

Abstract

The so-called Third Reich and National Socialism are controversial. Ever since the debate of fascism in the 1920s its origins, contents and the appropriation of National Socialism to a specific political or ideological camp have been subject to repeated controversy. In the field of research, at least regarding the National Socialist's claim to register, permeate and reshape every aspect of life under their rule, there seems to exist overwhelming consensus. To do so the so-called movement or the NS-Regime respectively used, among other things, language.

The presented research project aims at contributing to an answer to the question, how successful such an invasion or forming of the individual and collective reality might have been. Similar projects in the past were often based on an understanding of language in (and of) the "Third Reich" as a manipulative force. Animated by Utz Maas' suggestion in 1984 to undertake linguistic studies of certain texts before the backdrop of numerous sources from the same group of addressees (for instance the youth movement) and utilizing (socio)-historical findings, a few such projects (e.g. regarding the language of the Reichsarbeitsdienst) have been realized. More recent research has also been dedicated to linguistic, other specific discourse-analysis based approaches and especially those resting on linguistic criticism – while, since the 1990s, the latter have been the most copious once again.

Especially in contrast to the popular linguistic criticism, the presented project intends to contribute to the field of research with a descriptive approach that is based on interdisciplinarity and intends to study Ego-documents. The intention is to utilize historical and linguistic methods as well as ideas adapted from literary studies to analyze the sources and, additionally, discuss the results before the backdrop of the philosophy of language or sociology respectively.