



Creating A Demigod:

Nazi Art, Adolf Hitler,
and the Cult of
Personality.

by Robert W. Jones, Jr.

*Hubert Lanzinger's allegorical
portrait "The Standard Bearer"
(Der Bannerträger).*



The Führer, Adolf Hitler, portrayed as the military leader of Germany.

on a “Cult of Personality,” glorifies the leaders of totalitarian regimes and plays an important part in building up a national figure. Perhaps the most intense example is the artwork promulgated by Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Party. While the topic of Nazi art may seem repugnant, it is a classic study of art used as propaganda. Located in Washington DC is a unique collection of such propaganda, specifically from the Nazis of World War II. This article provides a short historical summary on the rise of Nazi Germany and then shows examples of the regime’s artwork currently in the Art Collection at the U.S. Army Center for Military History.¹ “Artwork” covers many mediums, from architecture and design to film, painting, and sculpture; however, paintings are the focus of this article.

Germany’s loss in World War I and the onerous provisions of the Treaty of Versailles provided the breeding ground for widespread discontent. Until October 1918, the Imperial German government controlled all news media. Propaganda extolled the fighting capabilities of the individual soldier and the country’s victories over the western Allies. Suddenly, the government announced an armistice in October 1918, which was in effect a surrender.

This act caused turmoil amongst the people. While many Germans agreed with the armistice, they did not believe that they were losing the war and they did not believe that Germany had started the war. A negotiated peace settlement was expected after the signing of the armistice. However, the Allies dictated the terms and Germany was not invited to Versailles. The common belief was that the army would have won the war if weak-kneed politicians had not “stabbed the country in the back” (*Dolchstoß*) by settling for an armistice.² The Allies blamed Germany for the war and sought heavy reparations for reconstruction. The humiliation of Versailles tainted the postwar democratic Weimar government from its very beginnings. The Nazi Party exploited these popular views to explain postwar hardships.

Between 1918 and 1923, Weimar Germany was plagued by severe internal crises. From both the left and the right came assassinations, anti-government propaganda, and popular revolts (*putsches* in German). The already weakened war-damaged economy could not recover; reparations and hyperinflation prevented reconstruction. The period between 1918 and 1923, is described by

“Cult of Personality”

The “cult of personality” is built around a heroic leader. It is especially popular in totalitarian regimes. In Nazi Germany the “cult of personality” emphasized individual dedication and loyalty to the all-powerful leader, who exemplified the “Aryan race.” As the *Führer* (leader) of the Nazi Party, Adolf Hitler used his charisma to get the German people to accept his vision of the future. Art was used to portray him as the benevolent guide (leader), for the nation.

Unless otherwise noted the artwork featured in this article is from the U.S. Army Center for Military History Art Collection. Most of the artists are unknown.

Historically governments have used art as a form of propaganda. Art is usually associated with beauty and inspiration, however totalitarian regimes such as the Nazis, the Soviet Union under Communism, Saddam Hussein in Iraq, and more recently North Korea used art as a propaganda medium. Much of the artwork centering



Emphasizing the prevalent despair in Germany in the interwar years, a heroic leader on a white horse rallies the troops while the wounded valiantly struggle to get to their feet.

“The trauma of surrender, economic hardship, and political revolution defined the real world in which most Germans lived. But emotionally they lived in the aftermath of wartime glory ... images of brave soldiers and strong women, hymns to a national spirit, and appeals to sacrifice ... persisted even as reality left them behind. As Germans experienced hunger, fear of invasion, revolution, and economic disaster, they clung to dreams created by wartime propaganda.” Claudia Koonz

Professor Claudia Koonz, *“The trauma of surrender, economic hardship, and political revolution defined the real world in which most Germans lived. But emotionally they lived in the aftermath of wartime glory ... images of brave soldiers and strong women, hymns to a national spirit, and appeals to sacrifice ... persisted even as reality left them behind. As Germans experienced hunger, fear of invasion, revolution, and economic disaster, they clung to dreams created by wartime propaganda.”*³

New political parties, both right and left, evolved in the chaos of post-war Germany. The rightist Nazi Party (officially the National Socialist German Workers Party, or in German *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, referred to by the acronym “Nazi”), began with less than a hundred members, but grew rapidly. The Nazi solution to Germany’s problems was unification. They emphasized a trinity – the individual, the people and the nation – united together and led by a visionary leader, Adolf Hitler.

Many of the new political parties in Germany had armed auxiliaries. Hitler created the Nazi Party “Gymnastic and Sports Division” to serve as the party’s military arm. It was a cover name because the Weimar government was cracking down on paramilitary groups. Later this element became the *Sturmabteilung* (S.A. or Storm Troopers), or “Brown Shirts,” because of their brown uniforms.⁴ Oaths



This painting depicts the Nazi Party membership oath ceremony. These often were conducted at night using lights and torches dramatizing the significance of the ritual.



administered during ritualistic ceremonies bonded the membership and insured loyalty to the leader. As the economy continued to deteriorate, the Nazi Party built its strength in the popularly elected Weimar assembly (the *Reichstag*).⁵ This gave them legitimacy in the minds of the people.

In 1932 Hitler ran for the presidency of Germany, coming in second to General Paul von Hindenburg (the WWI military hero). The next year, on 30 January 1933, Adolf Hitler became the Chancellor of a coalition government under the aged von Hindenburg (84 years old, in very poor health, and perhaps in the early

This 1938 postcard celebrates the incorporation of Austria as part of Germany. The caption, “One People, One Country, One Leader” was the primary theme of the Nazi internal campaign.

8 November 1918

Kaiser Wilhelm abdicates.

9 November 1918

The “Weimar Republic” is recognized by the Allies as the democratic government of Germany.

11 November 1918

The armistice is signed.

28 June 1919

The Treaty of Versailles is signed. Germany is forced to accept responsibility for the war. It must pay war reparations, give up its overseas colonies, and reduce the military to an army of 100,000.

1919 - 1923

A period of massive unrest, economic instability, and revolts, from both the right and left, in Germany.

29 July 1921

Adolf Hitler became the head of the Nazi Party.

1923

Hyperinflation drops the exchange rate of the German Mark from 18,000 to \$1 in January to 4 billion to \$1 in November.

8 - 9 November 1923

The “Beer Hall Putsch” in Munich was a Nazi Party attempt at a *coup d'état*. It was successfully prevented by the army and police. 16 Nazis and 3 policemen are killed.

1924

Adolf Hitler is tried and sentenced to 5 years for the “Beer Hall Putsch.” In Landsberg prison he writes *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), part autobiography, part blueprint for a future Germany and the “operator’s manual” for the Nazi Party. Released after serving nine months of the five-year sentence, Hitler went on a book tour to promote his book. The new bestseller propelled him into the national spotlight.

October 1929

During the Great Depression Germany was hit particularly hard.

September 1930

Massive popular discontent catapulted the Nazis into prominence. Their elected officials in the Reichstag went from 12 to 107 seats.

Summer 1932

Over 6 Million Germans were unemployed.

November 1932

In new national elections, the Nazis take 196 seats in the Reichstag.

January 1933

Hitler became Chancellor of Germany.

27 February 1933

The Reichstag was burned. The Communists were blamed, which gave Hitler an excuse to seize power through legislation.

March 1933

The “Enabling Act” gave Hitler additional executive powers and suspended some civil liberties.

13 March 1933

The Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda was established. The Nazi Party propaganda chief, Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, was its director.

May 1933

Trade unions in Germany were abolished.

10 May 1933

Massive book burnings took place.

July 1933

All political parties, except the Nazis were banned.

September 1933

The Reich Culture Chamber (Reichskulturkammer) was created to control all forms of art in Germany.

June 1934

During the "Night of the Long Knives," Hitler internally purged the Nazi Party. The death of President Hindenburg left a power vacuum.

August 1934

Hitler combined the offices of Chancellor and President after Hindenburg's death.

March 1935

Hitler reinstated conscription and began to build up the army.



The Rise to Power



Nazi standard at a Beer Hall Putsch Commemoration Ceremony

The Nazi Party developed its own heraldry as a source of identification for its members. Part of the Nazi Party's allure was its regalia (uniforms and symbology). In the summer of 1920 Adolf Hitler designed the party insignia. A hooked cross – the hakenkreuz – an ancient symbol became the Nazi swastika. Rejecting the black, red, and gold colors of the Weimar Republic, Hitler chose a white circle with the black swastika in the center on a red background. The red symbolized the movement, the white represented nationalism, and the swastika reflected the “struggle for the victory of the Aryan man.”¹ For parades and mass meetings Hitler devised standards based on ancient Roman Legion heraldry, with a black metal swastika on top surrounded with a metal wreath, surmounted by an eagle, from which hung a square swastika flag, emblazoned with “Germany Awake! (Deutschland Erwache!).”²

Endnotes

- 1 William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960), 43-44; Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* [English edition] (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 218-219.
- 2 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany*, 43-44.



A German stamp to commemorate the 1923 Munich "Beer Hall Putsch". When the Nazis came to power in 1933, a national holiday was declared. Re-enactments in Munich were conducted on the anniversary date of 9 November.

stages of senility).⁶ On the evening of 27 February 1933 arsonists destroyed the *Reichstag*.⁷ A "half-witted Dutch Communist" pyromaniac and others were arrested, tried, and executed for the crime.⁸ The *Reichstag* fire gave the Nazis an excuse to make a power grab. On 28 February, at Hitler's bequest, President von Hindenburg signed a decree "for the Protection of the People and the State" that suspended many civil liberties within Germany.⁹ By 5 March 1933 the Nazis were the majority party in the *Reichstag*. During the summer of 1933 it became the only legal political party in Germany.

From the creation of the Nazi Party, Adolf Hitler employed sophisticated propaganda. That propaganda apparatus was institutionalized as a government department shortly after Hitler was elected Chancellor on 31 January 1933. On 13 March 1933, he established the Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (*Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda* or *Propagandaministerium*).¹⁰ His propaganda chief, Dr. Paul Joseph Goebbels, was named its minister.¹¹

The *Propagandaministerium* became the largest of all Nazi Ministries. It was charged with controlling public opinion and enforcing Nazi doctrine. In a symbolic move, the new ministry building was placed in a prominent position on the *Wilhelmplatz*, directly across from the new Reich Chancellery building. This emphasized its important place in the hierarchy of the new "Third Reich."¹² The Propaganda Ministry infused Nazi ideology and doctrine into every aspect of daily life. Author Peter Adam explained: "National Socialist [Nazi] doctrine lived in almost every painting, film, stamp, and public building, in the toys of the children, in people's houses, in tales and costumes, in the layout of villages, in the songs and poems taught in schools, even

household goods. The cultural infiltration of every sphere of life never ceased."¹³ Art was an important weapon in the arsenal of the Nazi regime.

The Reich Culture Chamber (*Reichskulturkammer*) of Goebbels' Propaganda Ministry controlled German art.¹⁴ Membership was mandatory for all those "who participated in the creation, reproduction, intellectual or technical processing, dissemination, preservation, and sale of cultural goods."¹⁵ All forms of art had to promote Nazi ideology and racial consciousness. The German people were to be portrayed as peaceful or struggling to defend their country.

The Reich Culture Chamber issued licenses to the press, radio, arts, film, literature, and music. All aspects of culture were regulated by the Nazi "stamp of approval." Artists were investigated to ensure racial purity and adherence to Nazi ideals. They faced three choices: follow the Nazi licensing procedures; choose another profession; or flee the country. Party members



"Mai-Feier im Berliner Lustgarten" (*May Holiday in the Berlin Pleasure Garden*). A traditional harvest celebration depicted in the German (Nazi) art pavilion at the 1937 Paris World's Fair. The "maypole" is topped with Nazi flags. While the craft guilds and trade workers march they were being watched by boys in Hitler Youth uniforms. People cheered by rendering the "Nazi arm salute." By Rudolf Hengstenberg.



Under an arch inscribed with "Die Schmiede Grossdeutschland" (The Forge of Greater Germany), workers toil at a blacksmith forge to arm the personification of German womanhood for battle. A swastika keystone tops the archway. The shield is emblazoned with the German Imperial eagle with a swastika in the center. That part was damaged by an unknown Allied soldier. The hem of the woman's cape's is covered in swastikas.

could pursue art as a vocation, but only according to the rules of the Reich Culture Chamber.

Very quickly Nazism became an integral part of everything German. "*Gleichschaltung*," literally meaning "synchronization" or "coordination" was how the Nazi regime systematically established total control over Germans as individuals and how they coordinated all facets of societal life. The span of control covered the gamut from daily living to the economy to the arts.¹⁶

To expand control of Germany, Hitler and Goebbels used art as a propaganda tool. Artistic expression and political goals were combined. As an artist Hitler defined true art as being linked to the country, life, health, and the Aryan race. In a 1935 party speech, Hitler declared, "We shall discover and encourage the artists who are able to impress upon the State of the German people the

... in their origin and in the picture which they present, they are the expressions of the soul and the ideals of the community."

cultural stamp of the Germanic race ... in their origin and in the picture which they present, they are the expressions of the soul and the ideals of the community."¹⁷

Hitler and Goebbels knew the importance of image. The *Führer* (leader) had to be personified as a god-like figure. This was integral to Nazi propaganda. As the party grew in popularity, the "cult of personality" depicting Hitler as Germany's leader grew exponentially.¹⁸ A vigorous national program of artwork featured Hitler as the leader and extolled the mystical strength of the Nazi Party. Painters portrayed



Hubert Lanzinger's allegorical portrait "The Standard Bearer" (Der Bannerträger). Hitler is portrayed as a medieval – probably Teutonic – knight in a suit of silver armor, pure, and unblemished. In his right hand he holds a Nazi flag that is rippling 'heroically' in the wind. Hitler is presented as a superior human being, the almost god-like the personification of the leader and head of the National Socialist Party. This 1938 painting was popularized in posters and postcards. The damage in Hitler's eye was inflicted by an unknown U.S. soldier's bayonet.



The Munich [“Beer Hall”] Putsch, 1923, by Schmitt

*The Nazi Party prepared for revolution.¹ On 9 November 1923, Adolf Hitler used a mass meeting at the Buergerbäukeller beer hall in Munich to begin what became known as the “Beer Hall Putsch.”² After a confrontation with the police, sixteen Nazis and three police were dead or dying, with many others wounded. The subsequent trial of Hitler and nine co-defendants propelled him into the national spotlight. Convicted of treason Hitler would write *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle) in Landsberg prison, part autobiography, part blueprint for the future of Germany and the “operator’s manual” for the Nazi Party. Released after serving only nine months of a five-year sentence, Hitler went on a book tour to promote his new book. It became a bestseller and catapulted Hitler into the national limelight.³ The failed coup d’état became a sacred day for the Nazi Party and was commemorated in memorial ceremonies and paintings.⁴ In the center of the painting, Hitler boldly defies the soldiers, while dead and dying comrades lay at his feet. A bright light in the background emphasizes the righteousness of the cause. In reality, Hitler, and most of the Nazi leadership fled the scene as soon as shots were fired. The artist is identified only as “Schmitt.”*

Endnotes

- ¹ Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany*, 66-68.
- ² Sometimes also called the “Munich Putsch; Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany*, 66-68.
- ³ John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1989), 33; Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany*, 77-79.
- ⁴ In 1935 as the Chancellor of Germany, Hitler presided over a ceremony placing the sixteen dead in a national shrine.



Nazi Vision of Greatness, by Richard Spitz

The 1933 painting, "Nazi Vision of Greatness," by Richard Spitz capitalizes on religious fervor. Waves of Nazi Brown Shirts, gazing intently ahead, move toward a radiant, sun-like swastika atop a Teutonic castle on the horizon. In the center of the painting, a Brown Shirt, swooning in rapture, collapses. As he is caught by a comrade he is reverently gesturing toward the golden swastika-sun with his right hand. In the center, closest to the sun is the Nazi standard. Nazi flags dot the landscape, fluttering in the wind. In the right foreground are a Hitler Youth, a white bearded distinguished looking grandparent, a farmer, and other workers. Perhaps the most symbolic element in the painting is in the sky, where, amidst storming clouds, the spirits of faithful dead Nazis stream towards the shimmering swastika-sun, their right arms outstretched in the Hitler salute.

All paintings of Adolf Hitler depict him standing to denote strength.

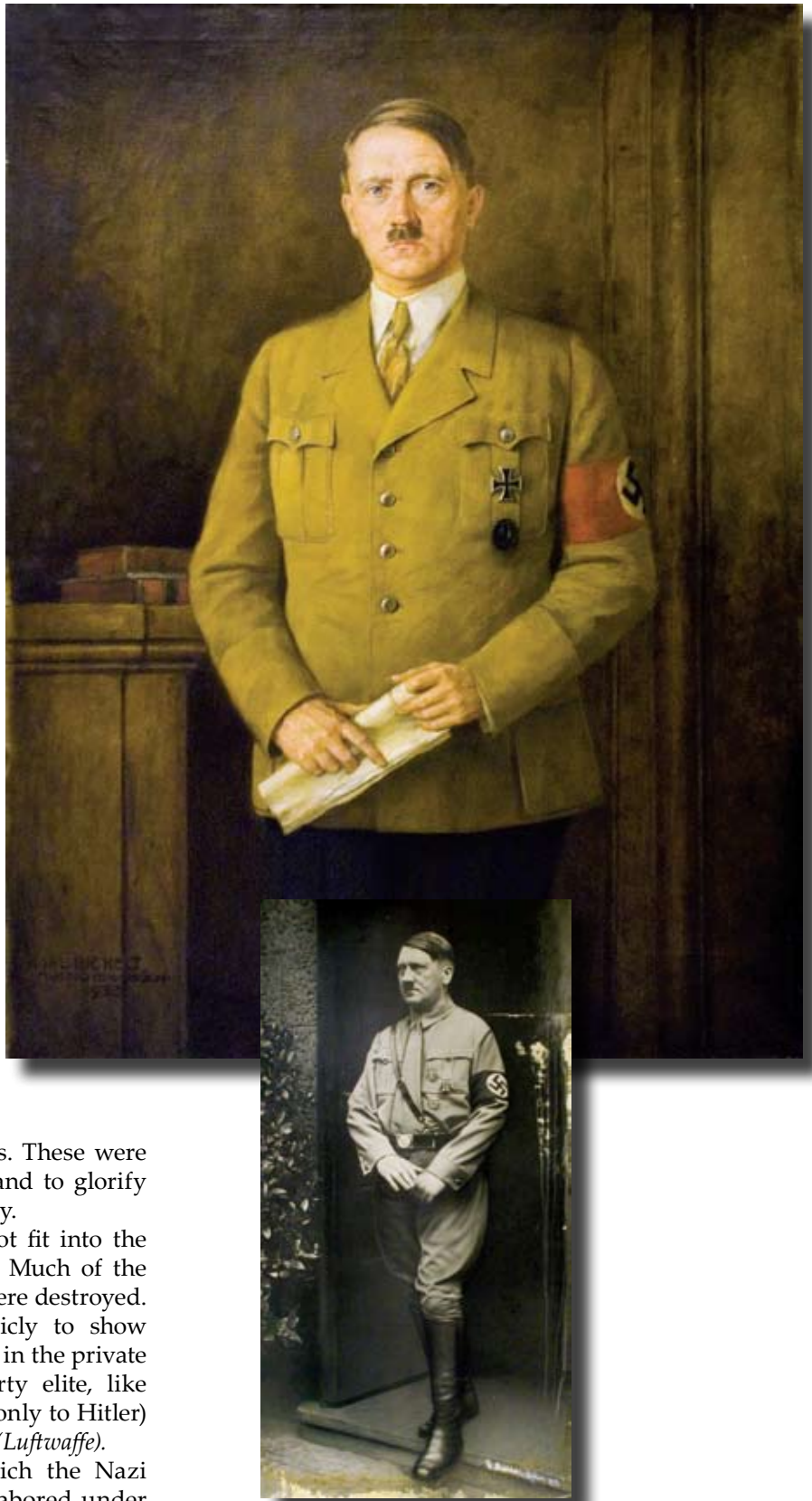
"An artist who wants to render the Führer must be more than an artist. The entire German people and German eternity will stand silently in front of this work, filled with emotions to gain strength from it today and for all times"
(Peter Adam).

him as the healer who would cure all of Germany's problems.

Photographs of Hitler had to receive his personal approval before public release. Art was even more closely scrutinized. The Nazi art magazine, *Die Kunst im Dritten Reich* (Art in the Third Reich) was printed on the best paper to ensure high quality reproductions.¹⁹ Hitler's portrait was usually the cover or the frontis piece of these magazines. Art contests were held throughout Germany. Paintings of the *Führer* were prominent winners. Since artists had to be licensed by the Propaganda Ministry, what better way for an artist to demonstrate solidarity or "good faith" with the party than to paint a portrait of Hitler? While most of the artwork was hung in public galleries, Hitler and Goebbels wanted to spread Nazi art to all levels of society. The German leader was the center piece of Nazi Party themes that became small portraits, busts, posters, postcards, even matchbook covers. These were all meant to inspire the German people and to glorify Hitler as the leader of the country and party.

Works of art and literature that did not fit into the Nazi ideology were labeled "degenerate." Much of the so-called degenerate artwork and books were destroyed. In some cases, they were burned publicly to show political strength. However, a lot ended up in the private art collections and libraries of Nazi Party elite, like Hermann Göring, *Reichsmarschall* (second only to Hitler) and Commander of the German Air Force (*Luftwaffe*).

Throughout the life of the Third Reich the Nazi regime used art as propaganda. Artists labored under strict regulatory standards, and many worked directly for the Propaganda Ministry. The majority of the Nazi effort was internal. It focused on the German people to reinforce the Hitler myth (image) and promote the Nazi ideology. The Propaganda Ministry mass produced



In this 1933 photograph of Hitler he wears his World War I Iron Cross First Class and wound badge (the equivalent of the U.S. Silver Star and a Purple Heart) on his Nazi Party uniform.

(Below) M/SGT Harold Maus of Scranton, PA is pictured with an Albrecht Dürer engraving, found among other art treasures at Merkers, Germany. 5/13/45.



(Left) General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Supreme Allied Commander, inspects art looted by the Germans and stored away in the Merkers salt mine in Central Germany. Behind GEN Eisenhower are General Omar N. Bradley (left), CG, 12th Army Group, and (right) LTG George S. Patton, Jr, CG, Third U.S. Army. 4/12/45.



"Bird in a Gilded Cage"
The branch insignia for some MFAA Officers



European Civil Affairs Division SSI



(Above) German loot stored in a church at Ellingen, Germany was found by troops of the U.S. Third Army. 4/24/45.

"Monuments Men"

During WWII, some Civil Affairs personnel served in a specialty unit designated Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA). The majority of MFAA soldiers were recruited and assigned based on pre-war civilian occupations as art and history professors, museum curators and directors, artists, architects, and archivists. These unique specialists were to be responsible for finding and safeguarding art on the battlefield. After undergoing orientation training at the Civil Affairs and Military Government School, in Charlottesville, Virginia, the MFAA soldiers were shipped to the European Theater of Operations. At the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) the "Monuments Men" were assigned to the European Civil Affairs Division and charged with finding and safeguarding art throughout the theater. After Germany surrendered, the U.S. Army became the trustee for a huge quantity of captured art treasures that ranged from German art museum collections to Nazi-looted art taken from occupied Europe. The MFAA specialists focused on three categories of art: One group concentrated on artwork looted from individuals and governments throughout occupied Europe; a second group collected artwork and cultural items taken from synagogues and Jewish families during the Holocaust; the third focused on Nazi art. The MFAA specialists collected from June 1944 to 1950. Each collection group determined what was to be shipped to the United States. The unit deactivated in Germany in 1950, but the specialty remains in today's Civil Affairs units. All photos courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

This painting was reproduced on everything from matchbooks to postcards and distributed throughout Germany. A fearless Adolf Hitler, in the forefront of massed party members, is mantled by sunlight from the heavens. The dove descending on him connects him religiously to the baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist. The caption reads "Es lebe Deutschland" (Germany Lives!). (The artist is K. Stauber).





This painting depicts a ceremony honoring the Nazi dead from the Beer Hall Putsch.



A bust of Hitler in the 82nd Airborne Division War Memorial Museum at Fort Bragg, NC, was shot full of holes by an unknown Allied soldier.

motivational posters and post cards until the German surrender on 8 May 1945.

During the 1945 Potsdam Conference the Allies agreed that all reminders of the Nazi regime, including artwork, would be removed from public view to hasten the denazification process in Germany.²⁰ In the American zone, artwork with Nazi symbols and military motifs were confiscated. This included state-owned and Nazi Party art that portrayed the leaders or symbolized Nazi ideology or doctrine. Between 1945 and 1950, the U.S. Army collected some 8,000 pieces of Nazi art and shipped them to the U.S. Army Center for Military History, for safekeeping in the Army Art Collection. Some of the art in that collection is temporarily displayed in U.S. Army military museums and offices around the country, including the Pentagon and in the major Army Command headquarters buildings. However, the majority is in storage. In late 1950 about 2,000 pieces of art were determined by the Department of the Army to be non-military and returned to the West German government. Over the next forty years more artwork was returned. Approximately 450 pieces of Nazi art remain in the U.S. Army Art Collection. Under German law, private individuals cannot own Nazi symbols,

Saddam Hussein's "Cult of Personality."



(Above) This mural from an airbase near Tikrit with everything from modern jet fighters to Muslim warriors shows "Saddam the Military Leader."



(Right) "Saddam the Arab Sheik," was another popular image of the Iraqi dictator



(Above) This mural of "Saddam the Peacemaking Diplomat" was vandalized by American soldiers and Iraqis. (Photo courtesy of LTC Robert Lunke)

Adolf Hitler's Third Reich lasted for 12 years; Saddam Hussein had 24 years to build his own cult of personality in Iraq.¹ From July 1979 to March 2003 (Operation IRAQI FREEDOM) Saddam controlled every aspect of Iraqi life. He created the myth that he was the descendant of two of the most famous figures in Iraqi History; the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II and the Muslim warrior-king Saladin.²

The image of Saddam Hussein was omnipresent in Iraq. It was a constant reminder of how important he was. To further demonstrate his influence and constant presence Saddam had more than seventy elaborate palaces erected throughout the country. The psychological impact of his image and stance in paintings and statues was profound. They reminded the people that Saddam was always watching. In them he portrayed himself as a military leader, an Arab sheikh, a diplomat in business attire, and dressed like Saladin and Nebuchadnezzar. Always he was presented as a benevolent father figure.

In Operation IRAQI FREEDOM American soldiers saw Saddam's art everywhere. Irate Iraqis and Coalition soldiers vandalized most of the Saddam artwork. While much was destroyed, a few pieces were preserved for exhibition at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville, NC and the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Museum at Fort Bragg, NC.

Endnotes

- 1 Adolf Hitler started developing his cult of personality before the Munich "Beer Hall" Putsch in November 1923. His publication of *Mein Kampf* helped his rise to popularity and power. Most historians consider the life of the Third Reich to be 12 years; from his assumption of power as the Chancellor in 1933 until the end of the war in 1945.
- 2 Eric H. Cline, "Saddam Hussein and History 101," BY GEORGE! Online, <http://www.gwu.edu/~bygeorge/030403/clinedit.html> accessed on 20 April 2008; Charles H. Briscoe, et al, *All Roads Lead to Baghdad. Army Special Operations Forces in Iraq* (Fort Bragg, NC: USASOC History Office), 16; This is a reference to the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II of the sixth century BC, and the 12th century Moslem warrior-king Saladin, (who took Jerusalem from the crusaders). Neither of these two historical figures is Iraqi or Arab. Nebuchadnezzar II was Babylonian, and Saladin was Kurdish.

memorabilia, and art. However, state-supported museums and educational institutions in Germany may display Nazi items for educational purposes.²¹

The standard question is: “Why not destroy the artwork created to promote one of the most despicable regimes in history?” The Nazi art collection at the U.S. Army Center for Military History enables the viewers to gain the German perspective of World War II.²² Worldwide, dictators have used and continue to use, the Nazi model to promote cults of personality, using art as a propaganda tool. Fidel Castro and Che Guevara in Cuba, Kim Jong-il in North Korea, and Mao in China continue to be portrayed as national heroes.

The author wishes to thank Ms. Renee Klish, Curator, the U.S. Army Center for Military History Art Collection for her assistance in researching this article and Master Sergeant (Ret.) Carlos Jaramillo, Jr. for the insignia on page 56.

Robert W. Jones Jr. is a historian assigned to the USASOC History Office and is a Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army. A graduate of the University of Washington, he earned his M.A. from Duke University and his MS from Troy State University. Current research interests include Special Forces in Vietnam 1960–1966, military government and civil affairs, special operations in World War II, Operation JUST CAUSE, and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.

Endnotes

- 1 The U.S. Army Art Collection is part of the U.S. Army Center for Military History; Renee Klish, Curator, Army Art Collection, the Center for Military History, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones, Jr., 16 January 2008, Washington DC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich. A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960), 31-32.
- 3 Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland. Women, the Family, and Nazi Politics* (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 1987), 23.
- 4 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 42-43.
- 5 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 190.
- 6 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 190.
- 7 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 192.
- 8 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 194.
- 9 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 194.
- 10 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 190.
- 11 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 148, 196.
- 12 Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 167, 201; **The First Reich refers to the unification of Germany; the Second Reich is the Weimar Republic following the First World War; therefore the Nazi Regime was the Third Reich.**
- 13 Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995), 21.
- 14 **The Reich Culture Chamber (Reichskulturkammer) was directly under the Propaganda Ministry in the chain of command. The Chamber had seven subchambers;** Toby Clark, *Art and Propaganda in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 61
- 15 Jonathan Petropoulos, *The Faustian Bargain: The Art World in Nazi Germany* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003), 215.

- 16 *Geleichschaltung* literally means the “synchronization” or “coordination” (or “bringing into line”). This is the term by which the Nazi regime systematically established a totalitarian control system over the individual, and tight coordination over all aspects of society, ranging from everyday life to the economy, and to art. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, 196-7; Clark, *Art and Propaganda in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), 61.
- 17 Adam, *Art of the Third Reich*, 15-16. Hitler, Party Day speech, 1935.
- 18 John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Viking Penguin, 1989), 33, 35; R. Ernest Dupuy and Trevor N. Dupuy, *The Encyclopedia of Military History*, second revised edition (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 1034.
- 19 Anthony Rhodes, *Propaganda. The Art of Persuasion: World War II* (Leicester, United Kingdom: Magna Books, 1993), 25.
- 20 Renee Klish, Curator, Army Art Collection, the Center for Military History, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones, Jr., 16 January 2008, Washington DC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Earl F. Ziemke, *The U.S. Army in the Occupation of Germany 1944-1946* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 1990), 270.
- 21 Klish interview; Stratton Mammon, “Memoir of the Ranking Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Officer in the ETO in World War II,” *Military Affairs*, April 1988, 61.
- 22 Klish interview.

