigration of Jewish Germans, while the failure to defeat Britain derailed a later plan to expel Europe's Jews, perhaps as far as Madagascar. The regime would eventually resort to measures closer to home as those more distant options faded.

### Preludes to Genocide

During their rise to power, the Nazis matched their virulent anti-Semitic rhetoric with sporadic but persistent harassment and vandalism against Jewish Germans and their property. These patterns continued after Hitler took office, although the regime initially paid great attention to targeting political opponents. The Nazis partially checked their anti-Semitic impulses to present a better image during the 1936 Olympics. Such respites were short, and the regime issued a steady stream of anti-Semitic legislation, beginning by barring Jews from government jobs. Gradually, Jewish Germans found themselves banned from practicing law, owning businesses, serving in the armed forces, and nearly all other areas of public, civic, and economic life. The Nuremberg Laws promulgated at the 1935 Party rallies were the lynchpin in this process.<sup>55</sup> The laws, for example, stripped Jews of German citizenship and barred marriage between Jews and Germans. The laws had to be clarified repeatedly since discrimination against Jews required a clear definition of a "Jew." The regime defined Jewishness based on blood and ancestry—that is, having Jewish parents or grandparents made you Jewish even if you no longer practiced Judaism. This still left vexing questions, like how to classify people with mixed ancestry, Jewish veterans, Jews married to non-Jews, or Christian converts from Judaism. A few of these subgroups, termed *Mischlings* or "crossbreeds," managed to avoid the worst of the regime's anti-Semitism, but the vast majority of Jews and people with Jewish ancestry effectively lost all claims to civil rights and even basic human dignity. They would feel the full fury of National Socialism.

In addition to closing down the metaphorical space of Jews within Germany, the regime also limited their physical freedom of movement. After

defining "Jews" through the Nuremberg Laws, the regime set about systematically limiting and eventually concentrating Jews geographically.<sup>56</sup> This effort began by declaring certain places off limits. Jewish teachers and professors were dismissed from their positions and barred from entering schools, universities, and libraries. Jews were gradually excluded from public parks, spas, cinemas, and even the Autobahns and, eventually, pretty much everything else imaginable. Victor Klemperer, a professor in Dresden who had converted from Judaism to Protestantism, had already noted in his diary by December 1933 that his literal lived space was narrowing as a result of the regime's restrictions, remarking that "lately, almost constantly, everything seems small to me."<sup>57</sup>

Some of these edicts were Reich-wide regulations, but localities had considerable room to go beyond the minimum. These were largely ad hoc actions, based on how local authorities interpreted the signals emanating from above. In some cases, local authorities simply put up signs that Jews were not allowed in certain areas. Some took even more extreme actions. Local authorities in the Franconian town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber expelled the small Jewish community in October 1938, two weeks before *Kristallnacht*, allowing them to trumpet the town as "Jew free."<sup>58</sup>

The next step in this spatially narrowing process was to crowd Jews into special designated "Jew houses." This had three main advantages from the regime's perspective. First, concentrating Jews made their former housing available for Germans, especially those displaced by the redesign projects in major cities. Second, it was much easier for authorities to monitor and eventually deport a spatially concentrated population. Third, it promised to open another revenue stream as Jewish wealth was extracted via intimidation, bribes, and outright confiscation. Speer initiated these efforts for Berlin's Jewish community, eventually leading to deportation and murder in the east. Hermann Göring issued regulations beginning in December 1938 that progressively voided property and rental rights for Jews.<sup>59</sup> Jewish Germans had little choice beyond packing into the limited number of approved Jew houses as evictions increased and avenues for emigration closed. Officials stepped up their efforts to cram Jews into ever-smaller living spaces in response to British bombing during 1941 while still carefully dispersing the houses to avoid creating concentrations large enough to challenge police forces. Needless to say, these Jew houses were often shabby buildings. The order that all Jews wear the yellow Star of David, so that they would be easily identifiable at all times, was the final step before their complete confinement and deportation to the east where conditions were unimaginably worse.

The Nazi regime assembled an expansive network of concentration camps stretching from Gurs in southwestern France to Vaivara in northeastern Estonia and from Falstad in central Norway to Dupnitsa in western Bulgaria. Kammler supervised the construction of this vast system through the central



SS building office headquartered in an appropriately austere office building in Berlin's Lichterfelde district. Construction became so important to the SS that Kammler's office became one of five chief sections of the organization's new economics and administrative office in 1942. In this position, Kammler and his sizeable cadre of architects and engineers served as the central clearinghouse for Himmler's far-flung building programs and closely monitored the building staffs attached to the main camps.

It is difficult to generalize about these camps, because they served a variety of functions over time, including punishing political prisoners, detaining foreign nationals, extracting forced labor, concentrating Jews for deportation to Eastern Europe, and of course mass murder. Some camps had permanent populations, while others basically functioned as transit camps sorting inmates for other destinations. Some were run by German client states or local collaborators, like the Vichy-French or Quisling-Norwegian governments, where SS officers made periodic visits, mostly to cull camp populations, but otherwise exercised loose supervision. Given this, conditions varied greatly depending on local commitment to the Nazi cause or the ability of the SS to coerce compliance. In terms of their design, the camps generally differed little from camps established in Germany and played similar roles in implementing Nazi brutality.

Camps were the main mechanism for dealing with opponents across most of Europe, but the regime adopted a different approach in Central and Eastern Europe. Hitler appointed Himmler to the new office of Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of German Nationhood with authority to deport hundreds of thousands of Jews and others from areas annexed by Germany to make way for ethnic Germans being resettled "back to the Reich" from the Soviet Union and other territories in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Italy. The Jewish deportees were sent to the General Government district until German administrators there balked, complaining that they were already struggling to deal with the district's large Jewish population. The deportations also strained the railway system already struggling with military-industrial demands. Himmler reluctantly halted the deportations, so officials had to deal with Jews locally and soon hit upon ghettos as the solution. Hitler reportedly considered ghettoization for Jewish Germans as early as 1935, remarking privately: "Out of all the professions, into a ghetto, enclosed in a territory where they can behave as becomes their nature, while the German people look on as one looks at wild animals."<sup>60</sup> The idea resurfaced from time to time but was dismissed for a variety of reasons, mostly because large concentrations were regarded as security risks.

There was no uniform policy for ghetto formation, although Reinhard Heydrich, one of Himmler's top deputies and a principal organizer of the Holocaust, brought some degree of coordination over the different and often competing organizations active in the east as Party and government officials endeavored to integrate their jurisdictions into the Nazi empire. Hundreds

of ghettos proliferated across annexed Polish territories and the General Government district. Ghetto formation later swept east following closely behind Hitler's armies as they rampaged into Soviet territory. Estimates vary and there are likely many smaller, undocumented ghettos, but Nazi officials established somewhere in the range of 140 ghettos in annexed Polish territories, 380 in the General Government district, and around 600 in occupied Soviet lands (see figure 7.3). Nazi authorities did not establish ghettos in Germany proper or the rest of Europe aside from a few exceptions, although some client states formed ghettos under varying degrees of pressure.<sup>61</sup>

It is tempting to lump the ghettos together, but there were significant differences. Larger ghettos tended to be walled or fenced, while ghettos in smaller towns and villages were generally open, relying on decrees to regulate when or if Jews could leave (figure 7.7). Smaller ghettos in Polish regions were gradually dissolved and their inhabitants transferred to a larger ghetto, a concentration camp, or directly to a death camp. The closure of ghettos in occupied Soviet territory usually meant marching Jews into nearby woods



**Figure 7.7. A Surviving Section of Wall That Surrounded the Kraków Ghetto**

The Nazi regime established countless ghettos across Europe. Some ghettos were like cities unto themselves and lasted a considerable time, but most were relatively small and simply served to congregate Jews temporarily until they were executed or deported to larger ghettos or camps. This surviving section of wall once surrounded the ghetto in Kraków.

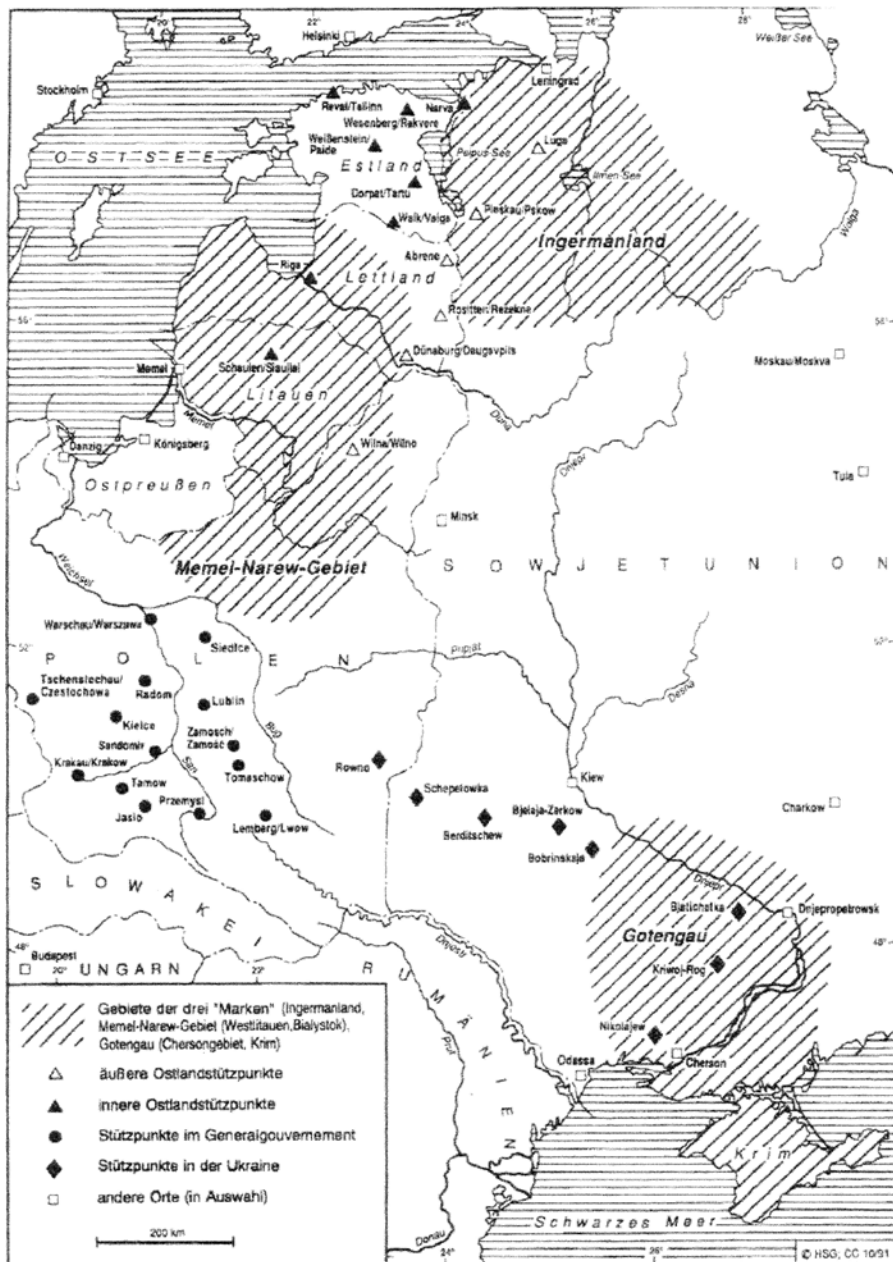
*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

where SS death squads, police reservists, and local accomplices executed them en masse. The remaining ghettos tended to be in larger cities.

Officials initially conceived of ghettos as temporary measures until Jews could be deported farther east. This changed after the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, as discussed later in the chapter. Authorities had considerable latitude in dealing with ghettos in their respective areas. Some regarded ghettos as resources to be exploited, while others wanted the Jews eliminated as rapidly as possible. The matter was never resolved definitively, but by late 1942, the remaining ghettos basically evolved into slave labor camps that happened to be located in urban areas. These ghettos were not mere footnotes along the path to genocide; rather, they served a broader role in continuing the process of isolating, exploiting, and liquidating any Jews that fell within Hitler's grasp.

Himmler pushed for a more systematic program to build the newly won German "living space" in the east. Sometime in early 1940, Himmler ordered Konrad Meyer, a professor of agronomy at Berlin University and member of Himmler's staff, to coordinate efforts to develop an overall blueprint, which soon evolved into the so-called General Plan East.<sup>62</sup> Himmler hoped this plan would stake his claim over the eastern territories and ensure that he would ultimately prevail over Göring and Alfred Rosenberg as the top authority in resettling the region. Rosenberg won out, sort of, with his appointment by Hitler in July 1941 to the newly created post of Reich Minister for the Occupied Eastern Territories, but his position was seriously undermined from the start by Himmler, the military, other ministers, and ultimately Hitler.

On the eve of the invasion of the Soviet Union, Himmler ordered Meyer to produce an expanded plan for colonizing eastern territories. This General Plan East went through several iterations, but no final copies are known to have survived the war. Based on secondhand summaries, the plan evolved into a much more ambitious program as German forces marched east. The last known, but probably not final version, produced in early 1942, called for the expulsion of around fifty million people from the area roughly between Warsaw, St. Petersburg, and Crimea to Siberia, where presumably the vast majority would die. Several million would remain behind to toil as slaves. Around ten million Germans and others deemed worthy of assimilation would settle the region initially in three main concentrations: Ingermannland centered roughly on Novgorod, Russia; Gotengau encompassing central Ukraine and Crimea; and Memel-Narew covering much of Lithuania, Latvia, and portions of Belarus and Poland. A series of around three dozen frontier strongholds, located roughly every one hundred kilometers along main transportation routes, would link these colonies back to Germany proper. In total, Meyer called for fourteen strongholds in the General Government, nine in Ukraine, and fourteen in the Baltic area, with the expectation that plunder and slave labor would fund the entire enterprise (figure 7.8). Himmler probably gained Hitler's approval during summer 1942 to



**Figure 7.8. Map of the General Plan East**

The SS developed several versions of the General Plan East, but the basic premise was to develop a long-range blueprint to fundamentally transform much of Eastern Europe into a German colonial possession while eliminating most other occupants through starvation or expulsion to Siberia. This map depicted the initial zones of colonization, indicated by diagonal lines, supported by various strongholds, marked by the triangles, circles, and diamonds.

Source: Meyer, *Generalplan Ost: Rechtliche, wirtschaftliche und räumliche Grundlagen des Ostaufbaues*, 101.

begin implementation that fall. In October 1942, Himmler ordered that Zamość near Lublin in the General Government be transformed into the first stronghold and a new colony *Hegewald* be established in central Ukraine.<sup>63</sup>

Himmler envisioned these as tests for his broader colonial fantasies, but they soon faced numerous challenges and barely got off the ground before being overtaken by the shifting fortunes of war. The SS construction battalions slated to build these strongholds were diverted to transportation and fortification works. The program did further the expansion of the concentration camp system outside of Germany. In summer 1941, Himmler ordered the construction of the Lublin (Majdanek) concentration camp. Once complete, the camps would hold up to 50,000 POWs, who would provide the labor for transforming the region into a model stronghold.<sup>64</sup> In the end, Lublin made relatively little contribution to Himmler's grandiose resettlement plans, but it and other camps played key roles in answering another question—namely, what to do about the Jewish ghettos. Their populations had swelled in size. Warsaw's ghetto, for example, reached around 460,000 inhabitants in March 1941.<sup>65</sup> Himmler, Heydrich, and other Nazi officials were increasingly concerned that these ghettos constituted a security, health, and racial threat to the Nazi state and German people.

## Death Camps

The ghetto problem and a confluence of other factors came together in 1941 to bring about the most murderous phase of the Nazi building program. First, there was a pressing need to replace housing destroyed by Allied bombers. Following a large raid on Hamburg in September 1941, Gauleiter Karl Kaufmann petitioned Hitler to approve the deportation of Jews from his district to provide replacement housing for homeless Germans. Within weeks, Jewish Germans were being shipped off for "resettlement" in the General Government, thus advancing the regime's long-held goal of ridding Greater Germany of Jews. Most deportees initially wound up in one of the larger ghettos, which only worsened overcrowding. Second, Himmler was working to empty the occupied eastern territories of non-Aryans to make way for the General Plan East. An influx of more Jews was unwelcome. Third, the regime's killing apparatus had gained considerable experience gassing patients through the Action T4 euthanasia program. These "experts" provided a core cadre that would set up the day-to-day mechanisms of genocide. Finally, and perhaps most important, Hitler ordered that the invasion of the Soviet Union be executed with wanton and unbridled brutality.

These factors led the regime to embark upon the systematic extermination of Europe's Jews, the so-called final solution to the Jewish question. It is unclear when the decision was made. It is possible that there was not really a single final decision ordering the Holocaust but rather a series of incremental steps made by Hitler, Himmler, and their subordinates through the summer

and fall of 1941.<sup>66</sup> Heydrich received approval to begin deporting Jews from Greater Germany and Western Europe to the east during the early stages of the Soviet invasion. The goal still seemed to be the deportation of Jews to reservations deep in occupied Soviet territory. Auschwitz would serve as a transit point on this journey, where those too weak to continue would be sorted out and killed, while the rest would continue on toward whatever fate awaited them in the east. Military setbacks eliminated the possibility of designating reservations around the Urals or beyond.

The deportations continued apace regardless, so that Himmler had little choice but to pack more and more Jews into ghettos, especially the Litzmannstadt (Łódź, Poland) ghetto in Wartheland. Gauleiter Arthur Greiser hoped to transform his province into a model German Gau but was now confronted with a great influx of Jews, which he regarded as an acute threat to state security and public health. In response, Greiser ordered the opening of the Kulmhof (Chełmno) death camp in December 1941 to alleviate overcrowding in the ghetto and advance the Germanization of his region.

The SS opened another camp near the village of Maly Trostenets southeast of Minsk, Belarus. Originally a POW camp, the site soon became a mass execution ground for Jews. The SS apparently envisioned the facility as playing a paramount role in reordering the region's demography. The SS placed an order for thirty-two cremation ovens in November 1941, ostensibly to help contain a typhus epidemic among German soldiers on the eastern front, but it is easy to imagine the ovens being used to dispose of murdered civilians. The SS eventually canceled the order and redirected some of the ovens to Birkenau.<sup>67</sup> Kulmhof and Maly Trostenets had no purpose other than extermination and helped speed the transition from the mass shootings of the death squads to mobile gassing vans and eventually the fixed gas chambers used with such lethality during Operation Reinhardt. At Maly Trostenets, victims were first herded into trenches and shot, but gas vans were later employed to ease the strain on the executioners. At Kulmhof, SS guards funneled prisoners through a converted cellar of a manor house to be stripped before being led to vans parked outside for gassing.<sup>68</sup> Both were steps toward streamlining the processes of deportation, dispossession, and extermination. By the end of 1941, the stage was set for the systematic exploitation and murder of Europe's Jews.

Whatever the sequence, there is no doubt that Hitler and his top lieutenants knew the regime was systematically exterminating Jews and others, even if they spoke in euphemisms like "special treatment" or "resettlement." Greiser had opened Kulmhof; Rosenberg discussed bringing T4 personnel east to carry on their work; death squads methodically rampaged across occupied Soviet lands, liquidating ghetto after ghetto. These approaches, however, proved impractical for murdering Jews in Central Europe where populations were much larger and more concentrated, in the Balkans where Nazi client states ruled, or in Germany and the rest of Western Europe where the regime

remained nervous about maintaining public order. Himmler's solution was Operation Reinhardt, which called for the construction of new extermination camps. Unlike regular concentration and labor camps in which inmates died slowly through starvation, disease, and exposure, these camps had no purpose other than immediate and efficient murder on an industrial scale. Himmler had Heydrich convene the Wannsee Conference on the outskirts of Berlin in January 1942 to assert SS control over the deportation of Jews from across Europe and their eventual fate in the east. The other authorities readily acquiesced.

Benefiting from experience gained through the T4 program, Kulmhof, and Maly Trostenets, among other killing sites, preliminary planning began in late summer or fall 1941 under the direction of Richard Thomalla, a top SS civil engineer in the General Government, for new extermination camps at Belżec, Sobibór, and Treblinka.<sup>69</sup> Construction began first at Belżec by December 1941, with mass executions commencing in March 1942. SS officer Christian Wirth, an experienced police detective and main figure in the T4 program, took over as commandant of Belżec and, in this position, experimented with different killing procedures. Wirth's ruthless determination soon garnered him supervisory authority over the other Reinhardt camps so that he could "improve" the extermination process at Sobibór and Treblinka.<sup>70</sup> The Lublin camp also made a relatively small contribution to the operation, although it simultaneously continued to function as a regular concentration camp.

The camps required relatively little in terms of actual design and construction. First, they were intended to be temporary. Second, Thomalla could draw on standardized templates, available through Kammler's SS building office, for barracks, canteens, watchtowers, and other common components of concentration camps. Finally, the camps did not require extensive barracks, robust security enclosures, or other facilities since the camps maintained quite small prisoner populations, which were in any case routinely exterminated and replaced by new arrivals.

The Reinhardt camps were located in relatively secluded, rural areas, yet relatively close to the major General Government ghettos and a railroad line (see figure 7.3). They were rather small, usually covering less than one square kilometer, and roughly rectangular in shape surrounded by watchtowers and barbed wire camouflaged with branches and saplings to hide camp activity from outsiders. The camps were normally divided into three highly segregated spaces. There was a living space for the camp staff, a processing space for arriving prisoners, and finally an extermination space for gassing prisoners and disposing of corpses. The living space contained housing for the camp's relatively small SS detachment, auxiliary guards, and prisoner work crews granted brief reprieves from execution while they sorted the possessions of those already murdered and performed other camp duties.

The processing spaces were rather small areas adjacent the main train platform. Prisoners were released from the cattle cars in groups, depending on the capacity of the gas chambers. Initial capacities likely ranged from 100 to 200 people at the start of the operation to 400 to 500 by the end. Men were immediately separated from women and children, and each group sent to separate areas to be stripped and robbed. From there, guards whipped the prisoners as they ran through a narrow fenced corridor of 100 to 150 meters that led to the extermination spaces, generally furthest removed from the train platform. Guards quickly herded prisoners into gas chambers disguised as showers where they died from asphyxiation. The execution spaces also contained small work camps for prisoners who cleared the gas chambers and buried and later cremated the corpses.<sup>71</sup>

By December 1943, the SS and its accomplices had exterminated the vast majority of Jews in annexed and occupied Poland. During the liquidation of Warsaw's ghetto from July to September 1942, for example, Nazi troopers and their auxiliaries sent around 265,000 people to Treblinka for immediate extermination; around 11,000 were dispatched to other labor camps, and some 10,000 died in the ghetto, reducing the overall population by around 90 percent.<sup>72</sup> Many Jewish populations across Europe suffered a similar fate as the SS systematically combed areas under their control. In total, Himmler's SS organized the murder in under two years of around 2 to 2.5 million people, mostly Jews and Romani, in these extermination camps. This does not include an additional two million people murdered concurrently during "normal" operations at Auschwitz and hundreds of other camps, as well as those summarily executed in assorted ghettos and killing fields scattered across Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>73</sup> Their mission largely accomplished, Himmler ordered the main Reinhardt camps closed and all traces of their existence erased. At this point, the murderous pace of the Holocaust slowed somewhat as the majority of Jews, Romani, Soviet POWs, and others slated for extermination were already dead. Survivors were either laboring on war-critical projects or somewhat protected in Germany's client states.

### **The Imperfection of Genocide**

The Reinhardt camps also became superfluous following the reconfiguration of the Lublin and Auschwitz concentration camps into hybrid concentration-extermination camps. During his visit to Auschwitz in March 1941, Himmler ordered both camps expanded to accommodate 30,000 to 50,000 prisoners. Himmler later ordered an additional camp near Auschwitz, named Birkenau, to house around 100,000 prisoners. Construction began in October. By mid-1942, Birkenau and Lublin had operational gassing facilities until the latter ceased gassing in late 1943. At that point, Birkenau took over as the main extermination camp while simultaneously continuing to function as a





**Figure 7.9. Aerial Photo of the Auschwitz and Birkenau Area**

Auschwitz and Birkenau were around 1.5 kilometers apart, while Monowitz, labeled here as I. G. Farben Complex, was around 3 kilometers in the opposite direction. This photo of the area was one of many taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft in 1944 and 1945, but their significance went unnoticed until CIA employees reexamined the images in the 1970s. The labels date to this secondary examination.

Source: National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

labor-processing center in conjunction with the original Auschwitz camp, the Monowitz camp, and dozens of smaller labor subcamps scattered throughout an area of nearly forty square kilometers designated by the SS as its exclusive “area of interest” (figure 7.9).

Initial plans were completed and construction had commenced before Bischoff arrived in October 1941, but he would shape the camp’s design in decisive ways. Ertl had already worked up plans for around 180 single-story, reddish-brick barracks each housing 550 inmates. One of Bischoff’s most immediate decisions was to increase this capacity to 744 prisoners; in practice, barracks often exceeded that and at times housed as many as 1,000. Bischoff also left his mark on the camp’s internal structure. SS camps normally arranged their buildings in rectangular grids but were otherwise open within the main perimeter fencing. In contrast, Bischoff divided Birkenau into

subsections separated by barbed wire to further control and isolate prisoners. The subsections grew progressively larger, but the number of latrines, kitchens, and washrooms remained constant.

Even by concentration camp standards, conditions at Birkenau were terrible. Inmates had about one-sixth the living space proscribed for inmates at other concentration camps. Every washroom and latrine served around 8,000 inmates, far beyond what was possible. Relatively few POWs survived long enough to reach Birkenau. Those who arrived died at an astonishing rate. Kammler eventually learned of those losses and was displeased as this vital slave labor force dwindled so rapidly. In response, he approved the immediate delivery of 253 prefabricated army horse stables, each housing 400 prisoners, which could be assembled faster than brick barracks (figure 7.10).<sup>74</sup>

Kammler and Bischoff worked up a series of ever-larger camp plans reflecting Himmler's evolving intentions for the site (figure 7.11). The camp expanded quickly into a massive complex spanning around five square kilometers with more than 300 buildings and reaching a peak population



**Figure 7.10. Horse Stables Used as Prisoner Barracks at Birkenau**

SS planners struggled to keep pace with the rapid expansion of building projects around Auschwitz, and so they turned to standardized horse stables as makeshift barracks for the burgeoning number of prisoners at Birkenau. These simple wooden structures were cheap and easy to assemble but offered squalid living conditions. Some stables were modified to function as latrines, kitchens, washrooms, and storerooms.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.



**Figure 7.11. SS Architects at Work in the SS Construction Office at Auschwitz**

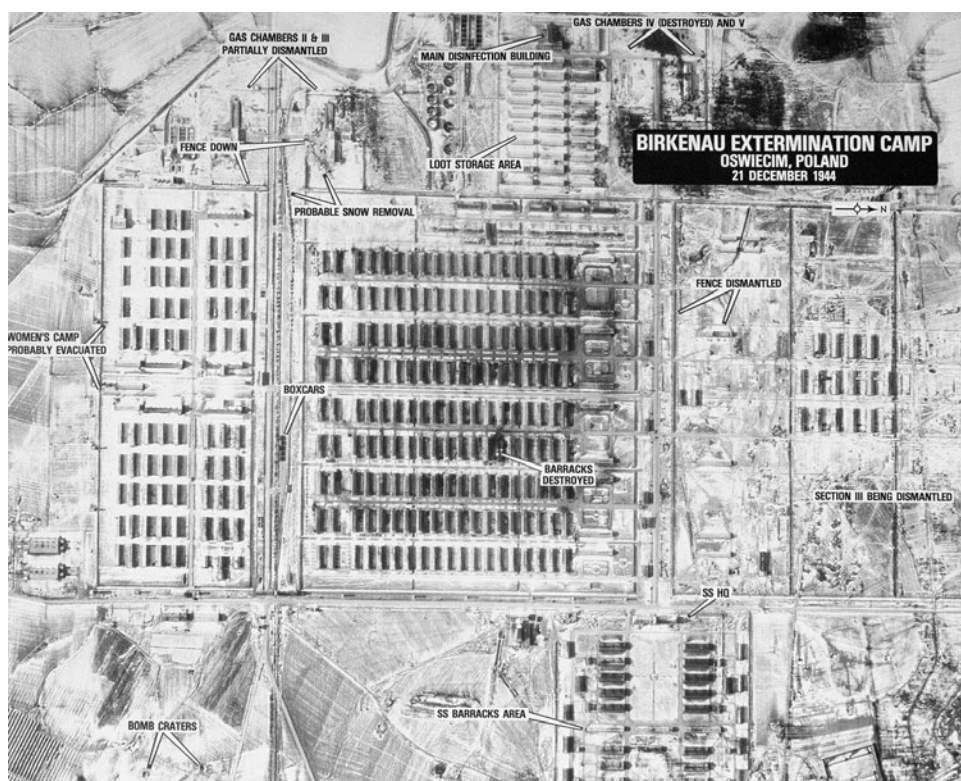
This photo shows SS architects in the SS construction office for Auschwitz engaged in apparently routine activities. There is no way to tell exactly what they are working on, but the apparent normality of the scene belies the horrific consequences of their work.

Source: Archive-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, Oświęcim, Poland.

of around 90,000 by fall 1943.<sup>75</sup> The end result was a long rectangular camp measuring around 1,700 by 700 meters with SS barracks and other facilities appended roughly halfway along the eastern side and an assortment of extermination and cremation facilities, discussed later in the chapter, along the western side.

The main trunk of the camp consisted of three main sections. The southernmost section composed of the earlier brick barracks, named BI, originally served to quarantine and delouse newly arrived POWs but eventually became the women's camp. This was divided from the middle BII and northern BIII sections by the railroad siding and the infamous ramp where SS doctors conducted the selections. BII and BIII were nearly identical, except that BIII was only partially completed. Like BI, the barracks were arranged in rigid grid formations, but because BII and BIII were so much larger, Bischoff had them fenced off into ten subsections, as noted earlier. In addition to restricting movement, the subsections also helped distinguish between categories of prisoners, with subsections generally housing a specific group (e.g., Romani, Hungarian women, families deported from Theresienstadt, etc.). Most subsections consisted of twenty-eight barracks, in addition to two

barracks each for kitchens, storerooms, washrooms, and latrines, all using wooden stables. BII also had specialized subsections consisting of hospitals and morgues along its western edge. In a macabre twist, Bischoff's revisions resulted in an internal spatial structure that bore unmistakable similarities to the cellular-based towns envisioned by Gottfried Feder, Carl Culemann, and Speer (figure 7.12). This parallel extended all the way down to the individual prisoner. The brick barracks in the women's section, for example, were subdivided into sixty-two bays, which were further subdivided into three vertically stacked sleeping niches, sort of like crude "bunk beds," with each originally planned to accommodate three prisoners but increased to four at Bischoff's order and often more in practice.



**Figure 7.12. Aerial Photo of Birkenau Concentration and Death Camp**

This aerial view of Birkenau hints at the immense scale of the combined concentration and death camp. The camp consisted of distinct rectangular sections built roughly from left to right. From the left, section BI included brick barracks and generally housed female prisoners. Separated by the infamous rail line and ramp for selections, BII, the middle block, was composed of wooden horse stables converted to barracks and subdivided into seven subsections, including the so-called central camp sauna in the top center. Furthest to the right, section BIII would have mirrored BII but was only partially constructed.

Source: National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

Birkenau's purpose took another turn as the camp expanded. Himmler accepted the industrialization of Upper Silesia at the expense of his vision for a model agrarian settlement, but the initial victories against the Soviet Union meant he could merely shift his goals to the vast expanses of occupied Soviet territory. The Auschwitz region was no longer Himmler's end goal, but it would provide the means to build his settlement schemes further to the east by becoming a slave labor complex supporting armaments production. By August 1942, Himmler ordered Birkenau further expanded to hold 200,000 prisoners. The supply of Soviet POWs was mostly depleted by this point, so Himmler looked elsewhere for slaves to fuel the machinations of his new empire. Those Jewish populations not exterminated during Operation Reinhardt and associated operations were the only realistic sources in terms of size and accessibility. Himmler decided that Birkenau would now serve as a hybrid death-labor camp. Those Jews deemed capable of work would be processed into the general camp population and assigned to work crews at Birkenau or any number of other locations. Those not selected would be exterminated as fast as the gassing chambers could manage. This decision reflected divergent priorities within the SS leadership where some, like Kammler, needed Jews kept alive, at least temporarily, to meet his building assignments, economic quotas, and so on, while others, like Heydrich, prioritized the perceived racial imperative of ridding Europe of Jews once and for all. The SS eventually arrived at something of a compromise through 1943. Those Jews deemed unfit for work would be exterminated; those few selected to work would toil for the SS, doomed to slower "extermination through work."<sup>76</sup>

As Bischoff and his colleagues readied Birkenau's killing machinery, Himmler realized the deportation of Jewish Germans was more difficult than expected due to complications with other authorities. So Himmler turned to the Nazi's Slovak puppet state. After some hesitation, the Slovak government agreed to send tens of thousands of Jewish Slovaks to Germany to work in armaments factories, most of whom were initially processed through Birkenau. These first deportations did not involve selections, since deportees were purposely chosen to include only young, healthy individuals. Yet the Slovak government, now struggling to support a growing percentage of Jewish elderly, children, or other non-workers, eventually agreed to ship the remainder of its Jewish population to Germany beginning in March 1942. These Jews from Slovakia, as well as Upper Silesia, selected as unfit to work would be the first populations exterminated at Birkenau through planned mass gassings.<sup>77</sup>

Birkenau was not unique in its incredibly murderous conditions, but its gassing and cremation facilities were remarkable. Indeed, the time and attention devoted to the crematoria stood in stark contrast to the relative disinterest in prisoner latrines, washrooms, and barracks. The regime had been experimenting with execution by gassing for several years. The first experiments began in late 1939 in preparation for the T4 program, which

used carbon monoxide asphyxiation to euthanize patients with disabilities (see figure 7.3).<sup>78</sup> Himmler hoped this same method could be adapted for use by his death squads roaming the occupied eastern territories. The first attempts used mobile gassing vans that funneled their exhaust into the rear cargo compartment, killing a couple dozen people at a time. It was a short step from there to using stationary diesel motors to pump carbon monoxide exhaust into a larger room to increase the scale of executions. Gassing facilities were fully operational at the main extermination camps by mid-1942. Several other concentration camps were experimenting with gassing chambers on smaller scales.

The first gas chambers were provisional. At Belzec, they were modified wooden barracks, but these chambers could not kill prisoners fast enough and were soon replaced by a concrete building covering around 240 square meters. Inside, six gas chambers had a total capacity of around 1,500 people. The pattern was similar at Treblinka, the last of the Reinhardt camps, where killing commenced in July 1942 with three gas chambers measuring roughly 4 by 4 meters housed in a stout brick building. By the following spring, the SS added a second gassing building with ten, slightly larger chambers, greatly increasing its killing capacity and eventually making Treblinka the second deadliest camp after Birkenau.<sup>79</sup> The SS initially buried corpses only to discover later that mass human decomposition made it impossible to conceal the crimes, so the bodies were exhumed and cremated.

The disposal of corpses posed an ongoing problem for the SS. Initially, Himmler had little alternative to transporting the deceased to local coroners for determinations of cause of death and cremation in accordance with existing law. This made it harder to conceal the SS's murderous methods, so Himmler had strong incentive to replace local coroners with camp doctors and municipal crematoria with in-camp facilities. Soon SS planners included crematoria as standard camp components. Because the death camps required cremation on an unprecedented scale, the SS turned to outside experts. The Erfurt-based J. A. Topf and Sons, one of Germany's leading firms in industrial-scale incineration and cremation, played the leading role, although other firms contributed as well. Ludwig and Ernst-Wolfgang Topf, owners of the company, were Party members, but the main liaison with the SS was Kurt Prüfer, the firm's chief engineer and also a Party member. Topf had already filled the first SS contracts for cremation ovens for Dachau and Buchenwald by the end of 1939, but these had relatively limited capacities. The SS's initial order in May 1940 for a cremation oven for the Auschwitz parent camp seemed in line with these earlier sales. Dejaco and Ertl, in one of their first collaborations, converted an ammunition storage bunker, a low brick and concrete bunker just outside the main prisoner camp, into Crematorium I. Prüfer installed the first double-chamber oven, estimated to have a daily capacity of seventy corpses. The project was completed in June with the first cremations in August.<sup>80</sup>

From there, the evolution of Crematorium I into a dedicated killing-cremation facility, as well as gassing and cremation at Auschwitz and Birkenau in general, was highly contingent as builders encountered numerous technical, material, and security challenges. The SS and its civilian contractors responded with varying degrees of ingenuity, improvisation, and incompetence over the next four years, in addition to determined ruthlessness. Bischoff soon determined that Crematorium I was insufficient for the expected rates of “normal” attrition through starvation, disease, and brutality that would accompany the planned expansion of both camps. Dejaco produced initial plans in October 1941 that called for a new crematorium, eventually designated as Crematorium II, next to Crematorium I that would house five triple-chamber ovens for a simultaneous capacity of fifteen corpses. Crematorium I would be upgraded with two additional sets of double-chamber ovens. These modifications created a need for a more robust ventilation system in Crematorium I to fan the flames of the new ovens and ventilate the morgue, where the stench of decomposing bodies was overpowering since the cremation process was much slower. At this point, there was no evidence that Bischoff or anybody else considered adding gas chambers to the crematoria, but the newly ventilated morgues needed just a few minor adjustments to serve that purpose.<sup>81</sup>

As Bischoff and his team readied these crematoria, other SS officers experimented with the fumigant Zyklon B. Manufactured by the Frankfurt-based Degesch firm, Zyklon B had been used regularly for delousing barracks and clothing since summer 1940. SS officers successfully tested its effectiveness for mass murder in September 1941. Following this discovery, converting the morgue in Crematorium I into a gas chamber was relatively easy. Gassing was underway by December 1941, but efforts to march victims through the camp and then conceal their murder proved very difficult and disruptive to regular camp operations. It was apparent that hundreds could be gassed in minutes but disposal of the corpses took much longer, hence the need for new and larger crematoria. By early 1942, Kammler and Bischoff, along with camp commandant Rudolf Höss, agreed that future gassing operations, as well as the planned Crematorium II, would relocate to Birkenau and that Crematorium I be decommissioned.<sup>82</sup>

Höss turned first to a farmhouse set back in the forest just west of Birkenau to accomplish the camp’s new gassing mission. The farmhouse was duly converted and designated Bunker 1, or the “red house,” with a maximum capacity of 300 to 400 people. Gassing started by May 1942, but the facility was cumbersome to reset between gassings due to poor ventilation. The bunker often had to be left open overnight to air out before corpses could be removed.<sup>83</sup> Höss ordered the conversion of a second nearby farmhouse, designated as Bunker 2 or the “white house.” Gassing started there by June, but it too suffered from poor ventilation. At this point, Birkenau was still

mainly dealing with the camp's regular death rate, which worsened greatly following a typhus outbreak that summer.

In response, Höss ramped up the scale of gassing those deemed unfit to work instead of simply allowing them to die through attrition. The bodies were initially buried, as had been the practice at Belzec, and then later cremated outside. This laborious process made clear the importance of having an industrial-scale crematorium. Höss's actions were largely driven by local conditions, but they made Birkenau the logical choice to become the chief extermination camp once Himmler ordered the Reinhardt camps closed. Birkenau was centrally located and had new gassing facilities. Operation Reinhardt had also shown that the key limiting factor was not extermination but rather cremation. Birkenau offered a ready solution with its new, large Crematorium II under construction.<sup>84</sup>

It was soon apparent that the new crematorium in Birkenau was insufficient in light of Himmler's decision to expand Birkenau's permanent population while simultaneously consolidating gassing activities there. Prüfer made several trips to Auschwitz by August to inspect the two existing crematoria and plan three additional crematoria. In addition to Crematorium II already under construction with five triple-chamber ovens, the SS and Prüfer agreed to build an identical Crematorium III (figure 7.13). These buildings would be located at the end of the railroad ramp opposite the main camp entrance, so that those not selected could be dispatched speedily. Crematorium IV and V were each slated to house two three-chamber ovens and positioned to support the gassing operations in Bunkers 1 and 2. The crematoria were rather unremarkable in appearance with long rectangular floor plans and brick exteriors not terribly dissimilar from the brick barracks in size, shape, and materials other than having oversized, thick rectangular chimneys.

Prüfer, Bischoff, Dejaco, Ertl, and an assortment of other SS, civilian, and prisoner engineers, architects, and skilled laborers made several modifications in response to material shortages, faulty designs, and harsh weather as they rushed to get the crematoria operational.<sup>85</sup> Winter conditions made gassing in the bunkers especially challenging due to heating and ventilation issues. It is not exactly clear when, but SS planners decided to consolidate gassing operations in the new crematoria, likely the result of experience gained from early gassings at Auschwitz and Birkenau, as well as lessons learned from the Reinhardt camps. Dejaco supervised the drafting of revised designs, which were complete by December 1942. This redesign entailed relatively few changes, most important, modifying the cellar morgues to have an airtight chamber, ventilation systems, reinforced doors, and fake shower fixtures.

Notably, Dejaco's initial design for Crematorium II included a chute. This allowed corpses to slide down into the cellar morgue to await cremation, a clear sign that the murders were expected to take place elsewhere,





**Figure 7.13. Aerial Photo of Crematorium II and Crematorium III at Birkenau**

This aerial reconnaissance photo shows Crematorium II and Crematorium III in operation with a train parked at the ramp while guards sort groups of prisoners for forced labor or the nearby gas chambers. Barracks from sections BI and BII are visible to the left.

Source: National Archives and Records Administration, College Park.

most likely the bunkers. The revised design replaced the chute with stairs descending down to undressing and gassing rooms, a clear sign that the murders would take place in the crematorium. Crematorium II and its twin Crematorium III would have around one hundred square meters for gas chambers that could be crammed with 500 to 700 people. Crematoria IV and V had about half that capacity. The basic plans for Birkenau as an extermination center were largely set.

The SS wasted no time testing Crematorium II after its completion in March 1943. A transport of around 2,000 Jews arrived from Kraków. SS doctors immediately selected 1,492 for gassing.<sup>86</sup> Crematorium IV was finished at around the same time, followed by Crematorium V in April, and finally Crematorium III in June. The rectangular layouts of the crematoria allowed a progression of rooms for undressing, gassing, and finally cremation. Prisoners normally entered Crematoria II and III by descending stairs down into

the basement to find undressing rooms and then the “showers” where they were murdered. Prisoner work crews transported the corpses via a small elevator up to the ground floor for cremation. Crematoria IV and V were the first structures purposely designed from the start to be combination murder-cremation facilities. They were also redbrick buildings with slightly pitched roofs, but all operations were on ground level.

The interior layout was undoubtedly an “improvement” in terms of efficiency from earlier crematoria but still seemed cumbersome. Prisoners entered through a doorway along one of the longer sides of the rectangular structure. From there, they entered a small vestibule. To their right was a short corridor leading to the two gas chambers; to their left was the morgue, the crematoria’s largest interior space. In warmer weather, prisoners undressed outside and were directed to their left down the corridor to the gas chambers. From there, the corpses had to be hauled back through the corridor and vestibule to the morgue. The two quadruple-chamber cremation ovens, originally intended for Maly Trostenets, were housed in a room at the opposite end of the building from the gas chambers. In colder weather, the process was even more cumbersome. The victims entered the vestibule and turned right into the morgue to undress. Guards then herded prisoners back through the vestibule and down the corridor to the gas chambers. Once killed, the corpses then went back through the corridor and vestibule to return to the morgue.<sup>87</sup> The most logical and obvious spatial sequence would seem to be entrance, undressing, gassing, morgue, and cremation arranged lengthwise through the building, but none of the crematoria followed this progression. The crematoria designs are generally interpreted as the epitome of a well-ordered extermination machine, but the building of the crematoria was just another example of many within the Nazi building program of poorly conceived plans, shifting priorities, and hurried improvisation.

Cremation remained a significant limiting factor despite the new facilities. It took between ten to fifteen minutes to gas each group. Combined with time to reset the undressing areas and gas chambers, the murder of each group required around two hours once they arrived at the crematoria. The process of cremation took much longer. For example, the selection and killing of the first transport processed through Crematorium II mentioned previously lasted just a few hours, but it took two days to dispose of the corpses.<sup>88</sup> Even worse for the SS and Prüfer, Kopf’s ovens broke down frequently due to design flaws, shoddy workmanship, and overuse. Most crematoria only managed to run a few months before some problem, mostly related to the ovens, put them out of operation. Even when working, the ovens proved much slower than promised. As a result, the SS returned to cremation in open-air trenches and pyres using techniques first developed at Kulmhof for heaping corpses and gas-soaked wood upon a supersized grill of crisscrossed railroad tracks. This low-tech method of open-air fires disposed of more corpses than the cutting-edge crematoria.

Birkenau had the capacity to kill around 8,700 people and cremate somewhere around 4,700 bodies over a twenty-four-hour period when all facilities were operational, which was seldom.<sup>89</sup> Birkenau reached its ghastly peak during spring and summer 1944 as trainloads of Jewish Hungarians arrived, totaling more than 430,000, in addition to steady shipments from the Litzmannstadt ghetto and trainloads of other Jews, Romani, and others from assorted locations across Hitler's crumbling empire. Most faced prompt extermination. In addition to the gassing facilities, another notable alteration in killing operations at Birkenau was that trains pulled quite far into the camp to unload prisoners compared to the Reinhardt camps. Birkenau's rail siding also branched into three parallel spurs surrounding the ramp before ending almost directly between Crematorium II and III compared to the Reinhardt camps, where prisoners had to run several hundred meters to their deaths.

It is unclear if this proximity substantially increased Birkenau's murderous capacity. Presumably, the multiple spurs helped during periods of high train traffic, but the most tangible result in terms of construction was the need for a large gatehouse spanning the place where the rail line entered the camp. Such a structure was not necessary at the Reinhardt camps since they were temporary installations. In contrast, Birkenau was intended to support the decades-long project of Germanizing the conquered eastern territories. A Polish inmate finished the initial plan for the gatehouse in November 1941. The plans initially only included the tower over the rail line and the southern half of the structure, which also included a gateway for vehicles. The structure was not extended to the north until 1943, resulting in a basically symmetrical structure. The gatehouse had a reddish brick exterior and long rectangular layout, much like the barracks and crematoria, but its steeper roof pitch and three-story, square watchtower spanning the rail line gave the building a more imposing presence (figure 7.14). The gatehouse and rail line were finished in late 1943 and early 1944, respectively, just in time for the arrival of the first trainloads of Jewish Hungarians. The gatehouse had little impact on camp operations but became one of the Nazi regime's more menacing structures.

In all, the SS murdered somewhere between 1.1 and 1.3 million people at Birkenau, the vast majority Jews, before Soviet forces liberated the camp in January 1945. Perhaps around 80 percent were killed upon arrival, while around 125,000 of those selected to work survived the war.<sup>90</sup> Other concentration camps gradually acquired their own gassing and cremation facilities. At Dachau, for example, the SS had added a small, single-oven crematorium by 1939 and a larger four-oven crematorium and gas chamber in 1942. In most instances, as at Dachau, the ovens failed to keep pace with the thousands of prisoners dying "naturally" of disease, starvation, and cruelty inflicted by guards. The gas chambers at these other facilities were generally used on an experimental and limited basis compared to the main death camps. Inmates



**Figure 7.14. The Gatehouse Main Entrance to Birkenau**

This simple brick gatehouse served as Birkenau's main entrance, through which ran the rail line that terminated at the infamous ramp where SS officials selected prisoners for slow death through slave labor or immediate extermination in the gas chambers. The entire structure was not completed until early 1944, relatively late in the camp's history, and is largely unchanged today.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

deemed unfit to work were instead commonly dispatched to T4 facilities for gassing or left to die in place.

Nazi rhetoric was replete with tropes of health and contagion, especially concerning Jews as a source of racial contamination. These fears proved somewhat self-fulfilling as the SS squeezed ever-greater numbers of Jews and others deemed unfit to live into increasingly crowded and squalid living conditions. Combined with poor nutrition, sanitation, and heating, the regime's racial fantasies and brutality eventually produced a very real public health threat within the ghettos and camps that threatened guards and surrounding civilian populations. The regime partially addressed the issue through extermination during Operation Reinhardt, but a different solution was needed after the SS shifted toward the more economical exploitation of prisoners after mid-1942. The proliferation of labor subcamps only heightened concerns by increasing contact between prisoners and critical civilian workers. The problem was most acute within the Auschwitz camps as they

evolved into the central extermination and labor-processing complex after the Reinhardt camps closed.

The full extent of the Nazi regime's networks of punishment, slavery, and death is hard to grasp, and a definitive reckoning is likely impossible given the chaos of war and the regime's considerable efforts to hide its crimes. According to a major documentation effort currently underway by a team of scholars working with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Nazi regime established at least 980 concentration and extermination camps, around 30,000 slave labor camps, and roughly 1,150 ghettos. The regime operated thousands of other camps and facilities for sex slaves, euthanasia, forced abortions, and other sorts of detention. In total, the building of Nazi Germany relied on more than 42,000 places of extra-judicial abuse, imprisonment, and extermination.<sup>91</sup> It is equally hard to imagine the vast movements of people within and between these places. The concentration camps alone held around 21,000 prisoners in August 1939. Despite the torrent of murder that followed, inmate populations continued to climb, peaking at around 740,000 in January 1945, half of whom would be dead within six months.<sup>92</sup>

The death toll of these camps and ghettos is even harder to estimate. Most experts figure the Nazi regime was responsible for the deaths of five to six million Jews, two to three million POWs, and around two million non-Jewish Poles. Perhaps another two million people were murdered because they were communists, Romani, disabled, homosexual, or any number of other perceived offenses to the Nazi state.<sup>93</sup> Granted, these estimates include many summarily executed before entering any type of camp, ghetto, or prison. But if one takes a broader spatial perspective, then every step of the process, all the way from forcing people out of their homes to the crematoria of Auschwitz, as well as the countless journeys in between and death marches after, were all integral to the building of Nazi Germany. A definitive accounting remains elusive, but the human toll wrought through Hitler's murderous building programs was staggering.

### **CODA: THE CENTRAL CAMP SAUNA**

Most camps had rudimentary disinfection and delousing buildings. At Auschwitz, this included the first uses of Zyklon B in the main prisoner reception building. The SS realized that a more systematic process was needed as the camp population swelled, especially once problems quickly went beyond lice to include typhus and typhoid fever. The threat was most acute as Birkenau increasingly operated as a labor exchange for the subcamps rapidly proliferating across Nazi-controlled Europe. This raised the prospects of spreading disease among civilian workers in critical industries. Bischoff responded with a disinfection building, nicknamed the central camp sauna, at Birkenau. Initial plans from late 1942 envisioned a relatively small building, comparable to the more provisional and ad hoc delousing facilities found at



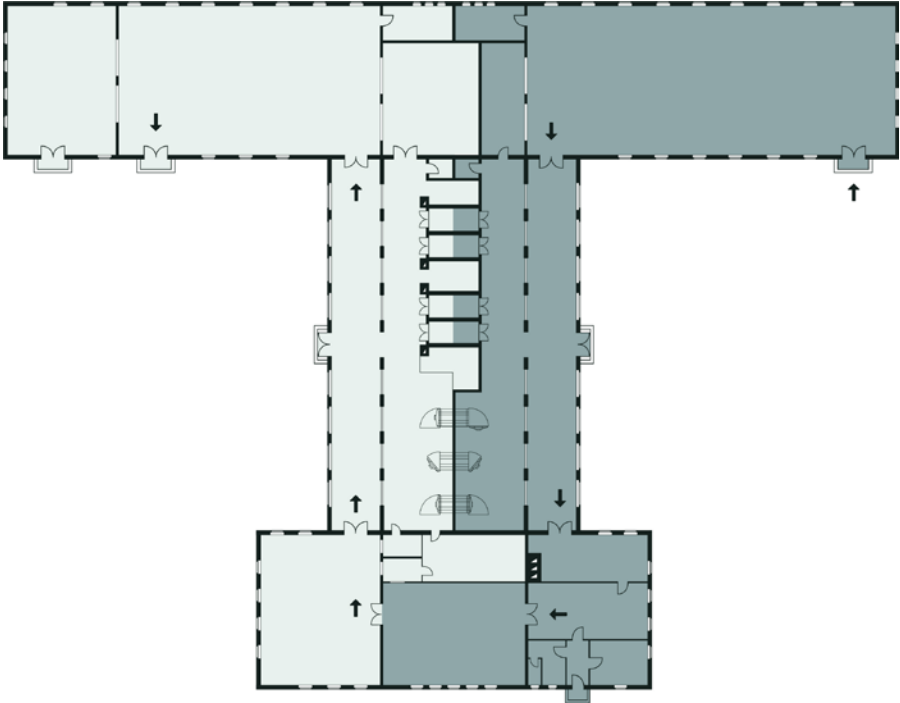
**Figure 7.15. The Central Camp Sauna at Birkenau**

The so-called central camp sauna was a rather unremarkable reddish brick building, similar in outward appearance to many other structures around Birkenau. The building's primary purpose was to delouse prisoners, but it also served to dehumanize and exploit those forced through the process.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

other camps, but Birkenau's rapid expansion led the sauna to grow into the largest camp structure by the time construction began in March 1943 (figure 7.15). Bischoff and the SS building office actually forced inmates to design the sauna. Completed in December 1943, the sauna was located at the eastern edge of the camp next to Crematoria IV and V and the so-called Canada section, which consisted of three rows of ten barracks each that were used to process belongings confiscated from prisoners.

The sauna provided an additional space for separating prisoners from any remaining hidden possessions, as well as sorting out those inmates deemed unfit for further work. The sauna building was an unassuming single-story, brick structure covering nearly 2,000 square meters in a symmetrical T shape. The main trunk of the building was nearly 50 meters long centered perpendicular to a 70-meter-long cap. The interior layout was also generally symmetrical with the building divided down the middle into "dirty" and "clean" spaces (figure 7.16). Groups of up to 2,000 prisoners entered into a large waiting room and were forced to undress. They then proceeded down the dirty hallway running along the main trunk where they turned over their clothing to be searched and disinfected in chambers manufactured by Topf



**Figure 7.16. Layout of the Central Camp Sauna at Birkenau**

This blueprint depicts the interior layout of the central camp sauna at Birkenau, bifurcated between a “clean” side to the left and a “dirty” side to the right, shown in the darker shading. Prisoners entered the doorway in the upper right into a large undressing room. While proceeding down the right-hand corridor, prisoners handed over their clothing to other prisoners who placed the clothing into one of the disinfection chambers. After a medical examination, prisoners entered the shower room at the bottom center and then the drying room at the bottom left. Prisoners retrieved their disinfected clothing as they walked up the left-hand corridor to reach the dressing room and eventually exit the building.

*Source:* Daae An.

and Sons. At the end of the hallway, SS doctors inspected prisoners before guards herded them into a large shower. Prisoners exited the shower and transitioned to the clean side of the building. From there, they followed the parallel, clean hallway in the opposite direction to receive clothing, enter the dressing room, and finally exit the building. The floor plan suggests a very efficient operation, but survivor testimony suggests otherwise. The disinfection process was slow, subjecting prisoners to long waits often in the cold, while the infestations circulating through the camps remained endemic. Survivors were unsure if the process was actually intended to help them or merely another form of abuse.<sup>94</sup> The SS most likely wanted to stop the epidemics, if for no other reason than they limited the amount of labor that could be extracted as the prisoners were worked to death.

# Epilogue

## *The Building and Breaking of Nazi Germany*

With total defeat a little over a year away, Robert Ley addressed a conference of Gauleiters in February 1944 concerning the imperative to build replacement housing as Allied bombers tore through Germany's cities: "Delay yourself no longer with great debates about the artistic design of makeshift homes. Here there is only one slogan: Build, build, build!"<sup>1</sup> This book opened with similar exclamations from Joseph Goebbels, but while those exclamations were triumphant, Ley's exhortation smacks of growing desperation and detachment from reality. Yet both statements highlight the common assumption among Party leaders that construction programs, architecture, and spatial planning were key instruments in building a new and victorious Nazi Germany. The possibilities of building this new Nazi empire appeared so limitless in 1940 that Albert Speer and Rudolf Wolters were inspired to declare—with visions of unconstrained building exciting their imaginations—that "under its Führer Adolf Hitler, Germany is entering an age of construction."<sup>2</sup> In reality, Germany was plunging into an age of destruction. To that end, Adolf Hitler's last act, in his self-styled role of master builder, was to order that destruction carried out to its fullest. In March 1945, Hitler issued his so-called Nero Decree instructing that Germany's bridges, factories, and anything else of value be destroyed before they were captured by encroaching Allied forces. Speer managed to countermand his Führer's scorched-earth policy, ironically after his actions as armaments minister had contributed to Hitler's ability to continue waging war until the bitter end.<sup>3</sup>

Hitler committed suicide on April 30, 1945, in Berlin, the city he hoped to transform into a grandiose ensemble of unimaginably imposing boulevards, monuments, government offices, and rally spaces. Instead, Hitler's actions and inactions created a horrific landscape of wrecked buildings, smashed infrastructure, piles of rubble, and countless dead and dying. Hitler ended his life in his private room in the so-called Führer Bunker located more than





**Figure E.1. The Flooded Führer Bunker in Berlin in 1990**

The Führer Bunker underneath the Reich Chancellery garden was Hitler's last redoubt and location of his suicide. The bunker was largely untouched after the war until uncovered as part of the area's reconstruction following the fall of the Berlin Wall and Germany's reunification. This photo shows the bunker flooded in 1990 prior to most remnants being destroyed or resealed. A parking lot for adjacent apartment buildings occupies the site today.

*Source:* German Federal Archives.

eight meters beneath the Chancellery grounds (figure E.1). Like the rest of the bunker, the room in which Hitler died was composed of thick concrete walls, floors, and ceilings, originally to protect against Allied air raids but in the final hours offering protection from Soviet artillery. In contrast to the bunker's austere structure, many of the furnishings were of high quality, having been taken from the Chancellery complex above. Hitler's working environs during his last months hardly equaled his self-perception as the supreme leader of the world's superpower, but his burial ironically conformed to his wishes in some ways. Hitler expressed his intention to be interred in a sarcophagus set in a grand hall open to the elements. Schutzstaffel (SS) guards carried Hitler's corpse outside to the Chancellery garden for cremation and burial in a shallow bomb crater.

The war in Europe ended with Germany's unconditional surrender a few days later. Critical assessment of the Nazi building program leads to many ambiguities and contradictions, hardly surprising given the ambiguities and contradictions inherent in the movement's personalities and ideology. The task of assessment is further complicated by the fact that so much of the Nazi building program never made it beyond the planning stages.

## Prospects and Possibilities

Alternative history has become a popular genre in recent years. The novel *Fatherland* by Robert Harris falls into this category. Harris relates the story of a Berlin police detective, Xavier March, who inadvertently uncovers a high-level government conspiracy during the course of a murder investigation. The basic story line is familiar, but the backdrop is haunting. Much of the action unfolds in Berlin in 1964, but in this alternative history, Nazi Germany won World War II, Hitler was turning seventy-five years old, and the Nazi regime was marking thirty-one years in power. The investigation leads the detective across a transformed Berlin. Harris weaves chilling images into the narrative by having the detective ride a tour bus down the new Avenue of Splendor through the heart of Hitler's capital. Harris's fictional detective notes that the avenue was

flanked on either side by the glass-and-granite walls of Speer's new buildings: ministries, offices, big stores, cinemas, apartment blocks. At the far end of this river of light, rising as gray as a battleship against the spray, was the Great Hall of the Reich, its dome half hidden in the low clouds.

He continues as the bus makes its way along the avenue and reaches Adolf Hitler Square:

Ahead was the hall. Its grayness had dissolved as their distance from it had diminished. Now they could see what the guide was telling them: that the pillars supporting the frontage were of red granite, mined in Sweden, flanked at either end by golden statues of Atlas and Tellus, bearing on their shoulders spheres depicting the heavens and the earth. The building was as crystal white as a wedding cake, its dome of beaten copper a dull green.<sup>4</sup>

These evocative images beg the question of how Germany's neighborhoods, streets, villages, cities, and landscapes might have looked if the Nazi regime had remained in power.

The question is difficult to answer and obviously entails speculation. The task is further complicated by the fact that, as noted throughout the preceding chapters, the Nazi building program was continually evolving right up to the bitter end. Despite these challenges, we would like to offer some general thoughts on an alternative scenario assuming that the war ended in the early 1940s with the Nazi Party firmly in power in Germany with direct or indirect control over much of Europe. Previous scholars have tended to imagine that the Nazi building program would have led to widespread standardization and homogenization. This is certainly possible, but an alternate interpretation seems more likely. If the Nazi regime retained its polycratic structure, it is quite likely that diverse power centers within the movement would have continued to pursue disparate building programs. Hitler was committed to monumental urban redesign projects. Yet even here, there are indications that things remained in flux. For example, Hitler's

evolving attitudes toward skyscrapers—namely, his transition from very critical to increasingly receptive—suggests the basic templates were far from finalized, as did the wide-ranging plans produced by Speer's reconstruction staff. Hitler's pet projects would have obviously received priority, but there is little reason to believe other Nazi bosses would have stopped sponsoring blood-and-soil farms and quaint villages, while others commissioned starkly functionalist transportation and infrastructure projects.

Gerdy Troost's lavish two-volume pictorial, *The Buildings of the New Reich*, as well as other coffee-table books produced by the regime, are perhaps the most tangible evidence for this. They invariably emphasized the diversity, modernity, and progressivity of Nazi architecture, design, technology, and craftsmanship. Despite the movement's hostility toward modernist architecture, the regime actually touted one of modernists' main tenets—namely, that form follows function—and touted it repeatedly. Among modernists, this mantra tended toward stark, functionalist styles, but Nazi architects interpreted the regime's emphasis on heroism, eternal values, and community in a wide variety of ways. As Werner Rittich explained in his 1938 coffee-table book on Nazi architecture and architectural sculpture, "no schematicism holds sway in our buildings, but rather every master builder, large and small, strives to solve the task at hand in such a way that the building fulfills its purpose and simultaneously outlines honestly in its appearance the meaning and purpose that were the reason for its construction."<sup>5</sup> What united these disparate projects, from the monumental rally spaces and Party forums to the small residential cells and local civic buildings, was the imperative of integrating and orienting German people, places, and spaces into a hierarchical order centered on the Party and its Führer; a radical restructuring of German living space. Returning to Troost: "From the loftiest building of faith to the simplest farmstead, from the mightiest work of technology to the plainest house, the German homeland grows into an ordered and structured whole and becomes the true image of an ideologically united, joyfully creative nation."<sup>6</sup>

A Nazi building program that proceeded along multiple trajectories begs the question of whether the regime could have actually realized its architectural ambitions. It is easy to dismiss Hitler and his builders as delusional based on the expansiveness and gigantism of their visions. Indeed, Speer wrote to Hans Lammers in November 1941, explaining that it would be impossible to realize all the regime's myriad building programs even after the war due to shortages of skilled labor and other practical challenges. Despite this proclivity to dismiss the possibility of the Nazi building program transitioning beyond sketches and scale models, it is difficult to point to specific factors that precluded the realization of the basic outlines of the regime's building programs as they existed by the early 1940s. The prerequisite technologies were generally available, including reinforced concrete and steel-skeleton-framed buildings. No doubt some challenges remained, such as the ability of the proposed foundations to support a structure as massive as the Great Hall. But this had more to do with Berlin's soggy soils, a problem soon

recognized and tested at the time, than to any architectural or technological deficiency. This does not mean everything would have proceeded smoothly. Indeed, Hitler's builders would have undoubtedly encountered numerous unforeseen problems, but it is likely that they could have found solutions, such as modifying the designs, materials, or locations. It is clear from Speer's memo to Lammers that Hitler's chief architect had a vested interest in limiting his boss's increasingly impulsive building pronouncements, which typically worsened the challenges Speer faced in redesigning Berlin. In fact, later in that same memo, and in an earlier memo from September 1938, Speer suggested that other projects be limited so that scarce materials, such as building stone, and labor could flow unimpeded to his projects.<sup>7</sup>

Speer and his colleagues made little effort to calculate the amount of labor and supplies needed to realize their projects. This was deliberate and stemmed from Hitler's disinterest in such practical considerations. Suffice it to say, the labor and supply requirements were tremendous. Not only did resources have to be marshalled for the actual projects, there were also the demands placed on the country's strained production and logistical infrastructures. Yet it does not appear that these challenges were insurmountable. Indeed, if one totaled the building materials—granite, limestone, bricks, concrete, wood, glass, and steel, and other supporting supplies like fuel—that were consumed in Europe from 1945 to the 1970s, the supply appears to have been sufficient to finish the general building programs envisioned by the Nazi regime. In fact, Europeans are still building into the twenty-first century, so there is little evidence to suggest that scarcity of building materials and supplies represented an insurmountable obstacle.

Hitler's builders also took steps to address this challenge. For example, many of the regime's monumental buildings were composed of bricks or steel-frame skeletons clad in granite or limestone. This allowed builders to achieve that heroic, eternal look on the exterior while the body of the structures utilized materials that were easier to mass-produce and transport and obviously cheaper. Many of these same points applied to labor. For example, the early Autobahn projects relied on significant amounts of manual labor, but work soon transitioned from shovels to larger excavating and paving machines that required significantly fewer workers. The growing emphasis on prefabrication and standardization also worked to reduce material and labor inputs, as well as costs.

Time was a greater challenge. Hitler set 1950 as the deadline for the main Berlin projects, for example, and a ten-year window after the war for the massive social housing program. Even where specific dates were not given, there was generally some pronouncement that completion must happen "as fast as possible." Even assuming a victorious Germany could shift significant amounts of resources, labor, and funds away from military purposes, a rather uncertain proposition, it is hard to imagine that the German construction industry could have scaled up fast enough to pursue the Führer and Gau cities, Autobahns, housing, the colonization of the eastern territories,

and the other various building programs simultaneously and with speed. This does not mean the projects could not be completed, just that it would take considerably longer than Hitler demanded.

Instead of a ten-year or five-year span, a more realistic time line may have been around forty years or so. This, too, may seem completely unrealistic, but postwar reconstruction certainly suggests its possibility. Under capitalist democracy in West Germany and a communist system in East Germany, cities, housing, and basic infrastructures were largely rebuilt or replaced by the late 1970s. Areas that remained fields of rubble generally resulted from political considerations. For example, communist authorities preserved portions of central Dresden in ruins to document the alleged barbarism of Western democracies since it had been British and American bombers that flattened the city (figure E.2). The authorities could have rebuilt or redeveloped the area if they had so desired.

The regime's financial situation is an even murkier area. As with labor and supplies, Hitler's builders did not spend much time working up detailed cost estimates. In any case, the costs would have been very difficult to forecast given the peculiarities and contradictions of the Nazi economy. Hitler kept transferring money to Speer's control even as work slowed dur-



**Figure E.2. Dresden in Ruins in 1945**

Successive waves of Allied bombers devastated Dresden in February 1945. This 1945 photo from the city hall tower suggests at the scale of destruction wrought upon Dresden and across Europe because of Hitler's war.

Source: German Federal Archives.

ing the early war years. Speer claimed that, as a result, he soon amassed more money than he could possibly spend until he and Franz Xaver Schwarz privately agreed to dissolve the account without informing Hitler. Yet every construction expenditure would have to be matched with a comparable measure of either spending cuts elsewhere, tax increases, or borrowing. Alternatively, the Nazis could simply inflate, default, or plunder their way to a “balanced” budget, convenient recourses for governments through the ages. Whatever the mechanism, it seems that the finances could have been arranged, although again over a longer time line. In another memo to Lamers in August 1940, Speer dismissed the idea that finances posed any sort of challenge.<sup>8</sup> Hitler argued his greatest buildings would ultimately pay for themselves through foreign tourism.

Most of these practical challenges could have been overcome in one way or another given enough time, but the building of Nazi Germany was still unlikely for a more fundamental reason. The building of Nazi Germany would have required enormous sacrifices from the population, including scarcity of consumer staples, increased financial burdens, and lower standards of living. The extent to which Germans, much less other peoples, were willing to sacrifice for the regime’s building program is highly uncertain and almost certain to erode rapidly. These hardships could have been shouldered by a population dedicated to the cause. People committed to a cause can accomplish incredible things and endure tremendous hardships. Yet the regime failed to achieve much “buy-in” beyond its core of supporters and opportunists, hence the regime’s repeated promises of better times just around the corner. In many ways, the Nazi regime’s continued functioning relied on ever-increasing inputs and repeated promises of a better future, but the inputs produced diminishing returns. Ultimately, those promises could not be fulfilled. It is unlikely that Hitler or his successors would have been able to resolve this fundamental contradiction. As a result, the regime would have to rely on growing levels of coercion, lawlessness, and violence to remain in power, which would have likely undermined the prospects of realizing its ambitious building program.

### **Continuity in People and Places**

Nazi Germany wrought unimaginable destruction across Europe. The level of physical destruction was symptomatic of the unprecedented demographic, economic, social, and political upheavals that swept most of Europe. Against this backdrop, it is easy to understand why many Germans experienced 1945 as a *Stunde Null*, or hour zero, that marked a radical rupture in the country’s historical trajectories. This was certainly the case for Hitler’s Party bosses, who mostly ended up committing suicide, being executed, or being imprisoned. Some architects and planners met similar fates, most notably Fritz Todt, who died in an airplane accident, and Hans Kammler, who allegedly committed suicide at war’s end. For the most part, though, Hitler’s cadre

of architects, engineers, and planners were too valuable to deploy on the front lines, so they had a higher probability of surviving the conflict. Speer was tried at Nuremberg with the other surviving top Nazis and imprisoned until 1966. After his release, he became quite wealthy, primarily through the publication of his best-selling memoirs, although he never practiced architecture again. Speer also became something of an international celebrity and coveted speaker as the most prominent surviving member of Hitler's inner circle. Hermann Giesler was also imprisoned. After his release in 1952, he settled in Düsseldorf working as a freelance architect and published his own memoirs. Both men lived in relative comfort until their deaths in the 1980s, their complicity with forced labor and genocide largely forgotten.

Most other architects, engineers, and planners active on behalf of the Nazi regime faced far fewer obstacles in transitioning to new lives after 1945. This was partially because this cohort operated like something of an unofficial fraternity, offering postwar connections and commissions to one another. For example, Friedrich Tamms, a classmate of Speer and later one of his most trusted deputies, became head of the city planning office in Düsseldorf. Tamms soon appointed several of his former associates from Speer's staff to prominent positions, including Hanns Dustmann, Konstanty Gutschow, Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, and Rudolf Wolters. Franz Xaver Dorsch collaborated with Allied occupation authorities and eventually founded an internationally renowned civil engineering firm. These types of arrangements occasionally proved controversial but were more commonly accepted with little interest or protest. In many cases, these architects were relatively unknown beyond professional circles. Tamms and Wolters worked on various transportation projects before joining Speer's staff and providing critical support for Speer's efforts to transform Berlin and other cities. Yet their names would have been largely unknown beyond the architectural community. Other architects worked in relative obscurity. Hans Stosberg, the main planner for the Auschwitz region, ran Hannover's planning office for two decades beginning in 1948.

Even those responsible for building the Auschwitz camps transitioned into the postwar period with little difficulty. Walter Dejaco and Fritz Ertl returned to their professions for several decades, interrupted by a brief trial that resulted in their acquittal. Their boss, Karl Bischoff, never faced a trial before dying in 1950 in relative obscurity. Konrad Meyer, author of the infamous General Plan East, was acquitted of war crimes before becoming a professor of landscape architecture at the Technical University in Hannover. Ordinary Germans may have been familiar with Speer, Giesler, Todt, and Paul Ludwig Troost, but they were very unlikely to have heard of the hundreds of other architects, engineers, planners, and other professionals that supported Hitler's sprawling building programs. In addition to relative anonymity, Hitler's builders also benefited from a perception that they were largely apolitical technocrats who simply designed and built what their employers, in this case the Party and state, ordered. For some, this perspective offered a convenient explanation for their activities, but many others

genuinely regarded themselves as technocrats focused on solving problems and getting things done. Finally, their skills were desperately needed in the postwar years with much of Germany in ruins, housing in severe shortage, and basic services and infrastructure collapsed.

Given these continuities in personnel, it should not be surprising that Germany's postwar reconstruction demonstrated substantial continuities in terms of principles and practices. The wholesale destruction wrought upon so many cities and towns opened avenues for programs of modernization aimed at reducing traffic congestion, pollution, overcrowding, and other long-perceived ills of the modern city. In large measure, these had been the objectives of architects and planners since the nineteenth century, so their persistence into the postwar years is less surprising than at first glance. Rising to prominence late in the Nazi period, the idea of the *Stadtlandschaft*, a "city landscape" of residential cells and industry dispersed among abundant greenery and efficient transportation linkages, became the dominant model of postwar urban planning. These basic principles can be found in Hans Bernhard Reichow's *Organic Urban Design: From the Metropolis to City Landscape* and *The Structured and Dispersed City* by Johannes Göderitz, Roland Rainer, and Hubert Hoffmann, both of which were largely written during the war. Josef Umlauf's *On the Essence of the City and Urban Planning* and Reichow's *The Auto-Friendly City: A Way Out of the Traffic Chaos* are two additional major works contributing to this process.<sup>9</sup> These and other works canonized many of the fundamental concepts of the late Nazi period into the urban planning practices of the postwar period. In short, there was no "hour zero," but rather a transitional period that opened new paths forward through which the burdens of the past could seemingly be left behind.<sup>10</sup>

As people and ideas were being sorted out, the actual buildings of the Nazi Reich remained in place. Some were more or less completely destroyed, most notably the Chancellery in Berlin, but ironically, most of the regime's buildings survived the war in generally good condition and still stand today, as shown by the contemporary photos scattered throughout the preceding chapters. This outcome reflected the regime's emphasis on dispersing population centers and industrial production to reduce their vulnerability to air raids. For example, central city neighborhoods in Braunschweig were devastated, but the regime's model settlement at Mascherode, complete with its community house, escaped destruction. The situation was similar for industry, where the established factories of the Ruhr region were smashed, but the main Volkswagen work at Wolfsburg remained largely operational. The regime's monumental buildings also fared relatively well. The rally grounds in Nuremberg sustained minor damage, but the Great Road, the unfinished shell of the Congress Hall, and other assorted structures remained generally intact. The Zeppelin Field also survived—minus its wreathed swastika and colonnades, which were dynamited away—and is still used today. The House of German Art and the Party forum in Munich also survived, as did the Gauforum in Weimar, although the main assembly hall was never



completed. The partially completed Autobahn, Order Castles, Prora resort, and the Olympic complexes also remained, as did countless other more mundane buildings and spaces. In general, there are really only two aspects of the Nazi building program where the bulk did not survive the war. The first was the renovated historical city centers, as in Braunschweig, Cologne, or Hamburg, which were leveled by Allied bombers. The second was the extermination camp network where the SS worked feverishly, but ultimately unsuccessfully, to erase evidence of its crimes.

### **Remembering the Past through Place, Space, and Architecture**

The survival of so many “Nazi” buildings has garnered varying reactions among Germans and outside observers, as well as diverse opinions about what to do with them.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, most of these buildings remain in use today. Indeed, the buildings, plans, and theories of the Nazi era—comprehensive urban plans, residential areas, industrial parks, transportation projects, military bases—would shape the geographies of postwar Germany and beyond into the twenty-first century. There are a variety of reasons for the endurance of “Nazi” architecture, places, and spaces. The most obvious reason is the practical difficulties in removing and replacing buildings, networks, or infrastructures that could still serve some purpose. It made little sense to abandon or demolish hundreds of thousands of homes and farms during the severe housing and food shortages of the initial postwar years. Nor did shutting down the production lines at the Volkswagen factory or abandoning the completed sections of the Autobahn make much sense. By the time the German economy had recovered, these homes, factories, and roads had largely lost their original associations with the Nazi movement amid the challenges and banalities of daily life.

Even projects with explicit connections to Nazi ideology were repurposed with relative ease. For example, the Order Castles became conventional military barracks. French and then American troops occupied Sonthofen before it returned to the West German army and was renamed General Beck Barracks in honor of a leading conspirator of the plot to overthrow Hitler in July 1944. The other Order Castles had comparable postwar histories. Many other military installations similarly survived and continued their functions under new management. The American army moved into the Party’s quartermaster center in Munich before it became headquarters for the municipal police. Other government buildings simply switched ministries. Hermann Göring’s Aviation Ministry building in Berlin housed East Germany’s House of Ministries and, after reunification, Germany’s Federal Ministry of Finance. Similarly, the Reichsbank would go on to house the Central Committee of the East German Communist Party and, most recently, Germany’s Foreign Office. The House of German Art is still an art museum.

This is not to suggest that all Nazi-era buildings could transition so simply. There were efforts to de-Nazify the built environment, but these tended to

be rather superficial, such as simply removing swastikas and eagles from buildings. In the most dramatic examples, American forces dynamited the huge swastika above the Zeppelin Field grandstands, and in Munich, the Temples of Honor met a similar fate. In most other instances, the symbols were more modestly chiseled or lowered off buildings. The newly “de-Nazified” buildings then assumed some other purpose. The Zeppelin Field has since hosted concerts, auto racing, and, oddly enough, political rallies. The nearby electricity substation, built to ensure the rally grounds had adequate power, had become a Burger King fast-food restaurant by the early twenty-first century. The completed portions of the Prora and Wewelsburg projects had varied uses over the years, but both ended up as youth hostels by the early twenty-first century. The community house in Mascherode likewise had a varied postwar existence, including as a movie theater, youth center, and, more recently, a store selling household goods and appliances. Hitler’s personal office building and its twin administration building are still extant as well but now house a music school and various cultural institutions. The SS office building in Berlin, where top SS officers supervised the construction of their far-flung camp network and decided the fates of millions, survived the war. It became home for another group of planners after the war, in this case West Germany’s Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning until that organization moved its offices in 2012 to another Nazi-era building, the former German Congress of Communities building (figure E.3).

The massive air raid shelters and flak towers have proven especially troublesome. Some were demolished. Demolition proved incredibly expensive, but the shelters were ill suited for most practical uses and have since gone through various uses, such as nightclubs, apartments, museums, and cafés (figure E.4). Some of these conversions have proven controversial because they raise questions about the commercialization of buildings and places associated with the Nazi movement. Bunkers remain scattered across Europe, stretching from the Atlantic and West Walls to Hitler’s Wolf’s Lair in present-day Poland. Remnants of Hitler’s Führer Bunker are still buried below Berlin, sealed off from the public. Many concentration camps remained in operation even after the war to house former inmates in need of convalescence, ethnic Germans expelled from the east, German prisoners of war (POWs), and suspected Nazi war criminals. Unfortunately, Soviet occupation authorities repurposed some of the concentration camps as “special camps” to incarcerate political prisoners, most notably Buchenwald and Sachsenhausen.

Happenstance and practicality determined the initial uses of many Nazi-era buildings, but gradually a sense emerged that these buildings, or at least their remnants, represented records of the past. Unsurprisingly, this impulse first emerged regarding the various camps and other sites of Nazi atrocities. The first initiatives tended to be rather small and ad hoc, but more systematic efforts began following the conversion of the Dachau camp to a memorial complex in 1965. In the decades that followed, most of the other major camps similarly became memorial and documentation centers, while smaller



**Figure E.3. The SS Main Economic and Administration Office in Berlin**

The SS Main Economic and Administration Office occupied this relatively nondescript building in Berlin. From here, SS leaders organized the enslavement and murder of millions. Note the similarities with figure 6.8.

*Source:* Joshua Hagen.

monuments and plaques were erected at less prominent sites. By the 1980s, attention gradually shifted to sites associated with the perpetrators, such as the Topography of Terror museum located on the site of the former SS headquarters in Berlin or the remnants of Hitler's compound at Obersalzberg.

There was also growing debate concerning whether Nazi-era architecture should be covered by historic preservation laws. Most of the prominent buildings were gradually declared historic monuments, and an increasing number of homes and other everyday buildings have been added to the register. For most, the designation allows the buildings to continue in their present purpose but generally forbids any extensive remodeling, additions, or alterations. The Congress Hall at the rally grounds is the single largest extant Nazi structure by most measures. Much of the exterior was finished by 1945, but the roofing structure was never started and the interior spaces were unfinished. The hulking structure served as a makeshift warehouse and storage depot, among other postwar uses. During the 1990s, the city of Nuremberg, which owned most of the rally grounds, approved the partial conversion of the Congress Hall into a documentation center of the Nazi rallies, while the remainder of the structure continued to serve a variety of



**Figure E.4. A Concrete Bunker to Protect Civilians in Berlin**

In response to the German air force's inability to halt Allied air attacks across Germany, Hitler ordered massive shelters built to protect civilians in larger cities. Difficult and costly to remove, these hulking concrete structures were often left in place after the war. Built in 1943 and capable of protecting up to 12,000 people, this air raid bunker in Berlin is currently a multifaceted museum that includes sections related to World War II and life in the bunker, the history of torture and medicine with an emphasis on gruesome practices, and finally a haunted house geared toward younger audiences.

*Source:* Robert C. Ostergren.

practical purposes. Like many other Nazi buildings, the Congress Hall will actually document the history of the Nazi movement; ironically, it serves as the “word in stone” as Hitler originally intended but conveys a much different message (figure E.5).

### **In Lieu of a Coda: Speer's Theory of Ruin Value**

Hitler envisioned a Reich on a millennial time frame but still imagined its eventual demise. If this were to occur, Hitler and his architects hoped the Party's monumental buildings would continue to speak to future generations of the greatness of the Nazi movement and its transcendental leader. As Hitler predicted while laying the cornerstone for the Congress Hall in 1935: “Should the Movement ever be silent, even after millenniums, this witness shall speak. In the midst of a hallowed grove of ancient oak trees will the people then marvel in reverent awe at this first colossus among

the buildings of the German Reich."<sup>12</sup> In reality, the building and breaking of Nazi Germany took a little more than twelve years, a relatively short period all things considered. Yet the Nazi movement managed to effect profound changes during its brief stint in power, including the near-total extermination of Europe's Jewish populations, the occupation and division of Germany, and a complete reordering of political and demographic borders across Central and Eastern Europe. The Nazi movement also wrought profound changes upon Europe's cities, towns, and landscapes, especially in Germany and adjacent eastern areas. Despite initial promises to restore order and grandeur to German cities on a scale that would last for centuries, the end result was rubble and wreckage, death and destruction, stretching from Berlin to the gates of Moscow and the streets of London.

In that sense, Speer's Theory of Ruin Value was rather prophetic. Speer claimed this theory came to him when he saw the rubble of a streetcar station just demolished to clear way for the Zeppelin Field. Although only exposed



**Figure E.5. The Voluminous Interior of the Congress Hall in Nuremberg**

Modeled on the Colosseum in Rome, the exterior shell of the Congress Hall in Nuremberg was largely finished by the time war began. The voluminous interior, in contrast, was empty and lacking its roof. Part of the exterior shell now serves as a documentation center to the crimes of the Nazi movement, while the remainder of the structure provides storage space for the local government and the Nuremberg symphony orchestra. For scale, note the vehicle parked toward the middle left of the photo.

*Source:* Robert C. Ostergren.

to the elements for a short time, the iron rebar was beginning to rust. Speer extrapolated from this rather drab sight that modern building materials would ultimately prove inadequate in conveying Hitler's desired sense of grandeur and heroism into the distant future. The solution, Speer reasoned, was to avoid using steel unless absolutely necessary. Stone was the preferred material since it weathered in a more pleasing fashion as demonstrated by the monuments of antiquity and the Middle Ages. Drawing upon the legacy of nineteenth-century Romanticism and its fondness of ruins as symbols of melancholy and lost golden ages, Speer claimed he commissioned a drawing showing how the Zeppelin Field grandstands would appear after being abandoned for centuries, covered in vegetation and slowly crumbling. Many within Hitler's inner circle were reportedly appalled by this drawing implying the fall of Nazi Germany, but Hitler found it inspiring and ordered the overall theory applied to all the Party's monumental buildings so that they would assume a pleasing aesthetic even after centuries or millennia of decay.<sup>13</sup> Given this emphasis on transcendental ruins, it is somewhat ironic that Speer's so-called cathedral of light projected above the Zeppelin Field was arguably the regime's most unique and impactful "building" but also its most ephemeral and transient. Speer noted as much after the war: "Funny isn't it . . . that if anything it will finally be only these, well yes, dramatics I will be remembered for."<sup>14</sup>

Speer's idea is evocative, but there is scant evidence to suggest his ruin theory existed during the Nazi period. Speer did publish a widely disseminated article in March 1937 exhorting his fellow builders to use stone rather than iron whenever possible.<sup>15</sup> Speer also noted the durability and beauty of the stone buildings of antiquity, but instead of romanticizing about any ruin theory, Speer argued that refraining from iron was necessary because Germany's limited iron supplies were needed for the successful implementation of the Four Year Plan. It is almost certain Speer came up with his theory later.<sup>16</sup> In 1967, two years before Speer's memoirs first appeared, the city of Nuremberg dynamited the colonnades along the top of the Zeppelin Field grandstands, ostensibly because they were already dilapidated. A few years later, the end pylons were similarly demolished for the same purported reason. At the time, some were skeptical that relatively minor wear and tear provided an excuse to rid the city of portions of its unpleasant past.

Such explanations are certainly plausible, but it is also clear that the quality of Nazi workmanship was widely lacking, most likely a side effect of Hitler's imperative to build quickly. In fact, the main seating sections of the Zeppelin Field grandstands were fenced off from visitors during our initial visit in 2001, and by 2013, preparations were underway for an extensive effort to prevent the structure from crumbling further since the structure is now classified as a historical monument. This is hardly surprising since most other surviving Nazi monuments have also required extensive restoration work at some point. Yet there are some places that evoke Speer's Theory of

Ruin Value. The most notable is at the heart of the Nazi movement. The Temples of Honor in Munich survived the war with minimal damage, although much of the city was flattened. In 1947, American forces demolished the upper portions of the temples to prevent the structures from becoming rallying points for Nazi supporters, but the foundation platforms still survive. Hitler was partially correct in believing that his buildings, long obscured by moss, weeds, and trees, would speak to future generations as the “word in stone.” But instead of power and grandeur, the temple foundations bear witness to the bitter fruits of blind hatred, fanatical belief, and wanton cruelty (figure E.6). A few steps away, a new documentation center opened in 2015 on the site once occupied by the Nazi Party’s Brown House headquarters. The vegetation covering the neighboring temple foundation was cleared to allow a visual linkage between the documentation center and the Königsplatz. In that sense, the story of the building and breaking of Nazi Germany lives with us to this day.



**Figure E.6. The Remaining Pedestal of One of the Temples of Honor in Munich**

American occupation authorities dynamited the Temples of Honor in 1947 to prevent them from becoming shrines for the remaining Nazi faithful. The pedestals remained, though, and were eventually overgrown with vegetation. The Nazi administration building is partially visible in the background through the trees.

Source: Joshua Hagen.

# Notes

## CHAPTER 1: STATISM, TOTALITARIANISM, AND NATIONAL SOCIALISM

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9. Quoted in Andreas Süssmilch, *Modernization and Rationalisation in National Socialist Germany, 1933–1945: “We Must Create the New Man”* (Hamburg: Dr. Kovač, 2012), 145.

10. Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt’s America, Mussolini’s Italy, and Hitler’s Germany, 1933–1939* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006), 15.

11. Stuart Elden, “National Socialism and the Politics of Calculation,” *Social and Cultural Geography* 7, no. 5 (2006): 753–69; Álvaro Sevilla-Buitrago, “Urbanism and Dictatorships: Perspectives of the Field of Urban Studies,” in *Urbanism and Dictatorship: A European Perspective*, ed. Harold Bodenschatz, Piero Sassi, and Max Welch Guerra (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2015), 27–35.

12. Richard Overy, *The Dictators: Hitler’s Germany and Stalin’s Russia* (New York: Norton, 2004), 218–64; Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2011); Igor Golomstock, *Totalitarian Art in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy, and the People’s Republic of China* (Duckworth, NY: Overlook, 2011), 266–301; Harald Bodenschatz, “Urban Design for Mussolini, Stalin, Salazar, Hitler and Franco,” *Planning Perspectives* 29, no. 3 (2014): 381–92; Lucy M. Maulsby, *Fascism, Architecture, and the Claiming of Modern Milan, 1922–1943* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

13. Rudolf Wolters, *Bauen im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland: Ein Schriftumverzeichnis* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1940), 3–4.

14. Harald Bodenschatz, Piero Sassi, and Max Welch Guerra, eds., *Urbanism and Dictatorship: A European Perspective* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2015).

15. Michael Mann, *Fascists* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 13. See also Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1951); Hartmut Frank, ed., *Faschistische Architekturen: Planen und Bauen in Europa 1930–1945* (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1985); Stanley Payne, *A History of Fascism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995); Kevin Passmore, *Fascism: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Bruce F. Pauley, *Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini: Totalitarianism in the Twentieth Century*, 4th ed. (Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2014).

16. Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*, 185–87.

17. “Die Bauten des dritten Reiches,” *Baugilde* 19, no. 26 (1937): 877–78. Speaking at a ceremony for the new Reich Chancellery a year later, Hitler extended his time line to the year 2400! The speech is reprinted in Angela Schönberger, *Die neue Reichskanzlei von Albert Speer: Zum Zusammenhang von nationalsozialistischer Ideologie und Architektur* (Berlin: Grbr. Mann, 1981), 177–82.

18. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 4, 89. See also Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Süssmilch, *Modernization and Rationalisation in National Socialist Germany*.

19. Thilo Schellers, “Die Strasse in das Reich,” (1936), quoted in Erhard Schütz and Eckhard Gruber, *Mythos Reichsautobahn: Bau und Inszenierung der “Straßen des Führers” 1933–1941* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1996), 62.

20. Rudolf Wolters, *Vom Beruf des Baumeisters* (Berlin: Volk und Reich, 1944), 65.

21. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999 [1925/1926]), 266.

22. Werner Rittich, *New German Architecture* (Berlin: Terramare, 1941), 35.

23. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 2 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 1263.

24. For an extensive history of the Nazi movement in English, see Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich*, *The Third Reich in Power*, and *The Third Reich at War* (New York: Penguin, 2004, 2005, 2009). For shorter histories, see Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000); Wolfgang Benz and Thomas Dunlap, *A Concise History of the Third Reich* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Shelley Baranowski, *Nazi Empire: German Colonialism and Imperialism from Bismarck to Hitler* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Joseph W. Bendersky, *A Concise History of Nazi Germany*, 4th ed. (Lanham, MD:

Rowman & Littlefield, 2014). For studies of daily life in Nazi Germany, see Detlev Peukert, *Inside Nazi Germany: Conformity, Opposition, and Racism in Everyday Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989); Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008); Thomas Kühne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918–1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010). See also Neil Gregor, ed., *Nazism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Jane Caplan, ed., *Nazi Germany* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Anson Rabinbach and Sander L. Gilman, *The Third Reich Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013).

25. A few works are worth briefly mentioning within this toxic stew. Paul de Lagarde, a scholar with broad interests in the ancient Middle East, authored a series of staunchly nationalist works during the late nineteenth century advocating German colonization and domination of Central and Eastern Europe, but he was probably best known for establishing anti-Semitism as a staple of conservative political thought in Germany. Houston Stewart Chamberlain drew on de Lagarde when writing his *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, first published in 1899. English by birth, Chamberlain later gained German citizenship and became a strong proponent of a racist dogma espousing the historical superiority of the Aryan race led by Teutonic peoples. Published in 1918, historian Oswald Spengler's *The Decline of the West* reflected deep-seated currents of cultural anxiety circulating across war-weary Europe. Spengler argued that civilizations constituted some type of super-organism that emerged, evolved, and eventually died over time. These civilizational life cycles were the drivers of history, Spengler argued, and the proper frames for understanding contemporary events, especially what he foresaw as the imminent demise of Western civilization. Finally, Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, an amateur cultural historian and political activist, countered these rather gloomy prognostications in *The Third Reich* in 1923. Moeller van den Bruck rejected both Western and Soviet models. Instead, he believed that national redemption and greatness were to be found in a new, revolutionary state based on a German variant of socialism. Although often unacknowledged, the thinking of de Lagarde, Chamberlain, Spengler, and Moeller van den Bruck, among many others, proved broadly influential within the Nazi Party, along with two of the movement's "best-sellers," Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and Alfred Rosenberg's *The Myth of the Twentieth Century*.

26. See George Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution: Toward a General Theory of Fascism* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1999); Hans Maier, *Totalitarianism and Political Religions*, vols. 1–3 (New York: Routledge, 2004–2007); Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Peter Steinbach, "Der Nationalsozialismus as politische Religion: Inszenierung, Instrumentalisierung, Funktion," in *Hitler und die Deutschen: Volksgemeinschaft und Verbrechen*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Thamer and Simone Erpel (Dresden: Sandstein, 2010), 112–20.

27. German geographer Friedrich Ratzel popularized the concept of *Lebensraum* in his 1897 tome *Politische Geographie*. Ratzel's work applied widely held contemporary beliefs on environmental determinism and social Darwinism to international relations, colonialism, and geopolitics. Germany's territorial losses following World War I intensified public anxieties, exemplified by Hans Grimm's best-selling novel *Volk ohne Raum* (Munich: A. Langen, 1926). These same general notions animated European overseas colonialism and the rationale for the Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny in the United States, as well as conterminous declarations by Japan to establish a Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere or Italy to create an empire spanning much of the eastern Mediterranean and East Africa. See Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: Nazi Rule in Occupied Europe* (New York: Penguin, 2008); Baranowski, *Nazi Empire*; and the articles in the special issue following Ian Klinke and Mark Bassin, "Introduction: *Lebensraum* and Its Discontents," *Journal of Historical Geography* 61 (2018): 53–58.

28. Beneath the Gauleiters, the Party's structure followed successively smaller administrative units starting with a district leader (*Kreisleiter*), local chapter leader (*Ortsgruppenleiter*), cell leader (*Zellenleiter*), and finally the lowest, the block leader (*Blockleiter*).

29. Most of Hitler's top lieutenants are the subject of at least one extensive biography, but more general readers may consult Joachim C. Fest, *The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the*

*Nazi Leadership* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011 [1970]). On the Gauleiters, see Karl Höffkes, *Hitlers politische Generale: Die Gauleiter des Dritten Reiches—ein biographisches Nachschlagewerk*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Grabert, 1997); Jeremy Noakes, "Viceroy of the Reich? Gauleiters 1925–45," in *Working towards the Führer: Essays in Honour of Sir Ian Kershaw*, ed. Anthony McElligott and Tim Kirk (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 118–52. Information on less prominent figures discussed throughout the book was drawn from various sources including Robert Wistrich, *Who's Who in Nazi Germany* (New York: Macmillan, 1982); Dieter Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes im Nationalsozialismus: Eine soziologische Untersuchung ideologisch fundierter Leitbilder in Architektur, Städtebau und Raumplanung des Dritten Reiches* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1993), 484–93; Hermann Weiß, *Biographisches Lexikon zum Dritten Reich* (Frankfurt: Fischer Taschenbuch, 2002); Ernst Klee, *Das Personenlexikon zum Dritten Reich: Wer war was vor und nach 1945* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 2003); Joachim Lilla, Martin Döring, and Andreas Schulz, *Statisten in Uniform: Die Mitglieder des Reichstags 1933–1945* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2004); Ernst Klee, *Das Kulturlexikon zum Dritten Reich: Wer war was vor und nach 1945* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 2007).

30. On the official organization of the Party, see Reichsorganisationsleiter der NSDAP, ed., *Organisationsbuch der NSDAP* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1943). For general reference, see Christian Zentner and Friedemann Bedürftig, *The Encyclopedia of the Third Reich* (New York: Macmillan, 1991); Wolfgang Benz, Hermann Graml, and Hermann Weiß, eds., *Enzyklopädie des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenverlag, 2001); Rüdiger Hachtmann and Winfried Süß, "Kommissare im NS-Herrschaftssystem: Probleme und Perspektiven der Forschung," in *Hitlers Kommissare: Sondergewalten in der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur*, ed. Rüdiger Hachtmann and Winfried Süß (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 9–11.

31. Ian Kershaw, "Working towards the Führer: Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler Dictatorship," *Contemporary European History* 2, no. 2 (1993): 103–18.

32. See Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany*; Norbert Huse, "Neues Bauen" 1918 bis 1933: *Moderne Architektur in der Weimarer Republik*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Ernst & Son, 1985); Frank-Bertolt Raith, *Der Heroische Stil: Studien zur Architektur am Ende der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1997); Anthony McElligott, *The German Urban Experience, 1900–1945: Modernity and Crisis* (New York: Routledge, 2001); Winfried Nerdinger, "Einen deutlichen Strich durch die Achse der Herrscher zu machen: Diskussionen um Symmetrie, Achse und Monumentalität zwischen Kaiserreich und Bundesrepublik," in *Architektur—Macht—Erinnerung: Stellungnahmen 1984 bis 2004*, ed. Christoph Hölz and Regina Prinz (Munich: Prestel, 2004), 27–41. On the Weimar period in general, see Detlev Peukert, *The Weimar Republic: The Crisis of Classical Modernity* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992); Anton Kaes and Martin Jay, *The Weimar Republic Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Eric D. Weitz, *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007); Anthony McElligott, *Rethinking the Weimar Republic: Authority and Authoritarianism, 1926–1936* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014).

33. Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 107.

34. Joachim Petsch, "Das Neue Bauen in der Weimarer Republik oder der Kampf gegen die Modernisierung der Architektur," in *Kulturelle Enteignung: Die Moderne als Bedrohung*, ed. Georg Bollenbeck and Werner Köster (Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher, 2003), 133.

35. See Wolfgang Voigt, "Die Stuttgarter Schule und die Alltagsarchitektur des Dritten Reiches," in *Faschistische Architekturen: Planen und Bauen in Europa 1930–1945*, ed. Hartmut Frank (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1985), 234–50; and several contributions on the Stuttgart School in Kai Krauskopf, Hans-Georg Lippert, and Kerstin Zaschke, eds., *Neue Tradition* (Dresden: Fritz Thyssen Stiftung, 2009).

36. Schultze-Naumburg was active in the Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts scene in Munich and Berlin around the turn of the century. He achieved fame through his book series *Cultural Works*, which did much to steer the middle and upper classes toward conservative tastes, as well as being cofounder of the preservationist/conservationist German League for Heimatschutz organization in 1904. In addition to authoring hundreds of articles and other

publications, Schultze-Naumburg designed well over one hundred buildings, including many stately manors. His most notable project was the rustic Cecilienhof Palace outside Berlin, later the scene of the postwar Potsdam Conference in 1945. Hitler and Schultze-Naumburg seemed to have a strained relationship. Schultze-Naumburg remained officially in good standing with the regime, including being recipient of a number of accolades and honors, but was never rewarded with prominent commissions. In that sense, he was an outlier among the older cohort of conservative architects who eventually managed to reconcile and rehabilitate themselves with the Nazi regime. It may not be a coincidence that Schultze-Naumburg was the oldest of the major architects engaged with the Nazi movement—he was twenty years Hitler’s senior and thirty-six years older than Speer.

37. Karl Willy Straub, *Die Architektur im Dritten Reich* (Stuttgart: Fritz Wedekind, 1932). Straub was a successful author, editor, and amateur architectural enthusiast with decidedly conservative leanings. After service in World War I, Straub resumed his career without much apparent difficulty before eventually settling in Berlin at the suggestion of Schultze-Naumburg. Straub became managing director of The Block and a Nazi Party member from 1931.

38. Kathleen James-Chakraborty, *German Architecture for a Mass Audience* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Christian Welzbacher, *Die Staatsarchitektur der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Lukas, 2006); Sabine Hake, *Topographies of Class: Modern Architecture and Mass Society in Weimar Berlin* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008); Jörn Düwel and Niels Gutschow, “Community and Town Planning: Debates of the First Half of the 20th Century,” in *A Blessing in Disguise: War and Town Planning in Europe 1940–1945*, ed. Jörn Düwel and Niels Gutschow (Berlin: DOM, 2013), 14–50.

39. See Ian Kershaw, *Hitler 1889–1936: Hubris and Hitler 1936–1945: Nemesis* (New York: Norton, 1998, 2000) or the abridged version *Hitler: A Biography* (New York: Norton, 2008).

40. Fröhlich, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, 2:113.

41. Gerdy Troost, ed., *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 2nd ed. (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark, 1943), 10.

42. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 80.

43. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 20, 34–35.

44. Brigit Schwarz, *Geniewahn: Hitler und die Kunst* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2009), 75–84.

45. Robert Eikmeyer, ed., *Adolf Hitler: Reden zur Kunst- und Kulturpolitik 1933–1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Revolver, 2004), 74. Hitler denounced the same groups during his culture speech the following year but also added “conceited impressionists” to the list.

46. *Der Parteitag der Freiheit vom 10.–16. September 1935: Offizieller Bericht über den Verlauf des Reichsparteitages mit sämtlichen Kongressreden* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1935), 66–68.

47. *Reden des Führers am Parteitag der Ehre 1936*, 3rd ed. (Munich: Franz Eher, 1936), 28. See also Winfried Nerdinger, “Hitler als Architekt: Bauten als Mittel zur Stärkung der ‘Volksgemeinschaft,’” in *Hitler und die Deutschen: Volksgemeinschaft und Verbrechen*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Thamer and Simone Erpel (Dresden: Sandstein, 2010), 74–80.

48. Eikmeyer’s *Adolf Hitler* is the single best source for Hitler’s speeches on art and architecture. It contains all five of Hitler’s culture speeches at the Nuremberg rallies, as well as his speeches associated with the House of German Art and its exhibitions.

49. *Reden des Führers am Parteitag der Ehre 1936*, 28.

50. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 2:695.

51. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 2:1262–63.

52. The film featured models of the new opera and several other projects in Munich, the Round Plaza and Army High Command complex in Berlin, the Gaudforum in Augsburg, and the High Academy of the NSDAP at Chiemsee. Kurt Rupli, dir., *Das Wort aus Stein* (Film, 1939).

53. Heinrich Hoffmann, ed., *Hitler abseits vom Alltag: 100 Bilddokumente aus der Umgebung des Führers* (Berlin: Zeitgeschichte, 1937).

54. “Arbeiten junger Architekten,” *Die Form* 8, no. 11 (1933): 339–51. The designs from Speer and Umlauf published here show clear affinities with the modernist tendencies of the Werkbund,

as did numerous designs by Wolters from the late 1920s. Speer's top three deputies in Berlin—Hans Stephan, Wolters, and Friedrich Tamms—were born in 1902, 1903, and 1904, respectively.

55. Contemporary professional journals give the impression of an almost exclusively male occupation during the Nazi period, although it should be noted that some architects were identified in ways that did not indicate a gender, for example, using just initials, abbreviations, or partial names. The few architects identifiable as women were generally collaborating with male colleagues on residential construction. Others worked in relative obscurity as drafters, designers, or other entry-level positions in practices headed by men. Women gained full admission rights to German technical universities by World War I, and the earliest cohorts performed on par with their male peers. Despite some progress in gaining access to academic training and credentials, female architects were generally barred membership in professional associations and civil service jobs, the largest category of employment. As a result, women constituted a small percentage of enrollments in architecture programs during the Weimar years, accounting for less than 5 percent. By 1933, a handful of women had managed to secure official diplomas, enter the civil service, and join professional associations. The relatively small pool of practicing female architects tended to work on designing kitchens, furnishings, or other domestic spaces that were seen as especially suited for women. The numbers of practicing female architects and architectural students dwindled after 1933, although no systematic study has been undertaken to date. The remaining female architects had mixed experiences under National Socialism but generally struggled as many of the hard-won gains since 1900 were reversed. Emilie Winkelmann, the first German woman to establish an architectural practice, began studying at the Technical University in Hannover in 1902. Winkelmann completed her studies but was denied the opportunity to take the corresponding civil service exam. Undaunted, Winkelmann established a successful private practice in the years before World War I designing an array of mostly residential buildings that followed rather traditional styles. She was admitted to the BDA in 1928 and then the RKK in 1938, allowing her to maintain a low-profile practice through 1945, mostly focusing on private commissions for rural villas and estates owned by acquaintances. In contrast, Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky, the first Austrian female architect, joined Ernst May's socialist-inspired building program in Frankfurt, where she famously produced the highly functionalist "Frankfurt kitchen" design. She remained with May's team when it left in 1930 to work in the Soviet Union. Schütte-Lihotzky eventually returned to Austria in 1940 hoping to join the communist underground movement but was soon arrested and imprisoned until 1945. See Kerstin Dörhöfer, *Pionierinnen in der Architektur: Eine Baugeschichte der Moderne* (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 2004); Despina Stratigakos, "I Myself Want to Build': Women, Architectural Education and the Integration of Germany's Technical Colleges," *Paedagogica Historica* 43, no. 6 (2007): 727–56, and "The Bobbed Builder: Women Architects in the Weimar Republic," in *Essays on Women's Artistic and Cultural Contributions 1919–1939: Expanded Social Roles for the New Woman Following the First World War*, ed. Paula Birnbaum and Anna Novakov (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 2009), 203–16.

56. See Koos Bosma, "New Socialist Cities: Foreign Architects in the USSR 1920–1940," *Planning Perspectives* 29, no. 3 (2014): 301–28.

57. Wolters, *Vom Beruf des Baumeisters*, 69.

58. The following biographical sketches draw from many sources, including Franz W. Seidler, *Fritz Todt: Baumeister des Dritten Reiches* (Munich: Herbig, 1986); Gitta Sereny, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* (New York: Knopf, 1995); Joachim C. Fest, *Speer: The Final Verdict* (New York: Harcourt, 2001); Hartmut Mayer, *Paul Ludwig Troost: "Germanische Tektonik" für München* (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2007); Michael Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler: Leben und Werk (1898–1987)* (Tübingen: Edition Altavilla, 2008); Blaine Taylor, *Hitler's Engineers: Fritz Todt and Albert Speer—Master Builders of the Third Reich* (Philadelphia: Casemate, 2010); Timo Nüßlein, *Paul Ludwig Troost (1878–1934)* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2012); Sebastian Tesch, *Albert Speer (1905–1981)* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016). Giesler and Speer both published postwar autobiographies that are helpful but are replete with omissions and distortions. Scholars have also published numerous studies focusing on less prominent architects active on behalf of the Nazi regime.

Additional biographical information on architects active during the period was drawn from various sources, most notably Werner Durth, *Deutsche Architekten: Biographischen Verflechtungen 1900–1970* (Munich: Friedr. Vieweg & Son, 1986).

59. Andreas Kübler, *Chronik Bau und Raum: Geschichte und Vorgeschichte des Bundesamtes für Bauwesen und Raumordnung* (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 2007), 100.

60. Dietmar Arnold, *Neue Reichskanzlei und "Führerbunker": Legenden und Wirklichkeit* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2005), 74–75, 77, 144–47. Speer agreed to accept a 4.5 percent honorarium for the new Reich Chancellery. No final receipt has been found to date, but Speer should have collected 1.26 million Reichsmarks for that project, assuming the original agreement was honored. An internal document in Speer's inspectorate from May 1944 authorized an annual payment of 80,000 Reichsmarks to Speer as installments for his total honorarium for the Great Hall of exactly 1,475,936.46 Reichsmarks. Speer probably received around 4.8 million Reichsmarks in total honorariums, in addition to other salaries and gifts. Yet during his imprisonment after the war, Speer reported to Allied military officials that his total net worth amounted to 1.12 million Reichsmarks. By one accounting, Speer earned around 4.2 million Reichsmarks before 1945 that was unaccounted for after the war. See Heinrich Breloer and Rainer Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer: Spuren eines Kriegsverbrechers* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2006), 80–81.

61. Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 342. See also David Kuchenbuch, *Geordnete Gemeinschaft: Architekten als Sozialingenieure Deutschland und Schweden im 20. Jahrhundert* (transcript, Bielefeld, 2010); Sylvia Necker, "Von der Hoffnung auf die neue Ordnung der Stadt: Architekten planen (für) die NS-Volksgemeinschaft," in "*Volksgemeinschaft*" als soziale Praxis: Neue Forschungen zur NS-Gesellschaft vor Ort, ed. Dietmar von Recken and Malte Thießen (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013), 145–56.

62. Stephen H. Roberts, *The House That Hitler Built* (New York: Harper, 1938), 235.

63. See Wolfgang Schäche, *Architektur und Städtebau in Berlin zwischen 1933 und 1945: Planen und Bauen unter der Ägide der Stadtverwaltung* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1991), 139; Harald Engler, *Die Finanzierung der Reichshauptstadt: Untersuchung zu den hauptstadtbedingten staatlichen Ausgaben Preußens und des Deutschen Reiches in Berlin vom Kaiserreich bis zum Dritten Reich (1871–1945)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004).

64. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 68. Writing in his diary, Goebbels corroborated Hitler's disdain for cost considerations: "The Führer will not talk about money. . . . It will be paid for soon. Friedrich the Great did not ask about money when he built Sanssouci." Fröhlich, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, 4:305.

65. Fröhlich, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, 4:140–41.

66. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 2:1263.

67. *Reichsgesetzblatt (RGB) Teil I* (1933): 175, 225. The Nazis did something similar on a smaller scale when they took office in Thuringia in 1930. Schultze-Naumburg became head of the State University for Architecture in Weimar and promptly fired any instructors believed to have modernist sympathies.

68. *RGB* (1933): 1065.

69. Petsch, "Das Neue Bauen in der Weimarer Republik oder der Kampf gegen die Modernisierung der Architektur," 134.

70. Richard J. Overy, *The Nazi Economic Recovery, 1932–1938*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 41.

71. Schönberger, *Die neue Reichskanzlei*, 177.

72. Fritz Todt, "Regelung der Bauwirtschaft," *Der Vierjahresplan* 12, no. 3 (1939): 762.

73. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 1 (Wauconda, IL; Bolchazy-Carducci, 1990), 530.

74. Karl J. Fischer, "Technik und Kultur: Alfred Rosenberg vor den deutschen Architekten," *Die Kunst für alle* 49, no. 2 (1933/1934): 13–14.

75. The fledgling Weimar government established the position of Reich Artistic Warden in January 1920 to create a new, democratic symbology to replace the discarded trappings of monarchy. This post was to supervise the creation of a new state iconography—including flags,

government seals, banknotes, postage stamps, and of course architecture—that would confer legitimacy and rally public support for the republic. Despite the impressive-sounding title, the office had limited authority over headstrong provincial governments and recalcitrant federal ministries and proved utterly incapable of closing the deepening divide among architects and urban planners. Christian Welzbacher, “Vom Reichskunstwart zur Abteilung ‘Bildende Kunst’ im Propagandaministerium: Kunst- und kulturpolitische Kontinuitäten vor und nach 1933,” in *Der Reichskunstwart: Kulturpolitik und Staatsinszenierung in der Weimarer Republik 1918–1933*, ed. Christian Welzbacher (Weimar: WTV-campus, 2010), 304–36.

76. See Joseph Wulf, *Die bildenden Künste im Dritten Reich: Eine Dokumentation* (Gütersloh: Sigbert Mohn, 1963); Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995); Richard Etlin, ed., *Art, Culture, and Media under the Third Reich* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Volker Dahm, “Die Reichskulturkammer und die Kulturpolitik im Dritten Reich,” in “*Und sie werden nicht mehr frei sein ihr ganzes Leben*”: *Funktion und Stellenwert der NSDAP, ihrer Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände im “Dritten Reich,”* ed. Stephanie Becker and Christoph Studt (Berlin: Lit, 2012), 193–221; Anke Blümm, “*Entartete Baukunst*”? *Zum Umgang mit dem Neuen Bauen 1933–1945* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2013), 118–37; Jonathan Petropoulos, *Artists under Hitler: Collaboration and Survival in Nazi Germany* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

77. Claudia Büttner, *Geschichte der Kunst am Bau in Deutschland* (Berlin: Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bau und Stadtentwicklung, 2011), 153–54. The finance minister subsequently set the amount as equal to 2.5 percent of the cost for new construction projects that exceeded 200,000 Reichsmarks.

78. The left-leaning journal *Die neue Stadt*, successor to *Das neue Frankfurt* founded by Ernst May, published an open letter from Max Cetto to Goebbels in mid-1933. Cetto worked on May’s New Frankfurt program and seemed clearly aligned with the modernist camp. His letter noted that various modernist architects had faced harassment since the Nazis seized power even though modernist architecture could be reconciled with Nazi ideology. Accordingly, Cetto requested that Goebbels set the record straight publicly. It is unlikely that Goebbels responded, but that was the journal’s last issue and Cetto migrated to Mexico within a few years. Max Cetto, “Brief eines jungen deutschen Architekten an den Herrn Reichsminister für Propaganda und Volksaufklärung Dr. Goebbels,” *Die neue Stadt* 7 (1933/1934): 26–28. See also Winfried Nerdinger, “Versuchung und Dilemma der Avantgarde im Spiegel der Architekturwettbewerbe 1933–35,” in *Faschistische Architekturen: Planen und Bauen in Europa 1930–1945*, ed. Hartmut Frank (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1985), 65–87; Petropoulos, *Artists under Hitler*, 50–58.

79. Eduard Führ, “Über die Kultur Architekten und Ingenieure im ‘Dritten’ Deutschen Reich,” in *Architektur und Ingenieurwesen zu Zeit der nationalsozialistischen Gewaltherrschaft 1933–1945*, ed. Ulrich Kuder (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1997), 56.

80. John C. Guse, “Nazi Technical Thought Revisited,” *History and Technology* 26, no. 1 (2010): 3–38.

81. See Michael Schneider, “‘Organisation aller schaffenden deutschen der Stirn und der Faust’: Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF),” in “*Und sie werden nicht mehr frei sein ihr ganzes Leben*”: *Funktion und Stellenwert der NSDAP, ihrer Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände im “Dritten Reich,”* ed. Stephanie Becker and Christoph Studt (Berlin: Lit, 2012), 165.

82. RGB (1935): 468.

83. Blümm, “*Entartete Baukunst*”? 137–58.

84. They are reprinted in Blümm, “*Entartete Baukunst*”? 426–30.

85. RGB (1936): 938.

86. Blümm, “*Entartete Baukunst*”? 158–71; the ordinance is reprinted on pages 433–37.

87. Winfried Nerdinger, “Baustile im Nationalsozialismus: Zwischen ‘Internationalem Klassizismus’ und Regionalismus,” in *Architektur—Macht—Erinnerung: Stellungnahmen 1984 bis 2004*, ed. Christoph Hölz and Regina Prinz (Munich: Prestel, 2004), 119–31.

88. Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the “National Community”* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 123–24.

89. RGB (1938): 1677–78.
90. See Todt, “Regelung der Bauwirtschaft,” 762–63; Christiane Botzet, “Ministeramt, Sondergewalten und Privatwirtschaft: Der Generalbevollmächtigte für die Regelung der Bauwirtschaft,” in *Hitlers Kommissare: Sondergewalten in der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur*, ed. Rüdiger Hachtmann and Winfried Süß (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 115–37.
91. Gerhard Frank and Werner Hempfing, *Die Neugestaltung deutscher Städte: Kommentar zum Gesetz vom 4. Oktober 1937* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1939), 5.
92. Hitler’s order is reprinted in Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, opposite page 287.
93. RGB (1942): 165, 246. See also Gregor Janssen, *Das Ministerium Speer: Deutschlands Rüstung im Krieg* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1968), 65–66.
94. RGB (1943): 529. See also Engler, *Die Finanzierung der Reichshauptstadt*, 393–94.
95. Several papers carried the Associated Press report; see “Victory Monuments Least of Nazis’ Worries Now,” *Chicago Daily News*, September 10, 1943, 3.
96. RGB (1944): 161, 207; Janssen, *Das Ministerium Speer*, 271–72.
97. A second architectural exhibition held from December 1938 to April 1939 drew nearly 300,000 visitors. Plans for subsequent exhibitions were abandoned due to the war. Herbert Hoffmann, ed., *Deutschland baut: Bauten und Bauvorhaben: Vierundneunzig Bilder aus der Ersten und Zweiten Architektur- und Kunsthandwerk Ausstellung zu München, 1938 und 1939* (Stuttgart: Julius Hoffmann, 1939); Despina Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 189.
98. Albert Speer and Rudolf Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Volk und Reich Verlag, 1941); Ulrike Zech, “Die nationalsozialistische Wanderausstellung *Neue Deutsche Baukunst* und ihre Rezeption in Portugal (1941)” (master’s thesis, Technischen Universität Berlin, 2005), <https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-tuberlin/frontdoor/index/index/docId/3696>.
99. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 2:1002–4. The last phrase was altered slightly from the original translation that read “the word of stone.”

## CHAPTER 2: THINGS TO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY

1. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 1 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1990), 530.
2. Albert Speer, “Die Bauten des Führers,” in *Adolf Hitler: Bilder aus dem Leben des Führers*, ed. Cigaretten-Bilderdienst (Hamburg: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1936), 72.
3. The origins of the *Führerstädte* designation are unclear. After France’s surrender in June 1940, Hitler gave priority to the redesign of these five cities but did not specifically label them Führer cities nor did he order a halt to redesign programs in other cities. Significant internal debate followed, especially concerning who would pay for Hitler’s grandiose plans. It is around this time that the term *Führerstädte* seemed to first appear in Reich Chancellery documents. For example, Interior Minister Wilhelm Frick wrote to Reich Chancellery chief Hans Lammers in December 1940 seeking financial relief for the redesign cities and differentiated between Führer and Gau cities, although the memo excluded cities beyond Germany’s 1937 borders so Linz was not among the Führer cities. In response, Minister of Finance Ludwig Graf Schwerin von Krosigk wrote to Lammers in January 1941 that only the redesign of the Führer cities, including Linz, would be eligible for financial assistance. See the documents reprinted in Jost Düllfer, Jochen Thies, and Josef Henke, *Hitlers Städte: Baupolitik im Dritten Reich* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1978), 23, 36, 40–53.
4. Berlin was by far Germany’s largest city with a population of around 4.2 million in 1933. Hamburg (1.1 million), Munich (735,000), Nuremberg (410,000), and Linz (115,000) were significantly smaller.
5. Jochen Thies, “Hitler’s European Building Programme,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 13, no. 3 (1978): 418; Harald Engler, *Die Finanzierung der Reichshauptstadt: Untersuchung zu den hauptstadtbedingten staatlichen Ausgaben Preußens und des Deutschen Reiches in Berlin vom*



*Kaiserreich bis zum Dritten Reich (1871–1945)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 411–12. These estimates are extremely speculative, because the costs of nearly every major Nazi building program ran far beyond initial estimates. Speer initially estimated the construction of the new Chancellery to cost 28 million Reichsmarks, for example, but the final tally was nearly three times that. See Dietmar Arnold, *Neue Reichskanzlei und "Führerbunker": Legenden und Wirklichkeit* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2005), 77.

6. Fritz Todt, "Regelung der Bauwirtschaft," *Der Vierjahresplan* 12, no. 3 (1939): 763.

7. See Winfried Nerdinger, "'Einen deutlichen Strich durch die Achse der Herrscher zu machen': Diskussionen um Symmetrie, Achse und Monumentalität zwischen Kaiserreich und Bundesrepublik," in *Architektur – Macht – Erinnerung: Stellungnahmen 1984 bis 2004*, ed. Christoph Hölz and Regina Prinz (Munich: Prestel, 2004), 27–41.

8. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1975), 30.

9. Christian Welzbacher, *Die Staatsarchitektur der Weimarer Republik* (Berlin: Lukas, 2006), 227.

10. Arthur Moeller van den Bruck, *Der preußische Stil* (Munich: Piper, 1916).

11. See Jan Nelis, "Modernist Neo-classicism and Antiquity in the Political Religion of Nazism: Adolf Hitler as *Poietes* of the Third Reich," *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 9, no. 4 (2008): 475–90; Winfried Nerdinger, "Hitler als Architekt: Bauten als Mittel zur Stärkung der 'Volksgemeinschaft,'" in *Hitler und die Deutschen: Volksgemeinschaft und Verbrechen*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Thamer and Simone Erpel (Dresden: Sandstein, 2010), 74–80.

12. Hartmut Frank, "Romanticism and Classicism," in *Paul Bonatz 1877–1956*, ed. Wolfgang Voight and Roland May (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 2010), 123–24.

13. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 41–42.

14. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 2 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 1003.

15. Raphael Rosenberg, "Architekturen des 'Dritten Reiches': 'Völkische' Heimatideologie versus international Monumentalität," in *Die Politik in der Kunst und die Kunst in der Politik*, ed. Ariane Hellinger, Barbara Waldkirch, Elisabeth Buchner, and Helge Batt (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2013), 69.

16. Gerdy Troost, ed., *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 2nd ed. (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark, 1943), 15. Hitler used this phrase as early as his culture speech at the 1935 Party rallies.

17. Wilhelm Lotz, "Bauten, Fahnen und Licht," *Die Kunst für alle* 52, no. 8 (1936/1937): 191, 194.

18. Hans Stephan, *Die Baukunst im Dritten Reich, insbesondere die Umgestaltung der Reichshauptstadt* (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1939), 11.

19. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses*, 70, 71.

20. Previews of the plan first appeared in issues of the Party newspaper and in a local Berlin newspaper. See Albert Speer, "Das künftige Gesicht der Reichshauptstadt," *Völkischer Beobachter* 51, no. 27 (January 28, 1938): 1–2; Albert Speer, "So wird Berlin umgebaut," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* 56, no. 24 (January 28, 1938): 1. Details had been distributed the previous day by the official German news agency, Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro, under the heading "Das Programm für die Neugestaltung Berlins," reprinted in Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 134–41.

21. "Berlins neues Gesicht wird geformt," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger* 78, no. 83 (April 12, 1938): 5. See also Albert Speer, "Neuplanung der Reichshauptstadt," *Der Deutsche Baumeister* 1, no. 1 (1939): 3–4, reprinted in Anna Teut, *Architektur im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1967), 196.

22. Elke Fröhlich, ed., *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, vol. 5 (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1993), 133.

23. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 2:985.

24. A map of intended demolitions was published in 1938, but it appeared far from the public eye in a specialized professional journal. See Max Berg, "Das Werden der Weltstadt Berlin als Sinnbild des deutschen Volkwerdens," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 22, no. 4 (1938): 26–33. The 1939 propaganda film *Das Wort aus Stein* was slightly more revealing in showing the planned locations of the Round Plaza, Army High Command, and Soldier's Hall. Conspicu-

ously absent, though, was the extent of the north-south axis, including the Triumphal Arch and the Great Hall.

25. The broad outlines and much of the details of the plans for the north-south axis are well known. Many of the original planning materials are held by the Library of Congress. Descriptions and analyses of the plans appear in many places. Four very useful treatments are Stephen D. Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin: The Speer Plans for Reshaping the Central City* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1985); Wolfgang Schäche, *Architektur und Städtebau in Berlin zwischen 1933 und 1945: Planen und Bauen unter der Ägide der Stadtverwaltung* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1991); Hans J. Reichardt and Wolfgang Schäche, *Von Berlin nach Germania: Über die Zerstörungen der 'Reichshauptstadt' durch Albert Speers Neugestaltungsplanungen* (Berlin: Transit, 1998); Wolfgang Schäche, ed., *Mythos Germania: Shadows and Traces of the Reich Capital* (Berlin: Lehmanns Media, 2008).

26. Wolters and Speer were classmates in Munich. Wolters transferred to Berlin in 1925 where he also studied under Tessenow, eventually completing his doctorate in 1930. Like Speer, Wolters's career got off to a difficult start marked by periods of unemployment. Wolters even resorted to working for the Soviet Union on various projects in Siberia. Wolters returned to Germany and, after a brief stint on Speer's fledgling staff in 1933, found greater opportunities working for the German Reich Railway, although he continued to work on minor projects for Speer. In December 1936—on the eve of Speer's appointment as Berlin's general building inspector—Wolters returned to work for Speer full-time and was eventually entrusted with direction of the planning section in Speer's burgeoning office, in addition to responsibility for the north-south axis, the museum district, the embassy district, and transportation throughout greater Berlin, and eventually leader of Speer's reconstruction staff. From this point to 1945, Wolters's career paralleled his slightly older benefactor. Wolters also acted as Speer's chief press officer. In this capacity, he edited the architectural section of the prestigious journal *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich*, curated the *New German Architecture* traveling exhibition, and probably served as initial author for most of Speer's publications, as well as authoring Speer's "official" biography. Wolters also kept an office diary documenting the work of Speer and his staff, including their active participation in the deportation of Jews from Berlin. See André Deschan, *Im Schatten von Albert Speers: Der Architekt Rudolf Wolters* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 2016).

27. Helmer, *Hitler's Berlin*, 105.

28. Kreis first gained fame for his rendering of a monument to former chancellor Otto von Bismarck and subsequently designed some of the highest-profile buildings of the Weimar period, including the Exhibition Grounds and Music Hall in Düsseldorf and the Hygiene Museum in Dresden. He eventually accepted appointment as director of the Dresden Art Academy and was one of Germany's most respected architects during the Weimar period. Kreis emerged as something of an elder statesman among his fellow architects, as evidenced by his tenure as president of the Association of German Architects from 1926 until his dismissal in 1933. Kreis's career prospects seemed uncertain under the new Nazi regime until Gerdy Troost intervened on his behalf in 1936 involving the competition for a new Luftwaffe regional command center in Dresden. Speer subsequently awarded Kreis numerous prestigious but unrealized commissions in Berlin, most notably the Army High Command and the Soldier's Hall. By the later years of the Nazi regime, Kreis was probably Germany's most revered architect. Speer and his entourage regarded Kreis as a kind of honorary godfather and published several tributes to mark his sixtieth birthday in 1943, as well as bestowing him with the presidency of the Reich Chamber of the Fine Arts in 1943. Hans Stephan published a glowing biography the following year as the second book in the German Artists of Our Time series after Wolter's biography of Speer. See Hans Stephan, *Wilhelm Kreis* (Oldenburg: Gerhard Stalling, 1944); Winfried Nerdinger and Ekkehard Mai, eds., *Wilhelm Kreis: Architekt zwischen Kaiserreich und Demokratie* (Munich: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1994).

29. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 181.

30. Hans Stephan, "Der Wohnungsbau in der Neugestaltung der Reichshauptstadt," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 11 (1939): 468. Stephan studied at the Technical University in

Berlin during the 1920s, although not directly under Tessenow, before joining Berlin's city building office and eventually Speer's staff in 1937. In addition to the east-west axis, Stephan's section was responsible for residential and commercial planning in Berlin and eventually contributed to Speer's reconstruction staff. Stephan is probably best known for his satirical caricatures of the Hitler-Speer plans for Berlin. See Lars Olof Larsson, Ingolf Lamprecht, and Sabine Larsson, *Fröhliche Neugestaltung oder die Gigantoplanie von Berlin 1937–1943: Albert Speers Generalbebauungsplan im Spiegel satirischer Zeichnungen von Hans Stephan* (Kiel: Ludwig, 2008).

31. Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk, 1941–1944: His Private Conversations*, trans. Norman Cameron, R. H. Stevens, and H. R. Trevor-Roper, 3rd ed. (New York: Enigma, 2000), 81. *Hitler's Table Talk* is to be used with some caution since the transcripts are mostly generalized summaries, which were later edited, rather than Hitler's verbatim comments.

32. Speer's *Inside the Third Reich* contains a sample of Hitler's sketches. Speer provides the main basis for the belief that Hitler was already sketching out ideas for grand, neoclassicist monuments by the mid-1920s. Scholars have generally accepted Speer's claim; however, there is little corroborating evidence, and subsequent examinations of Speer's postwar writings and interviews have found them rife with omissions, distortions, and falsehoods. Hitler may have sketched during the 1920s, but his official state style most likely first emerged in the early 1930s.

33. Welzbacher, *Die Staatsarchitektur der Weimarer Republik*, 124–61.

34. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999 [1925/1926]), 265.

35. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 75.

36. See Heinrich Breloer and Rainer Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer: Spuren eines Kriegsverbrechers* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2006), 69–73.

37. Otto D. Tolischus, "Reichsbank Lays Base of New Home," *New York Times*, May 6, 1934, 26. See also Winfried Nerdinger, "Versuchung und Dilemma der Avantgarde im Spiegel der Architekturwettbewerbe 1933–35," in *Faschistische Architekturen: Planen und Bauen in Europa 1930–1945*, ed. Hartmut Frank (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1985), 65–87.

38. A native Berliner, March's studies at the Technical University were interrupted by military service during World War I. He resumed his education after the war, studying and working under Bestelmeyer. March later joined the German railroad agency before founding a private practice. March and his brother won the competition to design the German Sports Forum, which was later incorporated into the 1936 Olympic grounds. March's subsequent commissions were few, the most notable being the Yugoslavian embassy in Berlin and Göring's Carinhall hunting estate.

39. Werner March, *Bauwerk Reichssportfeld* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1936); Wolfgang Schäche and Norbert Szymanski, *Das Reichssportfeld: Architektur im Spannungsfeld von Sport und Macht* (Berlin: be.bra, 2001).

40. Quoted in Iain Boyd Whyte and David Frisby, eds., *Metropolis Berlin 1880–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 487.

41. See Dieter Bartetzko, *Zwischen Zucht und Ekstase: Zur Theatralik von NS-Architektur* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1985).

42. Sagebiel studied at his hometown Technical University in Braunschweig, but military service delayed his graduation until 1922. He held several positions around Bonn and Cologne while finishing his doctorate until eventually joining Mendelsohn in Berlin in 1929.

43. *A Nation Builds: Contemporary German Architecture* (New York: German Library of Information, 1940), 23.

44. See the special issues devoted to the new Chancellery in *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 7 (1939): 278–315 on the exterior; 3, no. 9 (1939): 374–438 on the interior.

45. Breloer and Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer*, 57–58.

46. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 132–33.

47. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 36.

48. Reichhardt and Schäche, *Von Berlin nach Germania*, 158.

49. Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk*, 83.

50. Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk*, 523.

51. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 139–40; Engler, *Die Finanzierung der Reichshauptstadt*, 399–410; Breloer and Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer*, 51.

52. See Joshua Hagen and Robert C. Ostergren, "Architecture, Spectacle, and Place during the Nuremberg Party Rallies: Projecting a Nazi Vision of Past, Present, and Future," *cultural geographies* 13, no. 1 (2006): 1–25.

53. Hitler decided to make Nuremberg the permanent site of the annual rallies at a meeting in Bayreuth but only after first insisting that the Nuremberg city council agree to place no restrictions on how the grounds would be laid out. See Siegfried Zelnhefer, *Die Reichsparteitage der NSDAP in Nürnberg* (Nuremberg: Verlag Nürnberger Presse, 2002), 63–65.

54. See Alexander Schmidt et al., *Geländebegehung: Das Reichsparteitagsgelände in Nürnberg*, 3rd ed. (Nuremberg: Geschichte für Alle, 2002).

55. Hubert Schrade, "Der Ausbau des Zeppelfeldes auf dem Parteitagsgelände in Nürnberg," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 56, no. 18 (1936): 386.

56. Nevile Henderson, *Failure of a Mission: Berlin 1937–1939* (New York: Putnam, 1940), 66–67. Beyond Nuremberg, searchlights were used similarly at Bückeberg, Goslar, and Berlin, and probably other locations as well. Searchlights illuminated the speaker's tribune and its massive backdrop of swastika flags at the 1933 May Day celebrations in Berlin. Speer designed the backdrop, but it is unclear if the idea of using searchlights originated with him. The use of searchlights during the closing of the Reich Harvest Festival at Bückeberg in 1933 can be attributed to Speer with greater confidence. Speer had a handful of searchlights positioned around the assembly space and aimed to intersect over the masses to form a roughly equilateral triangle with the ground. Speer subsequently refined the use of searchlights during the Nuremberg rallies, at times positioning them to illuminate architectural focal points, flags, or processions. Speer continued experimenting as he had access to a growing number of lights. For the Berlin Olympics closing ceremony, Speer arranged the searchlights so the beams converged on a single central point in the sky, for example, while he had the lights aimed straight upward for the later rallies in Nuremberg and for the German Pavilion. Speer also experimented with the light beams themselves. The beams at the 1936 rallies were rather diffuse and created the impression of a wall of light extending upward. The rallies in 1937 and 1938 featured much sharper and distinct beams, so that they more closely resembled columns cutting upward through the darkness. The refinement likely resulted from Speer's experience lighting the German Pavilion at the 1937 International Exhibition in Paris, where the illumination of the building's main tower created a sense of columns of light merged within the structure. The overall design earned Speer one of the exhibition's grand prizes. See Anne Krauter, "Die Schriften Paul Scheerbarts und der Lichtdom vom Albert Speer: 'Das grosse Licht'" (PhD diss., Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, 1997), <http://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/archiv/4903>.

57. The father-son team of Ludwig and Franz Ruff was based in Nuremberg. Ludwig worked as professor of architecture at the School of Applied Arts in Nuremberg. He was collaborating with his son Franz on the design of the Congress Hall when he died in 1934. Franz took over the project while also overseeing the construction of the nearby SS barracks and the office building for Gauleiter Julius Streicher.

58. Willy Liebel, "Zum Geleit," in *Nürnberg: Die Stadt der Reichsparteitage*, special issue of *Das Bayerland* 46 (1935): 1.

59. Oberbürgermeister der Stadt der Reichsparteitage Nürnberg, ed., *Die Erneuerung der Altstadt in Nürnberg*, vol. 3 (Nuremberg: Volkhardt & Wilbert, 1937), 7.

60. Heinrich Höhn, "Umgestaltungen in der Altstadt von Nürnberg," *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 1934, no. 3 (1934): 73–77.

61. Julius Lincke, "Die Wiederinstandsetzung der Nürnberger Kaiserburg in Jahre 1934," *Der Burgwart* 36 (1935): 12, 19.

62. See Oberbürgermeister, *Die Erneuerung der Altstadt in Nürnberg*, 65–81; Julius Lincke, "Die Altstadterneuerung in Nürnberg," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 61, no. 16/18 (1941): 285–98.

63. Friedrich Bock, *Nürnberg: Von der Stadt der Reichstags zur Stadt der Reichsparteitage* (Stuttgart: Franck, 1938).

64. Werner Dittschlag, *Nürnberg: Die Stadt der Reichsparteitage* (Düsseldorf: August Bagel, 1937), 10.

65. Dittschlag, *Nürnberg*, 97.

66. *NS-Frauen Warte* (September 1939), cover illustration.

67. Ulrich Christoffel, "Bauen im Dritten Reich: Zur Ausstellung 'Architectur und Kunsthandwerk' in Haus der Deutschen Kunst in München," *Die Kunst für alle* 53, no. 6 (1937/1938): 129–37.

68. For extensive treatments of the many changes and plans envisioned by the regime for Munich, see Hans-Peter Rasp, *Eine Stadt für tausend Jahre: München—Bauten und Projekte für die Hauptstadt der Bewegung* (Munich: Süddeutscher, 1981); Richard Bärnreuther, *Revision der Moderne unterm Hakenkreuz: Planungen für ein "neues München"* (Munich: Klinkhardt und Bierman, 1993); Richard Bauer et al., *München—Hauptstadt der Bewegung: Bayerns Metropole und der Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Klinkhardt und Bierman, 1993); Iris Lauterbach, ed., *Bürokratie und Kult: Das Parteizentrum der NSDAP am Königsplatz in München* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1995); Peter Köpf, *Der Königsplatz in München: Ein deutscher Ort* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2005).

69. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 347.

70. Joshua Hagen, "Parades, Public Space, and Propaganda: The Nazi Culture Parades in Munich," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography* 90, no. 4 (2008): 349–67.

71. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 160.

72. Joshua Hagen, "Architecture, Urban Planning, and Political Authority in Ludwig I's Munich," *Journal of Urban History* 35, no. 4 (2009): 459–85.

73. Gall was a few years older than Hitler and so among the older architects working for Hitler. He joined Troost's staff in 1908, and the two were close collaborators over the years. In addition to completing Troost's designs, Gall also designed the House of German Architecture, the new Party Chancellery building, and various other unrealized projects in Munich.

74. Both contemporary accounts and subsequent scholarship have tended to position Sophie Gerhardine (Gerdy) Wilhelmine Andresen as a rather passive curator of her husband's legacy, but she was a powerful actor in her own right within Hitler's building program. Her gender undoubtedly served to minimize her contributions but so too did the ceaseless adulation bestowed upon her husband, as well as the dearth of interest paid to interior design during the Nazi period. Gerdy also seemed to favor avoiding the spotlight, although it is unclear if that was a personal preference or reflected the fact that she was designing some of Hitler's most private spaces. Paul and Gerdy met in 1923 at her father's woodworking shop, which produced Paul's ocean liner interiors. They married in 1925, although Gerdy was much younger; she was about twenty-five years his junior, around the same age as Speer, Wolters, et al. The couple established some type of collaborative partnership, including Paul's first commissions from Hitler, although Gerdy received no official credit. As a board member of the House of German Art, Gerdy helped organize the regime's top art and architecture exhibitions. She became something of an unofficial arbiter for architectural, interior, and furniture design—one with very expensive tastes—including such finishing touches as light fixtures, wall hangings, and even table settings. Hitler valued her opinion and friendship, and she was one of the few women to appear regularly alongside Hitler in public. Her lavish book, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, was arguably the single-most influential pictorial of Nazi architecture and urban planning. Although the book was ghostwritten, Gerdy revised the text, selected the images, and was credited as sole author. The book sold extremely well, leading to a second volume in 1943 that focused on military architecture. Two additional volumes on interior design and furnishings were planned but unrealized. Gerdy's close relationship with Hitler is not without irony since she—as a single, childless, and successful career-minded woman—was almost the polar opposite of the "good" Nazi woman. See Despina Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 107–46.

75. Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home*, 57.

76. Bonatz was an extremely well-known and influential architect during the Weimar period. Bonatz became professor at Stuttgart's Technical University after studying under Theodor Fisher in Munich. Shortly after the Nazi seizure of power, Bonatz was denounced for making comments critical of Hitler and unofficially barred from government commissions. Several influential friends, including Gerdy Troost, intervened on his behalf. Todt and Speer also remained admirers of Bonatz and eventually revived his career, most notably with commissions for numerous Autobahn bridges. While on an official state visit accompanying a traveling exhibition of Nazi architecture to Turkey in 1943, Bonatz agreed to work for the Turkish government and refused orders to return to Germany. As such, Bonatz remains a rather enigmatic figure: critical of Hitler and his regime, he was perfectly willing to work for Speer, Giesler, and Todt on several high-priority projects, but he then tried to disassociate himself from the regime once it became clear the war was going against Germany. See Wolfgang Voigt and Roland May, eds., *Paul Bonatz 1877–1956* (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 2010).

77. Altona was a separate municipality until it merged into Hamburg in 1937.

78. Hartmut Frank, "'Das Tor der Welt': Die Planungen für eine Hängebrücke über die Elbe und für ein Hamburger 'Gauforum,' 1935–1945," in *Das ungebaute Hamburg: Visionen einer anderen Stadt in architektonischen Entwürfen der letzten hunderfünfzig Jahre*, ed. Ulrich Höhns (Hamburg: Junius, 1991), 78–99.

79. Frederic Spotts, *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2003), 373.

80. Originally from Hamburg, Gutschow finished his architecture studies in Stuttgart in 1926 before returning to join the Hamburg city planning office. Gutschow left to establish a private practice but struggled during the Depression. He eventually found some stability through municipal commissions and Autobahn projects before his big break in the Hamburg redesign competition.

81. Quoted in Thies, "Hitler's European Building Programme," 414.

82. See Roderich Fick, "Der neue Brückenkopf in Linz an der Donau als Beginn der Neugestaltung der Stadt," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 5, no. 5 (1941): 89–107; Hanns Christian Löhrl, *Hitlers Linz: Der "Heimgau des Führers"* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2013).

83. Fick studied under Theodor Fischer in Munich before working as a freelance architect in Switzerland. He was working in the German colony of Cameroon when World War I started and ended up in Spanish internment. Fick returned to Germany after the war and resumed his career. His first Party commission was the House of German Doctors in Munich. Hitler was apparently impressed and charged Fick with responsibility for the Obersalzberg retreat and later for the redesign of Linz. Hitler eventually fired Fick from both posts amid power struggles with Martin Bormann, Giesler, and the Linz Gauleiter. Fick exhibited little interest in politics and did not join the Party until 1937. Odd among top Nazi architects, Fick was a few years older than Hitler, perhaps contributing to their cool relationship and Fick's rocky career during the Nazi period. See Lioba Schmitt-Imkamp, *Roderich Fick (1886–1955)* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2014).

84. Albert Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1976), 171.

85. Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, 109.

86. The current Italian, Japanese, and Spanish embassies were constructed as part of Speer's plan, as were the embassies of Denmark, Norway, and Yugoslavia although they now have different occupants. Other diplomatic buildings were also completed but destroyed during the war. The embassies were top priorities because they were needed as replacements since much of the former embassy quarter in the Spree bend was demolished as part of Speer's plan. Speer awarded the commissions for the embassies to a variety of lesser-known German architects, although Johannes and Walter Krüger and Werner March enjoyed more prominent profiles. The embassy designs generally mimicked the stylings of the Aviation Ministry, Tempelhof, and other state buildings.

87. The structure's official historical registry entry can be found at [http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/cgi-bin/hidaweb/getdoc.pl?DOK\\_TPL=lda\\_doc.tpl&KEY=obj%2009055087](http://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/cgi-bin/hidaweb/getdoc.pl?DOK_TPL=lda_doc.tpl&KEY=obj%2009055087).

## CHAPTER 3: A NAZI CIVIC SPIRIT

1. Hubert Schrade, "Der Sinn der künstlerischen Aufgabe und politischer Architektur," *Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte* 5, no. 51 (1934): 511–12.
2. Rudolf Wolters, *Bauen im nationalsozialistischen Deutschland: Ein Schriftumverzeichnis* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1940), 4.
3. Ernst Jarmer, "Planung und Gestaltung des deutschen Lebensraumes," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 13 (1942): 394.
4. See Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 151–97; Joshua Hagen, "Historic Preservation in Nazi Germany: Place, Memory, and Nationalism," *Journal of Historical Geography* 35, no. 4 (2009): 690–715.
5. E. B., "Erneuerung des Kölner Rathauses," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 18 (1939): 478.
6. Rudolf Stein, "Die Wiederherstellungsarbeiten im Breslauer Rathaus in den Jahren 1924–28 und 1934–36," *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 1936, no. 5 (1936): 182.
7. Helmut Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz: Architektur des Untergangs* (Vienna: Pro-media, 1998), 406, 916.
8. The office of Reichsstatthalter was created in April 1933 in non-Prussian states as part of an effort to bring regional governments to heel. With few exceptions, individuals held the office of Gauleiter and Reichsstatthalter simultaneously. Technically, one was a Party office and the other a government office.
9. In his autobiography, Hermann Giesler recounted a purported conversation with Hitler about Sauckel's preliminary proposal. In addition to rejecting the location, Giesler claimed Hitler thought the original design resembled a ducal residence and was too traditional. Giesler's account is certainly plausible but lacks corroboration. Hermann Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler: Bericht seines Architekten*, 2nd ed. (Leoni am Starnberger See: Druffel, 1977), 121.
10. See Wilhelm Rudiger, "Vom Münchener Forum der Bewegung," *Deutsche Bauhütte* 39, no. 24 (1935): 281.
11. Joshua Hagen, "Architecture, Symbolism, and Function: The Nazi Party's 'Forum of the Movement,'" *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28, no. 3 (2010): 397–424.
12. Alfred Rosenberg, *Letzte Aufzeichnungen: Ideale und Idole der nationalsozialistischen Revolution* (Göttingen: Plesse, 1955), 336–37.
13. "Wettbewerb der Deutschen Arbeitsfront um Entwürfe für das 'Haus der Arbeit,'" *Baugilde* 16, no. 2 (1934): 57.
14. Friedrich Paulsen, "Häuser der Arbeit: Das Ergebnis des Wettbewerbs der Deutschen Arbeitsfront," *Bauwelt* 25, no. 32 (1934): 1; "Wettbewerb 'Haus der Arbeit,'" *Baugilde* 16, no. 3 (1934): 74.
15. Friedrich Paulsen, "Das Haus der Arbeit," *Bauwelt* 25, no. 29 (1934): 700.
16. The choice of location likely stemmed from long-running discussions in Cologne about relocating the main train station away from the cathedral as part of a broader reorganization of traffic around the city center.
17. Petra Leser, *Der Kölner Architekt Clemens Klotz, 1886–1969* (Cologne: Kunsthistorischen Instituts der Universität zu Köln, 1991), 274–84; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 583; Hiltrud Kier, Karen Liesenfeld, and Horst Matzerath, eds., *Architektur der 30er und 40er Jahre in Köln: Materialien zur Baugeschichte im Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne: Emons, 1999), 20. Kratz had worked on various residential projects, most notably with Ernst May in Frankfurt and the Soviet Union. Kratz returned to Berlin in fall 1932 and later worked on various projects for the DAF under Julius Schulte-Frohlinde until he transferred to Giesler's team in Munich in 1941.
18. "Wettbewerb 'Haus der Arbeit,'" 74.
19. Leser, *Der Kölner Architekt*, 282–83.
20. Christiane Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht: Zur nationalsozialistischen Architektur und Stadtplanung* (Berlin: Verlag Bauwesen, 1999), 130–40.

21. Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler*, 120; Karina Loos, “Das ‘Gauforum’ in Weimar: Vom bewußtlosen Umgang mit nationalsozialistischer Geschichte,” in *Nationalsozialismus in Thüringen*, ed. Detlev Heiden and Gunther Mai (Weimar: Böhlau, 1995), 335.

22. On planning for Weimar’s forum, see Loos, “Das ‘Gauforum’ in Weimar”; Norbert Korrek, “Das ehemalige Gauforum Weimar: Chronologie,” in *Vergegenständlichte Erinnerung: Perspektiven einer Janusköpfigen Stadt*, ed. Reiner Bensch (Weimar: Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, 1999), 25–51; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 868–72; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 66–119.

23. Descriptions of the contest entries are discussed in Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 68–90. See also Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 868–71.

24. “Der Platz Adolf Hitlers in Weimar,” *Baugilde* 19, no. 26 (1937): 885–92; Loos, “Das ‘Gauforum’ in Weimar,” 835–37; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 89–90.

25. Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler*, 120; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 91–92.

26. Michael Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler: Leben und Werk (1898–1987)* (Tübingen: Edition Altavilla, 2008), 81–86.

27. Giesler claims Hitler privately admitted that his original idea to center the Weimar Party forum on the Reich Governor building was a mistake and then recounted his favorable impression of the civic center in Mülheim an der Ruhr. Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler*, 121–23; G., “Wettbewerb Stadthalle Augsburg,” *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 55, no. 31 (1935): 602–7; Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Bayern 1933–1945* (Munich: Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, 1993), 30–33; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 247; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 169–81; Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *Thomas Wechs 1893–1970: Architekt der Moderne in Schwaben* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 2005), 217–21.

28. Fritz Sauckel, “Zum ‘Platz Adolf Hitlers’ in Weimar,” *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 1 (1939): 29.

29. Paul Wolf, “Historische Stadtform und künftige Gestaltung der Stadt Dresden,” *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 71, no. 42 (1938): 1137–43.

30. Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 336–37.

31. Martin Mutschmann, “Die städtebauliche Neugestaltung Dresdens,” *Der Deutsche Baumeister* 1, no. 9 (1939): 16–22; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 142–62. Slightly different measurements are given in “Der Adolf-Hitler-Platz in Dresden,” *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 2 (1939): 64–67.

32. Kier, Liesenfeld, and Matzerath, *Architektur der 30er und 40er Jahre in Köln*, 183–84.

33. Alexander Heilmeyer, “Das neue Weimar Adolf Hitlers,” *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 1, no. 10 (1937): 22.

34. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 2 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 873.

35. Gerdy Troost, ed., *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*, 2nd ed. (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark, 1943), 88–89. On the exhibitions, see A. Gut, “Baukunst im Dritten Reich: Die erste Deutsche Architektur und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung,” *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 58, no. 7 (1938): 169–75; Friedrich Hoßfeld, “Erste Deutsche Architektur- und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung im Haus der Deutschen Kunst zu München,” *Baugilde* 20, no. 4 (1938): 101–6; Hans Kiener, “Die erste deutsche Architektur-Ausstellung im Haus der Deutschen Kunst zu München 1938,” *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 2, no. 2 (1938): 36–43; Erich Böckler, “Die Deutsche Architektur- und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung,” *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 2, no. 12 (1938): 87–91; Erich Böckler, “Die zweite Deutsche Architektur- und Kunsthandwerk-Ausstellung in München,” *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 6 (1939): 133–39.

36. It is not exactly clear when the term *Gauforum* first appeared. The term *forum* was used to describe the Königsplatz and later the Nuremberg rally grounds, but initial reports in Weimar referred to Adolf Hitler Square. The term *Gauforum* gradually entered common usage during 1937 and 1938.

37. Mutschmann, “Die städtebauliche Neugestaltung Dresdens,” 16.

38. Giesler does not indicate any previous knowledge or involvement with the Augsburg civic center before Hitler rejected the city’s proposal in late 1937, although he notes that Speer



had been active in the matter previously. In early 1938, Giesler claimed Hitler assigned responsibility for the city's redesign to him, forcing the preparation of initial sketches in great haste. Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler*, 128–30; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 182–96.

39. Heinz Tillmanns, "Augsburgs grosse Bauvorhaben," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 5 (1939): 196; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 199–200.

40. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 30–33; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 247–49; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 196–206; Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler*, 125–33.

41. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 34–35; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 267–69.

42. Speer's entire memorandum is reprinted in Jost Dülffer, Jochen Thies, and Josef Henke, *Hitlers Städte: Baupolitik im Dritten Reich* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1978), 67. See also Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 267–69.

43. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 584–86; Kier, Liesenfeld, and Matzerath, *Architektur der 30er und 40er Jahre in Köln*.

44. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 363–65.

45. Leser, *Der Kölner Architekt*, 284–90; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 584–86; Kier, Liesenfeld, Matzerath, *Architektur der 30er und 40er Jahre in Köln*, 21–30.

46. Giesler, *Ein anderer Hitler*, 121.

47. Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 112–19, 161–66.

48. It is obviously possible that other cities played more substantive roles that so far escaped notice or lack surviving documentation. There are also several Gau projects that remained largely unresearched for various reasons. Planning appears to have been reasonably advanced in Düsseldorf and Oldenburg based on Speer's 1941 memo and Hitler's decrees for these cities from 1939 and 1940, respectively. Speer's memo also indicated significant progress for Stettin, Posen, Danzig, and Königsberg (now Szczecin, Poznań, and Gdańsk in Poland, and Kaliningrad in Russia) with all receiving redesign decrees from 1939 to 1941. Of these, Düsseldorf and Stettin are perhaps the most intriguing since they were among the earliest Gau cities to receive redesign decrees. Speer's memo noted that the initial sketches for Düsseldorf's redesign focused on a new opera, reflecting the local Gauleiter's personal preferences, instead of a Party forum. This deviation seems odd but is plausible since Hitler enjoyed opera and had even included a theater in Bayreuth's forum. The status of planning in Kassel and Lüneburg is also unclear. Speer indicated planning "is still not done" for Kassel and "not yet available" for Lüneburg. Lüneburg had only become the Gau seat in 1937 but still received a redesign decree in May 1941. Gauleiter Karl Weinrich later requested a redesign decree for Kassel in July 1941, but it is unclear if the request ever reached Hitler. Unfortunately, it is possible much of the pertinent documentation was destroyed during the war. On Oldenburg, see Kerstin Thieler, "Architektur der Macht: Die Auseinandersetzung um Oldenburg als Gauhauptstadt," in *"Volksgemeinschaft" als soziale Praxis: Neue Forschungen zur NS-Gesellschaft vor Ort*, ed. Dietmar von Recken and Malte Thießen (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013), 164–69.

49. Jost Dülffer, "NS-Herrschaftssystem und Stadtgestaltung: Das Gesetz zur Neugestaltung deutscher Städte vom 4. Oktober 1937," *German Studies Review* 12, no. 1 (1989): 75–76. The law can be found in *Reichsgesetzblatt (RGB) Teil I* (1937): 1054–55.

50. There was public criticism following the announcements for the Munich and Weimar forums. Korrek, "Das ehemalige Gauforum Weimar: Chronologie," 35.

51. Albert Speer, "Städtebau im neuen Deutschland," *Vierjahresplan: Zeitschrift für nationalsozialistische Wirtschaftspolitik* 3, no. 1/2 (1939): 106–7.

52. The decrees for Augsburg, Bayreuth, Breslau, Dresden, Graz, Hamburg, and Würzburg can be found in *RGB* (1939): 263. Decrees for the Führer cities and some of the later Gau cities were slightly different. Some cities, especially the Führer cities, required subsequent decrees to clarify technical issues, like the area covered by the decrees, or administrative issues, like following a change in Gauleiter.

53. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 176.
54. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 68, 71.
55. Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 212.
56. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 1068.
57. "Planung und Aufbau in der Gauhauptstadt Posen," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 75, no. 38 (1941): K229–35.
58. Niels Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn: Architekten planen im "eingedeutschten Osten" 1939–1945* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 2001), 64.
59. Niels Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn*, 45–46.
60. Hermann Göring, "Gemeinden und Vierjahresplan," *Der Gemeindetag* 31, no. 6/7 (1937): 220.
61. Göring, "Gemeinden und Vierjahresplan," 221.
62. Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the "National Community"* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 188.
63. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 38–39.
64. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 58.
65. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 59.
66. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 60.
67. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 66.
68. "Städtebauliche Neugestaltung: Der Neubau Frankfurts an der Oder als Beispiel," *Bauen Siedlen Wohnen* 17, no. 15 (1937): 378.
69. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 684–86.
70. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 507–11.
71. Wolfgang Christian Schneider, "Die Stadt als nationalsozialistischer Raum: Die städtebauliche Inszenierung der 'Stadt der Auslandsdeutschen' Stuttgart," in *Figurativ Politik: Performanz der Macht in der modernen Gesellschaft*, ed. Hans-Georg Soeffner and Dirk Tänzler (Opladen, Germany: Leske and Budrich, 2002), 155–89; Roland Müller, "Die Neugestaltungs-Pläne der 'Stadt der Auslandsdeutschen' Stuttgart," in *NS-Architektur: Macht und Symbolpolitik*, ed. Tilman Harlander and Wolfram Pyta (Berlin: Lit, 2010), 157–66. The city planning department produced more typical Gauforum plans by 1941.
72. Wolfgang Voight, "Von der Hitlerskizze zur 'Neuordnung' und zum ersten Wiederaufbau: Deutsche Planungen und Bauten im annektierten Elsass 1940–1944," in *NS-Architektur: Macht und Symbolpolitik*, ed. Tilman Harlander and Wolfram Pyta (Berlin: Lit, 2010), 218.
73. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 536, 783.
74. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 76; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 541–45.
75. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 363, 908.
76. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 65; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 325–26, 363, 908.
77. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 395–96, 820.
78. Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 338–43.
79. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 51.
80. Speer was not designated responsibility for Frankfurt am Main until around four months after this memo, so it is plausible he was not yet aware of the state of local planning there. Planning for Bochum's Gauforum appeared rather vague and likely complicated by power struggles preceding the ouster of Gauleiter Josef Wagner in November 1941. Speer may have simply been unaware of the situation in Klagenfurt, although he did provide summaries of planning in other Austrian cities. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 75–77.
81. "Wettbewerb für ein Verwaltungsforum in Frankfurt/Oder," *Baugilde* 20, no. 19 (1938): 631.
82. "Städtebauliche Neugestaltung: Der Neubau Frankfurts an der Oder als Beispiel," *Bauen Siedlen Wohnen* 17, no. 15 (1937): 378–79.

83. Reinhold Niemeyer, "Frankfurt an der Oder: Die zukünftige Gauhauptstadt der Mark Brandenburg," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 3 (1939): 110–37; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 437–39; "Das Verwaltungsforum Frankfurt (Oder)," *Deutsche Bauhütte* 42, no. 18 (1938): 241; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 216–21.

84. Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 344–49. Mehrstens was a product of the Stuttgart School. He joined the Cologne city planning office before becoming professor of architecture at the Technical University in Aachen. Mehrstens designed relatively few buildings, the most notable being the Cologne airport, which resembled the more modernist stylings of Sagebiel's work. He would later contribute to Speer's reconstruction staff.

85. Niemeyer, "Frankfurt an der Oder," 135–37; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 439–40; Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 207–31.

86. Niemeyer studied in Munich and Hannover and, after military service in World War I, replaced Ernst May as city planner for Frankfurt am Main. Niemeyer fell out of favor with the mayor and subsequently transferred to Berlin, eventually becoming a section leader on Speer's reconstruction staff.

87. Reinhold Niemeyer, "Über die Neugestaltung der Städte," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 10/12 (1941): 538; Jeffery M. Diefendorf, "Planning for the Mark Brandenburg and for Prague during the Third Reich," *Planning Perspectives* 26, no. 1 (2011): 91–103.

88. "Wettbewerb für ein Verwaltungsforum in Frankfurt/Oder," 635.

89. Ingrid Holzschuh, *Wiener Stadtplanung im Nationalsozialismus von 1938 bis 1942: Die Neugestaltungsprojekt von Architekt Hanns Dustmann* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2011).

90. Willi A. Boelcke, ed., *Deutschlands Rüstung im Zweiten Weltkrieg: Hitlers Konferenzen mit Albert Speer 1942–1945* (Frankfurt: Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, 1969), 243.

91. RGB (1943): 575. See also Werner Durth and Niels Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern: Planungen zum Wiederaufbau zerstörter Städte im Westen Deutschlands 1940–1950* (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1988); Jörn Düwel and Niels Gutschow, eds., *A Blessing in Disguise: War and Town Planning in Europe 1940–1945* (Berlin: DOM, 2013).

92. Reprinted in Durth and Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern*, 51.

93. S., "Das Kreishaus in Weimar," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 58, no. 16 (1938): 415–18; "Zum Kreishaus in Weimar," *Deutsche Bauhütte* 42, no. 11 (1938): 144–45.

94. Wolfgang Ruhl, "Architektur in Regensburg 1933 bis 1945: Ein Überblick," in *Architektur in Regensburg 1933–1945*, ed. Stefan Maier (Regensburg: CH-Verlag, 1989), 64–66.

95. "Richtlinien für die Errichtung von Gemeinschaftshäusern der NSDAP in den Ortsgruppen," *Der Soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 4 (1941): 133.

96. Ingo Sommer, *Der Stadt der 500 000: NS-Stadtplanung und Architektur in Wilhelmshaven* (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1993), 188–91.

97. "Kreishaus der NSDAP in Bromberg," *Baugilde* 23, no. 7 (1941): 117–21; Ewald Liedecke, "Über die Vorarbeiten zum Bau einer neuen Kreisstadt bei Leipe," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 16 (1941): 571.

98. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 28–53.

99. Robert Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer: Deutschland braucht jeden Deutschen* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1937), 138–39.

100. Robert Ley, "Das Gemeinschaftshaus der NSDAP," *Arbeiterum: Amtliches Organ der Deutschen Arbeitsfront* 10, no. 22 (1940/1941): 2; "Richtlinien für die Errichtung von Gemeinschaftshäusern," 132.

101. "Richtlinien für die Errichtung von Gemeinschaftshäusern," 133.

102. Ley, "Das Gemeinschaftshaus der NSDAP," 3.

103. Ley, "Das Gemeinschaftshaus der NSDAP," 4; Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 198.

104. Wilhelm Grebe, *Handbuch für das Bauen auf dem Lande* (Berlin: Reichsnährstandverlag, 1943), 328.

105. Grebe, *Handbuch für das Bauen auf dem Lande*, 331.

106. "Gemeinschaftsanlagen im Dorf und Hauptdorf," *Neues Bauerntum* 36, no. 1 (1944): 3–4.

107. G. [Albert Gut], "Rathausneubau in Weilheim/Obb," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 58, no. 42 (1938): 1143–48.
108. Josef Umlauf, "Zur Stadtplanung in den neuen deutschen Ostgebieten," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 3/4 (1941): 118.
109. Schrade, "Der Sinn der künstlerischen Aufgabe," 513.
110. Hermann Seeger, *Öffentliche Verwaltungsgebäude*, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: J. M. Gebhardt, 1943), 14.
111. "Der Platz Adolf Hitlers in Weimar," 885.
112. Wolf, *Gauforen Zentren der Macht*, 119; Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler*, 86.
113. Bernd Söseman, "Appell unter der Erntekrone: Das Reichserntedankfest in der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur," *Jahrbuch für Kommunikationsgeschichte* 2 (2000): 113–56; Bernhard Gelderblom, "Das 'Reichserntedankfest' auf dem Bückeberg bei Hameln 1933–1937," *Gedenkstättenrundbrief*, no. 172 (2013): 42–51.
114. Lu Seegers, "Die 'Reichsbauernstadt' Goslar als städtische Repräsentation der 'Volksgemeinschaft,'" in "Volksgemeinschaft" als soziale Praxis: *Neue Forschungen zur NS-Gesellschaft vor Ort*, ed. Dietmar von Recken and Malte Thießen (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2013), 175–90.
115. Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 1049.

#### CHAPTER 4: FROM CHAOS TO ORDER AND BACK AGAIN

1. Heinrich Simon, "Der Dreiklang des Wohnungsbaues," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 22 (1941): 790.
2. *A Nation Builds: Contemporary German Architecture* (New York: German Library of Information, 1940), 89, 97.
3. Karl Neupert, "Die Gestaltung des deutschen Siedlungsbildes," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 60, no. 30/31 (1940): 460.
4. "Ein Jahrzehnt deutscher Sozialpolitik," *Vierjahresplan* 20, no. 7/8 (1943): 67–68. See also Elke Pahl-Weber and Dirk Schubert, "Myth and Reality in National Socialist Town Planning and Architecture: Housing and Urban Development in Hamburg, 1933–45," *Planning Perspectives* 6, no. 2 (1991): 161–88.
5. See David Kuchenbuch, *Geordnete Gemeinschaft: Architekten als Sozialingenieure Deutschland und Schweden im 20. Jahrhundert* (Bielefeld: transcript, 2010).
6. Dirk Schubert, "Theodor Fritsch and the German (*völkisch*) Version of the Garden City: The Garden City Invented Two Years before Ebenezer Howard," *Planning Perspectives* 19, no. 1 (2004): 3–35; Kai Krauskopf, "Standardization and the Landscape: Traditionalism and the Planning of Housing Estates in Germany between the Two World Wars," in *Regionalism and Modernity: Architecture in Western Europe 1914–1940*, ed. Leen Meganeek, Linda Van Santvoort, and Jan De Maeyer (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013), 167–71.
7. *Reichsgesetzblatt (RGB) Teil I* (1930): 593; Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (New York: Viking, 2006), 157–58.
8. *RGB* (1931): 551.
9. Tilman Harlander, Katrin Hater, and Franz Meiers, *Siedeln in der Not: Umbruch von Wohnungspolitik und Siedlungsbau am Ende der Weimarer Republik* (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1988).
10. *RGB* (1933): 323, 651.
11. See Roswitha Mattausch, *Siedlungsbau und Städtneugründungen im deutschen Faschismus* (Frankfurt: Haag & Herchen, 1981); Tilman Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine: Wohnungsbau und Wohnungspolitik in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1995).
12. Kühn and Knipping, "Die Gesundung der Breslauer Altstadt," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 56, no. 8 (1936): 172.
13. Wilhelm Pinder, "Zur Rettung der Deutschen Altstadt," in *Gesammelte Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1907–1935*, ed. Leo Bruhns (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1938), 197.
14. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999 [1925/1926]), 28–29.

15. Quoted in Victor Noack, "Verheissung und Hoffnung im Kampf gegen das Wohnungselend," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 68, no. 41 (1934): 800. See also See Ursula von Petz, *Stadtsanierung im Dritten Reich, dargestellt an ausgewählten Beispielen* (Dortmund: IRPUD, 1987); Rudy Koshar, *Germany's Transient Pasts: Preservation and National Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 151–97; Joshua Hagen, "Historic Preservation in Nazi Germany: Practices, Patterns, and Politics," in *Heritage at the Interface: Interpretation and Identity*, ed. Glenn Hooper (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018), 56–71.

16. Friedrich Paulsen, "Die Sanierung der Altstädte," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau: Städtebau Beilage* 17 (1933): 377–79.

17. Quoted in Dirk Schubert, "Gesundung der Städte: Stadtsanierung in Hamburg 1933–1945," in "... ein neues Hamburg entsteht ...": *Plänen und Bauen von 1933–1945*, ed. Michael Bose et al. (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986), 73.

18. Karl Koester, "Althaus- und Altstadtsanierung," *Deutsche Bauzeitung*, 68, no. 2 (1934): 37.

19. Johann Christoph Otto Ranck, "Gesundung der Hamburger Innenstadt," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 55, no. 36 (1935): 697.

20. K. Gutschow, "Sanierung des hamburger Gängeviertels," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 53, no. 47 (1933): 312.

21. Ranck, "Gesundung der Hamburger Innenstadt," 697–98. See also Victor Noack, "Umgestaltung des Gängeviertels in Hamburg," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 14, no. 23/24 (1934): 390–93.

22. W. Piegler, "Baulicher Luftschutz beim Wiederaufbau eines alten Stadtteiles Hamburg," *Bauwelt* 28, no. 17 (1937): 385.

23. Gerhard Jobst, "Die Altstadtsanierung in Kassel," *Bauen, Siedeln, Wohnen* 17, no. 6 (1937): 145–48; W. Brehme, "Die Sanierung der Altstadt in Kassel," *Der sozialen Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 17 (1941): 598–604.

24. Gerhard Jobst, "Die Erhaltung der Altstadt in Kassel," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 55, no. 6 (1935): 93–94.

25. Gerhard Jobst, "Sanierung der Altstadt in Kassel," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau: Städtebau Beilage* 17 (1933): 569.

26. Hans Vogts, "Die kölner Altstadtgesundung," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 57, no. 41 (1937): 1022–23. Vogts was rather typical of professional conservators. He completed his doctorate in architectural history at the Technical University in Darmstadt in 1909. He then worked in various government posts, including supervising transportation projects in Belgium during World War I. Vogts later joined the Cologne city conservators office and eventually rose to become director from 1933 to 1948, although he never joined the Nazi Party. In contrast to the main architects, engineers, and planners, the leading conservators tended to be a generation older, more likely to be in their fifties and sixties than their thirties and forties.

27. Hans Vogts, "Gesundungsmassnahmen für das kölner Rheinviertel," *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 1935, no. 4 (1935): 106.

28. Regine Schlungbaum-Stehr, "Altstadtsanierung und Denkmalpflege in den 30er Jahren—Fallbeispiel Köln," in *Architektur und Städtebau der 30er/40er Jahre*, ed. Werner Durth and Winfried Nerdinger (Bonn: Deutschen Nationalkomitee für Denkmalschutz, 1994), 87.

29. Vogts, "Gesundungsmassnahmen für das kölner Rheinviertel," 108.

30. Vogts, "Die kölner Altstadtgesundung," 1032.

31. Vogts, "Gesundungsmassnahmen für das kölner Rheinviertel," 108.

32. "Kölner Altstadtsanierung," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 15, no. 5/6 (1935): 123.

33. Karl Elkhart, "Die Altstadtsanierung in Hannover," *Der sozialen Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 17 (1941): 583. Elkhart studied under Fischer at the Technical University in Stuttgart. He held a variety of jobs, mostly in government, before moving to Hannover and becoming a prominent local figure. Elkhart did not join the Party until 1937 but was previously active in discriminating against local Jews and eventually organizing local Jew houses.

34. Quoted in Olaf Cunitz, *Stadtsanierung in Frankfurt am Main 1933–1945* (Frankfurt: Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1996), 57.

35. Theodor Derlam, "Die frankfurter Altstadtgesundung," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 13 (1939): 354.
36. Cunitz, *Stadtsanierung in Frankfurt am Main*, 100.
37. Uta Hohn, "Der Einfluß von Luftschutz, Bombenkrieg und Städtezerstörung auf Städtebau und Stadtplanung im 'Dritten Reich,'" *Die alte Stadt* 19, no. 4 (1992): 327.
38. Karl Strölin, "Die Durchführung von Altstadtsanierung," *Reichsplanung* 1, no. 5 (1935): 145, 147.
39. Andreas Walther, *Neue Wege zur Altstadtsanierung* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1936), 14–15.
40. Andreas Walther, "Soziale Sanierung in Großstädten," *Reichsplanung* 3, no. 3 (1937): 79–80. See also Schubert, "Gesundung der Städte," 62–83; Dirk Schubert, "Stadtsanierung im Nationalsozialismus: Propaganda und Realität am Beispiel Hamburg," *Die alte Stadt* 20, no. 4 (1993): 363–76.
41. G. [Albert Gut], "Die Altstadtsanierung in Altona," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 55, no. 6 (1935): 97, 101; Schubert, "Gesundung der Städte," 70–71.
42. Deutschen Gesellschaft für Wohnungswesen, ed., *Altstadtsanierung mit Reichshilfe 1934–1938: Eine Untersuchung auf Grund amtlichen Materials* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1940).
43. Strölin, "Die Durchführung von Altstadtsanierung," 143.
44. Wilhelm Gisbertz and Walther Gase, *Die Deutsche Kleinsiedlung: Systematische Darstellung* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1938), 5–7.
45. A. Kerler, "Die Siedlung Schottenheim in Regensburg," *Deutsche Bauhütte* 41, no. 24 (1937): 324–25; Stefan Maier, "Die 'Schottenheim-Siedlung': Sozialer Wohnungsbau im 'Dritten Reich,'" in *Architektur in Regensburg 1933–1945*, ed. Stefan Maier (Regensburg: CH-Verlag, 1989), 78–96; Stefan Maier, *Schottenheim: "Die neue Stadt bei Regensburg" als völkische Gemeinschaftsiedlung* (Bamberg: WVB, 1992); Helmut Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz: Kommunalpolitik in Regensburg während der NS-Zeit* (Regensburg: Universitätsverlag Regensburg, 1994), 431–37.
46. Quoted in Franz Voggenreiter, "Regensburg baut eine 'neue Stadt,'" *Das Bayerland* 48, no. 20 (1937): 614.
47. Otto Schottenheim, "Zum Geleit," *Das Bayerland* 48, no. 20 (1937): 609.
48. Franz Voggenreiter, "Siedlung und Mensch: Der sozialpolitische Wert einer Siedlung," *Das Bayerland* 48, no. 20 (1937): 636.
49. Hubert Wartner, *Mustergültige Volksgesundheitspflege in Regensburg durch die vorbildliche Siedlung "Schottenheim"* (Regensburg: Hans Strauss, 1940), 27.
50. Maier, *Schottenheim*, 116.
51. A. Kerler, "Baulicher Gliederung und Gestaltung Schottenheims," *Das Bayerland* 48, no. 20 (1937): 627.
52. Voggenreiter, "Siedlung und Mensch," 631–32.
53. Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 428–31.
54. Wartner, *Mustergültige Volksgesundheitspflege*, 9, 12–15. A. Kerler, "Die Siedlung Schottenheim in Regensburg," *Bauamt und Gemeindebau* 19, no. 22 (1937): 225–28; Maier, "Die 'Schottenheim-Siedlung,'" 78; Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 325.
55. Wartner, *Mustergültige Volksgesundheitspflege*, 24; Voggenreiter, "Regensburg baut eine 'neue Stadt,'" 618; Maier, "Die 'Schottenheim-Siedlung,'" 85–86; Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 433–37; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 143.
56. Wartner, *Mustergültige Volksgesundheitspflege*, 43.
57. Harbers studied architecture under Fischer at the Technical University in Munich. He held several government posts before joining the Munich city planning office in 1925, where he mostly worked on residential projects, as well as serving as editor of the influential *Der Baumeister* journal from 1933 to 1945.
58. Guido Harbers, "Die Siedlung München-Ramersdorf," *Der Baumeister* 32, no. 9 (1934): 289.
59. Maier, *Schottenheim*, 107–8; Ulrike Haerendel, *Kommunale Wohnungspolitik im Dritten Reich: Siedlungsideologie, Kleinhausbau und "Wohnraumarisierung" am Beispiel München* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1999), 261.

60. Ursula Henn, *Die Mustersiedlung Ramersdorf in München: Ein Siedlungskonzept zwischen Tradition und Moderne* (Munich: Uni-Druck, 1987), 235; Haerendel, *Kommunale Wohnungspolitik*, 262–63.

61. Henn, *Die Mustersiedlung Ramersdorf*, 230.

62. Curt R. Vincentz, "Nachdenkliche Betrachtung mit Bildern," *Deutsche Bauhütte* 38, no. 13 (1934): 153.

63. Otto Völckers, "Zur deutsche Siedlungsausstellung in München," *Bauwelt* 25, no. 39 (1934): 6.

64. Henn, *Die Mustersiedlung Ramersdorf*, 345–50; Haerendel, *Kommunale Wohnungspolitik*, 261–62.

65. Peter Fessler, "Die Mustersiedlung Ramersdorf unter der Lupe," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 68, no. 36 (1934): 700.

66. Max Säume, "'Die deutsche Siedlungsausstellung' und die Ausstellung 'Die Strasse' München 1934," *Baugilde* 16, no. 16 (1934): 552.

67. P. Rössler, "Kritische Berichte von der Deutschen Siedlungsausstellung in München," *Deutsche Bauhütte* 38, no. 13 (1934): 151.

68. Völckers, "Zur deutsche Siedlungsausstellung in München," 1.

69. Mackowsky, "Aus dem Siedlungswerk deutscher Städte," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 69, no. 37 (1935): 731.

70. "Richtfest der Siegfried-Kasche-Siedlung in Frankfurt a. d. Oder," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 14, no. 6/7 (1934): 56; "Die erste deutsche Frontkämpfersiedlung der nationalsozialistischen Kriegsopferversorgung," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 14, no. 6/7 (1934): 68–69. Schlageter was a World War I veteran and then right-wing paramilitary executed in 1923 by French occupation forces for conducting sabotage operations in the Ruhr region.

71. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 138.

72. *RGB* (1933): 517.

73. *RGB* (1933): 685.

74. "Baupolizeiliche Richtlinien für bauerliche Siedlungsbauten zur Neubildung deutschen Bauerntums," *Neues Bauerntum* 27, no. 10 (1935): 455–68.

75. Friedrich Kann, "Die Neuordnung eines Dorfes auf Grund des Wunschbildes," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 8 (1941): 361–65.

76. Wilhelm Grebe, *Handbuch für das Bauen auf dem Lande* (Berlin: Reichsnährstandverlag, 1943), 322.

77. "Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum," *Neues Volk* 3, no. 2 (1935): 34–37; Hinrich Lohse, "Planung und Durchführung von Landeskulturarbeiten in Schleswig-Holstein," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 3, no. 2 (1939): 49–54; Jan Smit, *Neubildung deutschen Bauerntums: Innere Kolonisation im Dritten Reich—Fallstudien in Schleswig-Holstein* (Kassel: Gesamthochschul-Bibliothek, 1983), 215–20; Lars Amenda, "'Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum': Rassenpolitik und Propaganda an der Schleswig-holsteinischen Westküste," *Informationen zur Schleswig-holsteinischen Zeitgeschichte* 45 (2005): 7.

78. Amenda, "'Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum,'" 10.

79. Richard Brodersen, "Planung und bauliche Gestaltung bei der Besiedlung des Adolf Hitler-Kooges," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 55 (1935): 772; Amenda, "'Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum,'" 9.

80. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 2 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 687.

81. Klaus Groth, "Der Aufbau des Adolf-Hitler-Kooges: Ein Beispiel nationalsozialistischen ländlichen Siedlungsbaues," in *Wir bauen das Reich: Aufstieg und erste Herrschaftsjahre des Nationalsozialismus in Schleswig-Holstein*, ed. Erich Hoffmann and Peter Wulf (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz, 1983), 309–10; Amenda, "'Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum,'" 10.

82. Groth, "Der Aufbau des Adolf-Hitler-Kooges," 321–22, 325–26; Amenda, "'Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum,'" 15, 17–24.

83. Groth, "Der Aufbau des Adolf-Hitler-Kooges," 317–19; Amenda, "'Volk ohne Raum schafft Raum,'" 16–17.

84. Brodersen, "Planung und bauliche Gestaltung," 776; Groth, "Der Aufbau des Adolf-Hitler-Kooges," 321.

85. Johannes Schottky, "Die biologische Auslese der Neubauern: Dargestellt an Hand der ersten 12000 Gesuche des Jahres 1934," *Neues Bauerntum* 28, no. 9 (1936): 388–89.

86. "Neubildung deutschen Bauertums: Die bäuerliche Siedlung von 1933 bis 1939," *Baugilde* 22, no. 34 (1940): 513.

87. Groth, "Der Aufbau des Adolf-Hitler-Kooges," 312–13.

88. "Nationalsozialistisches Aufbauwerk Öschelbronn," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 20, no. 1 (1938): 49.

89. Hermann Diruf, "Der Wiederaufbau von Öschelbronn: Das erste 'nationalsozialistisches Aufbauwerk,'" *Die Denkmalpflege* 47, no. 1 (1989): 39. See also Fritz Kreß, "Aus Schutt und Asche ist Oschelbronn wiedererstand," *Die Bauzeitung* 31, no. 34 (1934): 422.

90. W. Gräff, "Wiederaufbau von Öschelbronn," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 68, no. 1 (1935): 13, 16.

91. "Die Neubildung deutschen Bauertums im Jahre 1937," *Neues Bauerntum* 30, no. 12 (1938): 325; "Neubildung deutschen Bauertums: Die bäuerliche Siedlung von 1933 bis 1939," 513; Wilhelm Zoch, "Neue Ordnung im Osten," *Neues Bauerntum* 32, no. 3 (1940): 110; Smit, *Neubildung deutschen Bauertums*, 329; Ulrich Kluge, "Zwang contra Freiheit: Die Entstehung und Entwicklung der nationalsozialistischen Agrarordnung als 'Reichsnährstand' (1930–1939)," in *"Und sie werden nicht mehr frei sein ihr ganzes Leben": Funktion und Stellenwert der NSDAP, ihrer Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände im "Dritten Reich,"* ed. Stephanie Becker and Christoph Städt (Berlin: Lit, 2012), 179–92.

92. Grebe, *Handbuch für das Bauen*, 459–60.

93. Dieter Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes in Nationalsozialismus: Eine soziologische Untersuchung ideologisch fundierter Leitbilder in Architektur, Städtebau und Raumplanung des Dritten Reiches* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1993), 205.

94. Uwe Mai, *"Rasse und Raum": Agrarpolitik, Sozial- und Raumplanung im NS-Staat* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2002), 65–66.

95. Ulrike Haerendel, "Wohnungspolitik im Nationalsozialismus," *Zeitschrift für Sozialreform* 45, no. 10 (1999): 851.

96. RGB (1934): 295. See also Rüdiger Hachtmann, *Das Wirtschaftsimperium der Deutschen Arbeitsfront 1933–1945* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2012).

97. Gottfried Feder, "Das deutsche Siedlungswerk: Zwei programmatische Reden," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 16, no. 5 (1934): 185–86; Joshua Hagen, "Social Engineering, National Demography, and Political Economy in Nazi Germany: Gottfried Feder and His New Town Concept," in *Hitler's Geographies: The Spatialities of the Third Reich*, ed. Claudio Minca and Paolo Giaccaria (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 218–40.

98. RGB (1934): 568.

99. RGB (1934): 1225.

100. W. Gebhardt, "Heimstättensiedlung und Reichsheimstättenamt," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 15, no. 17 (1935): 351.

101. Ludowici earned a doctorate in engineering in 1920 after studying at several universities. He then went to work at his family's very successful brick and tile works. Ludowici joined the Party in 1923 and eventually served in several deputy staff positions for housing policy through the 1930s.

102. Johann Wilhelm Ludowici, "Die Eroberung des deutschen Bodens für den deutschen Menschen," *Deutsche Technik* 3 (1935): 584.

103. Ludowici, "Die Eroberung des deutschen Bodens," 588.

104. Quoted in Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes*, 215–16.

105. Reichsheimstättenamt der NSDAP und DAF, ed. *Siedlungsplanung* (Berlin: R. Müller, 1934), 5.



106. Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 180; Karl Christian Führer, "Das NS-Regime und die 'Idealform des deutschen Wohnungsbaues,'" *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 89, no. 2 (2002): 147.

107. Gisbertz and Gase, *Die Deutsche Kleinsiedlung*, 182, 185, 186–87.

108. Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 53–55.

109. G. Bamberg, "Die Arbeitsfrontsiedlungen Wurmrevier," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 17, no. 8 (1935): 347.

110. [Wilhelm] Gisbertz, "Siedlerauswahl und Siedlerberatung," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 15, no. 1 (1933): 94–95.

111. RGB (1935): 341.

112. Tilman Harlander and Gerhard Fehl, eds., *Hitlers sozialer Wohnungsbau 1940–1945: Wohnungspolitik, Baugestaltung und Siedlungsplanung* (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1986), 16; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 159.

113. Otto Marrenbach, ed., *Fundamente des Sieges: Die Gesamtarbeit der Deutschen Arbeitsfront von 1933 bis 1940* (Berlin: Verlag der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, 1940), 216–17.

114. Ludowici, "Die Eroberung des deutschen Bodens," 586.

115. Gisbertz and Gase, *Die Deutsche Kleinsiedlung*, 13–24, 195–96.

116. Dr. Klabe, "Siedlerauswahl in Schlesien," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 19, no. 5 (1937): 221; Eckart Hübner, "Das Siedlungswerk im Gau Süd-Hannover-Braunschweig," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 18, no. 11/12 (1936): 693.

117. Führer, "Das NS-Regime und die 'Idealform des deutschen Wohnungsbaues,'" 162.

118. Ludowici, "Die Eroberung des deutschen Bodens," 586.

119. Marrenbach, *Fundamente des Sieges*, 216–17.

120. Irmgard Landgrebe, "Pflichten und Rechte der Frau in der Siedlung," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 17, no. 5 (1935): 213.

121. Führer, "Das NS-Regime und die 'Idealform des deutschen Wohnungsbaues,'" 159.

122. W. Gebhardt, "Der entfesselte Siedlungsbau: Ein neuer Schritt zum Siedlungswerk der Partei," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 19 (1937): 500.

123. Haerendel, "Wohnungspolitik im Nationalsozialismus," 858; Führer, "Das NS-Regime und die 'Idealform des deutschen Wohnungsbaues,'" 164.

124. Wilhelm Cohrs, "Bauen, Siedeln, Wohnen: Rückblick und Ausblick," *Der Arbeitertum* 8, no. 6 (1938–1939): 8; Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes*, 233; Haerendel, "Wohnungspolitik im Nationalsozialismus," 854.

125. Krauskopf, "Standardization and the Landscape," 171–75. Schulte-Frohlinde studied under Bonatz and Schmitthenner and, after military service during World War I, graduated from the Technical University in Stuttgart. After a brief stint in the Cologne city building office, Schulte-Frohlinde accepted a similar position in Nuremberg in 1929. Schulte-Frohlinde was responsible for most DAF construction projects, excluding the Order Castles, and he later contributed to Speer's reconstruction staff.

126. Alfred Rosenberg, "Richtlinien deutscher Baukultur," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 69, no. 12 (1935): 229.

127. Robert Dirichs, "Die Braunschweiger Siedlungen," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 74, no. 15 (1940): 187.

128. Piepenschneider, "Die Gemeinschaft-Siedlung Braunschweig-Lehndorf," *Bauamt und Gemeindebau* 18, no. 16 (1936): 186–89; Markus Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Braunschweig, die "deutsche Siedlungsstadt" und die "Mustersiedlung der Deutschen Arbeitsfront" Braunschweig-Mascherode* (Hameln: C. W. Niemeyer, 2003), 184–87.

129. "Das 'Aufbauhaus' der Gemeinschaftssiedlung Braunschweig-Lehndorf," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 20, no. 3 (1938): 241–47; Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 62, 191, 184–208.

130. Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 65–76.

131. Rudolf Rogler, "Die Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode bei Braunschweig," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 3 (1937): 66.

132. Wilhelm Cohrs, "Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode: Eine Mustersiedlung der Deutschen Arbeitsfront entsteht," *Der Arbeiter* 7, no. 12 (1937): 10.
133. Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, "Die Gestaltung der Siedlung," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 14 (1937): 361.
134. Cohrs, "Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode," 12.
135. Cohrs, "Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode," 11.
136. Rogler, "Die Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode bei Braunschweig," 67.
137. Cohrs, "Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode," 12.
138. Fritz Brandt, "Lehrsiedlung Braunschweig-Mascherode," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 19, no. 9 (1939): 440; Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 65–76.
139. Cohrs, "Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode," 12; Wilhelm Lotz, "Ein Gemeinschaftshaus und ein Betrieb," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 2 (1939): 29–39; Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 112–27.
140. Cohrs, "Gemeinschaftssiedlung Mascherode," 10.
141. "Das Gemeinschaftshaus Mascherode bei Braunschweig," *Baugilde* 20, no. 35 (1938): 1189.
142. Ludowici, "Die Eroberung des deutschen Bodens," 588.
143. Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, "Baukultur im zweiten Vierjahresplan," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 13 (1937): 333.
144. Walter Fey, "Das Baujahr 1938 und seine praktischen Ergebnisse," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 21, no. 1 (1939): 15.
145. Krauskopf, "Standardization and the Landscape," 175–76.
146. Karl Christian Führer, "Anspruch und Realität: Das Scheitern der nationalsozialistischen Wohnungsbaupolitik," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 45, no. 2 (1997): 236. See also Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the "National Community"* (Oxford: Berg, 1993).
147. Führer, "Anspruch und Realität," 237–38.
148. Quoted in Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 90.
149. Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 180; Führer, "Anspruch und Realität," 249.
150. Walter Fey, "Wohnungsbau und Wohnungsbedarf im Weltkrieg und Heute," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 22, no. 2 (1940): 47.
151. Harlander and Fehl, eds., *Hitlers sozialer Wohnungsbau*, 126.
152. Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 196.
153. Harlander and Fehl, eds., *Hitlers sozialer Wohnungsbau*, 110, 112, 114.
154. RGB (1940): 1495.
155. RGB (1940): 1496–97.
156. This was not the same position Feder occupied previously.
157. RGB (1940): 1498.
158. Joachim Fischer-Dieskau, "Zum dritten Erlass des Führers über den deutschen Wohnungsbau," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 23 (1942): 719, 720.
159. Hans Wagner, "Die Mitwirkung der deutschen Gemeinden am Wohnungsbau nach dem Krieg," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 7 (1941): 220.
160. Fritz Todt's introduction to Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, "Rationalisierung im Wohnungsbau," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 60, no. 16/17 (1940): 233.
161. Adolf Hitler, *Hitler's Table Talk 1941–1944: His Private Conversations*, trans. Norman Cameron, R. H. Stevens, and H. R. Trevor-Roper, 3rd ed. (New York: Enigma, 2000), 75.
162. Schulte-Frohlinde, "Rationalisierung im Wohnungsbau," 234.
163. Heinrich Simon, "Der deutsche Wohnungsbau nach dem Kriege," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 1 (1941): 2, 5, 10–11, 13.
164. Hermann Doerr, "Die 'Vierraum-Musterwohnung' in Düsseldorf," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 20 (1941): 698.
165. Herman Doerr, "Schönheit des Wohnen: Ein politisches Problem," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 2 (1941): 42.

166. Hans Schönbein, "Wohnungsbau und Bauwirtschaft," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 22 (1941): 817.

167. Hans Spiegel, "Typung und Normung," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 9 (1940): 290.

168. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 161.

169. Wilhelm Grebe, "Wiedergesundung und Neuausrichtung des ländlichen Bauwesens: Zu dem Bauernhof-Wettbewerb 1941–42," *Bauwelt* 33, no. 37/38 (1942): 1–8.

170. Schulte-Frohlinde, "Rationalisierung im Wohnungsbau," 233.

171. Paul Steinhauser, "Der Wohnungsbestand im neuen deutschen Wohnungsbau," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 11 (1941): 358.

172. Karl Neupert, "Die politischen und organisatorischen Grundlagen der totalen Planung und Gestaltung," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 20, no. 5 (1940): 130.

173. Hans Wagner, "Der deutsche Wohnungsbau als kulturelle Aufgabe," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 12 (1941): 401.

174. Simon, "Der Dreiklang des Wohnungsbaues," 792.

175. Ernst von Stuckrad, "Leistungssteigerung durch Arbeiterheimstätten," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 18, no. 4 (1938): 92.

176. Helmut Malzahn, "Wohnraumgewinnung durch Teilung, Um- und Anbau," *Der Gemeindetag* 35, no. 15/16 (1941): 252.

177. Hans J. Reichhardt and Wolfgang Schäche, *Von Berlin nach Germania: Über die Zerstörungen der "Reichshauptstadt" durch Albert Speers Neugestaltungsplanungen* (Berlin: Transit, 1998), 153, 158.

178. Michael Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler: Leben und Werk (1898–1987)* (Tübingen: Edition Altavilla, 2008), 87.

179. Hans Stephan, "Der Wohnungsbau in der Neugestaltung der Reichshauptstadt," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 11 (1939): 464, 468; Gerhard Petrick, "Der Wohnungsbau im Siedlungsgebiet Charlottenburg-Nord," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 11 (1939): 473; Willy Lebens, "Wohnungsbau in der Neugestaltung der Reichshauptstadt," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 23, no. 4 (1941): 84–86.

180. Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler*, 203–6.

181. Haerendel, *Kommunale Wohnungspolitik*, 386; Jost Dülffer, Jochen Thies, and Josef Henke, *Hitlers Städte: Baupolitik im Dritten Reich* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1978), 164–66, 167.

182. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 61.

183. Niels Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn: Architekten planen im "eingedeutschten Osten" 1939–1945* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 2001); Isabel Heinemann, "Wissenschaft und Homogenisierungsplanungen für Osteuropa: Konrad Meyer, der 'Generalplan Ost' und die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft," in *Wissenschaft—Planung—Vertreibung: Neuordnungskonzepte und Umsiedlungspolitik im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Isabel Heinemann and Patrick Wagner (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2006), 45–72; Krauskopf, "Standardization and the Landscape," 177–78; Christian Ingrao, *The Promise of the East: Nazi Hopes and Genocide, 1939–43*, trans. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity, 2019).

184. Ernst Jarmer, "Die Aufgabe der Raumordnung im neuen Osten," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 1 (1941): 2.

185. Konrad Meyer, "Planung und Ostaufbau," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 9 (1941): 392. See also Philipp Zakrzewski, "Josef Umlauf—bedingt gesprächsbereit: Das Wirken eines Planers im Nationalsozialismus und in der jungen Bundesrepublik im Spiegel zeitgenössischer Dokumente," in *Vom Dritten Reich zur Bundesrepublik: Beiträge einer Tagung zur Geschichte von Raumforschung und Raumplanung*, ed. Heinrich Mäding and Wendelin Strubelt (Hannover: Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung, 2009), 66–83.

186. Konrad Meyer, "Grundlagen für Planung und Gestaltung in den neuen Ostgebieten," *Siedlung und Wirtschaft* 23, no. 2 (1941): 28.

187. "Richtlinien zur Pflege und Verbesserung des Ortsbildes im deutschen Osten," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 60, no. 50/51 (1940): 867. See also Phillip T. Rutherford, *Prelude to the*

*Final Solution: The Nazi Program for Deporting Ethnic Poles, 1939–1941* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2007).

188. Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Auschwitz, 1270 to the Present* (New York: Norton, 1996), 240–48. Umlauf was born in the Sudetenland region of what was then the Austro-Hungarian Empire and active in German-nationalist organizations from a young age. He studied architecture at the Technical University in Vienna during the 1920s and, after an additional semester under Tessenow in Berlin, began working in Germany in 1929. Umlauf struggled amid the Depression; he eventually found editorial work for the journals *Baugilde* and *Die Form*, the latter being closely associated with the Werkbund movement. Umlauf was one of the first members of the DAF's Homestead Office and progressed through a succession of government planning positions from there. After serving in the military from fall 1939, Umlauf was released to Meyer's SS planning staff in 1940 and was intimately involved in the General Plan East efforts.

189. Herbert Urban, "Krakaus Adolf-Hitler-Platz zeigt wieder ein deutsches Stadtbild," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 76, no. 5 (1942): 108.

190. G. [Albert Gut], "Der Wohnungsbau im Generalgouvernement," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 75, no. 48 (1941): 819.

191. Werner Knapp, *Deutsche Dorfplanung: Gestalterische Grundlagen* (Stuttgart: Karl Krämer, 1942): 5.

192. Dietrich Reiser, "Wohnungsbau als volkspolitische Waffe: Erläutert am Beispiel des Regierungsbezirkes Zichenau," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 14 (1941): 503.

193. Ewald Liedecke, "Über die Vorarbeiten zum Bau einer neuen Kreisstadt bei Leipe," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 16 (1941): 571.

194. Gottfried Feder with Fritz Rechenberg, *Die neue Stadt: Versuch der Begründung einer neuen Stadtplanungskunst aus der sozialen Struktur der Bevölkerung*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1939), 14, 30.

195. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 1–2.

196. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 479.

197. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 14, Tafel IV.

198. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 464.

199. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 19.

200. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 50, 461.

201. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 429.

202. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 468.

203. Panos Mantziaras, "Rudolf Schwarz and the Concept of *Stadtlandschaft*," *Planning Perspectives* 18, no. 2 (2003): 147–76.

204. Feder, *Die neue Stadt*, 18.

205. Gottfried Feder, "Reichsplanung—Stadtplanung," *Der deutsche Baumeister* 2, no. 7 (1940): 16.

206. Heinz Killus, "Der Totalitätsgedanke im neuen Städtebau," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 24, no. 4 (1940): 85.

207. Wilhelm Wortmann, "Der Gedanke der Stadtlandschaft," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 1 (1941): 16.

208. Hans Reichow, "Grundsätzliches zum Städtebau im Altreich und im neuen deutschen Osten," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 3/4 (1941): 226. After military service during World War I, Reichow studied architecture in Danzig and Munich, eventually completing a doctorate in engineering in 1926. He then worked in Berlin, including with Erich Mendelsohn, before working as a city planner in Dresden, Braunschweig, and finally Stettin. Reichow joined the Party in 1937 and made minor contributions to the redesign of Hamburg and planning for the General Plan East. He would become one of Germany's preeminent planners during the 1950s and 1960s.

209. Reichow, "Grundsätzliches zum Städtebau im Altreich und im neuen deutschen Osten," 230.

210. Carl Culemann, "Die Gestaltung der städtischen Siedlungsmasse," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 20, no. 24 (1940): 914.

211. Christaller completed his doctorate at the University of Erlangen in 1933, by which time he had demonstrated clear sympathies for socialist and communist parties. Christaller held a minor academic position until 1940, when he joined the Nazi Party and Himmler's planning staff working under Meyer on the General Plan East, although his exact contributions are unclear. Christaller returned to communist and socialist parties after the war.

212. Walter Christaller, "Grundgedanken zum Siedlungs- und Verwaltungsaufbau im Osten," *Neues Bauerntum* 32, no. 9 (1940): 305–12. See also Mechtild Rössler, "Applied Geography and Area Research in Nazi Society: Central Place Theory and Planning, 1933 to 1945," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 7, no. 4 (1989): 419–31.

213. Walter Christaller, "Die Verteilung der nicht landwirtschaftlichen Bevölkerung im Hauptdorbereich," *Neues Bauerntum* 33, no. 4 (1941): 139–45.

214. Walter Christaller, "Die Kultur- und Marktgebiete der zentralen Orte im deutschen Ostraum und die Gliederung der Verwaltung," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 4, no. 11/12 (1940): 498.

215. Josef Umlauf, "Der Stand der Raumordnungsplanung für die eingegliederten Ostgebiete," *Neues Bauerntum* 34, no. 8 (1942): 281–93.

216. Konrad Meyer, "Neues Bauerntum durch ländlich Neuordnung," *Neues Bauerntum* 35, no. 6/7 (1943): 146.

217. Rudolf Wolters, "Die neue Städtebau," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 3 (1942): 75.

218. Erich Böckler, "Die Gestalt der deutsche Stadt im Osten," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 3/4 (1941): 215.

219. Herbert Frank, "Raum- und Flächenordnungsskizzen als ersten Planungsgrundlagen," in *Planung und Aufbau im Osten: Erläuterungen und skizzen zum ländlichen Aufbau in den neuen Ostgebieten*, ed. Reichskommissar für die Festung deutschen Volkstums (Berlin: Deutsche Landbuchhandlung, 1941), 5; "Grundsätze und Richtlinien für den ländlichen Aufbau in den neuen Ostgebieten," in *Planung und Aufbau im Osten: Erläuterungen und skizzen zum ländlichen Aufbau in den neuen Ostgebieten*, ed. Reichskommissar für die Festung deutschen Volkstums (Berlin: Deutsche Landbuchhandlung, 1941), 67–69; Heinrich Himmler, "Richtlinien für die Planung und Gestaltung der Städte in den eingegliederten deutschen Ostgebieten," reprinted in Anna Teut, *Architektur im Dritten Reich* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1967), 347–57.

220. Arthur Greiser, untitled introduction to the special issue of *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 6 (1942): 173.

221. Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn*, 64. See also Neils Gutschow, "Stadtplanung im Warthegau 1939–1945," in *Der "Generalplan Ost": Hauptlinien der nationalsozialistischen Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik*, ed. Mechtild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher (Berlin: Akademie, 1993), 232–58.

222. Albert Derichsweiler, "Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront und ihre soziale Aufgabe im Osten," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 6 (1942): 174.

223. Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Auschwitz, 1270 to the Present* (New York: Norton, 1996), 248–53.

224. Stosberg studied architecture in Munich and Hannover before graduating in 1928. He began working as an urban planner in Breslau in 1930, mostly planning new residential construction. He joined the Nazi Party in 1937, and his relative proximity to Auschwitz made him a logical choice for the project.

225. Wagner, "Der deutsche Wohnungsbau als kulturelle Aufgabe," 399.

226. Heinrich Wolff, "Das Wohnhaus Albert Speers," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 19, no. 19 (1939): 973–78. Speer's house is pictured in Werner Rittich, *New German Architecture* (Berlin: Terramare, 1941).

227. Ignatius Phayre, "Hitler's Mountain Home," *Homes and Gardens*, November 1938, 193–95. Phayre's name was associated with a series of similar articles that appeared in English-speaking publications during the mid-1930s. In reality, Phayre was the pseudonym of William George

Fitz-Gerald, a British freelance writer and journalist of Irish parentage. Fitz-Gerald peddled his stories as firsthand accounts of time spent with Hitler at Obersalzberg, but the text and photograph were drawn—one might say plagiarized—from publications of Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler's personal photographer. It is extremely unlikely Fitz-Gerald ever visited Hitler, but the popularity of his pieces reveals considerable international interest in Hitler and his private life. See Despina Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 194–211.

228. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 157.

229. Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home*, 68–106.

230. Dietmar Arnold, *Neue Reichskanzlei und "Führerbunker": Legenden und Wirklichkeit* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2005), 148–49; Heinrich Breloer and Rainer Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer: Spuren eines Kriegsverbrechers* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2006), 74–77.

231. Speer described his humble home "in deliberate contrast to the recent habit among the leaders of the Reich, who were moving into huge villas or acquiring palaces. We [Speer and his wife] wanted to avoid all that" (Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 63).

232. Richard Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed: Allied Air War over Europe, 1940–1945* (New York: Viking, 2014), 144, 258–62.

233. Michael Bose, "Getarnter Wohnungsbau für Parteifunktionäre: Die Norweger-Häuser in den Walddörfern," in "Eine neues Hamburg entsteht": *Planen und Bauen von 1933–1945*, ed. Michael Bose et al. (Hamburg: VSA-Verlag, 1986), 161–71.

234. "Ein Jahrzehnt deutscher Sozialpolitik," *Vierjahresplan* 20, no. 7/8 (1943): 67–68.

## CHAPTER 5: TURNING GERMANS INTO NAZIS

1. Quoted in Franz Albert Heinen, "'Des Führers treueste Soldaten und seiner Idee glühendste Prediger': Das System der NS-Ordensburgen," in *"Fackelträger der Nation": Elitebildung in den NS-Ordensburgen*, ed. Albert Moritz (Cologne: Böhlau, 2010), 20.

2. Alfred Rosenberg, "Die Hohe Schule am Chiemsee," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 1 (1939): 17.

3. Otto Marrenbach, ed., *Fundamente des Sieges: Die Gesamtarbeit der Deutschen Arbeitsfront von 1933 bis 1940* (Berlin: Verlag der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, 1940), 49.

4. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999 [1925/1926]), 442, emphasis in original.

5. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 237.

6. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 408.

7. *A Nation Builds: Contemporary German Architecture* (New York: German Library of Information, 1940), 80.

8. Harald Scholtz, *Erziehung und Unterricht unterm Hakenkreuz* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985); Wolfgang Keim, *Erziehung unter der Nazi-Diktatur* (Darmstadt: Primus, 1997).

9. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 422.

10. Ch. Kark, "Bau von Kindertagesstätten eine politische Notwendigkeit," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 19, no. 22 (1939): 1055–57; Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Bayern 1933–1945* (Munich: Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, 1993), 104.

11. Elke Fröhlich, "Die drei Typen der nationalsozialistischen Ausleseschulen," in *"Wir ware Hitlers Eliteschüler": Ehemalige Zöglinge der NS-Ausleseschulen brechen ihr Schweigen*, ed. Johannes Leeb (Hamburg: Rasch und Röhring, 1998), 195–96; Gregory Paul Wegner, "Mothers of the Race: The Elite Schools for German Girls under the Nazi Dictatorship," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 19, no. 2 (2004): 170.

12. Robert Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer: Deutschland braucht jeden Deutschen* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1937), 137–42.

13. Christian Schneider, Cordelia Stillke, and Bernd Leineweber, *Das Erbe der NAPOLA: Versuch einer Generationengeschichte des Nationalsozialismus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1996), 45.

14. Werner Dobisch, "Der Umbau des Schlosses Bensberger zur Nationalpolitischen Erziehungsanstalt," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 58, no. 22 (1938): 575–83.

15. Otto Calliebe and Neuhaus, "Die Bauten der Nationalpolitischen Erziehungsanstalten in Preußen," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 50 (1939): 1169, 1171.

16. *Die Adolf-Hitler-Schule* (Berlin: Verlag der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, 1937), 1.

17. *Die Adolf-Hitler-Schule im Jahr 1941* (Kempten: Allgäuer, 1941), 6. See Fröhlich, "Die drei Typen der nationalsozialistischen Ausleseh Schulen," 203–7; Barbara Feller and Wolfgang Feller, *Die Adolf-Hitler-Schulen: Pädagogische Provinz versus Ideologische Zuchtanstalt* (Munich: Juventa, 2001).

18. Günter Kaufmann, *Das kommende Deutschland: Die Erziehung der Jugend im Reich Adolf Hitlers*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Junker and Dünnhaupt, 1943), 170.

19. *Die Adolf-Hitler-Schule*, 14.

20. *Die Adolf-Hitler-Schule*, 13.

21. Ewald Bender, "Die Adolf-Hitler-Schulen in Koblenz und Waldbröl," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 58, no. 8 (1938): 190.

22. Bender, "Die Adolf-Hitler-Schulen in Koblenz und Waldbröl," 190.

23. *Die Adolf-Hitler-Schule*, 15.

24. Martin Moll, "Führer-Erlasse" 1939–1945: *Edition sämtlicher überlieferter, nicht im Reichsgesetzblatt abgedruckter, von Hitler während des Zweiten Weltkrieges schriftlich erteilter Direktiven aus den Bereichen Staat, Partei, Wirtschaft, Besatzungspolitik und Militärverwaltung* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1997), 467.

25. Quoted in Robert Ley, *Der Weg zur Ordensburg* (Berlin: Verlag der DAF, ca. 1935/36), n.p.

26. Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer*, 121. See also Harald Scholtz, "Die 'NS-Ordensburg,'" *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 15, no. 3 (1967): 269–89; Michael Flaggmeyer, "Zwischen Gralsmythos und Führerschule: Die Ordensburg der Deutschen Arbeitsfront," in *NS-Architektur: Macht und Symbolpolitik*, ed. Tilman Harlander and Wolfram Pyta (Berlin: Lit, 2010), 79–98; Heinen, "'Des Führers treueste Soldaten und seiner Idee glühendste Prediger,'" 20–46; Franz Albert Heinen, *NS-Ordensburg: Vogelsang, Sonthofen, Krössinsee* (Berlin: Christoph Links, 2011).

27. Klotz was one of the older architects serving the Nazi regime, being a couple years older than Hitler. Klotz gained his architecture training as a teenager through a traditional apprenticeship system instead of formal schooling. He eventually established a private practice in Cologne focusing on residential construction that blended vernacular styles with decidedly modernist influences.

28. *Der Kongreß zu Nürnberg vom 5. bis 10. September 1934* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1935), 211.

29. Werner Rittich, *New German Architecture* (Berlin: Terramare, 1941), 36.

30. Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer*, 120.

31. Ewald Bender, "Die Ordensburg Vogelsang und Crössinsee," *Bauwelt* 27, no. 35 (1936): 1.

32. Hans Kiener, "Die Ordensburg Vogelsang in der Eifel," *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 1, no. 4 (1937): 103–9; Ewald Bender, "Die Ordensburg Vogelsang," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 57, no. 4 (1937): 73–85; Hans-Dieter Arntz, *Ordensburg Vogelsang 1934–1945: Erziehung zur politische Führung im Dritten Reich* (Euskirchen, Germany: Kumpel, 1986); Ruth Schmitz-Ehmke, *Die Ordensburg Vogelsang: Architektur, Bauplastik, Ausstattung* (Cologne: Rheinland, 1988).

33. Rudolf Rogler, "Ordensburg Sonthofen," *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 2, no. 3 (1938): 67–75; Robert Ley, "Die Ordensburg Sonthofen," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 1 (1939): 18–27; Gerhard Klein, "Die NS-Ordensburg Sonthofen 1934 bis 1945," in *Weltanschauliche Erziehung in Ordensburg des Nationalsozialismus: Zur Geschichte und Zukunft der Ordensburg Vogelsang*, ed. Paul Ciupke and Franz-Josef Jelich (Essen: Klartext, 2006), 65–84; Michael Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler: Leben und Werk (1898–1987)* (Tübingen: Edition Altavilla, 2008).

34. Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer*, 138.

35. Arntz, *Ordensburg Vogelsang*, 99.

36. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 2 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 982.

37. Arntz, *Ordensburg Vogelsang*, 187.

38. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 25, 123.

39. Robert Ley, "Die Treue ist das Mark der Ehre!," in *N.S. Ordensburg Sonthofen* (Kempten: Allgäuer, 1937), n.p.

40. Michael Schneider, "'Organisation aller schaffenden Deutschen der Stirn und der Faust': Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF)," in "Und sie werden nicht mehr frei sein ihr ganzes Leben": *Funktion und Stellenwert der NSDAP, ihrer Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände im "Dritten Reich,"* ed. Stephanie Becker and Christoph Studt (Berlin: Lit, 2012), 167.

41. Ley, *Wir alle helfen dem Führer*, 137–42.

42. Marrenbach, *Fundamente des Sieges*, 59.

43. Marrenbach, *Fundamente des Sieges*, 65–66, 69.

44. Marrenbach, *Fundamente des Sieges*, 53.

45. "Die Schulenburg Sassnitz der DAF," *Moderne Bauformen* 35 (1936): 461–80.

46. Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, "Nationalsozialistische Schulenburg Erwitte in Westfalen," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 56, no. 22 (1936): 25, 32.

47. Will Decker, *Der deutsche Arbeitsdienst: Ziele, Leistungen und Organisation* (Berlin: Junker und Dünnhaupt, 1937), 24, 30–31; Rolf von Gönner, ed., *Spaten und Ähre: Das Handbuch der deutschen Jugend im Reichsarbeitsdienst* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinkel, 1937), 145; Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 182.

48. Roland May, *Pontifex Maximus: Der Architekt Paul Bonatz und die Brücken* (Münster: Monsenstein and Vannerdat, 2011), 135.

49. Alfred Rosenberg, "Die Hohe Schule am Chiemsee," *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 3, no. 1 (1939): 17. Rosenberg was born in what is now Estonia to an upper-class family and read widely as a youth. He began studying architecture at the Technical University in Riga and persisted despite the turmoil of the Bolshevik Revolution and subsequent civil war. Amid this tumult, Rosenberg developed strident anticommunist and anti-Semitic views that regarded communism as essentially a plot masterminded by Jews. Rosenberg moved to Munich, where his political activism brought him into the heart of the nascent Nazi movement.

50. Reinhard Bollmus, "Zum Projekt einer nationalsozialistischen Alternativ-Universität: Alfred Rosenbergs 'Hohe Schule,'" in *Erziehung und Schulung im Dritten Reich*, ed. Manfred Heine-mann (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1980), 125–52; Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler*, 137–44.

51. Shelley Baranowski, *Strength through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 44–45.

52. Gerhard Starcke, "Wann ist jemals für das Volk mehr geleistet worden," *Arbeitertum* 8 (1938): 7.

53. *Reichsgesetzblatt (RGB) Teil I* (1936): 993.

54. Baldur von Schirach, "Gedanken zum Bauen der Jugend," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 4, no. 11 (1940): 173–86.

55. Max Kochskämper, "Neue süddeutsche Jugendherbergen," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 57, no. 29 (1937): 721.

56. Reichsjugendführung der NSDAP, ed., *Werkhefte für den Heimbau der Hitler-Jugend*, vol. 1 (Leipzig: Erwin Skacel, 1937), 17.

57. Dustmann studied in Munich before graduating from Hannover in 1928 and then working for Gropius for three years. After a brief stint at the Reichsbank building office, Dustmann transferred to the Hitler Youth and later Vienna, where he developed redesign plans for the city under Gauleiter Schirach's direction. Those plans were soon shelved, so Dustmann joined Speer's reconstruction staff. See Ingrid Holzschuh, *Wiener Stadtplanung im Nationalsozialismus von 1938 bis 1942: Die Neugestaltungsprojekt von Architekt Hanns Dustmann* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2011), 47–50.

58. Kaufmann, *Das kommende Deutschland*, 176.

59. "1937—das Baujahr der Hitler-Jugend," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 3 (1937): 69.

60. Hanns Dustmann, "Vom Bauen der Hitler-Jugend: Künstlerisch-soldatische Erziehung der jungen Generation," *Der Deutsche Baumeister* 2, no. 5 (1940): 3–8.



61. RGB (1939): 215–16.
62. Kaufmann, *Das kommende Deutschland*, 179–80.
63. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 156.
64. Otto Biedermann, "Jugendherbergen—Erziehungsstätten," *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 2, no. 5 (1938): 146.
65. Julius Lincke, "Die Reichsjugendherberge 'Luginsland' in Nürnberg," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 32 (1939): 851–57.
66. Max Kochskämper, *Herbergen der neuen Jugend* (Berlin: Bauwelt, 1937), 5. Kochskämper was a primary schoolteacher before and after his military service in World War I. He began working in the hostel movement in the mid-1920s. In 1933, he began as a consultant on hostel issues to the Hitler Youth and rose to become the regime's top hostel official by 1935 before eventually being called to military service during World War II.
67. Kochskämper, *Herbergen der neuen Jugend*, 5.
68. *A Nation Builds*, 85.
69. Kochskämper, "Neue süddeutsche Jugendherbergen," 735; Kaufmann, *Das kommende Deutschland*, 185.
70. Kaufmann, *Das kommende Deutschland*, 188.
71. Gerdy Troost, ed., *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich* (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark, 1938), 60–61.
72. Schirach, "Gedanken zum Bauen der Jugend," 175.
73. Paul Baumgarten, "Neuzeitlicher Theaterbau," in *Theaterbauten und Feiertstätten*, ed. Preußischen Finanzministerium (Berlin: Wilhelm Ernst, 1939). Baumgarten was one of the older cohort of architects working for the regime. He began his career focusing on upscale villas around Berlin. His renovation of the German Opera Berlin in 1934 was widely acclaimed and catapulted him to a series of prestigious commissions to renovate theaters in Augsburg, Berlin, Munich, and Weimar, as well as renovating the Bellevue Palace in Berlin as a new "guest house" of the Third Reich. Baumgarten's designs were rather conservative but unremarkable except for the inclusion of a "Führer's box." As Hitler's primary theater architect, Baumgarten was probably in line to design Hitler's crown jewel theater in Linz.
74. Brigit Schwarz, *Geniewahn: Hitler und die Kunst* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2009), 75–82.
75. Gerhard Kaldewei, "Stedlingschre" soll für ganz Deutschland ein Wallfahrtsort werden: Dokumentation und Geschichte einer NS-Kultstätte auf dem Bookholzberg 1934–2005 (Delmenhorst: Aschenbeck & Holstein, 2006), 62–64.
76. Bettina Gundler, "Promoting German Automobile Technology and the Automobile Industry: The Motor Hall at the Deutsches Museum, 1933–1945," *Journal of Transport History* 34, no. 2 (2013): 125–28.
77. Hiltrud Kier, Karen Liesenfeld, and Horst Matzerath, eds., *Architektur der 30er und 40er Jahre in Köln: Materialien zur Baugeschichte im Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne: Emons, 1999), 92; Sabine Steidle, *Kinoarchitektur im Nationalsozialismus: Eine kultur- und medienhistorische Studie zur Vielfalt der Moderne* (Trier: Kliomedien, 2012), 22–23, 289.
78. Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, "Die Kraft durch Freude-Stadt in Berlin 1936," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 56, no. 37 (1936): 1092.
79. Heinrich Schulz, *Sozialpolitik im neuen Deutschland* (Berlin: Deutsche Informations-Stelle, 1941), 81–82.
80. Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, ed., *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (Sopade)* 6, no. 4 (Salzhäusen: Petra Nettelbeck, 1980 [1939]), 463.
81. Karl Hannemann, "Ein Musterdorf," *Arbeitertum* 9, no. 12 (1939): 10.
82. Franz Gutmiedl, "'Kraft durch Freude' gestaltet das schöne Dorf," in *Das Dorf: Seine Pflege und Gestaltung*, ed. Werner Lindner, Erich Kulke, and Franz Gutmiedl (Munich: Georg D. W. Callwey, 1938), 111.
83. Werner Lindner, "Zum Geleit," in *Das Dorf: Seine Pflege und Gestaltung*, ed. Werner Lindner, Erich Kulke, and Franz Gutmiedl (Munich: Georg D. W. Callwey, 1938), 5. Also Werner Lindner, *Aussenreklame: Ein Wegweiser in Beispiel und Gegenbeispiel* (Berlin: A. Metzner, 1936). Lindner stud-

ied architecture at the Technical University in Berlin and became one of the foremost authorities on historic preservation and environmental conservation through the 1920s and 1930s.

84. "Neue Landschaft," *Das Bayerland* 47, no. 16 (1936): 481–82, 484–85, 489.
85. Werner Lindner and Erich Böckler, *Die Stadt: Ihre Pflege und Gestaltung* (Munich: Georg D. W. Callway, 1939).
86. Werner Lindner, "Aufgaben des Heimatpflegers in der klein- und Mittelstadt," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 59, no. 3 (1939): 72. See also Werner Lindner, "Die Wanderausstellung 'Die schöne Stadt, ihre Entschandlung und Gestaltung,'" *Heimatleben* 3 (1939): 65–68; Anja Weise, "Entschandlung und Gestaltung als Prinzipien nationalsozialistischer Baupropaganda: Forschungen zur Wanderausstellung 'Die schöne Stadt,'" *Die Denkmalpflege* 69, no. 1 (2011): 34–41; Joshua Hagen, "Historic Preservation in Nazi Germany: Practices, Patterns, and Politics," in *Heritage at the Interface: Interpretation and Identity*, ed. Glenn Hooper (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2018), 56–71.
87. "Kurzberichte Rothenburg o.d.T.," *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 1937, no. 2 (1937): 83; Joshua Hagen, "The Most German of Towns: Creating an Ideal Nazi Community in Rothenburg ob der Tauber," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92, no. 1 (2004): 207–27.
88. Otto Hespeler, "Die Bereinigung des Lübecker Stadtbildes," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 74, no. 28 (1940): 342–43; Trost, "Vom ersten Abschnitt der Hildesheimer Altstadtssanierung," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 75, no. 49/50 (1941): 837.
89. Walter Brugmann, "Bausünden in Alt-Nürnberg," *Das Bayerland* 45, no. 7 (1934): 221; Heinrich Knipping, "Die Entschandlung und Wiederherstellung des mainzer Stadtbildes," *Deutsche Bauzeitung* 73, no. 3 (1939): 65–74; Alfred Dorn, *Die Semlowerstraße in Stralsund: Entschandlung und Gestaltung* (Berlin: Alfred Metzner, 1940).
90. H. Lutz, "Verschönerung des Braunschweiger Stadtbildes," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 11 (1937): 271–73.
91. Fritzler, "Die Bereinigung der Altstast Trier," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 58, no. 8 (1938): 196–97.
92. Hornemann, "Die Erhaltungsaktion der Stadt Meisenheim am Glan," *Jahrbuch der rheinischen Denkmalpflege* 16 (1939): 467–73.
93. Julius Schulte-Frohlinde, Walter Kratz, and Werner Lindner, eds., *Der Osten* (Munich: Georg D. W. Callway, 1940).
94. "Richtlinien zur Pflege und Verbesserung des Ortbildes im deutschen Osten," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 60, no. 50/51 (1940): 867–71; Werner Lindner, "Pflege und Verbesserung des Ortbildes im deutschen Osten," *Baugilde* 22, no. 31 (1940): 459–62.
95. In his memoirs, Speer claimed Tessenow steadfastly refused to participate in the regime's building projects. It is true that Tessenow accepted only a few minor private commissions after 1933, but Speer's claim is false. In fact, Tessenow was one of eleven architects who competed in the Prora contest at Speer's personal invitation. Tessenow also built an infantry base near Magdeburg and submitted a proposal for an administrative forum in Braunschweig. See Marco de Michelis, *Heinrich Tessenow 1876–1950: Das architektonische Gesamtwerk* (Stuttgart: Deutsches Verlags-Anstalt, 1991), 137–51.
96. *Werk* could also be translated as "factory." Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, 63. See Franz Sickingen, "Das Seebad der Zwanzigtausend im Bau: Das 'Kraft-durch-Freude'-Seebad Mukran entsteht," *Arbeitertum* 7, no. 15 (1937): 10–11; Jürgen Rostock and Franz Zadničėk, *Paradiesruinen: Das KdF-Seebad der Zwanzigtausend auf Rügen* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1992); Hasso Spode, "Fordism, Mass Tourism and the Third Reich: The 'Strength through Joy' Seaside Resort as an Index Fossil," *Journal of Social History* 38, no. 1 (2004): 127–55; Shelley Baranowski, "A Family Vacation for Workers: The Strength through Joy Resort at Prora," *German History* 25, no. 4 (2007): 539–59.
97. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 253, 408–9.
98. Barbara Keys, "The Body as a Political Space: Comparing Physical Education under Nazism and Stalinism," *German History* 27, no. 3 (2009): 395–413; Nadine Rossol, "Performing the Nation: Sports, Spectacles, and Aesthetics in Germany, 1926–1936," *Central European History* 43, no. 4 (2010): 616–38.

99. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 2:701.
100. Starcke, "Wann ist jemals für das Volk mehr geleistet worden," 6–8.
101. Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, *Deutschland-Berichte*, 463.
102. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 334–35.
103. Erich Kulke, *Das Schöne Dorf: Eine Anleitung für die Gestaltung des deutschen Dorfes* (Berlin: Reichsnährstand Verlag, 1937), 32.
104. Marrenbach, *Fundamente des Sieges*, 368.
105. Wilhelm Lotz, "Das deutsche Stadion in Nürnberg," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 57, no. 39 (1937): 976.
106. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 59.
107. Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, 31.
108. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 153.
109. Elke Fröhlich, ed., *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, vol. 4 (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1993), 99.
110. A. Gut, "Neue Land- und Stadtkirchen," *Die Kunst für alle* 51, no. 5 (1935/1936): 123. See also Holger Brülls, "'Deutsche Gotteshäuser': Kirchenbau im Nationalsozialismus: Ein unterschlagenes Kapitel der deutschen Architekturgeschichte," in *Christenkreuz und Hakenkreuz: Kirchenbau und sakrale Kunst im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Stefanie Endlich, Monica Geyler-von Bernus, and Beate Rossié (Berlin: Metropol, 2008), 85–95; Beate Rossié, "'Symbolhafte Sprache, die aus der Weltanschauung entspringt': Kirchliche Kunst im Nationalsozialismus," in *Christenkreuz und Hakenkreuz: Kirchenbau und sakrale Kunst im Nationalsozialismus*, ed. Stefanie Endlich, Monica Geyler-von Bernus, and Beate Rossié (Berlin: Metropol, 2008), 96–110.
111. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 303.
112. *A Nation Builds*, 37.
113. Markus Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Braunschweig, die "deutsche Siedlungsstadt" und die "Mustersiedlung der Deutschen Arbeitsfront" Braunschweig-Mascherode* (Hameln: C. W. Niemeyer, 2003), 283–84; Helmut Müller, "Landeskirche Neubaumaßnahmen in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus," in *Kirchenbau im Nationalsozialismus: Beispiele aus der braunschweigischen Landeskirche*, ed. Dieter Rammner and Michael Strauß (Wolfenbüttel: Evangelisch-lutherische Landeskirche in Braunschweig, 2009): 65–68.
114. Speer also commissioned Bestelmeyer to design Berlin's new city hall, but the project never started. See Heinz Thiersch, *German Bestelmeyer: Seine Leben und Wirken für die Baukunst* (Munich: D. W. Callwey, 1961).
115. Holger Brülls, *Neue Dome: Wiederaufnahme romanischer Bauformen und antimoderne Kulturkritik im Kirchenbau der Weimarer Republik und der NS-Zeit* (Berlin: Verlag für Bauwesen, 1994), 195; Brülls, "'Deutsche Gotteshäuser,'" 78; Stefanie Endlich, Monica Geyler-von Bernus, and Beate Rossié, eds., *Christenkreuz und Hakenkreuz: Kirchenbau und sakrale Kunst im Nationalsozialismus* (Berlin: Metropol, 2008).
116. Holger Brülls, "Ein fest Burg? Kirchenbau und Kirchenkampf in der NS-Zeit: Die Reformations-Gedächtniskirche in Nürnberg," in *Kunst auf Befehl? Dreiunddreißig bis Fünfundvierzig*, ed. Bazon Brock and Achim Preiß (Munich: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1990), 161–86.
117. See, for example, Luigi Monzo, "Kirchen bauen im Dritten Reich: Die Inversion der kirchenbaulichen Erneuerungsdynamik am Beispiel der von Fritz Kempf entworfenen Kirche St. Canisius in Augsburg," *das münster* 68, no. 1 (2015): 74–82.
118. Heinz Biehn, "Wormser Domplatzgestaltung 1936," *Deutsche Kunst und Denkmalpflege* 1937, no. 2 (1937): 64; Ursula Clemens-Schierbaum, *Mittelalterliche Sakralarchitektur in Ideologie und Alltag der Nationalsozialisten* (Weimar: VDG, 1995), 218–20.
119. Clemens-Schierbaum, *Mittelalterliche Sakralarchitektur*, 197–204.
120. The Krügers both studied at the Technical University in Berlin and, after briefly holding government positions, established a joint private practice. Aside from the Tannenberg Memorial, their projects tended to be rather nondescript. They also designed the new Spanish embassy in Berlin.
121. Werner Flechsig, "Der braunschweigische Staatsdom mit der Gruft Heinrichs des Löwen," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 3, no. 11 (1939): 358–65; Christian Fuhrmeister, "Purifi-

zierung, Moderne, Ideologie: Zur Umgestaltung des Braunschweiger Doms im Nationalsozialismus," in *Kirchenbau im Nationalsozialismus: Beispiele aus der braunschweigischen Landeskirche*, ed. Dieter Rammler and Michael Strauß (Wolfenbüttel: Evangelische-lutherische Landeskirche in Braunschweig, 2009), 87–101.

122. Katharine Ruf, "Der Quedlinburger Dom im Dritten Reich," *Kritische Berichte* 12, no. 1 (1984): 47–59.

123. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 177.

124. Früchtel, *Der Architekt Hermann Giesler*, 130.

125. Josef Umlauf, "Zur Stadtplanung in den neuen deutschen Ostgebieten," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 3/4 (1941): 118.

126. Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1, *The Years of Persecution, 1933–1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 276; Alan E. Steinweis, *Kristallnacht 1938* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009).

127. Rainer Stommer, *Die inszenierte Volksgemeinschaft: Die "Thing-Bewegung" im Dritten Reich* (Marburg: Jonas, 1985).

128. Robert Dirichs, "Der braunschweiger Thingsplatz," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 55, no. 41 (1935): 801–5; Preußischen Finanzministerium, ed., *Theaterbauten und Feiertätten* (Berlin: Wilhelm Ernst, 1939), 108; Helmut Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz: Architektur des Untergangs* (Vienna: Promedia, 1998), 308.

129. Christina Kossak, "Provincial Pretensions: Architecture and Town-Planning in the Gaucapital Koblenz 1933–45," *Architectural History* 41 (1997): 246–47; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 577.

130. Wolfgang Christian Schneider, "Hitlers 'wunderschöne Hauptstadt des Schwabenlandes': Nationalsozialistische Stadtplanung, Bauten und Bauvorhaben in Stuttgart," *Demokratie- und Arbeitergeschichte* 2 (1982): 61–62; Weihsmann, *Bauen unterm Hakenkreuz*, 838; Roland Müller, "Die Neugestaltungs-Pläne der 'Stadt der Auslandsdeutschen' Stuttgart," in *NS-Architektur: Macht und Symbolpolitik*, ed. Tilman Harlander and Wolfram Pyta (Berlin: Lit, 2010), 156.

131. Hans Stephan, "Zwei nationalsozialistische Feiertätten Segeberg in Holstein und Northheim am Harz," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 57, no. 48 (1937): 1193–97.

132. Ludwig Moshamer, "Die Thingstätte und ihre Bedeutung für das kommende deutsche Theater," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 19, no. 12 (1935): 425–32.

133. Fröhlich, *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, 354.

134. Fritz Schaller, "Vom Beruf des Architekten in der Zeit," *Monatshefte für Baukunst und Städtebau* 20, no. 10 (1936): 348.

135. *Der Parteitag Großdeutschland vom 5. bis 12. September 1938* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1938), 81.

136. Kaldewei, "Stedlingsehre" soll für ganz Deutschland ein Wallfahrtsort werden.

137. Kaldewei, "Stedlingsehre" soll für ganz Deutschland ein Wallfahrtsort werden, 21–22.

138. Kaldewei, "Stedlingsehre" soll für ganz Deutschland ein Wallfahrtsort werden, 16–18.

139. Ludwig Siebert, "Deutsches Kulturschaffen als völkische Pflicht," in *Wiedererstandene Baudenkmäler: Ausgewählte Arbeiten aus dem Ludwig-Siebert-Programme zur Erhaltung bayerische Baudenkmäler*, ed. Ludwig Siebert (Munich: Bruckmann, 1941), 9. See also Joshua Hagen, "Historic Preservation in Nazi Germany: Place, Memory, and Nationalism," *Journal of Historical Geography* 35, no. 4 (2009): 690–715.

140. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 994–95.

141. The Dietrich-Eckhart Theater was pictured as part of the Berlin Olympics complex. Portions of the Annaberg amphitheater are also shown in one image focusing on the Freikorps Monument located above. Neither were presented as part of any broader program or referred to as "Thing" structures. Troost, *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich*.

142. RGB (1940): 990; Karl Hüser, *Wewelsburg 1933 bis 1945: Kult- und Terrorstätte der SS* (Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1987); Markus Moors, "Das 'Reichhaus der SS-Gruppenführer': Himmler Pläne und Absichten in Wewelsburg," in *Die SS, Himmler und die Wewelsburg*, ed. Jan Erik Schulte (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2009), 161–79.

143. Joshua Hagen, "Places of Memory and Mourning in Nazi Germany," in *Memory, Place and Identity: Commemoration and Remembrance of War and Conflict*, ed. Danielle Drozdowski, Sarah De Nardi, and Emma Waterton (London: Routledge, 2016), 236–54.

144. Based in Munich, Tischler served as the commission's chief architect from 1926 to 1959.

145. Christian Fuhrmeister, "Die 'unsterbliche Landschaft,' der Raum des Reiches und die Toten der Nation: Die Totenburgen Bitoli (1936) und Quero (1939) als strategische Memorialarchitektur," *kritische berichte* 29, no. 2 (2001): 57. See also Henri Nannen, "Totenmale des grossen Krieges," *Die Kunst für alle* 54, no. 2 (1938/1939): 62–64; Hans Gstettner, "Die deutsche Gestalt des Kriegergrabes: Zum Werk des Volksbundes Deutsche Kriegergräberfürsorge," *Die Kunst für alle* 55, no. 7 (1939/1940): 145–54; George L. Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 85–87; Ekkehard Mai, "Von 1930 bis 1945: Ehrenmäler und Totenburgen," in *Wilhelm Kreis: Architekt zwischen Kaiserreich und Demokratie*, ed. Winfried Nerdinger and Ekkehard Mai (Munich: Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1994), 157–67; Gunnar Brands, "From World War I Cemeteries to the Nazi 'Fortresses of the Dead': Architecture, Heroic Landscape, and the Quest for National Identity in Germany," in *Places of Commemoration: Search for Identity and Landscape*, ed. Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2001), 215–56.

146. The Battle of Grunwald also took place in the general vicinity. Fought in 1410, the battle saw Polish-Lithuanian forces decisively defeat the Teutonic Knights.

147. Troost, *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, 34; Jürgen Tietz, "Denkmal zwischen den Zeiten: Das ostpreußische Tannenberg-Nationaldenkmal während der Weimarer Republik und des Nationalsozialismus," *Nordost-Archiv* 6, no. 1 (1997): 41–68.

148. George L. Mosse, *The Nationalization of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars through the Third Reich* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1975), 69.

149. Friedrich Tamms, "Die Krieger Ehrenmäler von Wilhelm Kreis," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 7, no. 3 (1943): 50, 51.

150. Tamms, "Die Krieger Ehrenmäler von Wilhelm Kreis," 51, 57.

151. Tamms, "Die Krieger Ehrenmäler von Wilhelm Kreis," 57. See also Holger H. Herwig, "The Cult of Heroic Death in Nazi Architecture," in *War Memory and Popular Culture: Essays in Remembrance and Commemoration*, ed. Michael Keren and Holger H. Herwig (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009).

152. Gerdy Troost, ed., *Das Bauen im neuen Reich*, 2nd ed. (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark, 1943), 7.

153. Brigitte Kepplinger, "'Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens' im Nationalsozialismus: Die 'Aktion T4,'" in *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas: Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*, ed. Günter Morsch and Bertrand Perz (Berlin: Metropol, 2011), 84; Georg Lilienthal, "Der Gasmord in Hadamar," in *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas: Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung*, ed. Günter Morsch and Bertrand Perz (Berlin: Metropol, 2011), 141.

154. Rainer Stommer, ed., *Medizin im Dienste der Rassenideologie: Die "Führerschule der Deutschen Ärzteschaft" in Alt Rehse* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2008).

155. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 428.

156. "Hitler Teaches Cream of Youth to Be Dictators," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, November 21, 1937, 11.

157. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 1:347.

## CHAPTER 6: THE MACHINERY OF CONQUEST

1. Gerhard L. Weinberg, ed., *Hitler's Second Book: The Unpublished Sequel to Mein Kampf by Adolf Hitler*, trans. Krista Smith (New York: Enigma, 2003), 227; Andreas Süßmilch, *Moderniza-*

tion and Rationalisation in National Socialist Germany, 1933–1945: “We Must Create the New Man” (Hamburg: Dr. Kovač, 2012), 145.

2. To differing degrees and at different times, most other major powers reached similar conclusions. See Jean-Louis Cohen, *Architecture in Uniform: Designing and Building for the Second World War* (Montreal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 2011).

3. Wilhelm Treue, “Hitlers Denkschrift zum Vierjahresplan 1936,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 3, no. 2 (1955): 210.

4. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 2 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 829.

5. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 1:530.

6. Hermann Göring rose to fame as a World War I fighter ace. After stints as a commercial pilot and a period of exile following the failed putsch, Göring returned to Germany and quickly became one of Hitler’s closest confidants. Göring played a key role in introducing Hitler to German industrialists who helped finance the Party’s rise to power. Hitler rewarded Göring with various posts, including the ministerial portfolios for aviation, forestry, and economics. Göring often seemed removed from the broader ideological debates within the movement, except insofar as they presented opportunities to enhance his power and lavish lifestyle. Göring exhibited little interest in architecture, aside from his personal residences in Berlin and Obersalzberg, as well as his luxurious Carinhall hunting estate.

7. Hermann Göring, “Gemeinden und Vierjahresplan,” *Der Gemeindetag* 31, no. 6/7 (1937): 219.

8. Anson Rabinbach, “Beauty of Labor: The Aesthetics of Production in the Third Reich,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 11, no. 4 (1976): 43–74; Shelley Baranowski, *Strength through Joy: Consumerism and Mass Tourism in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 75–117.

9. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 57.

10. Otto Marrenbach, ed., *Fundamente des Sieges: Die Gesamtarbeit der Deutschen Arbeitsfront von 1933 bis 1940* (Berlin: Verlag der Deutschen Arbeitsfront, 1940), 325.

11. Heinrich Schulz, *Sozialpolitik im neuen Deutschland* (Berlin: Deutsche Informations-Stelle, 1941), 80.

12. Fritz Todt, “Schönheit der Technik,” *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* 2, no. 1 (1938): 8–15. See also Gerhard Fehl, “Die Moderne unterm Hakenkreuz: Ein Versuch, die Rolle funktionalistischer Architektur im Dritten Reich zu klären,” in *Faschistische Architekturen: Planen und Bauen in Europa 1930–1945*, ed. Hartmut Frank (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1985), 88–122; David Gartmen, *From Autos to Architecture: Fordism and Architectural Aesthetics in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009), 145–52.

13. See Werner Lindner, *Die Ingenieurbauten in ihrer guten Gestaltung* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1923); Werner Lindner, *Bauten der Technik: Ihre Form und Wirkung—Werkanlagen* (Berlin: Ernst Wasmuth, 1927).

14. Roland May, “‘Express the Idea of Engineering as Succinctly as Possible’: Paul Bonatz and Engineering Structures,” in *Paul Bonatz 1877–1956*, ed. Wolfgang Voigt and Roland May (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 2010), 101–17.

15. Albert Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, trans. by Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1976), 174–75.

16. Schulz, *Sozialpolitik im neuen Deutschland*, 52; Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the “National Community”* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 211; Baranowski, *Strength through Joy*, 110–11; Michael Schneider, “Organisation aller schaffenden Deutschen der Stirn und der Faust’: Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront (DAF),” in “Und sie werden nicht mehr frei sein ihr ganzes Leben”: *Funktion und Stellenwert der NSDAP, ihrer Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände im “Dritten Reich,”* ed. Stephanie Becker and Christoph Studt (Berlin: Lit, 2012), 172.

17. Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Bayern 1933–1945* (Munich: Architekturmuseum der Technische Universität München, 1993), 430; Daniel Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe: The German Aviation Industry in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012), 18.

18. Herbert Rimpl and Hermann Mäckler, *Ein deutsches Flugzeugwerk: Die Heinkel-Werke Oranienburg* (Berlin: Wiking, 1938), 5. See also Hermann Mäckler, "Die Heinkel-Werke Oranienburg," *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 4, no. 2 (1940): 21–31. After completing his studies under Fischer and Bestelmeyer in Munich in 1926, Rimpl held various positions before joining the Heinkel firm in 1934 as the head of its construction office. Rimpl also accepted several commissions for military-industrial projects across Germany and the occupied territories, especially near Salzgitter and Linz, before contributing to Speer's reconstruction staff and efforts to relocate military production to underground facilities. See Jo Sollich, *Herbert Rimpl (1902–1978): Architektur-Konzern unter Hermann Göring und Albert Speer, Architekt des Deutschen Wiederaufbaus, Bauten und Projekte* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 2013).

19. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 438.

20. R. J. Overy, *War and Economy in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 144–74.

21. *Vier Jahre Hermann-Göring-Werke Salzgitter* (Wolfenbüttel: Melchior, 2009 [1941]), 86; Christian Schneider, *Stadtgründung im Dritten Reich, Wolfsburg und Salzgitter: Ideologie, Ressortpolitik, Repräsentation* (Munich: Heinz Moos, 1979); Erhard Forndran, *Die Stadt- und Industrie-gründung Wolfsburg und Salzgitter: Entscheidungsprozesse im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1984).

22. Robert H. Kargon and Arthur P. Molella, *Invented Edens: Techno-Cities of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008), 37–45.

23. Joachim Fischer-Dieskau, "Die Entwicklung des Wohnstättenbaues," *Vierjahresplan* 2, no. 10 (1938): 584.

24. Wilhelm Cohrs, "Bauen, Siedeln, Wohnen: Rückblick und Ausblick," *Der Arbeitertum* 8, no. 6 (1938–1939): 10.

25. Heinrich Eggerstedt, "Fünf Jahre Architekturbüro der Deutschen Arbeitsfront," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 19, no. 11 (1939): 548.

26. Reichsorganisationsleiter der NSDAP, ed., *Organisationsbuch der NSDAP* (Munich: Franz Eher, 1943), 213–13a.

27. Cohrs, "Bauen, Siedeln, Wohnen," 9; Gerhard Starcke, *Die Deutsche Arbeitsfront: Eine Darstellung über Zweck, Leistung und Ziele* (Berlin: Verlag für Sozialpolitik, Wirtschaft und Statistik, 1940), 155.

28. Dieter Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes im Nationalsozialismus: Eine soziologische Untersuchung ideologisch fundierter Leitbilder in Architektur, Städtebau und Raumplanung des Dritten Reiches* (Bonn: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1993), 236.

29. Tilman Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine: Wohnungsbau und Wohnungspolitik in der Zeit des Nationalsozialismus* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1995), 87–100.

30. Ernst von Stuckrad, "Noch einmal: DAF und Arbeiterwohnstättenbau," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 6 (1937): 156–59.

31. Walter Groß, "Bevölkerungspolitische Aufgaben," *Der Vierjahresplan* 1, no. 5 (1937): 279.

32. Wolfgang Knorr, "Bevölkerungspolitische Forderung im Wohnungsbau," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 19, no. 2 (1939): 79.

33. Hannsgeorg Oechler, "Vierjahresplan-Siedlung der DAF im Gau Kurhessen," *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 21 (1937): 545–52; Hannsgeorg Oechler, "Sontra, die erste Vierjahresplan-Siedlung der D.A.F.," *Baumeister* 36, no. 6 (1938): 179–87.

34. Karl Neupert, "Die Gestaltung des deutschen Siedlungsbildes," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 60, no. 30/31 (1940): 460.

35. Markus Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Braunschweig, die "deutsche Siedlungsstadt" und die "Mustersiedlung der Deutschen Arbeitsfront" Braunschweig-Mascherode* (Hameln: C. W. Niemeyer, 2003), 135–41.

36. Gerhard Meier, "Das 'Göring-Heim' (1937–1945): Wohnungsbau für die Messerschmitt-Werke," in *Architektur in Regensburg 1933–1945*, ed. Stefan Maier (Regensburg: CH-Verlag, 1989),

97–108; Helmut Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz: Kommunalpolitik in Regensburg während der NS-Zeit* (Regensburg: Universitätsverlag Regensburg, 1994), 321–26.

37. “Die Arbeiterwohnstadt Pulsen i. Sa.,” *Zentrallblatt der Bauverwaltung* 60, no. 30/31 (1940): 464–68; “Stadtviertelgestaltung der Zukunft: Projektteil für die Mitteldeutschen Stahlwerke in Pulsen,” *Bauamt und Gemeindebau* 23, no. 10 (1941): 95.

38. Michael Fleischer, “Die Gross-Siedlung Danzig-Stolzenberg,” *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 16 (1941): 554–58; Herbert Sickert, “Die Bauten der ‘neuen Heimat’ im Gau Danzig-Westpreussen,” *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 16 (1941): 558–63; Karl Brunne, “Die Groß-Siedlung Elbing-Kupferhammer,” *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 16 (1941): 567–70.

39. Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 287–91.

40. Ernst von Stuckrad, “Der Wohnungs- und Siedlungsbau im Vierjahresplan,” *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 21 (1937): 544.

41. Rudolf Schmeer, “Moderne Wohnungswirtschaft,” *Arbeitertum* 7, no. 3 (1937): 3–4.

42. Göring, “Gemeinden und Vierjahresplan,” 221.

43. Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands, ed., *Deutschland-Berichte der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (Sopade)*, vol. 5, no. 10 (Salzhausen: Petra Nettelbeck, 1980 [1938]), 1107.

44. W. Gebhardt, “Rangordnung der grossen nationalen Aufgaben,” *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 16, no. 3 (1936): 45–46.

45. W. Gebhardt, “Der Siedlungsbau 1936/37: Rückblick und Ausblick,” *Bauen Siedeln Wohnen* 17, no. 1 (1937): 1–3.

46. Quoted in Roswitha Mattausch, *Siedlungsbau und Stadtneugründungen im deutschen Faschismus* (Frankfurt: Haag & Herchen, 1981), 122.

47. Quoted in Ulrike Haerendel, *Kommunale Wohnungspolitik im Dritten Reich: Siedlungs-ideologie, Kleinhausbau und “Wohnraumarisierung” am Beispiel München* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1999), 149.

48. Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 421.

49. Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 423.

50. Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 421–22.

51. Mittmann, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 63–64.

52. In comparison, the stock of passenger cars increased from 61,328 in 1933 to only 70,400 in 1944. Alfred C. Mierzejewski, *The Most Valuable Asset of the Reich: A History of the German National Railway*, vol. 2, 1933–1945 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 165; Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (New York: Viking, 2006), 343–44.

53. Anton Joachimsthaler, *Die Breitspurbahn Hitlers: Eine Dokumentation über die geplante transkontinentale 3-Meter Breitspuren Eisenbahn der Jahre 1942–1945* (Freiburg: Eisenbahn-Kurier, 1981).

54. Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 1:251.

55. *Die Autobahn* 9 (July 1933): 7–9.

56. Quoted in Erhard Schütz and Eckhard Gruber, *Mythos Reichsautobahn: Bau und Inszenierung der “Strassen des Führers” 1933–1941* (Berlin: Links, 1996), 18.

57. For example, see Fritz Todt, “Adolf Hitler und seine Straßen,” in *Adolf Hitler: Bilder aus dem Leben des Führers*, ed. Cigaretten-Bilderdienst (Hamburg: Cigaretten-Bilderdienst, 1936), 82–83, which stresses Hitler’s role in planning specific routes and directly refers to the Autobahn as “his streets.”

58. Schütz and Gruber, *Mythos Reichsautobahn*, 40.

59. *Die Baukunst* (August 1939): 329.

60. William H. Rollins, “Whose Landscape? Technology, Fascism, and Environmentalism on the National Socialist Autobahn,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85, no. 3 (1995): 494–520.

61. James D. Shand, “The Reichsautobahn: Symbol for the Third Reich,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 19, no. 2 (1984): 189–200.

62. Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 323.



63. Thomas Zeller, "Building and Rebuilding the Landscape of the Autobahn, 1930–70," in *The World beyond the Windshield: Roads and Landscapes in the United States and Europe*, ed. Christof Mauch and Thomas Zeller (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008), 125–42.

64. Roland May, *Pontifex Maximus: Der Architekt Paul Bonatz und die Brücken* (Münster: Monsenstein and Vannerdat, 2011), 75.

65. In addition to Tamm, two of Bonatz's main partners were the engineers Fritz Leonhardt and Karl Schaechterle. See May, *Pontifex Maximus*; Klaus Stiglat, *Bauingenieure und ihr Werk* (Berlin: Ernst & Sohn, 2004), 232–41, 358.

66. Paul Bonatz, "Die Gestaltung der Tankstellen der Reichsautobahnen," in *Reichsautobahn-Tankanlagen*, ed. Paul Bonatz and Bruno Wehner (Berlin: Volk und Reich, 1942), 13.

67. Other models included the Type Hannover by Werner March and the Type Frankfurt by Carl August Bembé, which shared the modernist lines of the Type Fürstenwalde. Mies van der Rohe consulted with March in creating the Type Hannover design. See Bonatz, "Die Gestaltung der Tankstellen der Reichsautobahnen."

68. Paul Bonatz, "Die Gesichtspunkte der Gestaltung," in *Reichsautobahn-Strassenmeistereien*, ed. Paul Bonatz and Bruno Wehner (Berlin: Volk und Reich, 1942), 11.

69. Stephen H. Roberts, *The House That Hitler Built* (New York: Harper, 1938), 240.

70. Schütz and Gruber, *Mythos Reichsautobahn*, 11; Thomas Kunze and Rainer Stommer, "Geschichte der Reichsautobahn," in *Reichsautobahn: Pyramiden des Dritten Reichs. Analysen zur Ästhetik eines unbewältigten Mythos*, ed. Rainer Stommer (Marburg: Jonas, 1982), 29.

71. Christopher Kopper, "Germany's National Socialist Transport Policy and the Claim of Modernity: Reality or Fake?" *Journal of Transport History* 34, no. 2 (2013): 162–76.

72. Hans Mommsen and Manfred Grieger, *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: ECON, 1996); Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 154–56.

73. Koller studied at the technical universities in Vienna and Berlin, where he met Speer. Koller switched between various minor positions before Speer helped him get appointed to the Homestead Office. Koller was virtually unknown within the architectural community when Speer nominated him to lead planning for the City of the KdF Car in 1937. Koller remained in this position until leaving for military service in 1942.

74. Marrenbach, *Fundamente des Sieges*, 364; Jan Otakar Fischer, "Memento Machinae: Engineering the Past in Wolfsburg," in *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past*, ed. Gavriel D. Rosenfelds and Paul B. Jaskot (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 89–115.

75. Birgit Rosendahl-Kraas, *Die Stadt der Volkstraktorenwerke: Eine Stadtutopie im "Dritten Reich"* (Wiesbaden: M. Galunder, 1999).

76. Elke Dittrich, *Der Flughafen Tempelhof in Entwurfszeichnungen und Modellen 1935–1944* (Berlin: Lukas, 2005); Elke Dittrich, *Ernst Sagebiel: Leben und Werk (1892–1970)* (Berlin: Lukas, 2005).

77. Jiří Janáč, *European Coasts of Bohemia: Negotiating the Danube-Oder-Elbe Canal in the Troubled Twentieth Century* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012), 85–129.

78. Bernd Windsheimer, "Bauten im Umfeld: Die Infrastruktur des Reichsparteitagsgelände," in *Geländebegehung: Das Reichsparteitagsgelände in Nürnberg*, ed. Geschichte für Alle, 2nd ed. (Nuremberg: Sandberg, 1995), 119.

79. *Reichsgesetzblatt (RGB) Teil I* (1941): 467.

80. Bernhard Stier, "Nationalsozialistische Sonderinstanzen in der Energiewirtschaft: Der Generalinspektor für Wasser und Energie 1941–1945," in *Hitlers Kommissare: Sondergewalten in der nationalsozialistischen Diktatur*, ed. Rüdiger Hachtmann and Winfried Süß (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 156–57.

81. *RGB* (1935): 375.

82. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 659.

83. Franz W. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt: Bauten für Staat und Wehrmacht 1939–1945* (Köln: Bernard & Graefe, 1987), 21.

84. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 469–73.

85. "Neue Kasernenbauten," *Die Kunst Deutsche Reich* 4, no. 5 (1940): 77.

86. Dittrich, *Ernst Sagebiel*, 59.
87. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 474–76.
88. Ingo Sommer, *Der Stadt der 500 000: NS-Stadtplanung und Architektur in Wilhelmshaven* (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1993), 129.
89. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt*, 35.
90. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt*, 128; Lars Hellwinkel, *Hitlers Tor zum Atlantik: Die deutschen Marinestützpunkte in Frankreich 1940–1945* (Berlin: Ch. Links, 2012), 64, 67–72, 132.
91. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 499–500; Jay Hatheway, *In Perfect Formation: SS Ideology and the SS-Junkerschule-Tölz* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 1999), 82–83; Paul B. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 117–20.
92. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 498.
93. Wilhelm Lotz, “Heeres-Kriegerschule-Danzig,” *Die Kunst im Deutschen Reich* 4, no. 5 (1940): 76.
94. J. E. Kaufmann and H. W. Kaufmann, *Fortress Third Reich: German Fortifications and Defense Systems in World War II* (Boston: Da Capo, 2003), 57–66, 89.
95. Neil Short, *Hitler’s Siegfried Line* (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 2002); Kaufmann and Kaufmann, *Fortress Third Reich*, 89–112.
96. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt*, 15; Christoph Tempel, “Kurze Beschreibung der Geschichte des Westwallbaus in den Jahren 1938–1945,” in *Wir bauen des Reiches Sicherheit: Mythos und Realität des Westwalls 1939 bis 1945*, ed. Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst (Berlin: Argon, 1992), 27.
97. Willi Henne, “Vom Bau des Westalles,” in *Deutsche Gemeinschaftsarbeit: Geschichte, Idee und Bau des Westwalls*, ed. Camillo Sangiorgio (Stuttgart: Deutscher Volksbücher, 1940), 52; Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt*, 15.
98. Paul Schmitthenner, “Die wehrpolitische Bedeutung des Westalles,” in *Deutsche Gemeinschaftsarbeit: Geschichte, Idee und Bau des Westwalls*, ed. Camillo Sangiorgio (Stuttgart: Deutscher Volksbücher, 1940), 78, 91.
99. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt*, 146; Heinrich Breloer and Rainer Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer: Spuren eines Kriegsverbrechers* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2006), 163.
100. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt*, 38–48; J. E. Kaufmann, H. W. Kaufmann, Aleksander Jankovič-Potočnik, and Vladimir Tonič, *The Atlantic Wall: History and Guide* (Barnsley, UK: Pen & Sword Military, 2012), 76–77.
101. Elke Fröhlich, ed., *Die Tagebücher von Joseph Goebbels*, vol. 8 (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1993), 129.
102. RGB (1935): 827, (1937): 559; Richard Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed: Allied Air War over Europe, 1940–1945* (New York: Viking, 2014), 232–51.
103. Steven J. Zaloga, *Defense of the Third Reich 1941–45* (New York: Osprey, 2012), 27; Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed*, 238–40.
104. Zaloga, *Defense of the Third Reich*, 45–46; Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed*, 238–40.
105. Kurt Krause, “Die Formgebung bombensicherer Bauwerke,” *Die Bauzeitung* 38, no. 25 (1941): 301–10.
106. Tamms was a classmate with Speer and Wolters in Berlin before joining the Berlin city building office. Tamms contributed to Speer’s initial renovations of the Reich Chancellery in 1934 before joining the Autobahn agency. Todt appointed Tamms and Bonatz to supervise the design of gas stations and bridges. Tamms also contributed to the redesign of the Führer cities, such as the Nibelungen Bridge in Linz, but most of his projects went unrealized. Tamms provided an early bridge between the OT and Speer’s staff.
107. Michael Foedrowitz, *The Flak Towers in Berlin, Hamburg and Vienna 1940–1950* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer, 1998); Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed*, 248.
108. Karl Christian Führer, “Anspruch und Realität: Das Scheitern der nationalsozialistischen Wohnungsbaupolitik,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 45, no. 2 (1997): 253; Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 260; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 672.
109. RGB (1942): 623.

110. Fischer-Dieskau, "Zum dritten Erlass des Führers über den deutschen Wohnungsbau," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 2, no. 23 (1942): 722.

111. Heinrich Dörr, "Bomben brechen die 'Haufen'-Stadt," *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5, no. 5 (1941): 270.

112. Johann Wilhelm Ludowici, *Totale Landesverteidigung* (Oldenburg: Gerhard Stalling, 1936), 7, 12.

113. Friedrich Nicolaus, "Wehrhafter Städtebau: Betrachtungen und Erfahrungen zur Gestaltung der neuen Stadt," *Der soziale Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 1, no. 5 (1941): 163.

114. Joachim Fischer-Dieskau, "Totale Wohnungsbau," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 3, no. 11/12 (1943): 220.

115. RGB (1943): 127.

116. RGB (1942): 545–46.

117. Hans Schönbein, "Der Kriegseinheitstyp für den Wohnungsbau," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 3, no. 13/14 (1943): 231.

118. Ernst Neufert, "Die Pläne zum Kriegseinheitstyp," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 3, no. 13/14 (1943): 233. Neufert studied at the Bauhaus academy and then worked as Gropius's chief deputy for the construction of the Bauhaus buildings in Dessau. He first enjoyed acclaim through the publication of *Bauentwurfslehre* in 1936, which was republished in its fortieth German edition in 2012, as well as dozens of foreign translations. He became widely recognized as the foremost expert in rationalization in design and was soon appointed chief deputy for standardization on Speer's staff. Neufert's most striking vision was the "house-building machine," a mobile enclosure within which long stretches of five-story apartment buildings could be laid down. See Walter Prigge, ed., *Ernst Neufert: Normierte Baukultur im 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1999).

119. Robert Ley, "Das deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 3, no. 23/24 (1943): 352.

120. Münk, *Die Organisation des Raumes*, 230, 257; Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 263.

121. RGB (1943): 535.

122. Ley, "Das deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk," 353.

123. Robert Ley, "Grundsätzliches zum künftigen Wohnungsbau," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 4, no. 5/6 (1944): 53.

124. Hans Spiegel, "Gestaltung und Ausführung des Behelfsheimes," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 4, no. 1/2 (1944): 4. Spiegel's studies in architecture were interrupted by military service during World War I, but he eventually established a private practice and earned a doctorate from the Technical University in Berlin in 1930. He designed several villas during the 1920s that clearly embraced modernism.

125. "Das Deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk," *Der Vierjahresplan* 8, no. 1 (1944): 21–22; Friedrich Nicolaus, "Die Aufstellung von einfachen Behelfsheimen in Siedlungsforum und ihre gruppenweise Zusammenfassung," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 4, no. 15/16 (1944): 178–84.

126. Heinrich Wiepking-Jürgensmann, "Das Behelfsheim in der Landschaft," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 4, no. 3/4 (1944): 35–42.

127. Victor Noack, "Das Behelfsheim," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 46, no. 11/22 (1944): 65.

128. Marie-Luise Recker, *National-sozialistische Sozialpolitik im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1985), 254–65; Tilman Harlander and Gerhard Fehl, eds., *Hitlers sozialer Wohnungsbau 1940–1945: Wohnungspolitik, Baugestaltung und Siedlungsplanung* (Hamburg: Hans Christians, 1986), 71; Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 271.

129. Ley, "Das deutsche Wohnungshilfswerk," 352.

130. Haerendel, *Kommunale Wohnungspolitik*, 420–21; Hiltrud Kier, Karen Liesenfeld, and Horst Matzerath, eds., *Architektur der 30er und 40er Jahre in Köln: Materialien zur Baugeschichte im Nationalsozialismus* (Cologne: Emons, 1999), 169–71.

131. Ley, "Grundsätzliches zum künftigen Wohnungsbau," 49.

132. Walter Kiehl, "In Behelfsheimen notiert," *Der Wohnungsbau in Deutschland* 4, no. 21/22 (1944): 231.
133. Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 450.
134. Halter, *Stadt unterm Hakenkreuz*, 454–55.
135. "Wohnungs- und bauliche Selbsthilfe auf dem Land," *Neues Bauerntum* 36, no. 9/10 (1944): 343.
136. Ley, "Grundsätzliches zum künftigen Wohnungsbau," 50–51.
137. Ley, "Grundsätzliches zum künftigen Wohnungsbau," 50–51.
138. Harlander, *Zwischen Heimstätte und Wohnmaschine*, 285–86.
139. Franz Seidler and Dieter Zeigert, *Hitler's Secret Headquarters: The Führer's Wartime Bases, from the Invasion of France to the Berlin Bunker* (Mechanicsville, PA: Stackpole, 2004), 58–60. See also Blaine Taylor, *Hitler's Headquarters: From Beer Hall to Bunker, 1920–1945* (Washington, DC: Potomac, 2007).
140. Seidler and Zeigert, *Hitler's Secret Headquarters*, 93–123.
141. Seidler and Zeigert, *Hitler's Secret Headquarters*, 218–35.
142. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 539.

## CHAPTER 7: WORKING TOWARD GENOCIDE

1. *Reichsgesetzblatt Teil I* (1935): 769.
2. Wilhelm Schlaghecke, *Das Heim im Reichsarbeitsdienst*, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt: Bechhold, 1937), 11. See also Rolf von Gönner, ed., *Spaten und Ähre: Das Handbuch der deutschen Jugend im Reichsarbeitsdienst* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinkel, 1937), 139–45, 183–90; Winfried Nerdinger, ed., *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus: Bayern 1933–1945* (Munich: Architekturmuseum der Technische Universität München, 1993), 186–91; Manfred Seifert, *Kulturarbeit im Reichsarbeitsdienst: Theorie und Praxis nationalsozialistischer Kulturpflege im Kontext historisch-politischer, organisatorischer und ideologischer Einflüsse* (Münster: Waxmann, 1996), 238–45; Kiran Klaus Patel, *Soldiers of Labor: Labor Service in Nazi Germany and New Deal America, 1933–1945* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 199–216; Peter Fritzsche, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 96–103.
3. Quoted in Manfred Seifert, "'Ehrendienst am deutschen Volke' und 'Schule der Volksgemeinschaft': Der Reichsarbeitsdienst," in *"Und sie werden nicht mehr frei sein ihr ganzes Leben": Funktion und Stellenwert der NSDAP, ihrer Gliederungen und angeschlossenen Verbände im "Dritten Reich,"* ed. Stephanie Becker and Christoph Studt (Berlin: Lit, 2012), 133–34.
4. Christoph Tempel, "Kurze Beschreibung der Geschichte des Westwallbaus in den Jahren 1938–1945," in *Wir bauen des Reiches Sicherheit: Mythos und Realität des Westwalls 1939 bis 1945*, ed. Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst (Berlin: Argon, 1992), 22.
5. Adam Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction: The Making and Breaking of the Nazi Economy* (New York: Viking, 2006), 260.
6. Martin Weinmann, ed., *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem* (Frankfurt: Zweitausendeins, 1990 [1949, 1951]); Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 358, 517. Also Timothy W. Mason, *Social Policy in the Third Reich: The Working Class and the "National Community"* (Oxford: Berg, 1993), 346–47; Karin Orth, "Camps," in *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, ed. Peter Hayes and John K. Roth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 372; Mark Spoerer, "Labor Sites," in *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, ed. Peter Hayes and John K. Roth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 354.
7. *Vier Jahre Hermann-Göring-Werke Salzgitter* (Wolfenbüttel: Melchior, 2009 [1941]), 140, 142, 151.
8. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 517–19.
9. Erhard Knechtel, *Arbeitseinsatz im Baugewerbe im Deutschen Reich 1939–1945* (Berlin: Hauptverband der Deutschen Bauindustrie, 2000), 9, 11.

10. Heinrich Himmler earned a degree in agronomy in Munich and rose through the Party ranks, eventually becoming head of the SS in 1929. Himmler also became chief of police, effectively giving him responsibility for Germany's law enforcement and security agencies. Himmler was aligned with the movement's folkish wing but mostly operated alone. Himmler confined his interest in architecture to a limited number of "cultish" sites or facilities used by the SS, like the Wewelsburg complex.

11. Hermann Kaienburg, "Vernichtung durch Arbeit"—*der Fall Neuengamme: Die Wirtschaftsbestrebungen der SS und ihre Auswirkungen auf die Existenzbedingungen der KZ-Gefangenen* (Bonn: J. H. W. Dietz, 1990), 25–28; Jan Erik Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung: Das Wirtschaftsimperium der SS* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001), 110. One of the best English-language sources is Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015). On the following sections, see also Weinmann, *Das nationalsozialistische Lagersystem*; Wolfgang Benz and Barbara Distel, eds., *Der Ort des Terrors: Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager*, 9 vols. (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2005–2009); Geoffrey P. Megargree, ed., *Encyclopedia of Camps and Ghettos, 1933–1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009); Nikolaus Wachsmann, "The Dynamics of Destruction: The Development of the Concentration Camps, 1933–1945," in *Concentration Camps in Nazi Germany: The New Histories*, ed. Jane Caplan and Nikolaus Wachsmann (New York: Routledge, 2010), 17–43. A great deal of information is also available at the websites of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (<http://www.ushmm.org>) and Yad Vashem (<http://www.yadvashem.org>).

12. Harold Marcuse, *Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933–2001* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 31–37.

13. Robert Sommer, *Das KZ-Bordell: Sexuelle Zwangsarbeit in nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslagern* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2010), 166–68.

14. Paul B. Jaskot, *The Architecture of Oppression: The SS, Forced Labor and the Nazi Monumental Building Economy* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 126–39; Piotr Setkiewicz, "The Fencing and System for Preventing Prisoner Escapes at Auschwitz Concentration Camp," in *The Architecture of Crime: The Security and Isolation System of the Auschwitz Camp*, ed. Teresa Świebicka, trans. William Brand (Oświęcim, Poland: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2008), 37, 45–46.

15. Kaienburg, "Vernichtung durch Arbeit," 92.

16. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 103–23.

17. Kaienburg, "Vernichtung durch Arbeit," 262–63.

18. Hermann Kaienburg, *Der Militär- und Wirtschaftskomplex der SS im KZ-Standort Sachsenhausen-Oranienburg: Schnittpunkt von KZ-System, Waffen-SS und Judenmord* (Berlin: Metropol, 2006), 129–60.

19. Kaienburg, *Der Militär- und Wirtschaftskomplex*, 118–28.

20. Kaienburg, *Der Militär- und Wirtschaftskomplex*, 301–20.

21. Kaienburg, *Der Militär- und Wirtschaftskomplex*, 204–10.

22. Michael Thad Allen, *The Business of Genocide: The SS, Slave Labor, and the Concentration Camps* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 166.

23. Allen, *The Business of Genocide*, 167.

24. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 221, 400–401.

25. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 393–94.

26. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 532.

27. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 374.

28. Heinrich Breloer and Rainer Zimmer, *Die Akte Speer: Spuren eines Kriegsverbrechers* (Berlin: Propyläen, 2006), 181–87, 449–51.

29. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 125–27; Daniel Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe: The German Aviation Industry in World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2012), 7, 12.

30. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 393–94; Allen, *The Business of Genocide*, 170.

31. Urziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe*, 144–93.

32. Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 630.

33. Allen, *The Business of Genocide*, 170.

34. Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe*, 113; Richard J. Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed: Allied Air War over Europe, 1940–1945* (New York: Viking, 2014), 287.

35. Peter Hayes, *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

36. Auschwitz, sometimes called Auschwitz I, was the first and main camp administratively. Auschwitz-Birkenau (Auschwitz II) and Auschwitz-Monowitz (Auschwitz III) were added later. To avoid confusion, the camps will be referred to here as Auschwitz, Birkenau, and Monowitz. The statement about the first camp outside of Germany depends somewhat on definitions. The Mauthausen and Stutthof camps could also claim that distinction, since they were located in Austria and Danzig, respectively. Yet Austria was “peaceably” annexed to Germany, and Stutthof was established initially by the Gestapo and only later became a regular SS camp. Himmler also commanded the Gestapo, but it was a state agency separate from the SS.

37. After serving in the air force during World War I, Bischoff completed his studies in engineering and worked as a freelance consultant. He joined the Party in 1932 and began working for the air force as a civilian employee in 1935 until he transferred to the SS in 1941. In his mid-forties, Bischoff worked in Auschwitz until he transferred to Kattowitz (Katowice, Poland).

38. The central building office was housed in several barracks to the east of the main Auschwitz camp. Its construction archive was sealed after the office closed. The SS destroyed the main camp archive shortly before Soviet forces arrived but had apparently forgotten the construction archive by then. As a result, Soviet troops captured a large cache of drawings, blueprints, and other materials documenting the work of the building office. For details of the building office, see Rainer Fröbe, “Bauen und Vernichten: Die Zentralbauleitung Auschwitz und die ‘Endlösung,’” in *Durchschnittstäter: Handeln und Motivation*, ed. Christian Gerlach (Berlin: Verlag Assoziation Schwarze Risse Rote Straße, 2000), 155–209. See also Jean-Claude Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz: Die Technik des Massenmordes*, trans. Eliane Hagedorn and Barbara Reitz (Munich: Piper, 1994), 31; Debórah Dwork and Robert Jan van Pelt, *Auschwitz, 1270 to the Present* (New York: Norton, 1996), 127–235; Niels Gutschow, *Ordnungswahn: Architekten planen im “eingedeutschten Osten” 1939–1945* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 2001). Ertl had studied at the Bauhaus in Dessau from 1928 to 1931.

39. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 221–30.

40. Kaenburg, “Vernichtung durch Arbeit,” 230–31; Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 361–62; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 445.

41. Karola Fings, *Krieg, Gesellschaft und KZ: Himmlers SS-Baubrigade* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2005), 254.

42. Kammler studied in Danzig and Munich before holding minor government positions during the Weimar years. Kammler earned a doctorate in engineering in Hannover and joined the Party in 1932. From there, Kammler gradually rose through the ranks, mostly within the Aviation Ministry, due to his organizational abilities. In 1940, he transferred to the SS and gained overall responsibility for SS construction projects, most notoriously overseeing the planning of new concentration and death camps. Toward the end of the war, Kammler amassed broad powers and functioned as the regime’s de facto plenipotentiary for special projects, including advanced aircraft and missile programs.

43. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 406–15; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 620–24; Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe*, 122–28, 143.

44. Overy, *The Bombers and the Bombed*, 292.

45. Kai Olaf Arzinger, *Stollen im Fels und Öl für Reich: Das Geheimprojekt “Schwalbe 1,”* 2nd ed. (Iserlohn, Germany: Hans-Herbert Mönnig, 1997), 27–35; Horst Hassel and Horst Klötzer, *Kein Düsenjägersprit aus “Schwalbe 1”* (Balve, Germany: Zimmermann, 2011).

46. Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe*, 118–20, 134–35, 142.

47. Dorsch served in the army during World War I before joining the Party in 1922. After completing his studies in architecture and civil engineering in Stuttgart in 1928, Dorsch worked with Todt and the two became close friends. Dorsch served as Todt’s main deputy

and commonly exercised operational control over the OT's priority projects. Speer gained nominal authority over Dorsch after Todt's death, but in practice, Speer concentrated on construction and armaments production within Germany, while Dorsch was largely free to run OT operations abroad.

48. Speer, *Inside the Third Reich*, 336–37, 339–43; Franz W. Seidler, *Die Organisation Todt: Bauten für Staat und Wehrmacht 1939–1945* (Koblenz: Bernard & Graefe, 1987), 116–18, 147; Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe*, 133.

49. Nerdinger, *Bauen im Nationalsozialismus*, 441–42, 445; Uziel, *Arming the Luftwaffe*, 136–37.

50. Barbara Johr and Hartmut Roder, *Der Bunker: Ein Beispiel nationalsozialistischen Wahns—Bremen-Farge 1943–45* (Bremen: Edition Temmen, 1989); Rainer Christochwitz, *Die U-Boot-Bunkerwerft "Valentin": Der U-Boot-Sektionsbau, die Betonbautechnik und der menschenunwürdige Einsatz von 1934 bis 1945* (Bremen: Donat, 2000); Marc Buggeln, "Der U-Boot-Bunker Valentin in Bremen," in *Bunker: Kriegsort, Zuflucht, Erinnerungsraum*, ed. Inge Marszolek and Marc Buggeln (Frankfurt: Campus, 2008), 103–19.

51. For a detailed inventory of V-sites, see Philip Henshall, *Hitler's V-Weapon Sites* (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 2002), 26. See also Steven J. Zaloga, *German V-Weapon Sites 1933–45* (Botley, UK: Osprey, 2007).

52. Richard J. Overy, *War and Economy in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 7–8.

53. Hermione Giffard, "Engines of Desperation: Jet Engines, Production and New Weapons in the Third Reich," *Journal of Contemporary History* 48, no. 4 (2013): 821–44.

54. Götz Aly, *Hitler's Beneficiaries: Plunder, Racial War, and the Nazi Welfare State* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2007), 193.

55. Translations of the main anti-Semitic laws are available at the end of Francis R. Nicosia and David Scrase, eds., *Jewish Life in Nazi Germany: Dilemmas and Responses* (New York: Berghahn, 2010).

56. Sarah K. Danielsson, "Creating Genocidal Space: Geographers and the Discourse of Annihilation, 1880–1933," *Space and Polity* 13, no. 1 (2009): 55–68; Paolo Giaccaria and Claudio Minca, "Topographies/Topologies of the Camp: Auschwitz as a Spatial Threshold," *Political Geography* 30, no. 1 (2011): 3–12; Anne Kelly Knowles, Tim Cole, and Alberto Giordano, eds., *Geographies of the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

57. Guy Miron, "'Lately, Almost Constantly, Everything Seems Small to Me': The Lived Space of German Jews under the Nazi Regime," *Jewish Social Studies: History, Culture, Society* 20, no. 1 (2013): 121–49.

58. Joshua Hagen, "The Most German of Towns: Creating an Ideal Nazi Community in Rothenburg ob der Tauber," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 92, no. 1 (2004): 221.

59. Saul Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, vol. 1, *The Years of Persecution, 1933–1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 290–91, 320; Konrad Kwiet, "Without Neighbors: Daily Living in *Judenhäuser*," in *Jewish Life in Nazi Germany: Dilemmas and Responses*, ed. Francis R. Nicosia and David Scrase (New York: Berghahn, 2010), 117–48.

60. Friedländer, *Nazi Germany and the Jews*, 143.

61. Martin C. Dean, "Ghettos," in *The Oxford Handbook of Holocaust Studies*, ed. Peter Hayes and John K. Roth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 341; Dan Michman, "The Jewish Ghettos under the Nazis and Their Allies: The Reasons behind Their Emergence," in *The Vad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust*, ed. Guy Miron and Shlomit Shulhani (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009), xiii–xxxix.

62. Meyer studied agronomy at the University of Göttingen and completed his doctorate in 1926. He held various teaching and research positions by the time he joined the Party in 1932. In 1934, Meyer transferred to the University of Berlin and became a central coordinator of funding, research, and publications on rural and farming issues across many universities. He also edited the journals *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* and *Neues Bauerntum* for several years.

63. Czesław Madajczyk, "Vom 'Generalplan Ost' zum 'Generalsiedlungsplan,'" in *Der "Generalplan Ost": Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik*, ed. Mechthild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher (Berlin: Akademie, 1993), 13–24; Bruno Wasser, "Die 'Germanisierung' im Distrikt Lublin als

Generalprobe und erste Realisierungsphase des ‘Generalplans Ost,’ in *Der “Generalplan Ost”: Planungs- und Vernichtungspolitik*, ed. Mechthild Rössler and Sabine Schleiermacher (Berlin: Akademie, 1993), 275–93; Czesław Madajczyk, *Vom Generalplan Ost zum Generalsiedlungsplan* (Munich: K. G. Saur, 1994); Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 307–15; Götz Aly and Susanne Heim, *Architects of Annihilation: Auschwitz and the Logic of Destruction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 253–82; Isabel Heinemann, “Rasse, Siedlung, deutsches Blut”: *Das Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt des SS und die rassenpolitische Neuordnung Europas*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2003), 359–414, 453–64; Christian Ingrao, *The Promise of the East: Nazi Hopes and Genocide, 1939–43*, trans. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity, 2019).

64. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 332–33.

65. Guy Miron and Shlomit Shulhani, eds., *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009), 902.

66. Henry Friedlander, *The Origins of Nazi Genocide: From Euthanasia to the Final Solution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Raul Hilberg, *The Destruction of European Jews*, 3rd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003); Christopher R. Browning, *The Origins of the Final Solution: The Evolution of Nazi Jewish Policy, September 1939–March 1942* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); Günter Morsch and Bertrand Perz, eds., *Neue Studien zu nationalsozialistischen Massentötungen durch Giftgas: Historische Bedeutung, technische Entwicklung, revisionistische Leugnung* (Berlin: Metropol, 2011).

67. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 38, 43, 65–66; Christian Gerlach, “Failure of Plans for an SS Extermination Camp in Mogilév, Belorussia,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 11, no. 1 (1997): 60–78.

68. Patrick Montague, *Chełmno and the Holocaust: The History of Hitler’s First Death Camp* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 11–13.

69. Thomalla joined the Party in 1932, and his career seemed unremarkable until he was deployed by the SS to the General Government in 1939. In 1940, he was assigned to the SS Lublin office, which would incidentally become the organizational center for Operation Reinhardt, where he supervised an array of relatively minor building projects. In November 1941, Thomalla became chief SS building director in Zamość, about forty kilometers away from the future site of the Belzec camp. It is not clear if Thomalla was specifically selected to build the Reinhardt camps or if he just coincidentally happened to be the nearest SS building officer. The fact that Thomalla’s appointment coincided with the start of construction at Belzec suggests his assignment was purposeful.

70. Yitzhak Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka: The Operation Reinhardt Death Camps* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 14–43; Jules Schelvis, *Sobibor: A History of a Nazi Death Camp* (New York: Berg, 2007), 23–43.

71. The precise layout of the Reinhardt camps is unknown for a number of reasons. First, very few eyewitnesses survived. Second, those who did survive generally only saw part of the camp and often had differing recollections. Finally, the SS was relatively thorough in erasing physical traces of the camps. Systematic archaeological research offers the best hope for unearthing solid evidence of the Reinhardt camps’ spatial disposition, but research is still challenging because of the provisional nature of the camp architecture.

72. Miron and Shulhani, *The Yad Vashem Encyclopedia of the Ghettos during the Holocaust*, 914.

73. The death tolls given for Operation Reinhardt should be considered approximations. The operation’s secrecy, brevity, and lethality, combined with paltry surviving documentary and physical evidence, have left much unknown about these camps. The so-called Höfle Telegram—a progress report sent to Adolf Eichmann, a senior SS officer and organizer of the Holocaust—listed the number of Jews arriving at extermination camps by December 31, 1942, as: Belzec (434,508), Lublin (24,733), Sobibór (101,370), and Treblinka (713,555), for a total of 1,274,166. Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas, “A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of Jews during ‘Einsatz Reinhardt’ 1942,” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15, no. 3 (2001): 468–86.

74. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 254–68.

75. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 271–72; Tooze, *The Wages of Destruction*, 527.



76. See Kaienburg, “Vernichtung durch Arbeit”; Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*; Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*; Allen, *The Business of Genocide*.

77. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 276–306.

78. The T4 program utilized existing sanatoriums, mental health facilities, and hospitals as euthanasia centers and therefore required relatively minor architectural modifications to suit this new role.

79. Arad, *Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka*, 31, 38–39, 42.

80. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 8–9, 14–15.

81. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 33; Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 269–71.

82. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 43–48.

83. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 48–49.

84. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 51–55, 67–68.

85. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 58–62.

86. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 75–102.

87. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 322.

88. Pressac, *Die Krematorien von Auschwitz*, 75–102.

89. This estimate is a very rough approximation and only considers those gassed in the crematoria. The total would be higher if routine deaths through starvation, disease, and punishment were included, as well as cremations conducted outside.

90. Orth, “Camps,” 371.

91. Eric Lichtblau, “The Holocaust Just Got More Shocking,” *New York Times*, March 1, 2013, SR3.

92. Schulte, *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, 402; Orth, “Camps,” 366.

93. These are very crude approximations drawn from many of the earlier sources and quite likely over- or underestimate by hundreds of thousands. They do not include military personnel and civilians killed during combat operations.

94. Dwork and van Pelt, *Auschwitz*, 333–34; Teresa Świebocka, ed., *The Architecture of Crime: The “Central Camp Sauna” in Auschwitz II–Birkenau*, trans. William Brand (Oświęcim, Poland: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 2001).

## EPILOGUE

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2. Albert Speer and Rudolf Wolters, *Neue Deutsche Baukunst*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Volk und Reich Verlag, 1941), 14.

3. See Heinrich Schwendemann, “‘Drastic Measures to Defend the Reich at the Oder and the Rhine’: A Forgotten Memorandum of Albert Speer of 18 March 1945,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 4 (2003): 597–614.

4. Robert Harris, *Fatherland* (New York: Random House, 1992), 25–26, 28–29.

5. Werner Rittich, *Architektur und Bauplastik der Gegenwart* (Berlin: Rembrandt, 1938), 120.

6. Gerdy Troost, ed., *Das Bauen im Neuen Reich* (Bayreuth: Gauverlag Bayerische Ostmark, 1938), 157.

7. Jost Dülffer, Jochen Thies, and Josef Henke, *Hitlers Städte: Baupolitik im Dritten Reich* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1978), 34, 60–61.

8. Dülffer, Thies, and Henke, *Hitlers Städte*, 38.

9. Hans Bernhard Reichow, *Organische Stadtbaukunst: Von der Großstadt zur Stadtlandschaft* (Braunschweig: Westermann, 1948); Josef Umlauf, *Vom Wesen der Stadt und der Stadtplanung* (Düsseldorf: Werner, 1951); Johannes Göderitz, Roland Rainer, and Hubert Hoffmann, *Die gegliederte und aufgelockerte Stadt* (Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth, 1957); Hans Bernhard Reichow, *Die autogerechte Stadt: Ein Weg aus dem Verkehrs-Chaos* (Ravensburg: Otto Maier Verlag, 1959).

10. See Werner Durth and Niels Gutschow, *Träume in Trümmern: Planungen zum Wiederaufbau zerstörter Städte im Westen Deutschlands 1940–1950* (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1988); Jeffrey M. Diefendorf, *In the Wake of War: The Reconstruction of German Cities after World War II* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

11. See Aleida Assmann, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit: Erinnerungskultur und Geschichtspolitik* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 2006); Gavriel D. Rosenfeld and Paul B. Jaskot, eds., *Beyond Berlin: Twelve German Cities Confront the Nazi Past* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007); Winfried Nerdinger, "Die Dauer der Steine und das Gedächtnis der Architekten," in *Geschichte macht Architektur*, ed. Werner Oechslin (New York: Prestel, 2012), 159–75.

12. Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations 1932–1945: The Chronicle of a Dictatorship*, vol. 1 (Wauconda, IL: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1992), 694–95.

13. Albert Speer, *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1981 [1970]), 56.

14. Gitta Sereny, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth* (New York: Knopf, 1995), 131. In his prison diary entry for July 9, 1956, Speer reminisced about his "light architecture," noting the strangeness that "the more successful architectural creation of my life is a chimera, an immaterial phenomenon." Albert Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Macmillan, 1976), 428.

15. Albert Speer, "Stein statt Eisen," *Vierjahresplan* 1, no. 3 (1937): 135–37. See also Angela Schönberger, "Die Staatsbauten des Tausendjährigen Reiches als vorprogrammierte Ruinen? Zu Albert Speers Ruinenwerttheorie," *Idea: Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunsthalle* 6 (1987): 97–107; Christian Fuhrmeister and Hanns-Ernst Mittag, "Albert Speer und die 'Theorie vom Ruinenwert' (1969): Der lange Schatten einer Legende," in *Bunker: Kriegsort, Zuflucht, Erinnerungsraum*, ed. Inge Marszolek and Marc Buggeln (Frankfurt: Campus, 2008), 225–43.

16. Speer first publicly mentioned the Zeppelin-Field-as-ruins illustration during an interview shortly after his release from prison in 1966 but does not mention how Hitler or anybody reacted or anything regarding a ruin theory. Albert Speer, "'Die Bürde werde ich nicht mehr los': Spiegel-Gespräch mit Albert Speer über Adolf Hitler und das Dritten Reich," *Der Spiegel*, no. 46 (1966): 50, 52.

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