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“Is The End Game All The Same?”: Analyzing The Importance Of German Schools And The Hitler Youth Under The Third Reich

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**“IS THE END GAME ALL THE SAME?”:
ANALYZING THE IMPORTANCE OF GERMAN
SCHOOLS AND THE HITLER YOUTH UNDER THE
THIRD REICH**

Honors Thesis

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Bachelor of Education**

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By

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ABSTRACT

Was the German public education system or the Hitler Youth more influential in the indoctrination of children in Nazi Germany? The German school system promoted a rhetoric built upon a Nazi ideological framework, with the end goal of having children passively think within that framework. In contrast, the Hitler Youth emphasized physical training and militarization as a critical component of the indoctrination process. Ultimately, both proved vital in the success of Nazi Germany's re-education program and allowed for the full integration of youth into the Nazi State.

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Looking to the future, children were Hitler's means to creating the Germany he envisioned. While children did not comprehend their place in Germany's history as anything special, Hitler knew the power he could obtain through indoctrinating the German youth into his Nazi organization. Hitler's future for Germany heavily depended on the indoctrination and manipulation of the youth. He needed them to live and breathe by his ideology—the Nazi ideology. How would he accomplish this? Hitler's plan would require the complete control of the education system within Germany. It would take time, but by 1939 Hitler's administration would have re-educated the masses of German youth through schooling and youth organizations. This essay will argue how children were successfully indoctrinated by Hitler's Nazi ideology. From the evidence which supports this argument, I will seek to conclude whether the Hitler Youth proved more influential than schools for the German Youth or vice versa. Another possibility, equally important to note, could also conclude that both were necessary components to overall succeed in indoctrinating the Nazi Ideology for German Youth.

The task of educating meant something very different to Hitler than it did to the educational system before 1933. Since 1924, strained in his book *Mein Kampf*, Hitler believed “*Gymnasium*, [secondary public schools], [to be] plagued by a propensity for mental discipline thus filling youthful minds with useless bits of knowledge only to be forgotten.”¹ Overall, the Nazis believed the educational system was “in dire need of a new spirit growing out of the *völkisch* State...[relating] to the concepts of race, soil and nationalism.”² The focus of schools, from 1933 on, would therefore no longer educate

¹ Wegner, Gregory, *Schooling for a New Mythos: Race, Anti-Semitism and the Curriculum Materials of a Nazi Race Educator*. Gent, Belgium, vol 27, issue 2, 1991, 188-213, 193-194.

² Ibid, 194.

children to further their intellectual path, rather their policy became educating children to live—be a part of, and do for the State. Students demonstrated their “mastery” of the Nazi Party platform by applying what they learned in school to their lives:

‘Good German youth’ avoided those who were ‘different’. ‘Good German youth’ avoided thinking beyond what they were told at school. ‘Good German youth’ thought more of the state than they did of themselves. Education in Nazi Germany emphasised compliance and not resistance, passivity and not activism, and the group’s values and not the individual’s beliefs.³

Created during the Weimar Period, The Basic School Law of 1920 professionalized the field of teaching, which made teachers “valued” and their job respected.⁴ With the rise of the Nazi Party, this law, along with the professional development of teachers, was no longer supported.⁵ This had made the jobs of some teachers quite difficult. Advancements made during the Weimar Period from 1920-1933, which saw teachers as professionals who defined “curriculum and shape[d] pedagogical practice was largely discontinued by 1935, as teachers colleges and the German Teachers Union saw their power wane.”⁶ Teachers across all grade levels had to wonder if they were any longer cut out for the job, and for others the Nazi administration would decide for them.

For the youth to truly absorb the ideology of Nazism the right people had to be implementing the information. On July 1935, in a report from the German delegation at the Fourth International Conference on Public Instruction, it became clear that reforms in the education policy would mean nothing without the support of the teachers.⁷ Once the

³ Slavkin, Michael L., *The Holocaust and Education: What Impact Did Educators Have on the Implementation of Anti-Judaic Policies in 1930s Germany?*. North Manchester, IN: *Pedagogica Historica*, vol. 48, no. 3, June 2012, 431-449, 446.

⁴ *Ibid*, 435.

⁵ *Ibid*, 436.

⁶ *Ibid*, 436.

⁷ *The Development of German Education - 1934-35*. *Monatshefte Für Deutschen Unterricht* 27, University of Wisconsin Press. no. 7 (1935): 281-85, 284-285.

Nazis controlled the realm of education, it was not hard to have that support. Nazi conspirators began to remove teachers who were ‘harmful and untrustworthy.’ “Many teachers and professors (mostly Jewish) were dismissed and were replaced with ‘State spirited’ teachers.”⁸ This was just the start of the *Gleichschaltung*, Nazification, of German schools. For the teachers that remained, they would be required to belong to the National Socialist Teachers League (NSLB) as well as take an oath of “loyalty and obedience” to Hitler.⁹ It was the formation of the NSLB that would from there on out train its teachers based on Nazi ideology.

Teachers became the essence of Nazism. They followed a Nazi standard—*proving themselves* as early as their membership in the Hitler Youth.¹⁰ For any reason at all, teachers were subject to removal when deemed necessary. According to Koonz, memoirs by Jewish students stated how “spies (often disguised as teaching assistants but actually old fighters or Hitler Youth members) infiltrated secondary and primary schools.”¹¹ It became even more difficult to hide from observation within the school system when strict, loyal Nazis were placed into higher positions. In 1934, extracts from the Third Reich stated:

A decree of the Reich Minister of Education made the head of any school fully responsible for the conduct of the institution in line with the official party ideology. Teacher committees...were abolished. A ‘confidential instructor,’ the school youth warden of the Hitler Jugend, appointed by the Hitler Youth authorities, was assigned to each school.¹²

⁸ United States. 1996. *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*. Vol I. Buffalo, N.Y.: W.S. Hein, 313-314.

⁹ Ibid, 314.

¹⁰ Ibid, 314.

¹¹ Koonz, Claudia. 2003. *The Nazi Conscience*. Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 139.

¹² United States. 1996. *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*. Vol I. Buffalo, N.Y.: W.S. Hein, 314.

While some larger communities in Germany avoided the Nazification of their schools, keeping a democratic structure from the Weimar period, for some time, eventually all education systems would become one of leadership based on “blood and soil.”

“Documentation of swift firings of Party challengers is noted from 1933-1935, as political opponents, Jewish teachers, and those deemed ‘not Aryan’ enough were dismissed.”¹³

The teaching staff which remained were re-trained by Reich Minister for Science, Education and Popular Culture Bernhard Rust. Month-long training sessions were implemented to educate teachers on the ideology of the NSDAP.¹⁴ Would this training and re-educating of the teaching staff prove successful? Would there be resistance? Could teachers morally accept their duty to enforce a curriculum which revolved mostly around racial superiority?

A testimony from a Holocaust survivor, Otto Stern, stated that “there was nothing in the demeanour of his teacher that would make him think he had moral issues or concerns with the curriculum he taught.”¹⁵ Michael Lawrence Slavkin, who had interviewed Stern and four other survivors, noted, generally, the lack of resistance amongst teachers: “most testimonies noted that teachers ‘towed the Party line’ on a day-to-day basis, and that they did not recall examples of kindness or resistance in the face of bias in their classrooms.”¹⁶ However, the testimonies Slavkin recorded could be fallible, since they did not include any in depth descriptions of *how* devoted their teachers were to

¹³ Slavkin, Michael L., *The Holocaust and Education: What Impact Did Educators Have on the Implementation of Anti-Judaic Policies in 1930s Germany?*. North Manchester, IN: Pedagogica Historica, vol. 48, no. 3, June 2012, 431-449, 438.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 438.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 446.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 446.

the Nazis. Also, one cannot conclude that there were no objectors within the teaching staff in all schools based on just a handful of testimonies. Accounts of the youth during the Third Reich, disclose how teachers were sometimes able to find a middle ground when it concerned the treatment of their Jewish students. Walter F. explained how his teacher could send mixed messages to the students in his class. One day Walter was taking a math test, when an Aryan boy tried to copy his answers. The teacher called to the Aryan boy to not “copy Jewish work.” Afterwards, the teacher spoke to Walter and said ‘you know I didn’t want to offend you. I wanted to show up this Nazi.’”¹⁷

Just as all teachers did not fit the ideological mold, the same went for students. From 1936, Jewish students were not allowed to remain in the German school system amongst Aryan children ‘until further notice.’¹⁸ However, what may come as a surprise is that, eventually, not all Aryan children were able to continue their education either. While Jewish students were isolated and kicked out because of anti-Semitic laws, *pure* Germans were turned away for another reason. Due to educational reform policies, moving away from intellectualism, it became a requirement, as of January 1935, that German students who wished to continue to *University* [high school] must have completed six months in a work camp.¹⁹ In 1935, a report of the German delegation, Fourth International Conference on Public Instruction, presented that:

The task of the secondary schools, it runs, is to educate that section of German youth which is specially well fitted in body, character and mind, so that it will later be capable of filling responsible positions in our cultural, economic and political life in an exemplary fashion. The secondary school,

¹⁷ Altman, Linda Jacobs. 2010. *Shattered Youth in Nazi Germany: Primary Sources From the Holocaust*. Berkeley Heights, N.J.: Enslow Publishers, 67.

¹⁸ Slavkin, Michael L., *The Holocaust and Education: What Impact Did Educators Have on the Implementation of Anti-Judaic Policies in 1930s Germany?*. North Manchester, IN: *Pedagogica Historica*, vol. 48, no. 3, June 2012, 431-449, 438.

¹⁹ *The Development of German Education - 1934-35*. *Monatshefte Für Deutschen Unterricht*, University of Wisconsin Press. no. 7 (1935): 281-85, 284.

therefore has the task of making a choice from among those who wish to enter it, a choice which rejects those who are unsuitable and unfit, in order that the most suitable and the fit may be the more helped on.²⁰

What does this say about the Nazi schooling system? If physical ability determined more so an acceptance into a continuing education, than one's ability to master a Nazi ideological mindset, what point was there to attending school in the first place? While I do not explicitly wish to answer these questions, they may be utilized to inspire deeper thinking on the topic.

Hitler, in conversation, expressed his own disdain for intellectualism: 'Put young men in the young army, whence they will return refreshed and cleansed of eight years of scholastic slime.'²¹ Is school not supposed to create the foundation of one's knowledge of their own self and the world around them? Why would the Nazi administration wish to exclude the people of their own "superior race" from advancing their own mental and physical character for the State?

During a student's years in primary school, classes would emphasize this "us vs them" mentality. Alfred Vogel, a biology curriculum writer and elementary school principal from the Third Reich, encouraged teachers to educate students about heredity, and the 'blood community' of the German nation, to instill racial consciousness into children.²² "Vogel advocated a 'race corner' in the school grounds that could be used to carry out experiments on plants and allow pupils to see the strength of the 'pure-bred' plant over the mixed-bred one."²³ Not only would the new generations of German youths be inculcated, through curriculum, with teachings from Biology, which surrounded

²⁰ Ibid, 284.

²¹ Pine, Lisa. 2010. *Education in Nazi Germany*. New York: NY. Berg Imprint, 13.

²² Ibid, 43.

²³ Ibid, 43.

nationalistic avidity and a focus on racial superiority, but also Physics and Chemistry, Geography, History, Mathematics, and Physical Education.²⁴

Biology's role in the refocused curriculum would be prominent over others because of how easily it could be molded by Nazi objectives.²⁵ Teachers of Chemistry and Physics had to make more of an effort to prove its subjects' importance for Nazi ideological aims. In doing so, "the significance of physics for warfare was emphasized," as well as the creation of a "new branch of physics teaching under National Socialism—the physics of weapons."²⁶ Overall, after 1936, the purpose of physics was to further awaken the will to bear arms and to do so practically for defense against enemy attack.²⁷

To appropriate the material more, students were shown that "Chemistry education...connected the chemical industry to the German people and the German economy."²⁸ For example, the discussion of unfairness towards Germany in the Treaty of Versailles, how it lost its territories "rich in raw materials," allowed chemistry teaching to draw connections between Germany's economy and raw materials.²⁹

Walter Leonhardt, a secondary school teacher from Dresden, explained that chemistry has to do with the instruments of power that first make it possible to wage war, with the most important mineral resources, coal and iron ore, from which steel is produced, with the materials for producing gunpowder and explosives, with the fertilizers to ensure the national food supply, etc. In the years since the lost war, chemistry teachers have considered it their duty to make clear to pupils what instruments of power Germany lost by being robbed of the mineral sources in Lorraine, the Saar and Upper Silesia, and most textbooks have to be devoted to such things so that our young learn to assess Germany's endangered situation from this viewpoint.³⁰

²⁴ Wegner, Gregory, *Schooling for a New Mythos: Race, Anti-Semitism and the Curriculum Materials of a Nazi Race Educator*. Gent, Belgium, vol 27, issue 2, 1991, 188-213, 190.

²⁵ Pine, Lisa. 2010. *Education in Nazi Germany*. New York: NY. Berg Imprint, 44.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 44.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 45.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 47.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 47.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 47.

While there is much to expand on in just the field of Physics and Chemistry alone, the main role of the subjects was essentially geared towards national pride and community building under the NSDAP.

Like Physics and Chemistry, the subject of Geography found a way to bring the theme of military defense into its classroom teachings.³¹ “Defence geography included military topography, as well as a discussion of national borders and arenas of war.”³² So, in studying the homeland, students would look at political geography to explain the German requirement for “living space” and how the Treaty of Versailles created bordered areas where Germans would live in territories lost to the enemy after WWI.³³ The homeland, overall, became the central theme in Geography. “It emphasized topics such as the political subdivision of Germany, its racial groups, its ‘living space’ in Europe, Germans in border areas and abroad, [and] German colonies.”³⁴ Phrases like ‘blood and soil’ and ‘people without space’ were common in Geography education as propaganda, influencing children to identify more the with Nationalist Socialist party.³⁵ The end goal was for students to cultivate a strong love for their homeland, Germany.³⁶

Though History classes found ways to teach in the spirit of the NSDAP, it was obvious to men like Alfred Rosenberg, an ideologue of the Nazi Party, that the task to rewrite world history would take years, if not decades.³⁷ The History textbooks from the Weimar Period were already representative of nationalistic fervor for the State. It would be in the newer History textbooks, created under the Third Reich, that the “glorified”

³¹ Ibid, 49.

³² Ibid, 49.

³³ Ibid, 29.

³⁴ Ibid, 49.

³⁵ Ibid, 49.

³⁶ Ibid, 49.

³⁷ Ibid, 50.

ideas of militarism and nationalism would be at its peak.³⁸ History lessons would focus on the “great” names in German history to highlight the leadership principle.³⁹ They would learn, in part, about German culture and role of women in the ‘national community.’⁴⁰ “Furthermore, they employed maps, graphs and charts to highlight population policy issues, such as the declining birth rate and the age make-up of the population to demonstrate that Germany was becoming ‘a nation without youth.’”⁴¹ According to Lisa Pine’s *Education in Nazi Germany*, there was a “flurry of activity” in the development of History as a taught subject.⁴² Psychologically, the purpose of History in the curriculum reinforced the social and political culture of Nazi Germany.

While History made sense to be altered as a subject more geared under the Nazi ideology, Mathematics, one may argue, being about numbers and figures, would not. Nevertheless, it was not an exception in the alteration of curriculum subjects. Math would become militaristically focused through having children work with numbers of bullet trajectories as well as calculations about bombs, aircrafts, and cannons.⁴³ Pine cites, from a Nazi Math textbook, that:

[As an example], pupils were given the following statement: A bombing plane can be loaded with one explosive bomb of 35 kilograms, three bombs of 100 kilograms, four gas bombs of 150 kilograms, and 200 incendiary bombs of 100 kilogram. The questions that the pupils had to answer were: ‘What is the load capacity? What is the percentage of each type of bomb? How many incendiary bombs of 0.5 kilograms could be added if the load capacity were increased by 50 percent?’⁴⁴

³⁸ Ibid, 51.

³⁹ Ibid, 50.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 51.

⁴¹ Ibid, 51.

⁴² Ibid, 51.

⁴³ Ibid, 51.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 51-52.

To continue, “numerical problems based on state expenditure on ‘hereditarily ill’ and ‘inferior’ people exemplified the way in which Nazi ideology pervaded the school curriculum.”⁴⁵ Questions surrounding topics like this brought up implications towards one’s perception of their community, encouraging students to view certain peoples as impure or ‘undesirables’—furthering the ideas of “us vs. them.”⁴⁶

When looking at the overturned curriculum and the themes of most school subjects, there is an evident overlap in what is being taught. Considering all of Germany’s classroom subjects were taught in the spirit of the NSDAP, it is expected to hear similar ideas appear in different topic materials. When it comes down to it, the Nazi ideology is concerned with nationalistic pride for Germany, the focus on the *Volk*, and the overall success of the State. In looking at how subjects were taught to students, these thematic focuses were present in one way or another.

One of the most emphasized subjects was Physical Education. Hitler and Nazi educators devoted ample time to the focus of this subject.⁴⁷ Hitler’s desire for a strong, fit breed of German bodies made physical education the primary focus of educational work.⁴⁸ In schools “physical education had a new and important role. No other form of education was considered ‘to give such possibilities for the education of the character of young people.’”⁴⁹ From primary school up until secondary school physical education made its mark. In grades 1-3, children participated in movement stories based on their curriculum such as Hansel and Gretel. They would exercise by stretching “to imitate the

⁴⁵ Ibid, 52.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 52.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 61.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 61.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 63.

height of trees, moving around in the woods and imitating animals in the forests.”⁵⁰

Female students had different experiences in physical education after year 3 in school.

For this purpose of this paper, male students will be the focus as are the Hitler Youth in the latter section. Specific skills and exercises would be particular to each grade level, enhancing and building the body strength and abilities of each male student. Pine cites that:

For years 5-7, these exercises included ‘order exercises’ (commands for individuals and groups), ‘marching exercises’ (duration one to three hours), cross-country games, wrestling, swimming and floor exercises. For years 8-10, there were ‘order exercises’, ‘marching exercises’ (duration four hours), country exercises which included orientation, assessment and use of terrain, and camouflage. In addition, there were waving and flashing exercises, pitching of clubs, aerial defence and gas defence exercises, swimming, floor exercises, wrestling and fist-fighting. For years 11-13, the activities were of a similar nature, but order and marching exercises were intensified, and country exercises were extended to include reconnaissance patrol training.⁵¹

According to Nazi educators and contemporaries of Alfred Vogel, there was an evident shift towards more physical conditioning and character formation from the traditional development of
of the intellect:

It is not so much a matter of making the student knowledgeable on all questions of eugenics, but of creating motives for his action... Physical Education develops and forms body and soul, as the carriers of racial heritage, through physical exercises rooted in *Volkdom*.⁵²

The curriculum motivated students through psychological teachings and physical exercises. It is with their newfound knowledge, surrounding Nazi ideology, that the

⁵⁰ Ibid, 63.

⁵¹ Ibid, 64.

⁵² Wegner, Gregory, *Schooling for a New Mythos: Race, Anti-Semitism and the Curriculum Materials of a Nazi Race Educator*. Gent, Belgium, vol 27, issue 2, 1991, 188-213, 194.

future of Germany, those students, found reasoning in their actions, and were doing what was *best* for the State. The curriculum taught students to be able to identify with their community and heritage. To further create a better community and livelihood of peoples within Germany, German youths would need to grasp that it was their duty to better evolve for the preservation of Germany. Under Hitler, that meant being the most physically fit one could be, having considerable character, and knowing that the Nazi ideology was best suited to outline the law of socialization amongst Germans.

Outside of German schools, the Hitler Youth furthered the exercise of the bodies and minds of German youths, reinforcing the ideas of the Nationalist Socialist Party that were taught in classrooms. Its organization would help put the learnings of Nazi ideology into practice.⁵³ “By the end of 1932, membership in the Hitler Youth was just over one hundred thousand.”⁵⁴ However, reports from Bavaria in June 1935 would show that there was resistance, specifically from the working-class, to the Hitler Youth movement.⁵⁵ Sax and Kuntz, noted the opinion of some working-class youths: “approximately one-third of those in our schools are not members of the Hitler Youth and must consequently attend school on Saturdays.”⁵⁶ Parents believed their children to be better off inside schools, rather than practicing arduous Hitler Youth drills. While at first membership was voluntary, by December 1936 membership became known as State Youth and was mandatory.⁵⁷ Apart from the League of German Girls (BdM), the Hitler Youth quickly became the largest organization for young people ever known.⁵⁸

⁵³ Sax, Benjamin C., and Dieter Kuntz. 1992. *Inside Hitler's Germany: A Documentary History of Life in the Third Reich*. Lexington (IL): Heath, 303.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 303.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 322.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 322.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 303.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 303.

The Hitler Youth, among other youth organizations, became the educational center representative of comradeship, self-discipline, and chivalry.⁵⁹ It was through heavy physical training that these young men became molded into men of the Nazi Party, if they were not already. Just as the schools put great emphasis on physical education, escalating to greater lengths as boys aged into young men, the Hitler Youth was doing something quite similar. Findings by the CIA show that there were certain requirements to achieve proficiency at four different levels under the Hitler Youth. Whilst these levels are not labeled by age, it is possible to infer that the increasing difficulty in requirements, and the number of requirements, increases with age.

In comparing the entry-level (cub) group with the upper-level (silver) group one will see the marked differences. Entry-level members were tested on the abilities to run 60 meters in 12 seconds, long jump 2.75 meters, throwing a ball 25 meters, memorizing the HJ oath of allegiance, and memorizing the National and HJ anthems.⁶⁰ The physical requirements of the silver level prove much more laborious. By the time young men reach this level they were tested on the abilities to fire small arms at a 12 ring target from unsupported position with a required score of 30, (though there is no evidence to how they are scored), throw an Indian club at a target—where one must have three hits out of five throws at a circle 4 meters in diameter at a 22 meter distance, march 20 kilometers by road in not less than 4 or more than 4 ½ hours without a pack, read maps to identify two easily visible features on a scale of 1:100,000, identify accurately objects at a

⁵⁹ *The Development of German Education - 1934-35*. Monatshefte Für Deutschen Unterricht 27, University of Wisconsin Press. no. 7 (1935): 281-85, 282.

⁶⁰ *The Hitler Jugend (The Hitler Youth Organisation)* “CIA Site Redirect.” *Central Intelligence Agency, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force Evaluation and Dissemination Section, G-2 (Counter-Intelligence Sub-Division)*, 30 Nov. 2010, www.cia.gov/redirects/ciaredirect.html, Annex E1.

distance of 300 meters, estimate the range of three distances between 50 and 500 meters (with only a margin error of 30%), deliver an oral message containing information regarding time, place, and strength of forces, camouflage an individual position in open terrain, and use cover and concealment while reaching an objective 200 meters distance while the approach is under enemy observation.⁶¹ In conjunction, the CIA documents showed the requirement of an Ideological Test for members of the silver level alone. One must name and explain 'racial measure' of the State, tell what one knew of the importance and mission of the German Peasantry, state the routine one must follow in their day-to-day life to preserve one's health and strength, be ready to give their life on the field of battle for their people and Fatherland (as well as answer why?), be able to answer why it is the duty of every German man and woman to render war service to the Fatherland, and finally be able to answer why the Law for Military Service states: 'The rendering of labour service is a prerequisite for active military service.'⁶² The stringent regiment that German children went through over the course of years, molded them into soldiers well prepared for combat.

The Hitler Youth Organization, arguably developed character and created comradeship amongst its men more so than the public schools.⁶³ This fact, was appreciated so much that to honor the continuation of the organization each Saturday would become a sort of holiday for the Youth. Stated in a report of the German delegation: "by decree of June 7th, 1934, each Saturday, as 'National Youth Day'..., is to be entirely devoted to the educational work of the Hitler Youth Organization in all

⁶¹ Ibid, Annex E2.

⁶² Ibid, Annex E2-E3.

⁶³ *The Development of German Education - 1934-35*. Monatshefte Für Deutschen Unterricht 27, University of Wisconsin Press. no. 7 (1935): 281-85, 282.

schools.”⁶⁴ Those within the Hitler Youth had an effect on the classrooms and became a dominant presence. Their Hitler Youth duties even trumped that of teacher’s classroom. In an account by Erich Dressler, recalling his Hitler Youth days in school, he explained how the teachers were afraid of him and his comrades. When a teacher was reported by Hitler Youths to their Group Leader, after a disagreement over unfinished homework, because of HJ duties, the Group Leader went to the headmaster who then ruled in favor of the Hitler Youth and dismissed the teacher.⁶⁵ The Group Leader “was only sixteen, but as a leader in the Hitler Youth he could not allow such obstructionism to hinder [the HJ students] in the performance of duties which were more important than our school work.”⁶⁶ Whilst the Hitler Youth’s presence in school could be dominating at points, it was not eternal.

When the schools came under Bernhard Rust, the new Reich Minister for Education and Science, he was able to restrict the influence of the Hitler Youth within classrooms.⁶⁷ “In 1936, Rust even succeeded in abolishing the ‘Day of State Youth’... which granted all members of the Hitler Youth a day off in the week to enable them to fulfill their duties within the organisation.”⁶⁸ Rust argued that the schools would not be able to perform their own duty—to educate pupils, if one day was taken away from providing lessons.⁶⁹ Yet Hitler Youth uniforms did not leave the classroom and were still able to undermine the authority of teachers.⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Ibid, 282.

⁶⁵ Hagen, Louis Edmund. 2012. *Ein Volk, Ein Reich: Nine Lives Under the Nazis*. Stroud, Gloucestershire: Spellmount, 65.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 65.

⁶⁷ Burleigh, Michael, and Wolfgang Wippermann. *The Racial State Germany 1933-1945*. Cambridge University Press, 1991, 208.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 215.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 215.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 215.

Despite the tension between the Hitler Youth and their school teachers, what both organizations stood for were not all that different. Schools on multiple fronts were able to provide an education completely refurbished by Nazi ideology. The curriculum was used as a tool to indoctrinate the German Youth both psychologically and physically. Each subject taught around the ideas of racial superiority, “blood and soil,” and nationalism. The largest focus within the schools’ curriculum, Physical Education, even promoted the need for fitness and health to create Germany’s best. However, “schools embodied but one foundation within the larger Nazi Institutional framework.”⁷¹ Due to the findings by the CIA, one can see the same psychological AND physical contribution used to inculcate the German Youth with Nazi ideology. The main difference between both the Hitler Youth organization and the education system was each’s focal point to their education. Schools were more concerned with the aspects of ideology that made students think. The school curriculum, besides physical education, put more time into training the psyche of the student—training the German child’s subconscious, and way of thinking, so that it followed in line with how the Nazis would want them to view their place in the world and those around them. The Hitler Youth, on the other hand, while having set standards for the ideology knowledge of their members, mainly and intensely focused on the physical training and militarization of the German youth. Overall, both organizations shared the same responsibility and each contributed to the success of the re-education of German Youth as an entirety.

⁷¹ Wegner, Gregory, *Schooling for a New Mythos: Race, Anti-Semitism and the Curriculum Materials of a Nazi Race Educator*. Gent, Belgium, vol 27, issue 2, 1991, 188-213, 192.

From the evidence researched in this paper, one is able to conclusively state that the Hitler Youth and the school system together were both necessary components in the overall success of indoctrinating the German Youth with Nazi Ideology.

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2. Wegner, Gregory, *Schooling for a New Mythos: Race, Anti-Semitism and the Curriculum Materials of a Nazi Race Educator*. Gent, Belgium, vol 27, issue 2, 1991, 188-213.