



DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM

PRESS KIT

Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933–1938

An exhibition of the German Historical Museum

31 JANUARY – 10 NOVEMBER 2013



ZERSTÖRTE VIELFALT
BERLIN 1933–1938

31. Januar bis 10. November 2013
Deutsches Historisches Museum
Unter den Linden 2 | 10117 Berlin
täglich 10–18 Uhr | www.dhm.de

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MEDIA TALK ON THE EXHIBITION on 28 January at 11 am

Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933-1938

An exhibition of the German Historical Museum

On the occasion of the Theme Year of the city of Berlin the German Historical Museum is presenting the exhibition "Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933–1938". It brings together more than 40 citywide projects of museums, memorials, associations and initiatives that deal with the history of Berlin under National Socialism. As an exhibition with free admission "Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933–1938" is the connecting link of the themes of the participating projects and serves as the central access to the more than 120 project partners of the Theme Year for Berliners and Berlin visitors. The exhibition illustrates how the diversity of society and the cultural avant-garde of 1920s Berlin were destroyed when the Nazis took power. Each of the participating projects stands for an example of a certain aspect of Nazi persecution. The projects recall the cultural creativity of Jewish artists, writers and architects, but they also revive the remembrance of "forgotten" places such as the SA Prison Papestrasse, now a memorial.

"Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933–1938" is therefore meant as a point of departure for explorations in the urban area of Berlin. Visitors move through the exhibition on a kind of city tour. Selected places like Kurfürstendamm, the Brandenburg Gate or Anhalter Bahnhof are connected with events that spotlight how National Socialism established itself in Berlin – from the takeover of power in 1933 to the "Crystal Night" pogrom in November 1938. The key image for the "Gleichschaltung" of the Berlin municipal administration is the "Rotes Rathaus", the "Red City Hall". Numerous contemporary election posters in the exhibition illustrate how the propaganda slogan "Red Berlin" was used before 1933 by both the rightwing and leftwing parties.

A special exhibition supplementing the area devoted to the Nazi period in the DHM's Permanent Exhibition deals with the history of the Berlin Zeughaus, from armoury on through its different phases as a museum.

"Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933–1938" comes about in cooperation with Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH (Cultural Projects Berlin). Extensive brochures on the exhibition are available in German and English free of charge. History and film workshops, guided tours, a film series in the Zeughauskino, concerts, talks by experts and a discussion with contemporary witnesses accompany the exhibition.

Your partners for the media talk will be:

André Schmitz, State Secretary for Cultural Affairs

Prof. Dr. Alexander Koch, President of the Foundation German Historical Museum

Dr. Simone Erpel, Curator of the exhibition

Prof. Dr. Michael Wildt, Chairman of the academic advisory council of the exhibition

Moritz van Dülmen, Managing Director of Cultural Projects Berlin/Theme Year 2013

FACTS AND TIMES

<i>Place</i>	German Historical Museum Exhibition Hall
<i>Duration</i>	31 January – 10 November 2013
<i>Open</i>	Open daily 10 am to 6 pm
<i>Admission</i>	free
<i>Information</i>	German Historical Museum Unter den Linden 2 10117 Berlin Telephone 030/20304 – 444 Fax 030/20304 – 543
<i>Internet</i>	www.dhm.de/ausstellungen/zerstoerte-vielfalt/
<i>Exhibition space</i>	c. 410m ² on the ground floor of the exhibition hall
<i>Size of the exhibition</i>	250 Objects 40 Project presentations
<i>Curator</i>	Dr. Simone Erpel
<i>Exhibition design</i>	Ulrike Bretschneider and Werner Schulte
<i>Media</i>	<i>Info brochure</i> An extensive information brochure on the exhibition is available free of charge in German and English editions. It offers an introduction to the time from 1933 on and presents more than forty projects of the Berlin Theme Year. <i>Audio guide</i> in German and English Audio guide for children in German free of charge
<i>Media partner</i>	Inforadio (rbb)
<i>Partner</i>	Kulturprojekte Berlin GmbH
<i>Supported by</i>	Stiftung Deutsche Klassenlotterie Berlin Hauptstadtkulturfonds

ACCOMPANYING EVENTS

Book presentation

28 January, 7 pm, Zeughauskino
Berlin 1933 – 1945. City and Society under National Socialism
Talk with the book's authors and editors Prof. Dr. Michael Wildt, Dr. Christoph Kreutzmüller and Dr. Simone Erpel
Admission free

Panel discussion (in German)

4 February, 7 pm, Zeughauskino
80 Years ago 1933 – A cosmopolitan city turns brown. Insights of history – still problems of today? Harald Asel, Inforadio, in conversation with Dr. Simone Erpel, curator DHM, Moritz van Dülmen, Cultural Projects Berlin, Dr. Christoph Kreutzmüller, author, Pascale Hugues, journalist
In cooperation with Inforadio, Admission free

Concert (in German)

14 February, 7 pm, Auditorium
Land des Lächelns or 's wird schon wieder besser. Undesired artists in the spotlight
Multimedia collage by and with Evelin Förster, on piano: Matthias Binner
Admission 8 euros, reduced 6 euros | further dates: 18 April, 19 September, 7 November

Talk with contemporary witnesses and film (in German)

20 February, 6 pm, Auditorium
Page Boys in the Dream Factory. Black extras in German movies
A film by Dr. Annette von Wagenheim in Kooperation with the WDR followed by talk with contemporary witnesses Theodor Michael and Juliane Michael
Joliba. Interkulturelles Netzwerk in Berlin e.V.
Admission free

Book presentation (in German)

27 March, 6 pm, Auditorium
Luftangriffe auf Berlin
Talk with the book's authors and editors Prof. Dr. Laurenz Demps and Prof. Dr. Uwe Schaper, Moderation: Dr. Christoph Links
in cooperation with the Ch. Links Verlag, Admission free

Further information soon on:

www.dhm.de/ausstellungen/zerstoerte-vielfalt/begleitprogramm

FILM PROGRAMME

In February and March the Zeughauskino presents a picture of Berlin at the time in the series "Zeitbild Berlins" with German feature films from the early 1920s to the early 1940s.
www.zeughauskino.de

TOURS

Public tours

Mon 2 pm, Sat 3 pm, Sun 1 pm (in German)
English-language tours Fri 2 pm

Programme for children and families (in German)

Hitler and the Pink Rabbit. A literary exhibition tour on National Socialism
10 + 24 February, 2 pm

Audio guide in German and English

Audio guide for children in German
Free of charge

Tours for groups by prior appointment

(German, English, French, Spanish, Italian, Danish and Polish)

Phone 030 / 20304-750, fuehrung@dhm.de

75 euros plus admission

Tours for school classes

1 euro per pupil, admission free

ROOM TEXTS

Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933–1938

The exhibition “ Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 1933 – 1938” is the German Historical Museum’s contribution to the eponymous Theme Year of the city of Berlin on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the National Socialist takeover of power in 1933 and the 75th anniversary of the November pogrom of 1938.

The city’s diversity, which had once founded Berlin’s reputation as a cultural metropolis, was destroyed by the Nazis. This changed the city and society profoundly. Much of what had distinguished Berlin for decades was rapidly and irrevocably lost.

A great variety of dedicated projects throughout the entire city summon up the remembrance of this destruction and its causes within the framework of the Theme Year. More than forty of them contribute directly to the museum’s exhibition “ Diversity Destroyed. Berlin 193 –1938” . Presented in red showcases, the individual projects provide information about their exhibitions, art and film projects, readings, theatre pieces, audio walks and other such ventures.

These individual contributions are joined together in the museum’s exhibition by a kind of tour of the city. Selected places that played an important role in establishing the Nazi dictatorship come into focus: Kurfürstendamm, the Brandenburg Gate or Anhalter Bahnhof. But the tour also passes by the synagogue in Fasanenstrasse that was burnt to the ground in the November pogrom of 1938 and ends in the ruins of the Berlin city hall – a symbol of past moral dissipation, but also of a new beginning.

The Berlin of the Weimar Republic

With the founding of the German Empire in 1871 Berlin became the imperial capital almost over night. At first lampooned as “ Parvenupolis” and derided as city of social climbers among the European capitals, Berlin quickly developed into a metropolis. Soon after the First World War the city was already seen as the biggest and most modern metropolis on the continent, and with four million inhabitants Berlin was the third largest city in the world.

While the heavy traffic at Potsdamer Platz testified to technical progress and big city tempo, the “ New West” around Kurfürstendamm with its elegant shops, cafés and dance palaces stood for the modern, urbane attitude of the city’s inhabitants.

The darker side of the rampantly growing city was evident only a few streets away: social misery, housing shortages and homelessness marked the working-class quarters. The economic crisis of 1929 aggravated the situation. Mass unemployment and a series of political scandals undermined the trust in the Weimar Republic and fostered the rise of the anti-democratic parties.

The Nazi "Seizure of Power" in 1933. Staging and Approval

In the early evening of 30 January 1933 some 15,000 members of the SA, the SS and the Stahlhelm marched through the Brandenburg Gate to the Reich Chancellery. The paramilitary units were celebrating the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Reich Chancellor by Reich President Hindenburg.

Most of the familiar pictures purporting to record this event on 30 January 1933 are in fact propagandistic manipulations from later years. The National Socialists saw January 30th as the day of their "seizure of power" and as the official start of their rule. For this reason they staged and restaged the procession more and more splendidly each year. The new pictures arranged for propaganda soon replaced the true remembrance of the event.

In fact, many Berliners followed the torchlight procession from the roadside or on radio. Some hoped that Hitler would bring an upswing in the economy and others believed his cabinet of "national unity" would avert the threat of a communist revolution. But communists and social democrats took to the streets at that time to demonstrate against the new government, both in Berlin and in other German cities as well.

Razzia! The Crushing of the Political Opposition

In eliminating their political opponents the National Socialists relied on the power of the state and the violence of the street.

The Reichstag fire on the night of 27 February 1933, which the Nazis blamed on the communists, offered the government under Adolf Hitler the excuse to render essential constitutional rights inoperative and to take radical measures against the opposition. The regime had communists and social democrats arrested and banned their parties, organisations and newspapers. At the same time the powers of the police were expanded so that people could now be taken into "protective custody" for an unlimited period of time.

In the meantime the SA and SS were arbitrarily settling a score with their real or supposed enemies. The police offered little protection to those who were affected. Moreover, in Berlin alone the regular police were supported by around 5,000 armed "auxiliary police" recruited from the SA and SS. Within a few weeks they arrested several thousand members of the opposition during random razzias.

The "Gleichschaltung" of the Berlin Municipal Government

After the elections to the Reichstag and the communal governments in March 1933 the National Socialists were the strongest force in Berlin as well as in the German Reich. After the elections the SA and police immediately occupied the municipal assembly and the town halls. Members of the magistrate and the district mayors were dismissed with no recourse to law.

The new power brokers "purged" Berlin extensively. The legal basis for their actions was formulated in the "Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service" from 7 April 1933. It allowed for the dismissal of civil servants for racial or political reasons. While the dismissal from civil service meant a social decline for those affected, the wave of layoffs provided unforeseen career opportunities and prospects of advancement for many other people.

The "Gleichschaltung" and compulsory conformity with the party line often went hand in hand with "self-compliance" in a display of anticipatory obedience. Whether out of conviction, opportunism or fear – the vast majority of public servants and employees rendered the required allegiance to the party and thus contributed to the implementation of the Nazi dictatorship.

Flight, Exile, Emigration

Anhalter Bahnhof was one of the main railway stations that functioned as a point of departure for artists, intellectuals, scientists and politicians fleeing the country immediately after the National Socialist takeover of power. Thousands of Berliners were declared enemies of the state by the Nazis and had to leave their homeland. The largest group consisted of those persecuted for "racial" reasons: some 13,000 Jewish Berliners saw themselves forced to emigrate in 1933 alone.

Similar to the Jewish emigration, those seeking political exile in the first years of the Nazi regime also made their way primarily to the countries bordering on the German Reich. For the majority of emigrants assumed that their exile would be temporary and hoped for a speedy collapse of the regime so that they could soon return home.

Prague and Paris in particular became centres of emigration. Many refugees not only followed the developments in Germany, but also secretly took up contact with the opposition and thus supported the resistance in their homeland.

Forced Sterilisation – Precursor of the Murder of the Disabled

Early on the National Socialists created an instrument to implement their racial ideology: the "Law for the Prevention of Hereditarily Diseased Offspring" from July 1933. They saw the "corpus of the German people" ("deutscher Volkskörper") threatened by a "commingling" with supposedly "inferior races". To prevent "racially detrimental" characteristics from being passed on hereditarily, those who were allegedly "genetically defective" were to undergo compulsory sterilisation.

From 1934 on the law provided the "Hereditary Health Court" with the legal basis to order more than 14,500 forced sterilisations in Berlin alone. The victims included people who were stigmatised as "asocial", but above all patients in sanatoriums and mental institutions.

The Nazi "racial policies" became more radical after the outbreak of the war. Under the codename "Action T4" – named after the seat of the organizational headquarters at Tiergartenstrasse 4 in Berlin – more than 70,000 persons in Germany were murdered in 1940/41 in six sanatoriums and mental institutions that had been turned into killing centres for this purpose.

Exclusion in the Shadow of the Olympic Games

The Olympic Games took place in Berlin in August 1936. The National Socialist regime saw the games as a chance to present the new Germany before the entire world as an open-minded and peace-loving nation.

Although anti-Semitic slurs and signs were removed from public view for the duration of the games, in reality it was only a façade and mere window dressing. For in the shadow of

the Olympic Games the Nazi regime continued its policies of suppression and exclusion with no let-up.

In the weeks before the games began, a wave of arrests of regime opponents swept throughout Germany. At the same time, the Nazis began building the Sachsenhausen concentration camp near Berlin, where around a thousand prisoners were already interned by September 1936.

The exacerbated repression was also directed against some 600 Berlin Sinti and Roma, who were deported to Berlin-Marzahn on the periphery of the city in mid-July 1936. This new camp was the first ghetto for a racially persecuted minority in Germany.

The November Pogrom in Berlin

In the night of 9 November 1938 violent anti-Semitic excesses took place in Berlin – as elsewhere in the Reich. SA, SS and members of the Hitler Youth set fire to synagogues and vandalised Jewish businesses and flats. In Berlin the excesses lasted for three days. There were at least seven deaths, and twelve synagogues as well as hundreds of Jewish shops and private apartments were destroyed. The Nazis dragged off almost 3,000 Jewish men to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

The November pogrom, also known as “Crystal Night”, represented a new stage in the escalation of the Nazi persecution of Jews. The pretence for the pogrom – which Nazi propaganda pictured as a “spontaneous outburst of the people’s rage” – was the assassination of the German diplomat Ernst vom Rath in Paris by a Polish Jew named Herschel Grynszpan. But the real reason behind the pogrom was that the regime was annoyed at the stagnation since 1937 of the number of Jews emigrating from Germany.

The deliberately induced pogrom aimed to accelerate the expulsion of the Jewish population. Accordingly, the regime enacted several decrees soon thereafter with the intention of increasing the isolation of the Jewish population and destroying their economic basis.

War, Forced Labour, Destruction

Germany had launched the Second World War in 1939. But at the beginning most Berliners did not feel seriously affected by the war. There were still relatively few Allied air raids; despite the rationing of foodstuffs the inhabitants were adequately supplied.

And yet the city and the everyday life of the people quickly changed. The deportation of the Jews started in October 1941 in full public view. The assembly points and railway stations from which the Gestapo deported 50,000 people to the ghettos and extermination camps were located in the middle of the city.

From 1942 on the Wehrmacht brought more than 500,000 civilian labourers and prisoners of war to Berlin, which was a centre of the German wartime economy. There they were forced to work in arms factories and other vital industries.

Starting in 1943 the Allies flew air strikes more frequently. The city was rapidly reduced to ruins. Many of the war-weary Berliners were relieved when the German army capitulated in May 1945, but they nevertheless feared the revenge of the victors. However, for the forced labourers and the Jews who had survived the persecution in hiding, the end of the war meant liberation.

War in the Museum, the Museum in the War.

The Zeughaus under National Socialism

When it was finally completed in the year 1730, the Zeughaus served as Prussian weapons depot until 1879. Two years later it was opened to the general public as the "Pantheon of the Brandenburg-Prussian Army". As both weapons museum and museum of the Prussian Army, the Zeughaus collections remained committed to what was perceived to be a "heroic" past until after the First World War.

After 1933 this task took on even greater importance, especially through the display of works by the pertinent painters of war scenes, and culminated in the glorification of World War II. Under the direction of Rear Admiral (ret.) Hermann Lorey – as a Jew the previous director Moritz Binder lost his job in 1933 – the Zeughaus became a centre of "instruction in the spirit of warfare". The museum now displayed huge amounts of looted modern weapons and uniforms that had come to the Zeughaus in the course of the invasion of Poland in 1939, which had launched the war of aggression.

Every year from 1940 on the central state ceremony for the "Day of Remembrance of the fallen heroes" of the First World War took place in the Zeughaus and the neighbouring New Guardhouse.