

Postage Stamps Commemorating the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch (1943)

Abstract

The Nazi regime actively and frequently used its own movement's past to foster a sense of nationalist pride. It was important to the regime's leaders that the movement be perceived as a dynamic and youthful force that triumphed over its enemies. Thus, many cultural artifacts of the time borrowed from or made reference to important events from the history of the party. The stamps depicted here portray the Beer Hall Putsch of 9 November 1923, which was a planned attempt to topple the republican government. From Munich, the Nazis had hoped to launch an assault against the government in Berlin, hoping to emulate Mussolini's March on Rome. The Putsch failed, and its leaders, including Adolf Hitler, were arrested and charged with high treason. Despite the failure of the Putsch, the event remained a crucial moment for the NSDAP: even the "blood flag"—the red banner atop which sat the Swastika—had its origins at this event, as blood from some of the wounded Nazis stained the flag they had carried. These stamps thus reminded Germans of the supposed 'heroic martyrs' of 1923.

Particularly important was the timing of their release, in 1943. Twenty years since the Putsch, and four years into a brutal war, the regime sought ways to instill ideas of victory. Yet the significance of these stamps also lies in the subtle manner in which they inculcated their message. Even today, postage stamps remind citizens of an historic event or personage during the most mundane times, such as preparing to send a letter. Thus, by tying a commemoration to the Party's early struggles to the everyday in 1943, these stamps served to instill hope for victory and the stubborn insistence that Germany would prevail.

Source





Source: Postage stamps, 1935-44. See also the reproductions on Wikimedia Commons:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DR_1935_599_Hitlerputsch.jpg and:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DR_1943_863_Hitlerputsch.jpg

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