

“Der – Die – Das” (1897)

Abstract

There is more behind this grammar lesson than meets the eye. Different segments of German society are identified by the artist, Bruno Paul, according to the gender of the nouns that describe their status as either supporters or enemies of the state. The first descriptor, illustrated in the top panel, is masculine: the mob [*Der Pöbel*]. The second is feminine: the crowd [*Die Menge*]. The third, shown at the bottom, is neuter: the people [*Das Volk*]. The caricature’s punch-line is that only decorated military officers and the very wealthy—a tiny minority of German society—constituted “the people.” This cartoon first appeared in the satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* in 1897.

Source



Source: Bruno Paul, “Der – Die – Das” (1897). Drawing published in *Simplicissimus*, vol. 2, number 6 (1897), p. 41. Klassik Stiftung Weimar a.o., *Simplicissimus* online edition, www.simplicissimus.info

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