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Third Reich

National Socialist Racial Doctrine

From Andrea Böhnke



The National Socialists pursued a radical race doctrine. Behind this was the assumption that the people living in Germany belonged to different races. The Nazis distinguished between two races: the Aryans and the Jews.

- The Aryan race should rule
- The Jews as the enemy of the Nazis
- Anti-Semitism was required by law
- Not only Jews should be exterminated

The Aryan race should rule

The National Socialists derived their race theory from two pseudosciences: race theory and race hygiene. Both developed towards the end of the 19th century.

From racial theory, the Nazis adopted the idea that humanity can be divided into different races. However, they equated the concept of race with that of the people. They declared the German people to be a representative of the so-called Aryan race. In the race theory this was considered perfect: As a primordial race, it was superior to all other races and therefore intended to rule over them.

The Nazis borrowed the idea of so-called race care from racial hygiene. Behind this was the view that the Aryan race must maintain its purity and quality. Only in this way can humanity develop to something higher.

The Jews as the enemy of the Nazis

The Jews were the main enemy of the Aryan race for the Nazis. They declared it to be a race of its own and assumed that it had a harmful influence on the quality of the Aryan race. Therefore it must be destroyed.