

## 01 On the Road to Success: The Documentation Centre 2001 - 2017

### **Position in the German Memorial Landscape**

Since the Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds was opened in 2001, it has been unique among German memorials. In contrast to the memorials connected with former concentration camps or prisons, this institution looks at the Nazi regime itself, which, here more than anywhere else, attempted to win over the entire German people by means of gigantic construction projects and staged events.

### **Development of Visitor Numbers**

Based on the experience of a previous smaller exhibition in the Zeppelin Grandstand, the Documentation Centre was expected to attract about 100,000 visitors per year. After the "run" during the first year (230,000), annual visitor numbers levelled off at 165,000 in 2003 and 2004. Since 2005, the centre has seen a steady increase in visitors. On 23 July, 2012, the two millionth visitor was welcomed. In **2017**, for the first time, annual visitor numbers reached **275,000**. About 50 per cent of these visitors come from abroad, including many tourists from the English-speaking world visiting Nuremberg on a river cruise.

### **Number of Groups Catered For**

The annual number of school classes and other groups (police, German army, adult education courses) taking advantage of the Study Forum's educational programmes has meanwhile increased to over 1500. In summer 2013, the educational programme was modified and extended, on the basis of experience in the first eleven years, and taking into account the new principles of "historical-political education with a sharpened profile".

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## Exhibitions

The Documentation Centre continually develops the topics addressed in the permanent exhibition "Fascination & Terror", with lectures, symposiums and temporary exhibitions. Some exhibitions were created by outside institutions, some were in-house productions. The two exhibitions organised by the Documentation Centre – "Seduced, abused, and sacrificed: the short life of Nuremberg Hitler Youth Member Paul B." and "Racial Mania – The Nuremberg Laws of 1935" – proved to be very successful. The first exhibition toured to numerous German cities, and French and English versions went to France and the USA. The exhibition "Racial Mania" also went to France, and in 2009, a Polish version was shown in the Auschwitz Memorial.

The first major exhibition organised by the Documentation Centre opened in April 2008 – "Burden of Images – Franconia during National Socialism". It presented a wealth of images in an unusual way, literally as a panorama of the state of mind of an entire region.

Between May and October 2010, as a contribution to the railway jubilee year 2010 – 175 years of railway in Germany – the Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds – in co-operation with six Polish memorial sites – presented the exhibition "The Track. The Logistics of Racial Mania". It was grouped around a central installation, "The Track", serving as an artistic and multi-layered metaphor. This was the Documentation Centre's largest and so far most successful special exhibition, and was visited by just under 50,000 people.

In 2012, in close co-operation between the Documentation Centre and relevant experts as well as historians from the region, the special exhibition "Robbed of Rights. Robbed of Dignity. Robbed. Aryanisation in Nuremberg and Fürth" was prepared, with particular reference to the current state of research. It followed on from Documentation Centre projects investigating the history of Franconia in National Socialism.

The special exhibition in 2013 "WortGewalt. Vom rechten Lesestoff" [Violence of Words. Right-wing Reading Matter] using books from the Documentation Centre's own collection, was reason for the Documentation Centre to continue looking at unanswered questions concerning the mentality of the "Third Reich" and types of similar mentalities in its various successors, and to find answers to these questions, following the centre's brief of educational and explanatory work.

In the memorial year 2014, the Documentation Centre commemorated the events of World War I and its repercussions until the present day, with a unique multi-media installation using panoramic projections: "Summer Fourteen. The Birth of the Horror of Modern Times".



In 2015, the exhibition "The Grounds" looked at the history of the grounds since 1945. A scaffold cube with suspended objects illustrated numerous facets of the former Party Rally Grounds and made an up-to-date contribution to the debate about their future development. This is a consistent continuation of the Documentation Centre's policy to experiment with innovative forms of presentation in its special exhibitions.

The 2017 exhibition "Albert Speer in the Federal Republic. Dealing with the German Past" was the most successful special display since the opening of the Documentation Centre. The exhibition, devised in cooperation with the Munich Institute for Contemporary History, explained why for decades, the "Speer legend" met with such a positive response in the Federal Republic. Due to the major success, an adapted version of the exhibition will be shown in further locations throughout Germany until 2020.

### **Awards**

In 2000, the City of Nuremberg was honoured with the UNESCO Prize for Human Rights Education 2000. The city's efforts in establishing the Documentation Centre on the former Nazi Party Rally Grounds were explicitly recognised by the award.

In 2002, the Documentation Centre was awarded the Silver Otter by the British Guild of Travel Writers, as best non-British museum. After 24 years, this was the first time the annual award had been given to a German institution.

### **Co-operations**

There is increasing co-operation between the staff of European memorials and documentation centres both nationally and internationally. The Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds has established contact – with co-operation and several exchanges of temporary exhibitions – with the Centre de la Mémoire Oradour and the Panstwowe Muzeum Auschwitz, as well as with the information centres in Vogelsang and Prora, to name but a few.

### **Area Information System**

With its permanent exhibition "Fascination & Terror", the Documentation Centre provides a key to understanding the surrounding former Nazi Party Rally Grounds. In order to give all those entering the freely accessible grounds an opportunity to get an idea of their topography and historical context, an area information system was installed in 2006. 23 panels, located in prominent positions all over the former Nazi Party Rally Grounds, give information about the function of this particular location in words (English/German) and images.



## **Tasks for the Future: Building Extension and Plans for an “Experience Space”**

With annual visitor numbers of 275,000, the Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds has reached the limits of its capacity. In 2017, finance for the planned extension of the museum was successfully secured from the Federal Republic and the Free State of Bavaria. The extension project will be completed by 2021, and will cost 15.3 million Euros. Plans include new functional spaces, such as an event room for over 200 people, an enlarged cafeteria and an administrative wing, as well as a relaunch of the permanent exhibition which by then will be twenty years old. An extended media and research centre providing media and learning formats for further information will aim at a range of different target groups, giving new impetus to future educational work. The revision of the permanent exhibition will offer the opportunity to introduce new topics, reflecting the current state of research, such as today’s culture of remembrance in Germany and Europe, and to promote the interlinking of content with various parts of the grounds.

In addition to this work, the Documentation Centre’s team is developing plans for an “Experience Space Party Rally Grounds”, extending the existing information to the outdoor areas, after the buildings on Zeppelin Field and the Zeppelin Grandstand have been made structurally safe. Orientation to the grounds is to be improved, and areas which have so far not been accessible will be opened to the public. Using various media and opening up visual axes, this extension will give visitors an impression of the spatial impact of the mass stage productions of former times. The interior space of the Zeppelin Grandstand will also be accessible for communicating history.

### **This folder also includes the following information texts about the Documentation Centre:**

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- 02 The Former Nazi Party Rally Grounds
- 03 The History of the Documentation Centre
- 04 The Architecture
- 05 The Permanent Exhibition “Fascination & Terror”
- 06 Educational Programmes
- 07 General Information
- 08 Time Line 2001 to 2017

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