

The Anatomy of the Reich

**Explanations of the structures, institutions and
functionings of the Third Reich**

By TheBlackTiger

Brief comments on pre-start lore

The best start to this is from the beginning, and that beginning would be the pre-start lore, which is very underdeveloped right now, apart from loosely knowing about Himmler's coup and the West Russian War, almost no political events are mentioned, and the Reich and its sphere seem to have not changed since the 40s, but this is quite to the opposite of the situation in real life. From the 10 Reich Ministers in Hitler's original cabinet in January 1933, only 2 remained at their post at the end of the regime. Amongst the party's ranks, the statistics are pretty much the same, of the 100 men who had been Gauleiters at some point, only 20 had served since or before 1933 until 1945. And with Bormann pushing constantly for appointment of younger officials, and age being largely restricted to below 50 for a key appointment in the East (1)(3) (with rare exceptions being allowed), it is very likely that the faces of the Reich and the Party would be very different ones compared to well-known figures in real life, and with many prominent people from the younger generation, such as Paul Wegener, Ludwig Ruckdeschel, Hartmann Lauterbacher, Siegfried Uiberreither, Gustav Adolf Scheel (all of them Bormannites or Bormann's allies, Scheel perhaps the least so, but still) not being mentioned much I have to conclude that some more work on pre-start lore has to be done. But before one should write about something, he should get a *good* understanding of the subject he is writing about. Wikipedia is not going to do it, like at all.

Over more than 3 years I spent in modding, my main areas of focus were USSR and Nazi Germany, while I at various points worked extensively on other countries (France, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, etc.), those two remained my main fields of expertise. In more recent times it was the latter, while for most of this period it was the former or both equally. As you can see in the literature section, I have over that period covered pretty much every aspect of the NS regime, and so I have summed up in this document the knowledge I have acquired in a relatively short format, allowing other people or devs to get a good understanding relatively quickly. Nazi Germany was a rather complex creation, and while this will probably be the length of half a short book by the time I'm done, it had to be so, as I wanted to put everything you really need to know in a single document. If you're interested in anything further, just ask me on discord.

I will most probably not cover either the NS economy or the Nazi rule in the East here. The reasons for not covering the former is that it's simply too complicated to explain in a short format, and understanding of it is very dependent on a person's own understanding of economics and political economy. Half of pretty much every book written on the subject are usually the author's political opinions, and understanding and explaining the subject to someone who doesn't have knowledge of actual economics beyond popular-culture political economy is rather difficult. I'm very much willing to do that on some other occasion, as I'm an economics student myself and Nazi economics was the first thing I really started properly researching, but I'd prefer to keep this document to being history as opposed to interpretations of complex economic events.

The reason I'm not covering the East, even tho I consider it to be one of my prime areas of expertise, is because EN is quite deep into development, and so I doubt this can have much of an impact on it, this document is primarily aimed at V&J update.

The NSDAP

Structure of the Party and the State, and Reichsreform

Books have been written on the structure of the Reich, but before we get to the state apparatus in Germany, we should cover the NSDAP itself and the pre-start political issue of Reichsreform and a NS constitution. Here we come across the first key term we'll be discussing, the Gauleiter. Gauleiter is the *party* leader of a Gau [administrative unit of NSDAP, ie a Party region]. He holds the highest office in the party hierarchy in that region and is responsible for the management and administration of NSDAP within it. He is also tasked with overseeing the Kreisleiters (chief of the next lower administrative unit). It was a position that wasn't easy to get into, as the candidate had to be a prominent and somewhat well-connected Political Leader (term for nazi party functionaries, short PL) and had to serve for at least a year in the Party Chancellery to prove themselves (to Bormann). On top of this additional de facto requirements might exist for specific and more special Gaue (good cultural taste and knowledge for Vienna (1)(3)(4), strong personality and workaholicism for Munich (4), strong propagandistic showing and name recognition for Berlin, and so on). On top of all this Gauleiters were for the most part appointed by Bormann, technically by Hitler, but he rarely if ever objected to Bormann's lists as the leader of the Party Chancellery (short PK), which is why potential future Gauleiters had to serve there for at least a year (1), so Bormann and his clique could get to know them, and decide if they are worthy of further promotions. Even so, the Gauleiter only had power over the Party, and Nazis wanted them to also possess authority over the state apparatus and government institutions within their areas. This however wasn't always possible, and here we come to the core issue of the Reichsreform, which is another term we'll be talking about at length later.

(the following section is mainly from (1) and (14))

Before we delve into that, let me quickly summarize the vertical structure of NSDAP. The lowest level party cell was a Block, led by a Blockleiter (part-time functionary, there were well over half a million of them throughout Germany).

Multiple blocks formed a Cell, led by a Zellenleiter (still a low-ranking position with not that many people under them, there were about 100k of them).

Above the cell comes the first actual level at which some serious administration was done, the Ortsgruppe, led by an Ortsgruppenleiter. At this level the officials were still part-time functionaries, but there is a developed structure and staff. Ortsgruppe staff was composed of departments for organization, press, propaganda, personnel, training, etc. as well as liaisons from DAF, NSV, NS-Frauenschaft, Reichsnährstand and similar NS organizations; there was well over 25k of these in Germany and they roughly corresponded to municipalities.

Above the Ortsgruppe is the main level of NSDAP's administration, the Kreis. From this point onwards the functionaries working here were mostly full-time employees of the Party. Each Kreis was led by a Kreisleiter, which was typically the highest appointment most party cadres would hope for, in some cases coming with a perk of a Reichstag seat. Every one of them, (there were about 900) was approved by Hitler, but proposed by Gauleiter or the PK, he would perform duties on a provisional basis for a while until Hitler confirmed the appointment, altho

during the war Hitler didn't concern himself with these matters, so they were confirmed by the Gauleiter as a "War Kreisleiter", and were to be reexamined post-war. Depending on how many people and party members there were in the Kreis, and how his performance is rated by the Gau, a good performing Kreisleiter in a densely populated city could have a salary as high as a Wehrmacht Oberst, or about 3-4 times the average salary in Germany. Each Kreis had a Kreisleitung, that is Kreis staff with similar departments to an Ortsgruppe (organization, press and propaganda, economics and legal affairs, bookkeeping office, education, training, literature office, etc.) but with more people under it, full-time employees and more resources.

Finally above the Kreis is the last territorial division of NSDAP, the Gau. Led by a Gauleiter (of which there were 42 by the end of the war), each Gau encompassed a large chunk of Germany, which might or might not correspond with the borders of Lander or Regierungsbezirke (state administrative divisions), hence the whole Reichsreform business. The Gauleiter was a representative of the Führer in charge of political, cultural, and economic life in his region through party machinery; he was the head of the Gau's Gauleitung, or Gau staff, with all the offices mentioned previously, but now with more men and resources and much more authority and capacity for independent action. Every Gauleiter had a deputy, that is Deputy Gauleiter (who couldn't become the Gauleiter of the region in which he was Deputy Gauleiter to prevent deputies undermining their bosses). The Deputy Gauleiters were candidates for future Gauleiters (in other regions), but that promotion was far from guaranteed. As we will see in a moment, some Gauleiters also held appointments as Governors of the same regions, thus merging at this level the Party and the state.

Before talking about the rest of the party's levels, it should be noted that apart from the Gauleiter, the other [word]letiers were not ranks, but rather appointments. Parallel to this appointment a person would hold a rank within the party cadre system, for example a newly appointed young Kreisleiter might hold a rank of Hauptabschnittsleiter in the party, while another Kreisleiter could be a Dienstleiter in the party. The same way a divisional commander is not a rank in the Army but rather an appointment held by an officer with another rank in the Army rank system, like Generalmajor for example. All of these appointments, from Gauleiter down, collectively held the title of Hoheitsträger ["bearers of sovereignty"], because they are territorial party chiefs, they bear political sovereignty for their territory. Of course the "amount" of sovereignty they bear is quite different, a Zellenleiter has relatively little independence, and his job is more supervisory than anything, while a Gauleiter bears a large amount of independence and acts as a viceroy in the area (within the guidelines of the PK and the Führer). Each Gau also had a female Gauleiter, Gaufrauenschaftsführerin, and some of the affiliate organizations also had their own territorial divisions with the same borders as the Gaue.

Above the Gauleiters is the national level of the party, which is not a territorial division because they administer the party and its affiliate organizations as a whole. This is the Reichsleitung [National Leadership], its comprised of Party Offices, some of which are led by Reichsleiters (as with Gauleiters, Reichsleiter is both an appointment and a rank, a person gets it because they lead a certain party office or party affiliate organization, but upon being replaced or retiring, they no longer actively hold the rank, rather they are a retired Reichsleiter at that point; while a Kreisleiter when he gets replaced or transferred to some party office keeps his party rank, while he is technically a retired Kreisleiter, he'd be addressed by his party rank, not "retired Kreisleiter"). These Reichsleiters, their staff and all the other party offices organized and

ran the party. Arguably the two most important offices of the Reichsleitung were the Party Chancellery, which was the general staff of the party and the Reich Treasurer's office. Not all chiefs of party offices were Reichsleiters and not all party affiliate organizations were of equal status, there were 4 types:

- 1) **Divisions of NSDAP** (Gliederungen der NSDAP) which were SA, SS, NSKK, HJ, NS-Frauenschaft, NSDStB and NSDDB.
- 2) Then there were also **Affiliated Organizations** (angeschlossene Verbände) which included DAF, NSV and a bunch of other unimportant organizations.
- 3) Then there were also **Supervised Organizations** (Betreute Organisationen), which included a bunch of unimportant organizations, the only notable one being the German Municipal Congress (Deutscher Gemeindetag).
- 4) Lastly there was **Other NS Organizations** which included RAD and NSFK, which were both under a state authority, but were still Nazi in their nature.

[note that sometimes NSFK is listed as a Party Division, but it's status was different to a normal Party Division as it was under the Reich Aviation Ministry and had a job within the German aviation, that is to provide pilot training]

Just a few closing notes before we get back to the Gaue; the territorial cadre system we talked about above, with Block, Cell, Kreis and Gau was the Politischen Organisation der NSDAP [Political Organization of the NSDAP] (short PO). The PO, together with the Divisions of NSDAP are "The Party", while the other three types are independent organization associated with it but were not part of it (altho in reality all the Divisions of NSDAP were largely independent from the PO).

The last level of NSDAP's structure was the Führer himself.

While Hess was Deputy Führer (of NSDAP, not of the Reich), he was also Reichshoheitsträger, meaning he bore the political sovereignty over the entire Reich in Hitler's name. While Bormann didn't inherit the title, he inherited all its powers.

Now finally we can return to discussing the Reichsreform and the Gaue; there were *de facto* three types of Gau, let's examine them:

1) **Reichsgau**

This was the "model" gau, here state administration and party administrative borders were the same whenever possible, and the Gauleiter held the position of Gauleiter and Governor at once. On top of that, all of these were made in annexed territories, which meant the entire administrative structure was (re)made by the Nazis after acquiring the land. This meant the bureaucracy was the more political here, and often packed with former party officials, the influence of the civil servants was more limited here, as appointments were done largely by the Gauleiter-Governor and not the Reich Interior Ministry, which was in charge of state administration, governmental institutions, police and nominally the Governors as well.

2) **Gaue with parallel borders to a Lander**

Most of the Gaue in the Altreich (territories that were part of Germany before the annexation of Austria) didn't have parallel state administration to their own borders and could span more than one Lander (German States; Bavaria, Prussia, Baden, and so on). Each Lander had its own administration, government, Minister-President, institutions,

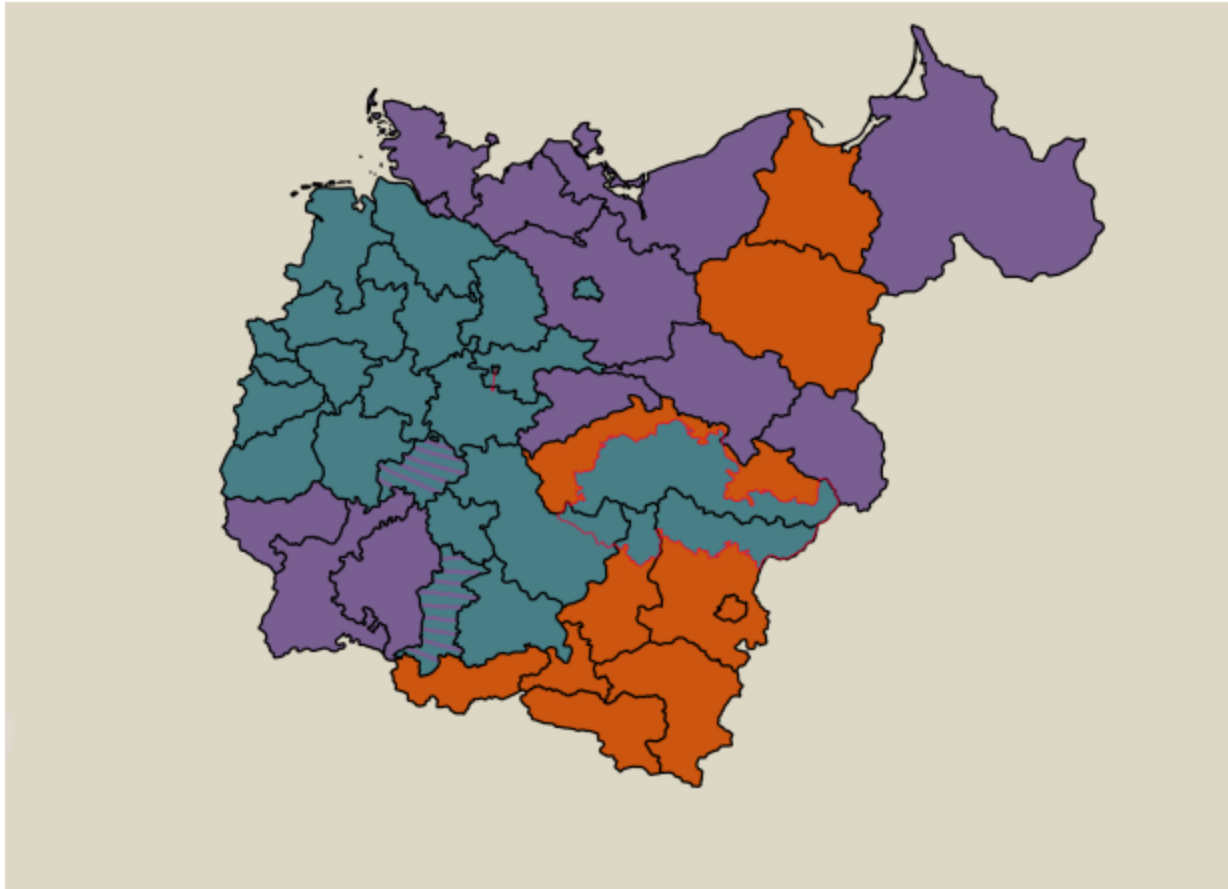
etc. So state and party functions couldn't be combined properly. The position of chief of state administration, be it Minister-President of Bavaria or some other such function would be held by one person, while there were multiple Gaue in those lands, and thus some of them would only be leaders of the party in their territory and subordinate to the Gauleiter who held the position of the Lander boss. However this wasn't the case in every Gau in the Altreich, since some of them had the exact same borders as the corresponding Lander and thus their Gauleiter, who held both party and state function, de facto had the same authority as a Gauleiter in Reichsgau. This existed in smaller Lander (Baden, Mecklenburg, Saxony) and in some Prussian provinces, as Prussia was, both before and after Hitler's coming to power, further divided into provinces with their own administrations. Especially during the Nazis little remained of the Prussian Lander-level power and the vast majority was delegated to Provinces and Regierungsbezirke or to the Reich government.

3) Gau within a Lander/Province with multiple other Gaue in the same Lander

This was the situation in bigger Prussian Provinces (Rhine for example) or bigger Lander, such as Bavaria. Here only one Gauleiter in the Lander/Province could be the Province President (or Minister-President of Bavaria) and thus the rest held party power alone, with their influence on state apparatus within their land depending on their relations with the Province President. Another similar situation is a Gau that has a small Lander within it, but the Gauleiter isn't Minister-President or Governor of that Lander, yet he is Province President of the Province which majority of the Gau belongs to, in this case he has state authority only in one part of his Gau, but party authority over the whole Gau, but the boss of the small Lander holds no party authority in his Lander while holding the state power in it.

This is all evidently a little messy and was viewed by the Nazis as a remnant of The System, as they called Weimar Germany (2), so they wanted to reform it, abolish the Lander completely, and turn every Gau into a Reichsgau, where the function of Governor of the area and Gauleiter of the area can perfectly align. This process was named Reichsreform. But it never happened, the Lander and the weird state and party boundaries remained for most part until the end of the regime. There were a couple of reasons, apart from the legal issues that would arise by suddenly abolishing the Lander, which had its own laws and regulations, which Hitler didn't want to do while the Reich is actively expanding or at war (but actively planned during the war, as can be read in his discussions as early as mid-1942). Another issue was that such a move would abolish Goering's position as Minister-President of Prussia, which wasn't a huge concern for Hitler, let alone Hess or Bormann (when Reichsreform was being talked about Hess was still around, we're talking about mid-30s before Hitler banned the discussion of it until after the war (1)(3)), but it is something that should be noted. The most major issue, however, is that such a move resulted in dozens of proposals from various Gauleiters who wanted to expand the borders of their own Gaue, and caused many conflicts between Gauleiters and started breaking party unity at that level (which was generally pretty high within the Gauleiter corps (1), especially in the 40s, when almost all newly appointed and about half of the old ones were Bormann's picks and part of his clique (more on Control faction later, don't worry)). Thus all discussion of this was banned, however, a Task Force was created, working within Hess's

staff, chaired by one of Hitler's favorite Gauleiters to make official plans and proposals for later. (Amongst other things, creating Lower Saxony was discussed and its borders defined (9)). Gauleiter Adolf Wagner who led the Reichsreform Task Force, was also given the title of Beauftragten für den Neubau des Reiches [Representative for the Reconstruction of the Reich]. Anyway, the only real piece of Reichsreform passed during the 30s was the Greater Hamburg Act, which abolished the Free State of Lübeck (a Lander in the Reich), and was the only real major redrawing of inner-Reich borders in peacetime.



Here is a map of all Gaue as of 1944.

Gaue in brown-orange color are Reichsgaue, those in purple are Gaue of the second type, that is with parallel borders of state administration, and those in bluish color are those where Gau borders did not match any state administration. The exceptions have purple stripes, here the offices of parallel state administration existed on a lower level than the level of the Lander (Regierungsbezirke in Bavaria).

Also note that the Protectorate was split between Sudetenland, Bayreuth, Oberdonau and Niederdonau, but the authority of their governors only existed as far as the borders of the Reich went and beyond that the Gauleiters were only responsible for party affairs and had 0 other authority.

It should be further noted that the wish to combine state and party offices was an exception, rather than the rule (1), in fact, this practice was banned in 1937 (1)(2), as the early years of the regime shown to the party leadership that allowing the person to hold functions in those two "pillars of the Reich" ended up in corruption and nepotism, and lower engagement of party functionaries, who were now busy with their state jobs, thus an end was put to this practice, except for the couple dozen PL in the highest echelon of the party (Reichs- and Gauleiters) and some people who held high state functions, but minor party ones. However, the Reichsreform and other such mergers of state and party power on high level were something that had very strong backing in the most powerful current in the party, the Control faction (more on these tards later, see: Factions and Factionalism section). The Reichsreform was part of a greater process in the Reich, pushed by the party functionaries, the "partification" of Germany; since this is a new and very important term when discussing political history of the Reich it's best if we first explain what that is and how it works.

The partification is a process by which the organs of state power are subdued to party functions, not because a person is a party member, but because the positions are in a personal union with party functions, or appointment can only be made by the Party Chancellery. What happened in real life, that being Gleichschaltung, was Nazification of Germany, meaning appointment of officials who are themselves Nazis or pro-Nazi, but it is not the same as partification of Germany, which is a process Nazis never completed, and some didn't want to, since it was pushed by Bormann and the Party Chancellery and opened the door for Bormann to acquire even more immense power than he did already. Let me quote Orlow to better understand what is going on here. Partification is "...actual administration of societal institutions by offices of the party cadre system, rather than by officials who as individuals were party members". The latter are Nazified officials, while the former, the officials who hold their office of state power by virtue of their posting in the party cadre system are partified officials. Apart from just this, partification generally represents a change in relations between the party and the state and the party and the society, and it is the embodiment of the Control faction's ideology, which we will discuss in detail later. This process was going on during the entire time the Nazis were in power, but really kicked off only after Bormann formally took over from Hess and the Party Chancellery was formed. It should be understood that Reichsreform is another step towards partification of Germany and it makes the function of Governor almost always in a personal union with that of a Gauleiter, thereby giving every Gauleiter "authority of command" (a term for autonomous decision-making ability) over both the Party and the state apparatus and institutions within a given area. While this was opposed on lower levels of government (and indeed banned by Hess (with Bormann's approval) shortly after Nazis came to power), personal union of highest state and party authority on this level was viewed as ideal. This is because the next lower level, that of a Kreis, was viewed as an ideal level for party administration, run by the Kreisleiter, who should entirely be devoted to party affairs within his area and not concern himself with state affairs, according to Control ideology. In fact as Bormann and PK tightened their grip on party cadre system, instructions and communication between the PK and Kreisleiters directly became increasingly more common, while Gauleiters became more of a regional party figureheads actually spending his time being province Governor, or Reich Defense Commissar, or whatever other state function related to the war effort or the economy he had. The Gauleitung (Gauleiters staff and Gau-level party departments) performed most

important function instead of the Gauleiter himself, and they were further strengthened by Bormann, especially in regards to economy (but they were nevertheless under strict financial oversight by the Reich Treasurer's office when it comes to party funds, which were not to be misused, and Franz Xaver Schwarz kept bookkeeping quality high; if some functionary wanted money for personal reasons (paying his tax bill, buying his mistress a house, buying a car, etc. (all real examples btw)) they had to request it from the party's Reichsleitung and in some cases pay it back from their salary later, since some of these were loans rather than free money). The gradual reduction in engagement of Gauleiters in Party affairs in favour of Kreisleiters in turn freed Gauleiters to gain key functions in the state apparatus parallel to their offices, and this could especially be seen in Goebbels-Cabinet appointment. Not only was Goebbels himself a Gauleiter (and a Reichsleiter), Ministries of Interior and of Culture were both given to a Gauleiter (Giesler and Scheel respectively) and Himmler's successor as RFSS was also a Gauleiter (Hanke, tho he got the post for an entirely unrelated reason). And other key posts in late-war Germany were increasingly filled by them, such as the Head of Administration in the Office of the Reich Plenipotentiary for Total War (Wegener, a firm Bormannite and ideological leader of Control faction), as well as almost all Reich Commissars for occupied territories except Seyss-Inquart in Holland.

Thus the Reichsreform, despite being a large political task and a touchy subject (7), is something that should be part of the pre-start lore and the amongst the most major political events of the late 40s, strengthening Party's (read: Bormann's) position and weakening Goering's (and Goebbels', but he'll die later so whatevs), as they rely more on state apparatus for allies and powerbase.

National Socialist Constitution & Party/Reich Senate

The Second most major event of the 40s must be the new Constitution that was long in the planning and was "necessary". The truth is, the legal basis for the Third Reich was pretty shitty, the country operated with a half-suspended constitution, while bureaucracy pretended it was intact, and some party members and members of paramilitary organizations pretended it didn't exist at all. The discussion about the new constitution was active in think tanks since the early years of the regime and within the party and the (pro-regime) legal scholars, it was one of the bigger debates (for example Ohlendorf worked in one such think tank before being fired for too much criticism of the regime (6)(13)). Actually, a new constitution was being written by Gregor Strasser before the Nazis ever came to power, in 1920s (1), but he (and his work) was out of the picture by the time they came to power. "Legal Group" in the Party had also been working on something in the mid-30s. The Reichsreform Task Force was also tasked with brainstorming constitutional reform (1)(7). Party Chancellery, Reich Chancellery, and Minister of the Interior Frick had all been working on proposals and to-do lists for the next constitution through the regime's existence, until the very end (8) (Frick was usually always rejected because his proposals were pretty out of touch with Hitler's views). Draft decree for the Führer Elections made by the Reich Chancellery after Hess' flight also exists. The Reichsreform and the Senate were an integral part of the new constitution, and have been officially planned to be included in the new constitution since at least 1937 (8) when Hitler definitively said it in a speech before the cabinet and other high state functionaries. Even in 1943, when Himmler came to

power in the Ministry of the Interior, in one of his first decrees on the topic of administration, he reaffirmed that all Reconstruction (Reichsreform) planning should be delayed until the victory in the war (7), which was the policy since the start of the war in 1939, but he still felt the need to mention it.

But what would this contain? A good start of the answer to that question would be taking a look at Hitler's Table Talk from early March 1942, altho the same stuff is mentioned in other sources as well. The main point was the strengthening of the Reichstag's role in governance and a "strong" constitutional split between executive power (himself) and legislative power so that he wouldn't have to deal with "politics". On top of this, he talks at length about the elections of the next Führer. And some of the things mentioned in Table Talks about the Senate were also mentioned on a few occasions by Felix Kersten, who said he heard it from Himmler.

On top of this, the Senate was supposed to be included in the constitution, and a detailed explanation of how the Führer is to be elected was to be included as well, the new constitution was to be adopted by a temporary Constitutional Reichstag after the war (8). It should also be noted that a rework of the entire top-level party organization was also planned, which was intended to deal with the issue of Reichsleiters (8). Namely, the position was largely useless, originally the title of Reichsleiter (RL) was supposed to be given to people who lead a Reich-level party office, and each appointment corresponded to one of these offices. However after the first Reichsleiters started dying or being kicked out, they were not replaced, while their offices did receive new leaders, who were not granted the rank. This was largely because Bormann (and Rosenberg amongst others) wanted to abolish the rank of Reichsleiter entirely (1). What would happen with the Party offices remained unanswered, or to be more precise, consensus on what should happen didn't exist. Bormann wanted to absorb them into the PK (what a surprise), as departments or delegate their functions to already existing departments if applicable (1); Rosenberg wanted to keep the party offices just not have the rank of Reichsleiter for them, he wanted the offices which already have a RL at the head to be called Oberste Ämter, and ones without Obere Ämter; the ones with RLs would be downgraded after RL's death or retirement until only Obere Ämter are left and the rank is gone (8). Since Rosenberg was powerless, Bormann's ideas are likely to be implemented, as more Reichsleiters die out, and the ones remaining are already well-positioned within the regime and have no reason to get into beef with Bormann over it, or are already powerless and can't do shit about it.

Returning to Hitler's mention of splitting power; the likely reason Hitler talks about splitting the executive branch from politics is not any sort of checks and balances (altho he explains his wish for a split exactly for such reasons, it's unlikely he means it even in a private conversation). It is much more likely he wanted to split it so he would stop bothering himself with party politics as he wanted to basically retire post-war (retire as in do less work and chill in Linz, while of course remaining the Head of State). This wouldn't really be a major change, since Hitler already wasn't involved in party politics much during the war and largely let Bormann handle that, unless there is some major issue or a dispute at a high level, which Bormann was then to report to Hitler (from both perspectives) and Hitler would make the final call. This formal distancing of the executive branch from policy-making would, combined with the ongoing participation and Reichsreform, would further entrust more power in the hands of the party and Governors, while giving the state a political head (Vizekanzler for example) to manage it, similar to the way Bormann manages the party.

The Reich Senate was supposed to be a body of 60 (or 64) high-ranking Nazis that elect the Führer after Hitler or his successors died. From Table Talk a good picture can be made of what Hitler wanted it to be like and records from Himmler's doctor Kersten mention Himmler's (altho it might have simply been Hitler's but Himmler repeated it) proposal, which is almost identical to that of Hitler, just more detailed. Source number 8 is also largely dedicated to the Senate and explores various proposals and developments around it. The Senators would be appointed largely from the party, based on their personal achievements and not based on positions they otherwise hold (which was also mentioned as an option, including by Hitler, but was later dropped in favour of personal appointments). Some appointments were supposed to be given to people in high state functions that do not hold party positions, and some seats were supposed to be given to people who have made large contributions to culture. It was hotly debated whether Field Marshals, as representatives of the Wehrmacht, should have been appointed Senators. In Frick's original 300-men Senate proposal, all Marshals were included due to their rank, Hitler dismissed appointing them or other Wehrmacht figures as the army was "apolitical" and thus not suited for, what he saw as, a purely political task. (8) However, others like Rosenberg pushed the idea that at least some Marshals should be appointed, as Wehrmacht was one of the three pillars of the Reich (8). Generally speaking the members of the Senate were supposed to be picked from the highest level of leadership, the Reichsleiters, Reich Ministers and Gauleiters. Hitler also wanted it to work like the College of Cardinals, the people were supposed to be locked in, with no access to any outside information so it would be "true" elections and not influenced by "propaganda" (3).

To conclude the constitutional part; the process of implementing the new constitution and the Reichsreform should be called "Der Neubau des Reiches" in the lore (this was the name given to the draft paper produced by the Reichsreform Task Force (1)(7)), it would include basically all of the mentioned above (Reichsreform, new Constitution, Senate and reform to Party Offices). According to one set of documents, the Senate was not supposed to be in permanent secession, in fact, quite the opposite, it was supposed to meet only when called for (to elect a new Führer primarily). According to another set of documents, which were made later, the Senate in its full composition was supposed to meet regularly and serve as advisory body to the Führer, while a special set of 24 Senators, forming the "Small Senate" would be the body that elects a new Führer. The appointment of a Senator was not for life, and they were replaceable. The second proposal for the Senate I mentioned, would have the Senate acting as an advisory body to the Führer, which would basically make the Senate a more formal body for the Reichs- and Gauleiter bi-annual conferences, which served as main places for policy discussion and decision-making amongst the highest echelon of the party. Altho called bi-annual, they could be convened more often by Hitler if he wanted to discuss some particular matter. These conferences, which happened at every level of Reich administration (conferences of Reichs- and Gauleiters and those of State Secretaries being particularly important) were in a way a replacement for meetings of formal bodies, or for bodies that didn't exist; namely the Reich cabinet, which didn't formally meet in full roster after the late 30s, or some body for leadership of the party, such as the Central Political Commission, Executive Committee, or Board of Directors, all of which existed at some point and were abolished later. So the top party functionaries met in a more informal Reichs- and Gauleiter conference, and not some Politburo with clear membership. This also provided some flexibility, which Hitler liked, as officials not in

the rank of Reichs- or Gauleiter were also invited if the topic concerned them (people in functions which were formerly held by a Reichsleiter, but he died or was replaced, such as Reichsjugendführer or Korpsführer of NSKK were regularly invited even tho they don't hold the rank). This proposal for the Senate, with two Senates and the Senate acting as a formal advisory body was the latest of all proposals and by far the most likely to be implemented.



Senator's Hall in the Brown House in Munich (Munich was the "Capital of the Movement")

The way the Senate is introduced within the Party "legally" can vary, the least interesting option would be for the Senate to come to exist via adoption of new Führungs- und Geschäftsordnung der Reichsleitung der NSDAP [Management and Rules of Procedure of the Reich Leadership of NSDAP], last such document was introduced in August 1941 (8). A more interesting option, which would boost reformist and legalistic currents in the Party would be for Hitler to issue a new Party Constitution. In the early days of the Party, it had a constitution that became especially important to the way the Party was governed during Hitler's stay in prison (1). After he came out it was slowly dismantled as it limited Hitler's authority and gave a large amount of power to the Board of Directors which Hitler wasn't a part of. Bringing "back" Party Constitution would further calm party politics so Hitler could "get out" of them more (he was not very involved to begin with after coming to power, and especially during the war since he delegated power to decide in "party disputes" to Hess and later Bormann ages ago) and it would weaken Bormann's position, who is already extremely powerful, and the Reichsreform already strengthen his position further.

Factions and Factionalism in NSDAP

I won't be putting the exact source in this chapter like I did in previous ones as it would get too repetitive, this is basically a summary of Orlow's whole book, with added information from Goebbels' diaries, Broszat's book and a couple other sources here and there.

Webs and cliques of a couple of officials holding personal loyalty to another, higher-positioned official, was quite common in NSDAP, but those were mostly limited to one's own staff or officials subordinated to him who he picked himself, on a grander level, NSDAP was not very factionalized, especially not into factions that have stable membership and a leader.

However, this is not to say that trends and even factions didn't exist within the party, both ones based on ideology and policy existed at various times, altho they were almost always (with exception of one, which was the most powerful one) leaderless and rather represented an association of various high ranking functionaries, together with their mid-ranking followers and the cliques and staff of those mid-ranking followers. They were also almost always fluid and changed over time. Here we'll first explore all the factions and groups that existed at different points in time.

The Original Split

The original split in the party existed since its founding before Hitler even joined, this split remained until the late 1920s, mostly ending with the introduction of the rural-nationalist electoral strategy and the end of the urban-socialist strategy. The two factions, which existed both amongst the party cadre and the wider membership were "pioneers" and "revolutionaries". When Hitler was in jail and NSDAP was banned, this split in ideology and tactics caused there to be two successor parties until 1925, the Greater German People's Community (Grossdeutsche Volksgemeinschaft, GDVG) representing pioneers and the larger and more relevant National Socialist Freedom Party (Nationalsozialistische Freiheitspartei, NSFP) representing the revolutionaries. I won't go into too many details because this split is no longer relevant.

The "pioneers" were older party members, usually being born around the 1880s, they had experienced their youth in the Empire and were often members or sympathizers of the old Volkish groups. Their ideology largely followed the writings of Theodor Fritsch it was very nationalist, anti-urban culturally, and extremely anti-Semitic. To them, the Jews were behind everything bad that happened to the German people. Pioneer strongholds in the 20s were Munich, Nuremberg, and Bamberg, all of which were in Bavaria, as all factions we'll discuss, it had no single leader and largely disappeared as a current in the party by the time Nazis got into power. To give you an idea what type of people these are, one of the most prominent pioneers (albeit also the most radical) who basically kept his views forever, until being purged, was Julius Streicher. Other pioneers, who happened to both be sidelined after coming to power, were Hermann Esser and Philipp Bouhler (altho the latter was not ideologically pioneer as much as he was simply aligned with them politically).

The "revolutionaries" were younger party members, typically born after 1890, they spent their youth in the trenches and later in the Freikorps, typically more educated than the pioneers,

they viewed "frontline socialism" as their main experience of the war. To them, the Marxists were the main enemies of the German people, because they propagated to the workers "international" socialism, instead of "national" socialism. They were also anti-Semitic, as they believed Jews were amongst the key propagators of Marxism, but they weren't the primary "enemy", the primary enemy were the "Marxists" and their organizations (mainly KPD, but also SPD according to them). Their main focus was urban areas, and their goal was to push the KPD and SPD out of factories and gain worker's votes.

They were largely present in the north and west of Germany, and Gregor Strasser represented something akin to a leader, largely because he was, until his resignation, the highest-ranking person in the party apparatus and thus the best positioned revolutionary as well. In the late 20s they were somewhat organized around the "National Socialist Working Community", an association of prominent revolutionaries such as Goebbels (who was the Business Manager (=Operations Officer) of the Working Community), Franz von Pfeffer (Supreme SA Führer), Strasser brothers, and majority of Gauleiters in North and West, such as Lohse, Kaufmann, Telschow, Rust, Ley, etc. but revolutionaries also existed outside of this more organized clique. Examples of those who kept or expanded their positions since the 20s were for example, Erich Koch, Friedrich Hildebrandt and Martin Mutschmann.

After the reemergence of NSDAP in 1925, the revolutionaries largely had the upper hand, both on local and mid-level (Gaue) of party administration, the SA at this point was also reemerging and was a stronghold of revolutionary ideals within the urban areas, even in Bavaria, despite party apparatus in Munich, Nuremberg, and Bamberg still being strongly pioneer. The strong revolutionary position led to the adoption of the "urban-socialist" plan in 1926, which was a strategy to gather members and votes in urban industrial centers while appealing to the more socialist nature of Volksgemeinschaft including pushing demands such as 50% worker ownership in all enterprises and nationalizations of big ones, and using tactics such as street fighting to push KPD out of the territory SA "controlled". The SA and local level activists largely already held these views and so they only intensified their work, while rural party cells, still dominated by pioneers, turned into fairly enclosed communities, recruiting only "trusted" people. By the fall of 1928, it was deemed that the urban-socialist plan had been exhausted, all that can be gained from it was already gained and now the SA started causing more and more trouble, after being unhinged for almost 3 years, its violent activities couldn't be properly controlled. Party policy was that violence can be used only to an extent that doesn't cause the local police to ban the party in the area. In 1928, Berlin SA crossed the line and party activity was (temporarily) banned by Berlin police, this amongst other factors contributed to the adoption of a new plan. Under the new strategy, rural areas became the target of expansion and power was to be achieved only by electoral means, the economic promises became vague but didn't shift too much from the previous promises so it wouldn't demoralize the local activists in the cities. The message shifted to nationalist one instead of an economic one, and rural cells started opening up and getting more party funding. The strategy was a success, and as a side-effect of this success, as well as a shift within the revolutionary party cadre to supporting electoralism (in fact Strasser, who was the Reich Organizational Leader of Party, was amongst the biggest proponents of electoralism), caused the existing faction split to slowly disappear over the next few years.

Hitler himself never picked a faction, always holding a third position and taking a bit from one and a bit from another, on top of this, more and more younger people started joining the party, who didn't experience the war or the early days of NSDAP first-hand; this third current in the party isn't given a name, but it represents a kinda generic "Nazi" identity which isn't familiar with older faction split and never gets to be. Thus by the time Nazis got elected the split in the party didn't exist anymore as such, the factionalism died out and a common "Nazi" identity ruled amongst the cadres. On the other hand, the SA became the keeper of the revolutionary flame, now manifested in street violence rather than socialist policy proposals, and thus the split became more of a Party/SA affair rather than an inner-party affair.

The New Split

After the Nazis came to power, a new issue arose within the party cadres, the question of what should be the role of the NSDAP in German life and what should be the relationship between the party and the people. This split was much smaller in its scope (being limited largely to high-ranking and mid-ranking party functionaries), but far more important, since it would determine the party's impact on the whole of German society.

Two viewpoints emerged, "Control" and "Betreuung" (which is translated as "Welfare" in the literature, and thus that will be the term used from now on). The principal representative of the Welfare approach was Robert Ley, the new Reich Organizational Leader of NSDAP (short: ROL), who took over from Strasse, Ley was also Head of DAF. Control was represented by Hess (Chairman of Party's Central Political Commission, and soon to be Deputy Führer (*of the Party*) and Bormann, his Chief of Staff, as well as the NSDAP's Reich Treasurer, Franz Xaver Schwarz, (a much more important guy than he usually gets credit for).

The Welfare viewpoint demanded a politicized, tightly connected Volksgemeinschaft, in which the party (merged with the DAF) would act as a "politically motivated welfare state" providing the German citizens with Education and Betreuung. Education being of course a nice word for propaganda and politicized education, while betreuung (as a word also translated as "taking care") would mean the state provides for the members of the political-economic machine of NSDAP-DAF, which was supposed to be a mass party including most Germans, everything they need and organizing social and economic life, along the lines of something only seen in the Soviet Union. Another important thing is that Ley didn't view party membership as anything "elite" and neither wanted to attribute that status to the party functionaries, as in his mind the party was supposed to represent the Volksgemeinschaft fully and thus include as many Germans in it as possible.

The Control viewpoint on the other hand disagreed with everything Ley wanted; "Quite aside from the fact that they would have disputed the accumulation of power in Ley's hands in any event, they also rejected Ley's concept of German society under Nazi rule... ..Ley's opponents laboured to create a tightly knit, centralized, vertically taut organization, with an elite, co-opted membership and a fanatic, but technically and administratively competent functionary corps. In this view the territorial cadres of the NSDAP would become a decision-making elite that dominated all other societal components - whether affiliated with the party or not". In view of the Control faction's leaders, the party should include no more than 10% of the German population and membership should regularly be purged from "mere due payers" (non-militant

elements; in fact Bormann and Schwarz planned a purge of at least 1 million members to happen right after the end of the war, and preparations for it were under way), joining the party should be a long and strenuous process, as to ensure "quality" of all new members, recruitment for party functionaries should be limited almost exclusively to exceptional members of the Hitler Youth. Older Kampfere were to be sidelined and only appointed to positions of power if no suitable younger replacement was available. As we will see later in the text, the Control faction, which dominated party politics since the late 30s was the only thing akin to an actual organized clique in NSDAP since the end of the Working Community in 1926, with a clear leader, leadership institution, ideological goals, and one where members can somewhat clearly be determined.

The two factions of the new split were never equal in their power, from the very start, the Welfare faction was dominant really only in the DAF and Gaue with former revolutionaries in charge, while Ley's power in the party in his capacity as ROL was constantly diminishing. Hitler was *not* interested in party politics almost at all since coming to power, he focused on being the head of government (and later the state) and foreign policy and military affairs, thus quickly after coming to power Hess got a new title, Deputy Führer. This title was *not* Deputy Führer of the Reich, only of the Party, he was deputy to Hitler in his capacity as Party Chairman (of Führer) of NSDAP. Hess was given the right to mediate and solve all disputes in the party amongst party functionaries, he was above the rest of the Reichsleiter in his capacity as Deputy Führer and he was above all Gauleiter in his capacity as Reichshoheitsträger.

A Hoheitsträger, as was mentioned, was a territorial cadre chief (Hoheitsträger literally means "bearers of sovereignty"), that is, chiefs of every distinct level of party administration over some territory were collectively known as Hoheitsträger. A Hoheitsträger of a Gau is the Gauleiter, Hoheitsträger of a Kreis (next lower level of administration below Gau) is a Kreisleiter, etc. Hess was Hoheitsträger of the entire Reich, and was thus one level above all the Gauleiters, so he was their boss, even though they should have been responsible only to Hitler, but Hitler didn't want to deal with them and day-to-day party business so he gave it over to Hess (who didn't like working in office, so in reality it was Bormann and his staff who did most of the work from the start).

This all made Ley's position significantly less important than it was during Strasser, Ley was left with organizing the structure of party offices, designing uniforms, rank insignia, and publishing the party Organizational Book (first Organisationsbuch came in 1936 and was Ley's bid to get the upper hand in the inner-party conflict), it was supposed to list every office and rank in the party and clearly determine the authority of each, no new office or position was supposed to be created unless it appeared in the Organizational Book. The book was, for a good reason, given the nickname "Ley's fairy tales" as it massively expanded his own power as ROL and left his jurisdiction somewhat unclear, while precisely limiting the powers of Deputy Führer, Reich Treasurer and other functions held by his enemies. It goes without saying that a large part of what was written in the book was ignored entirely. Without going into more details about the fights between Ley and party cadres under the Control faction, the struggle ended de facto in the late 30s, Ley's power play didn't work out, he was progressively more sidelined within the party and finally, ROL was deprived of any power whatsoever by Bormann in like 1942, and the position remained solely as an "advisor" to the party, and was pushed almost entirely in the economic sphere, and outside of party affairs.

As we have seen, the Control faction was now in charge of all of the party's highest bodies, however, that doesn't mean it could still exercise any governmental power in the Reich. As purely party functionaries, the Control people had no authority whatsoever over the state institutions or the law and had to get everything they wanted only by persuading Hitler or responsible Ministers to issue decrees or push for those laws in the Reichstag. Especially under Hess (but more specifically before 1939/1940) the Control faction, despite being in charge, wasn't that aggressive within the party, its main thing was the training PLs, the establishment of young and skilled staff around the Office of the Deputy Führer (future Party Chancellery (short: PK)) and streamlining the way the party operates and constantly, but slowly, chipping away at the powers of Reichsleiters in favor of the Office of the Deputy Führer. This all changed in 1941.

The Bormann Era

Again I'll try to be quick here, after 1941 Bormann formally took over the Office of the Deputy Führer (now called the Party Chancellery), unlike Hess, Bormann wasn't slow and steady in his ways, he was extremely power-hungry and wasted on time in stripping every party office of its authority in favor of the PK. After Hess's flight majority of RLs excepted the powers of Hess's former office to be distributed to other offices as it was in a moment of "weakness", however Bormann wasn't about to let that happen, he "worked like a horse" in his own words, to ensure the PK would become the "general staff of the Party". For first few months, the PK's power was largely negative, meaning it could only prevent others from pushing their agenda, but it had difficulties pushing its own, except in the Church issue, which Bormann was very passionate about (since he was a massive Church-hater) and he enlisted the support of Gauleiters to do his work with their powers. After a major victory against Ley (who tried to beg Hitler to give over Hess's authority to ROL again, as it was under Strasser) and Rosenberg, who both tried to make a political comeback within the party, Bormann understood that he can effectively push his own agenda and that the PK did not suffer in authority from Hess's flight.

Bormann was no conservative, not in the slightest, he was primarily a bureaucrat with little skill for public speaking, but that doesn't mean he didn't have an agenda, and a very developed one at that. Bormann with his few hundred staffers (about 200 in 1941, rose to around 400 by the end of the war) and any allies effectively pulled the levers of power in the NSDAP and held firm control over the personnel issues, thus making every Gauleiter and most other high functionaries (even in the state apparatus) appointed after 1941/2 either a Bormannite, supporter of Control viewpoint or at least an ally of the PK willing to push its agenda. The Brown House in Munich really did become the general staff of the party (just to note Bormann largely had little contact face-to-face with his staff as he was in Berlin, but he kept up a voluminous correspondence, often reaching up to a hundred dictated memos and letters per day, and he had his adjutants and other lieutenants going back and forth often).

The Secondary Players

Apart from these "major" currents and factions, there were a couple more smaller, but prominent "groups" in the Party.

After coming to power, a "legal group" within the party appeared. These were trained and educated lawyers and jurists who were "experts" on legal matters who wanted to politicize the legal system and move it in line with the party BUT they wanted to prevent the quality and training of the judicial appointees, staff and lawyers from suffering because of the politicization, they very much wanted to maintain a professional judiciary, which however, would also take into account ideological goals when it comes to cases that are connected to ideological issues. The original main members were Dr. Hans Frank, Dr. Roland Freisler, Dr. Otto Thierack, Dr. Curt Rothenberger, Dr. Helmut Nicolai, Dr. Wilhelm Stuckart, and Dr. Werner Best. However during the war there was something called the Judicial Crisis that became the main issue around May 1942, without getting into much details, Hitler (influenced by Bormann) figured that almost nothing had changed in the judiciary and that "people's justice" wasn't despended at the "enemies" of the Reich, but rather they went through a slow and bureaucratized legal process, and judges didn't treat party functionaries preferentially or take their "elite" status in society into account (this second thing was particularly important for Bormann who almost wanted to take party functionaries out of the legal system completely and make it so only the PK can issue a ruling against them without a professional judge). Hans Frank was opposed to the renewed push against the professionalism of the judiciary and he was thus sidelined in legal issues after publicly disagreeing with Hitler during a tour of German universities where he held a couple lectures in defence of the judiciary.

Werner Best was shipped to Denmark and already lost his influence in legal matters long ago, altho his fall was more connected to inner politics of the SiPo, rather than his stances on legal issues. Nicolai was fired in 1935 for opposing the Nazi policies too much and Stuckart was too busy being State Secretary in the Ministry of the Interior, thus the remaining "legal group" represented the most radical partificationists amongst the trained jurists in NSDAP and they overtook the Ministry of Justice after 1942 (apart from Freisler who was sent to the People's Court, so he wasn't very involved). Even still the views of Hitler and Bormann who would prefer "people's justice" based on emotional ideologically-driven decisions rather than professional legal norms and the remains of the "Legal Group" still didn't align, and in the end the Judicial Crisis which seemed to have been "solved" by the appointments of 1942 in reality wasn't solved in the way Hitler wanted, judiciary became more compliant in rhetoric but resisted attempts at "deprofessionalization" in reality (except for "traitors" who went to show trails at the People's Court and camp inmates working outside the camps who were, for the duration of the war, tried by a pseudo-court of police or security functionaries (akin to NKVD troikas) if they committed a crime).

The other such group was a late-war formation, after the return of Goebbels into a position of power and the rise of Speer (please note, Goebbels wasn't nearly as influential as he is usually made out to be, he was very powerful and influenced Hitler in the early and mid 30s, but was after that a dying star until political mobilization for total war started (around 1943), where he hoped to get a leading role, but was fucked over by Bormann (as at the time they were not allies), but after Bormann's Committee of the Three didn't prove effective enough (and lacking in propagandistic value, as a bureaucratic body), Goebbels returned to the spotlight in 1944 with appointment as Reich Plenipotentiary for Total War, however at this point he was somewhat allied with Bormann against Göring, so there was no pushback).

The "Goebbels group" comprised Funk, Speer (who Goebbels describes as "entirely my man" in his diaries), Goebbels and Ley and formed around 1943 when the initial push for total war started. Apart from Speer, who was a rising star (whose political influence is also hugely overestimated), Funk, Goebbels and Ley were high-ranking officials with little power or "authority of command" (a contemporary term for ability of autonomous decision-making) who were all former revolutionaries now trying to make a comeback by a propagandistic appeal to social tensions (especially after July plot, the aristocracy, even tho powerless, (Hitler banned appointment of nobles to positions of power in the party (and to large extent in the state apparatus) in 1943, when that happened in Goebbels' diaries he notes that Hitler hates them even more than he does) was a target of numerous bloodthirsty speeches by the likes of Ley and such) to motivate the people for the "final push" to victory.

Their goal at the start (keep in mind this is 1943 and Goebbels and Goering are allies) was to make Hitler provide the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich with proper powers, in order to allow it to control the Gauleiters and update its membership to reflect the needs of the war better (24). The Gauleiters largely didn't want to listen to Speer and followed PK's directives instead or acted as they saw fit. Bormann's proposal however to make a state committee, the aforementioned Committee of the Three was accepted by Hitler (the Three were representatives of the "Three Pillars of the Reich", the Wehrmacht, the Party and the State, those being Keitel, Bormann and Lammers respectively).

After his failure, and after political alignments changed the goal of the group was simply a streamlined control of the war economy and raising of popular morale to support the total war effort. Goebbels' previous fall ended up being temporary and he made a comeback, while Speer also benefited from this alliance. Only Ley couldn't save himself and largely gained nothing from the affair. Funk remained where he was, and his ministry wasn't entirely sidelined by Speer's, which was good enough for him, however since he was in charge of civilian economy and the war economy was becoming bigger and bigger, his area of influence were naturally being reduced by the war.

The State under National Socialism

This is another chapter in which it's hard to list exact sources, as this topic is covered in pretty much all of them to some extent. Probably the main source is *The Hitler State: The Foundation And Development Of The Internal Structure Of The Third Reich* by Martin Broszat. But others are also used, especially Orlow's book on topics of party-state relations.

Now that we've covered the Party, we should cover the other two Pillars of the Reich, starting with the most important one, the State. First we must briefly understand the state in which the German State was before the Nazis came to power (that's a nice sentence lol). The German civil service was a prestigious class, civil servants often came from families with traditions of civil service going back generations, as well as from aristocracy. It was also a group which ensured that many people joining the civil service came from similar backgrounds. German bureaucracy was essentially a second Wehrmacht, being an enclosed group of its own, living beneath the political and elected state bodies. Its members were highly-educated, efficient, and once they took the job, the majority stayed in the civil service until retirement. There was a rigid system of pay grades and promotions, everything was done in a legalistic and bureaucratic way, following the letter of the law. There were 4 basic career paths in civil service, simple service, middle service, senior service and higher service (in German: einfachen Dienstes, mittleren Dienstes, gehobenen Dienstes und höheren Dienstes), each of these services had different requirements for education and different pay grades, movement from one grade to another was possible, but supervised by the Prussian Testing Commission in the Interior Ministry, the same Commission supervised all joiners in higher service. University degree was a requirement for top service careers, and for higher service individual bodies could set further requirements, many civil servants thus held doctorate in law, which was a safe bet for a strong career. In 1933 in Germany there were 1,5 million civil servants. This includes the so-called "ministerial bureaucracy" (that is functionaries in the ministries of the Reich, bureaucrats in the executive branch and such), the legal bureaucracy (public prosecutors, police functionaries, etc.) the administrative bureaucracy in municipalities, provinces and such, and the Wehrmacht Civil Servants (mostly called Wehrmacht Officials), etc.

Altho it should be noted that when talking about civil service, and when they are referred to in literature, its mostly referring to the higher career path.

During the Weimar era, despite nominal membership in political parties, technical skill and Prussian-esque devotion to public service remain the main traits of German civil service. Even in positions which were part of the "political civil service", ie those that were appointed by the ruling government, technical skill and qualification was a key factor. This self-reproducing "class" with strong roots in the authoritarian and efficient bureaucratized Prussia of the old, did everything that it could, and it could do a lot, to keep its position and not allow politics to penetrate deep into this sphere of the state. During the late Weimar period, the bureaucracy greatly expanded its powers, with lack of parliamentary support for ruling governments, and increased use of executive action, the main executioners of this semi-authoritarian style were the civil servants, who now gained for themselves the right to interpret the law and regulation

and enforce it in a way they want, even if that isn't exactly what was intended. This "right" of civil servants is a surprise tool that will help them later.

When Nazis came to power, there were two main ways of thought within the new regime. The pro-State and the pro-Party one. The pro-Party viewpoint wanted to undermine the traditional civil service and politicize it, give the NSDAP a final say in personnel choices and make all civil servants join the party so that their Kreisleiters and other party functionaries would be their bosses in the party system and thus have some influence over them. The pro-State viewpoint was that held by Goring, Goebbels and most of the time, Hitler, but perhaps more importantly by Dr. Wilhelm Frick, the Reich Interior Minister. It called for Nazification of the very top of the state, that being key ministers and some key State Secretaries which was quickly done, but also strict separation of the state from the party. The argument went that because the leadership of the state is high-ranking National Socialists, it means that the Party administration has nothing to do lurking around state institutions, since leadership comes from top down, Party having a say in state matters would effectively mean they don't trust their own highest echelon and are sabotaging their work. While otherwise very strong, the Control Faction, which was the only bearer of pro-Party view, couldn't in any way enforce its will, and pro-State viewpoint became official policy very early in the regime. Frick, who was quite old, and very old-school and Prussian in his thinking (despite being Bavarian) and quite conservative, had his own project for the state apparatus, of which he was the boss as Interior Minister and General Plenipotentiary for the Reich Administration. This was the following [from his letter to Hitler]:

"I have, my Führer, always seen it as my duty as your civil service Minister since 1933, to make available to you for the great tasks of state policy a highly qualified professional civil service and to develop in it the old Prussian conception of duty as well as the National Socialist character."

The first part, the old Prussian conception of duty, had already existed and was a key element of civil servants in Germany, but the NS character had to be built. Frick however still preferred technical qualifications over political ones, and Hess' and Bormann's constant calls for Party influence in promotions and political training were shut down every time they were made. This led to a phenomenon of many civil servants becoming party members after 1933 as a show of this new NS character, but it effectively led to no changes. The premature retirement (with pension) of Jewish and social democratic or communist civil servants, who didn't fit into the wide range of exempt categories, following the introduction of Civil Service Restoration Act, affected barely 1% of all civil servants in Germany. While the law allowed for premature retirement of civil servants for political unreliability, this could only be done by the disciplinary or administrative courts, which tended to protect their own. Even the Führer couldn't dismiss a civil servant, but could only request an investigation by the aforementioned bodies. This was tested when after annexing Austria and Sudetenland Hitler ordered dismissal of all civil servants (without pension) who had shown openly anti-nazi character (as I mentioned before in Reichsgau part, Nazis were often more eager to enforce their will in territories outside of 1933 Germany, then in the Altreich). This order was effectively suppressed by the highest body of state bureaucracy, the Reich Chancellery, and only very few civil servants were actually dismissed and almost none without pension. Some even sued for a person and won against the Reich (suing the Reich was

somewhat common during the war for officers dismissed by Hitler in anger without a pension, for example July 20 conspirator, Erich Hoepner was dismissed, sued and won).

It is only necessary to look at the numbers of new Party members to see how the professional civil service suddenly opened their eyes to National Socialism (irony);

Out of 2,228 town Lord Mayors and Mayors 1,049 (47 per cent) were old Party members, 694 (31 per cent) new Party members and 485 (22 per cent) non-Party members. Out of 49,443 municipal Mayors 9,517 (19.3 per cent) old Party members, 20,114 (40.6 per cent) new Party members, 19,812 (40.1 per cent) non-Party members. And these two groups were part of the political civil service, amongst the professional civil service, similar numbers exist; among the total of 689 regional councilors 198 (28.8 per cent) were old Party members, 235 (34 per cent) new Party members, 256 (37.2 per cent) non-Party members.

After mid 1933 the Party closed its doors for new members, and it wasn't until 1937 that a ban on joining the Party was lifted, after which point the ban was again reinstated except on special days like Hitler's birthday, majority of these new members joined in 1937, as many were still skeptical of the longevity of the new regime in 1933.

The Inner Workings of the Government

The aforementioned Reich Chancellery (short: RK) was essentially the HQ of the state apparatus. Its task was to turn Hitler's orders and proposed decrees of the government into legal documents, as well as to coordinate work of different ministries and function as intermediary when drafting new legislation.

A typical law or decree in the Reich would come from one ministry and be sent as an circular letter by the Reich Minister or more often State Secretary to other ministries concerned in the matter as well as the RK, each would give their comments, suggestions and feedback or even daft counter-proposals and send them back around to all the ministries concerned in the matter. After an agreement is reached, the RK's lawyers descend upon the draft and check if the lawyers of all the ministries involved did a good job, after the legal stuff is done, the RK would forward it to whoever needs to sign it for it to become law. In case of Hitler's decrees it usually went the other way, instead of the law going up to be made and approved before being signed, it would go down, Hitler would say what he wants, the RK would draft the decree in a way that's within the law and Hitler would sign it.

After Bormann was appointed as Hitler's secretary, he had effectively become the secretary not only to Hitler, but to the government as well, and it became his job to mediate and coordinate work of various ministries. The RK already had a department for State Affairs (under Klopfer), which increasingly tried to sideline the RK and turn it more into a legal department for the government instead of the HQ of the state bureaucracy.

Apart from Ministries there were also independent government agencies and bodies not subordinate to any ministry, but rather directly subordinate to the Reich Chancellery, these held the status of Obersten Reichsbehörden [Supreme Reich Authorities]. Dozens of offices held this status, some of the most prominent include: Hitler Youth (after 1936), Reich Labour Service (after 1943, before that it was under Interior Ministry), Supreme Court, Reich Insurance Office, Reich Statistical Office, Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, General Government and others, alongside offices of General and Reich Plenipotentiaries and Commissars, such as General

Plenipotentiary for Labour Deployment, Reich Commissar for Social Housing, Reich Plenipotentiary for Total War and other such offices, and of course very importantly, the offices of the Representative of the Führer for the Four Year Plan. This last one in particular was a very powerful office that involved the majority of the ministries in its operation. The General Council of the Four-Year Plan, one of the two main bodies running the Office of the Plan (the other being the Secretariat), represented every ministry involved in the economic operation of the country. From the 12 positions which were automatically members of the Council only 2 were not from the state apparatus (Representative of the NSDAP to the Council and Chief of the War Economy and Armaments Office of the Wehrmacht). All the other members (Representative for the Four Year Plan, Reich Commissar for Price Setting, 2 State Secretaries from the Four Year Plan Office, State Secretary in the Reich Forestry Office and State Secretaries from Ministries of Labour, Interior, Transport, Economics and Food and Agriculture) were state functionaries and in case of State Secretaries, highest ranking people in their ministries besides the Minister himself, but during NS period, as before, State Secretaries really ran the day-to-day operations of their Ministries more so than the politicians who became Ministers, as majority of them either came from within the ministerial bureaucracy or were Party's experts on the field in question.

The Four Year Plan is one of those bodies created during the NS period to solve a problem the Nazis deemed too political or volatile for the conservative ministerial bureaucracy to handle. Altho vast majority of Four Year Plan employees were either civil servants or experts in economics or business, the leadership and managerial positions were filled by people who weren't believers in the conservative Reichsbank-Finance Ministry doctrines and were usually people who were considered both knowledgeable (or experienced) and "reliable". The whole goal of the Four Year Plan originally was to exploit fully the raw material potentials of Germany, and especially steel, so that at the same time both export and armament production could be increased. Exports particularly were important for the early Four Year Plan, as foreign currency reserves and gold reserves were a staple issue in Nazi Germany's economy until the war. There was capacity for more production, but private industries in the steel business didn't want to artificially boost production. For this they were punished by Göring's first decree during the Four Year Plan, their rights to extracoin and assets in the areas now overtaken by the newly founded Reichswerke Hermann Göring were expropriated in a glamorous ceremony in which over 300 representatives of private steel industries were presented with maps of areas they had just lost by the decree. You could say Göring started the Plan with a little trolling of the unruly raw material firms (more was to come, especially in territories not part of the Reich in 1933).

The Four Year Plan had a slow start and it wasn't until 1937 that it really took pace, and it was only in 1938 that effects could be seen (this was partially because building a staff took some time and consolidation of various nationalized assets and already existing state companies (like Rheinmetall) in the raw materials sector took some time). In 1938 a new Four Year Plan was adopted by Göring (called New Military-Economic Production Plan) which greatly expanded the Four Year Plan's goals from increase in raw resources to increase of production in every sector of the armaments industry. While Göring wasn't an economic expert, the Air Ministry was fairly experienced, as it had almost single handedly built up the German air industry from nothing in 1933 to the largest armament industry throughout the entire war, and it had also intervened in the aluminum industry and considerably boosted aluminum production. Indeed the Air Ministry was effectively the Armaments Ministry before the Armaments Ministry

became a thing, and its State Secretary, future Generalfeldmarschall, Erhard Milch who led these programs was later a key player in war-time Armaments Industry and one of Speer's key coworkers (interestingly, Milch was half-Jewish, as he had a Jewish father, and would have been thus classified as a "1st-degree Mischling" according to Nuremberg laws, but was protected by the regime with an invented story that his mother was unfaithful to his father; he was the highest ranking "Mischling" in Nazi Germany).

Göring was aware of his own lack of knowledge and had thus surrounded himself with almost 2000 experts in economics, business, statistics and finance. The Plan was effectively run by a few highest ranking bureaucrats in the Four Year Plan Office, one of those, Paul Körner (one of the two State Secretaries in the Office) chaired General Council meetings when Göring wasn't present (and sometimes even when he was). While I won't go too deep into the Four Year Plan or economics of the NS period too much, ultimately the Plan undisputedly achieved progress towards its goal, and for a (relatively brief) period of time before WW2, Germany had become the largest producer of steel in the world, surpassing the United States (21).

Just to put the economic policy making situation in perspective before I finish the session, the main institution which regulated and effectively ran the entire economy was the Reich Ministry of Economic Affairs. After Schacht's resignation from the Ministry, the Ministry and the Office of the Four Year Plan merged some of their departments and offices, but still remained separate organizations. The other power centers in the economic sphere were the Reichsbank (still under Schacht) and the Reich Ministry of Finance, whose cadres were generally far less happy with the Hitler regime and were much more conservative in their approach. Despite the difference of opinion, Reichsbank remained a player in economic policy, as it was able to follow economic developments and potential holes in policy very quickly due to its sophisticated system of macroeconomic statistics, which was the most advanced in the world at the time (21). It wasn't until later, during the war, that the Armaments Ministry became a key player and that the Central Planning Board overtook many duties of the Four Year Plan, but I digress. The Nazi economic policy, economic structures and the functioning of German economy is something that would warrant another document, probably no smaller than this one, to properly explain (maybe one day... maybe one day...).

The Administration and State Structure

The Reich Interior Ministry (the Minister was also General Plenipotentiary for the Reich Administration) was in charge of, administration, as well as the civil service at large. Below the Reich-level there were the Länder [States], such as Prussia, Bavaria, etc. However since Prussia covered half the Reich, it had an additional level of administration that is more equal to Länder outside of Prussia, that is Prussian Provinces, such as Westfalen, Pommern, Ostpreußen, etc. The head of these was Oberpräsident [High President] and the head of a Länder was Reichsstatthalter [Reich Governor]. The Länder and Prussian Provinces are from here on out subdivided in the same manner, Prussia just has that one extra level because of its size. The third administrative unit equal to the Länder and Prussian Provinces would be the Reichsgau, which also has a Reichsstatthalter, who was also the Gauleiter in that region. All Reichsgaue also had the same subdivisions as Länder and Prussian Provinces.

This subdivision starts with Regierungsbezirk [Governmental District], which was the next lower level; it existed universally everywhere in Germany no matter what is above it. Its head is called Regierungspräsident [literally Government(al) President, but it's translated as District President]. He is a civil servant and this level of administration had considerable importance for state administration and most things related to it on a regional level were done on this level. The Regierungspräsident is responsible primarily to the Interior Minister. Nazis continued appointing civil servants, administrative lawyers and similar sort to these posts, and largely didn't politicize appointments.

Below the Regierungsbezirk there were many districts, of which two types existed, Landkreis [Rural District] and Stadtkreis [Urban District]. Landkreis had at its head a Landrat [County Administrator] who was a civil servant in charge of that rural district and who was subordinate to the Regierungspräsident. In urban places there was either a Bürgermeister [Mayor] or Oberbürgermeister [Lord Mayor] depending on the size of the town or city. Also depending on the size, Bürgermeister was either subordinate to Landrat (if the town is small and part of a Landkreis as opposed to being its own district) or directly to the Regierungspräsident. Oberbürgermeister was subordinate directly to the Interior Ministry. Both Bürgermeister and Oberbürgermeister had certain autonomous powers under the principle of local Selbstverwaltung [self-administration]. Below the Districts there were Gemeinden [Municipalities].

Now that we've covered two pillars of the Reich involved in government and administration, I'd first cover the Schutzstaffel before returning to the third pillar of the Reich, the Wehrmacht.

The Black Guard

I won't be putting the exact source in this chapter either, as almost every sentence could easily get 2 or 3 sources for it, so it would be too many, the majority of information comes from the following:

- The Order of the Death's Head
- Allgemeine-SS - The Commands, Units and Leaders of the General SS
- The Allgemeine-SS; Robin Lumsden, Paul Hannon; Osprey, 1993.
- (all 6 Volumes of) Uniforms of the SS
- Uniforms, Organization and History of the Waffen-SS
- Hitler's Hangman - The Life of Heydrich
- Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression Vol 1 & 2
- Uniforms, Organization and History of the German Police Volume 1 & 2
- Hitler's Elite - The SS 1939-45

As well as a little from almost every other source mentioned, since SS is mentioned often even in works not made specifically about it, anyway;

What was the SS?

I'm not trying to insult anyone here, but the chances that the reader of this knows what the SS was, how it was organized, what its basic purpose is, and what it was made for are pretty slim, unless you've read a book or two. This is largely no fault of your own, it's mostly a fault of historians that focused on the more "interesting" and attractive parts of SS as opposed to the organization as a whole, not to say that such works don't exist, they do, and many are very good books, but they are not as attractive to write and probably don't sell as well as a action-filled adventure of some SS ace tanker. In fact Waffen-SS (short: W-SS), which is probably the most well-explored part of the SS and the one that usually first comes to mind is the least SS-y part of the SS and the one where Himmler had limited influence, if any... It's enough to look at the roster of its top generals and their relations with Himmler to understand that W-SS was essentially an organization with a will of its own. Neither Waffen (or SS-Verfügungstruppe before it; short: SS-VT) or SS-Totenkopfverbände (short: SS-TV), altho perhaps more iconic, are not what the SS was made for, or what its basic purpose was. That lies with the, admittedly complicated, Allgemeine-SS (short: A-SS).

Firstly, let's quickly cover the SS uniform, as I won't be going into details about them. Black SS uniforms were being replaced with grey uniforms since 1935 for full-time functionaries and since the late 30s for part-timers. In 1938/39 they were omitted from service except for special occasions and in 1942 they were entirely eliminated from service, and sent back to the SS, where they were stripped of insignia and given to native police formations in the East or Germanic SS in the West. Waffen-SS never even had black uniforms (Waffen was formed in 1940) and pre-war SS-Verfügungstruppe and LSSAH only wore them on parade and ceremonial duties. All SS uniforms would and should be grey in TNO, reintroduction of black uniforms

wouldn't make sense, and since all were recalled in 1942, nobody would have them anyway, except Germanic SS.

*The **Paramilitary** part of SS*

If I were to ask you what is paramilitary about SS, apart from its ranks and military-ish uniforms, chances are most people would say Waffen-SS. However Waffen wasn't a paramilitary organization, it was an actual military, nothing very para or milita about it. The actual paramilitary aspect of the SS is what it was made for, the protection squads, or later entire regiments (called Standarten). These were part-time voluntary units organized in every part of Germany to protect Hitler when he comes around. This quickly became redundant, as Hitler had his own personal guards, so SS Standarten guarded other local Nazi leaders, Nazi rallies, and such activities. There were two types of SS Standarten, SS-Fuß-Standarten [Foot Regiments], which was the majority, and SS-Reiterstandarten [Riding Regiments].

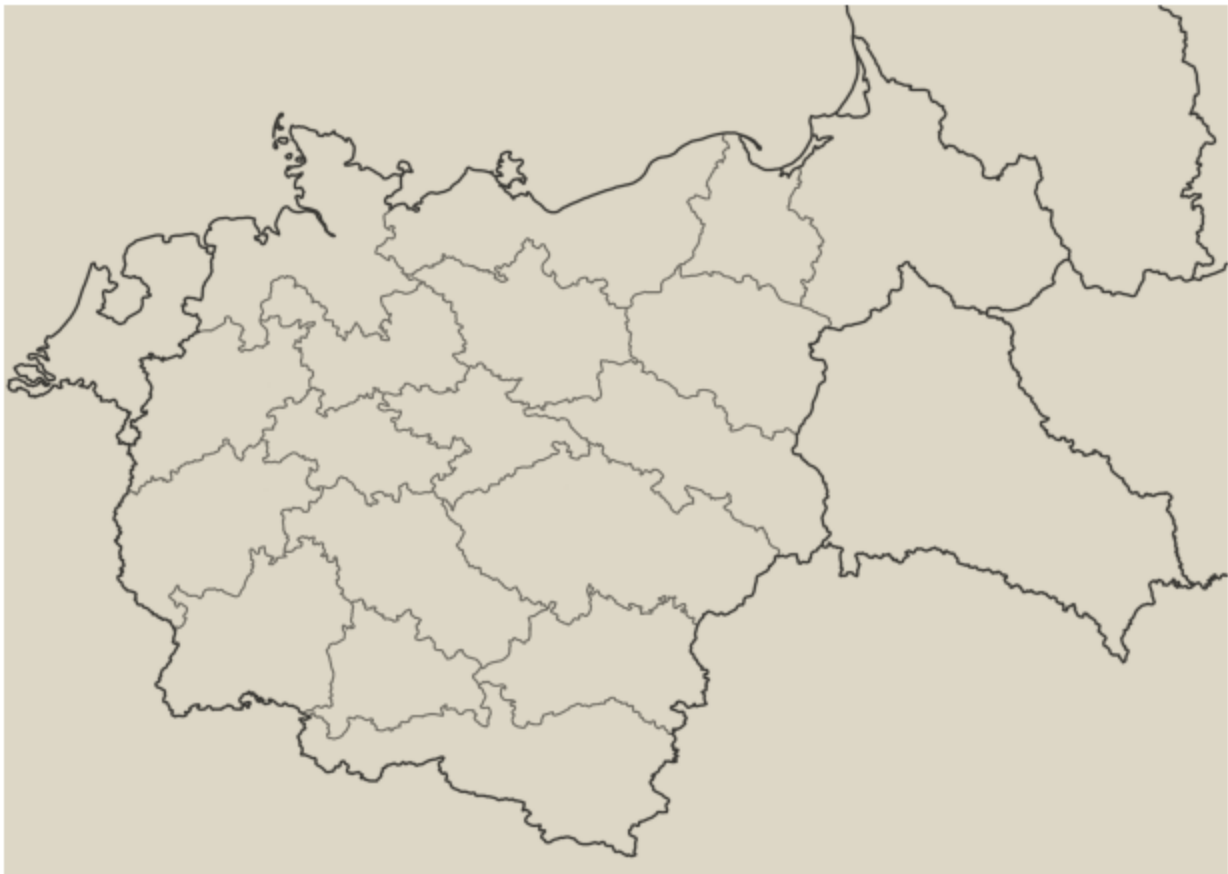
Of the first there were 127 Standarten in the SS (not counting Germanic SS), of which all but one, 127th, were stationed in Germany (the 127th was in Oslo). A German foot Standard was to have between 3 to 5 Sturmbann [Battalion], each of which was to have 500 to 800 men. After the beginning of the war however, finding a Standard at full strength was basically impossible, as the majority of its men went to serve in the Army, or in Waffen-SS. A member of the Standard had to be between 18 and 35 years of age and meet all the requirements to join the SS. For people who weren't full-time officers or NCOs in SS, being a member was not paid, in fact the SS man would pay for all the costs of uniforms and such himself. Generally they would participate in some activities twice per week and two or three Sundays a month, mostly physical exercise or sport training, other activities included standing around parades. The men of A-SS Standarten were unarmed and did not carry guns on their duties, hence why the military part of the SS is called Waffen-SS, which literally means Armed SS.

There were 24 Reiterstandarten (last two were raised for only a brief period of time and were used to fill the already existing ones, so in reality there were 22). They were generally not a paramilitary organization used to stand around Nazi rallies, but de facto just riding clubs made to attract high-society, which was otherwise mostly unwelcome in other parts of Nazi movement, and especially professional horse riders, as Himmler particularly wanted to have all, or at least as many as possible of them as SS members. Himmler even made a deal with the Equestrian Association to be annexed and all its members would get SS membership, without regard to their personal political beliefs or political history (which caused controversy within the SS).

Apart from these, which were for young men in good physical condition, there was also SS-Reserve, for those members between ages 35 and 45, who could be called up in case of manpower shortages, and finally SS-Stammabteilung, for those above the age of 45 (mostly honorary members, (medical) doctors, and such).

Other minor SS units existed, such as pioneer battalions, medical units, and others, but they were generally small and attached directly to SS-Abschnitte [SS Districts] (which were territorial commands, which administered and to some extent controlled the Standarten). Each Abschnitt had a Führer and a Stabsführer [Chief of Staff], as well as a full- or part-time staff. Above the Abschnitt there was another level of territorial command, typically made of 3 Abschnitte, it was the last and the highest regional command of the SS and its borders

corresponded to borders of Wehrmacht's Wehrkreise until 1944 and to multiple Party Gaue after that point, these were SS-Oberabschnitte [SS Upper Districts] (short: SS-Oa.). Each SS-Oa. also had a Führer and a Stabsführer and a staff of officers and NCOs, as well as part-timers and honorary SS members, the Führer of the SS-Oa. was almost always a position in personal union with the position of Higher SS and Police Leader (short: HSSPF) for the region. (More about HSSPFs after I first explain the German Police). The only intentional exception was in the Berlin region where the two positions were held by two different men. HSSPF post was generally held by SS-Obergruppenführer, or at least a person that will soon become one, and is suitable for that promotion. While the commanders of SS-Oa. were on duty in Waffen-SS as reserve officers, or sick, or otherwise unavailable, the SS-Oa. would be commanded by a substitute SS leader, often the Führer's deputy (substitute Führer of the SS-Oa. does not by default also become a substitute HSSPF, that could be filled by another officer).



Map of all SS-Oberabschnitt after February 1944 border changes (SS-Oa. existed in some occupied territories as well on paper, as shown here, but mostly not beyond the paper IRL)

The last thing to cover would be the honorary SS leaders. There were three "types" of SS leaders (by SS leader I mean SS officers), those were:

- 1) Hauptamtlich (full-time paid) - these were part of the SS and worked full time in Main Offices, Allgemeine-SS, Concentration Camps, SD, etc.
- 2) Nebenamtlich - these worked part-time for the SS as a secondary job and most of their time was spent on a job in a party or a state organization and were typically attached to

staffs of Main Offices or SS-Oa, they were either originally honorary leaders, but due to their education or expertise in some area they took a job as advisors in some Main Office or people who as mentioned before had another main job and so couldn't spare the time to work full-time.

- 3) Ehrenamtlich (honorary and unpaid) - these didn't work for the SS aka they didn't hold SS offices. They just had the SS rank and had the right to wear the uniform, without any obligations and without any authority within the SS. Honorary SS leaders were almost all attached to "Stab RFSS" (not to be confused with Persönlicher Stab Reichsführer-SS) which basically means they are unassigned within the SS, alternatively honorary SS leaders who were experts in some field could be attached to some Main Office or the staff of an SS-Oberabschnitte, but didn't do any work, or did very little in advisory roles, so they weren't raised to nebenamtlich status. This was Himmler's attempt to expand the influence of the SS with Gauleiters, ministerial functionaries and state officials. Ultimately it didn't always yield expected results, as many honorary SS leaders became Himmler's enemies despite being senior SS officers and even SS-Obergruppenführers (such as Ribbentrop, Forster, Darré, etc.)

The SS Main Offices (Reichsführung-SS)

Now that we covered the basic part of the SS, and the function for which it was made, it's time to cover the leadership structures of the SS, the Main Offices. By 1942 there were 12 Main Offices, each led by an SS-(Ober)Gruppenführer, who represented the 12 knights of the SS, also called the "12 apostles of the SS", each with their own room in Wewelsburg, altho these larps terms weren't used at the time. These Main Offices WERE NOT all part of the SS, rather they organized and administered every part of Himmler's personal empire, which he carved for himself in the Reich, based on his many titles. Some of these are instead part of the SS, while others are State institutions, parts of various Ministries or Supreme Reich Authorities. Together they covered Himmler's sphere of influence, that being the SS, the German Police, settlement operations, ethnic policy and things beyond just security and military matters, such as the concentration camps, the SS economy, management of the Germanic SS, etc.

Collectively these main offices are called the **Reichsführung-SS** [Reich Leadership of the SS]. SS members who worked in these offices had the "Reichsführung-SS" cuff title (SS loved cuff titles). Reich Leadership of the SS was in a way part of both A-SS and W-SS as they were kind of a level above the split, and personnel from both could be assigned to them, before the war most were members of A-SS, and during the war were transferred (formally called up for service, ie conscripted) into the Waffen-SS. This was done so these men were not called up for Wehrmacht front service as they were deemed needed by the SS, so they were called up for Waffen-SS service instead, thus fulfilling their military obligation, while being seconded to the Main Offices, where they worked already, meaning nothing changed for them except the part of the SS they were attached to, and furthermore as members of W-SS their salaries were paid by the Reich, not the SS. Not all SS employees were transferred, some were declared "uk." [relieved of military service] by the SS, but SS couldn't make an infinite amount of men "uk." they had to comply with Army's regulations on the matter. We'll now cover each Main Office;

(note, the duties of the main offices are listed as they were in the final form of the main office, because these changed over time somewhat and it would be useless for me to tell you what they did before when that is no longer relevant.

Before 1935, the leadership of the SS was basically just Himmler's staff and it was ad-hoc and constantly changing, finally on January 30, 1935, main office as an organizational unit was formed. The Main Offices were made out of Offices, as the SS grew in size and responsibility some Main Offices had many such subordinate Offices, and intermediary level of Office Group was created in some of them during the war. Tendency was to move towards all Main Offices having Office Groups, but because some were simply smaller than others it wasn't introduced universally.

In 1935 there were 3 such offices;

SS-Hauptamt [SS Main Office] (short: SS-HA) then under Gruppenführer Curt Wittje, served as the HQ of the SS, handling almost all affairs of the organization before 1939/1940 when it grew too big and was broken up. In 1939/1940, as we'll see many of its Offices were raised themselves to Main Office status and thus became independent of SS-HA, which was fully reorganized. Its duties afterwards included political and worldview education (indoctrination) of the entire SS and Police, control over physical training in the SS, recruitment of men for Waffen-SS and oversight and expansion of the Germanic SS. As well as that, it handled personnel matters of non-officers (men and NCOs) of the SS. It had about 10,000 employees in 1944, most of whom were transferred to W-SS.

Chiefs: Curt Wittje (1935), August Heissmeyer (1935-1940), Gottlob Berger (1940-1945)

Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt der SS [Race and Settlement Main Office of the SS] (short: RuSHA) then under Obergruppenführer Walther Darré (back then Darré was cool with the SS). It handled the racial evaluation of all SS candidates (checking of family trees for Jews) and family aspect of SS service (approval of marriages of SS officers and related regulations), keeping of archives of their family trees, and it handled settlement matters within the SS. So it owned land and built housing for SS offices and men who want to move (it owned especially a lot of land in the Protectorate). In 1944, it had about 3000 employees.

Chiefs: Walther Darré (1935-1938), Günther Pancke (1938-1940), Otto Hofmann (1940-1943), Richard Hildebrandt (1943-1945)

Last og Main Office was **SD-Hauptamt** [SD Main Office] (short: SD-HA) under Heydrich, altho total membership of SD was less than 300 at that point, Himmler had to make SD seem important, as it was made the Party's only intelligence service, and Himmler was afraid it might be replaced if it doesn't at least seem to exist. It was an office of the Party, nominally, and not of the SS, tho it treated it as its own. Its leader was Heydrich, and it was merged into RSHA when it was formed in 1939.

In June 1936 Himmler was appointed as Chief of German Police in the Reich Interior Ministry (short: ChdDtPol. im Rmdl) [note; im Rmdl was rarely said in the internal SS documents and was dropped in formal correspondence as well following Himmler's appointment as Reich Interior Minister], and he set out to reform the German Police. In late June Abteilung III [Department III] of the Interior Ministry was reorganized into two Main Offices (all German ministries had same template for organization that was adapted for their own use, no such thing as Main Office existed in any of them, instead such offices were called Departments or Main Departments, and Himmler clearly used the term because of its association with the SS, tho

both of these were not SS offices, they remained part of the Interior Ministry, that is, they were state institutions and their employees civil servants). The two were **Hauptamt Ordnungspolizei** for Schutzpolizei (short: Shupo) and Gendarmerie as well as other uniformed police services, general administration of the police and firefighter services. The other was **Hauptamt Sicherheitspolizei** [Main Office of the Security Police] (short: HA SiPo) for plain clothes SiPo, that is Kripo and the Gestapo. Both were offices of the Interior Ministry and thus had no legal connection with the SS. HA SiPo was formed out of Reichskriminalpolizeiamt [Reich Criminal Police Office] (short: RKPA), the HQ of the Kripo and Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt [Secret State Police Office] (short: Gestapa), the HQ of the Gestapo and some other legal and administrative offices. HA SiPo was under Heydrich and became part of RSHA.

In 1936 **Hauptamt Ordnungspolizei** [Main Office of the Order Police] (short: HA OrPo or HAOP) under Obergruppenführer (from 1942 Oberst-Gruppenführer) Kurt Daluege was added. Its task for administration, leadership and oversight of the entire German uniformed police. While technically listed as an SS office, HA OrPo was part of the Interior Ministry and most employees were not SS members. Considering it oversaw all branches of OrPo, Fire Protection Police, as well as voluntary and compulsory supporting organizations such as the City and Rural Guard, it was actually the largest Main Office. At its peak the policemen and civilian volunteers under its command numbered 3,5 million (tho vast majority of which were civilians in City and Rural Guard and volunteer fire-fighting brigades).

Chiefs: Kurt Daluege (1936-1943), Alfred Wünnenberg (1943-1945); note: Daluege formally remained Chief of HA OrPo until the end, but was on leave since 1943 due to multiple heart attacks and generally poor health, Wünnenberg took over as Active Chief.

Six more offices were added in 1939;

On June 8, 1939 **SS-Personalhauptamt** or SS Personnel Main Office (short: SS-PHA) under Gruppenführer (from 1942 Ogruf) Walter Schmitt was formed which was simply an upgrade of SS Personnel Chancellery and its merger with Amt II (Personnel) of SS-HA, it was tasked with handling promotions, dismissals and personnel questions in general of SS officers. It also regularly published the Seniority Lists of the SS (Dienstalterliste der SS). It had about 200 employees in 1944.

Chiefs: Walter Schmitt (1939-1942), Maximilian von Herff (1942-1945)

On the same day as SS-PHA, **Hauptamt SS-Gericht** [Main Office of SS Courts] (short: HA SS-Gericht) under Gruppenführer (from 1942 Ogruf) Paul Scharfe, was formed. It administered the large network of regional SS and Police Courts, Field SS and Police Courts and the Supreme SS and Police Court, where members of the Waffen-SS or regular Police who broke the law would be tried as they were outside the normal judiciary. Kripo and Gestapo, altho policemen and nominally under the jurisdiction of "SS and Police legal code" were not tried by the SS and Police Courts, and the disciplinary powers over them were given de facto to RSHA and its own disciplinary institutions.

Chiefs: Paul Scharfe (1939-1942), Franz Breithaupt (1942-1945), Dr. Günther Reinecke (1945)

Another Main Office was formed on that day, **Hauptamt Persönlicher Stab Reichsführer-SS** [Main Office of the Personal Staff of Reichsführer-SS] (short: HA Pers. Stab RFSS) under Gruppenführer (from 1942 Ogruf) Karl Wolff which included Himmler's staff and a mishmash of SS organizations, registered as separate associations under law, that didn't fit into any other Main Office, those being Lebensborn, Circle of Friends of the Economy, Ahnenerbe,

the Wewelsburg castle, etc. It had about 700 employees in 1944. Subordinate to it were also Reich Physician of SS and Police (the chief medical officer of the SS and Police), and Chief of Telecommunications of the SS.

Chiefs: Karl Wolff (1939-1945, de facto until 1943 after which point all elements of the staff were subordinate directly to Himmler and Wolff was transferred to Italy, but retained the title)

Also in June, two economic Main Offices were created, both under Oswald Pohl. **Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten** [Main Office of Budget and Construction] (short: HA HuB), part of the Office of Chief of German Police, and as such part of the Reich Interior Ministry, it had two offices, Office I (Budget) which covered budgeting, finance matters, economic legal matters, and property management for the Police, and Office II (Construction) which covered construction matters for the Police, Waffen-SS, KLs, NAPOLA-s and other SS related institutions. Office I was under Georg Lörner (1939-1942) and Office II under Pohl (1939-1941) and later Dr. Hans Kammler (1941-1942)

The other office created under Pohl in June 1939 was **SS-Hauptamt Verwaltung und Wirtschaft** [SS Main Office Administration and Economics] (short: SS-VuWHA). It was part of the SS, and it dealt with economic interests of the SS, and management of various enterprises the SS ran. These two Main Offices, together with some administrative offices of SS-FHA and KL Inspectorate, were merged in 1942 in order to form the SS-WVHA.

The last Main Office created in 1939 was **Reichssicherheitshauptamt** [Reich Security Main Office] (short: RSHA) which wasn't really a single office, rather a collection of independent offices and organizations, was formed under Gruppenführer (from 1941 Ogruf) Reinhard Heydrich. It was formed from SD-Hauptamt, an office of the Party and Hauptamt SiPo which was part of the Reich Interior Ministry; SD and its men continued to be financed by the Reich Treasurer of NSDAP, rather than the State. As it was not a formal creation, but rather a mix of state and party offices, the term RSHA wasn't initially used in official documents. Its chief was called Chef der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD [Chief of SiPo and SD] (short: CSSD). In Feb. 1944 it had 50,648 employees (31,374 in Gestapo, 12,792 in Kripo and 6,482 in the various SD-s)

Chiefs of SiPo and SD: Reinhard Heydrich (1939-1942), Heinrich Himmler (1942-1943), Dr. Ernst Kaltenbrunner (1943-1945)

On August 15, 1940 further two Main Offices were added; **SS-Führungshauptamt** [SS Operations Main Office] (short: SS-FHA) which served as the HQ of Waffen-SS and was concerned with officer and NCO training, non-economic administration, communications, control of reinforcement units and medical service of the military parts of the SS. It was under Himmler until 1943, when it was given over to its de facto leader and Chief of Staff until that point, Obergruppenführer Hans Jüttner; It is reported to have had about 40,000 employees by 1944. Chiefs: Heinrich Himmler (1940-1943), Hans Jüttner (1943-1945)

And the other office formed on this date was **Hauptamt Dienststelle SS-Obergruppenführer Heissmeyer** [Main Office "Office of SS-Obergruppenführer Heissmeyer"] which was the SS name for a collection of Heißmeyer's offices, namely the NAPOLA Inspectorate (in charge of Napola schools) and Heimschule [Boarding School]. This was also not an SS office, but rather a state institutions of the Reich Ministry of Science, Education and Culture, its SS staff numbered about 500 men, the rest being regular civil servants. It was, very surprisingly, under Obergruppenführer August Heissmeyer (1940-1945).

In 1941 two more Main Offices concerned with settlement and Volksdeutsche affairs were added, neither of which were SS offices, but were state institutions, part of Supreme Reich Authority "Reich Commissar for the Consolidation of German Nationhood". What that means is that RKFDV was an independent (from any ministry) institution of the German federal government. Germans had this weird habit of omitting "the Office of", and rather saying that a person is a Supreme Reich Authority, what they mean is the Office of that person. So Himmler, as a holder of a post in the rank of a Supreme Reich Authority, organized his "Office" as two Main Offices;

Hauptamt Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle [Ethnic German Assistance Main Office] (short: VOMI or HA VOMI) which was tasked with welfare and economic assistance, organization, education, and management of Volksdeutsche resettlers. As well as Political coordination and education of Volksdeutsche in their home countries, agitation for them to emigrate to Germany, and supporting them economically. An NSDAP body, it was just managed by an SS officer before 1941, but was subordinate to Hess, as the Deputy Führer. After Hess flew to Britain, part of his duties related to Volksdeutsche were given over to Himmler and in 1942 he received a proper office for this and became Head of the Main Office for Nationality Questions of NSDAP, under whose authority VoMi was placed, however it was very connected to RKF too, which will be explained later. It was under Obergruppenführer Werner Lorenz (1941-1945), and it VoMi was the only of these main offices to be disbanded before the end of the war. It was disbanded in early February 1945.

The other office formed in 1941 was **Stabshauptamt des Reichskommissar für die Festigung Deutschen Volkstums** [Staff Main Office of the Reich Commissar for the Consolidation of German Nationhood] (short: RKFDV or HA RKFDV), tho nominally called "Stabshauptamt", it was regularly referred to as just Hauptamt. It was a quite influential office in the East, and occupied territories in general, concerned with issues of administration of German settlement and SS's tool for intervening in eastern policy. Its tasks included planning, resettlement, construction, economic affairs and housing of German settlers. Its staff numbered in thousands, only 300 of which were active-service SS (or W-SS) men. It was under Gruppenführer (from 1944 Ogruf) Ulrich Greifelt (1941-1945).

Finally the last Main Office to be created was **SS Wirtschaft- und Verwaltungshauptamt** [SS Economic and Administration Main Office] (short: SS-WVHA) in charge of SS's business empire employing hundreds of thousands of workers (including many foreign and forced workers), as well as administration of assets of Waffen-SS (barracks, training areas, etc.) and the concentration camps. It had an SS staff of 24,000 in 1944, almost all of which were transferred to W-SS (this figure includes also the camp guard units and camp commandants' staff-s). It was under Gruppenführer (from 1942 Ogruf) Oswald Pohl (1942-1945).

To summarize; HA OrPo and RSHA were offices of the Interior Ministry, they were subordinate to Himmler in his capacity as Chief of German Police.

When Himmler was appointed Reich Commissar for the Consolidation of German Nationhood that position was designated as a Supreme Reich Authority (government agency independent of a Ministry) and he could organize his agency as he liked. Main part of the agency was HA RKFDV, but the entire staff of HA VoMi was also placed under that agency and

financed by it, even tho it was actually a Party institution subordinate to Himmler in his capacity as Representative of NSDAP for Nationality Questions. Thus as RKFDV Himmler had a main office for tasks of the role and used the opportunity to turn his NSDAP agency (VoMi) into a government-funded institution and a second main office within the institution of RKFDV.

HA Dienststelle SS-Ogruf. Heissmeyer was part of the Education Ministry and wasn't a Main Office due to Himmler's titles, rather due to Heissmeyer becoming Inspector of NPEA.

The employees of these were civil servants (except the SD), and their salaries were paid by the Reich, these offices had no authority over either Allgemeine-SS or Waffen-SS and couldn't issue orders to either. Men employed here who were members of the SS, were so in honorary capacity or at most in part-time capacity, typically assigned to some Staff of a A-SS command, VoMi for example before the war had a total of 3 career SS men amongst its employees (VoMi Chief Lorenz, Chief of Staff Dr. Hermann Behrends (Heydrich's friend and career SD man) and Lorenz's adjutant) . Hitler could have woken up one morning and abolished the SS, and nothing would have structurally changed in these offices, except that the employees who were members of the SS wouldn't wear the grey uniforms on ceremonial occasions and would drop their SS ranks and only retain civil service or police ranks.

These 5 offices were given by the SS the status of "equivalent" to SS Main Offices for purposes of staff listings and such, and majority of their personnel below the top leadership were not members (with the exception of RSHA where at least the middle management were also mostly members), unlike in the remaining 7 where most of the staff in general were SS or Waffen-SS employees.

These remaining 7 Main Offices were of the SS through and through, and administered every part of it (technically RSHA was also considered by the SS to be its own Main Office, because of the SD half of it, but they would count 8 Main Office of the SS). Of these, the Personal Staff of RFSS had no authority of command, and couldn't issue orders, as it was just Himmler's staff and a bunch of random organizations. If orders related to interactions of some other institution and Himmler's Staff needed issuing they'd be issued by Himmler himself. The remaining 6 offices had authority of command in the SS within their spheres of jurisdiction, their employees were for the most part full-time SS men (majority of whom were transferred to W-SS during the war, so SS didn't need to pay them, and wouldn't lose them to conscription). That was the part of Himmler's empire subordinate to him in his capacity as Reichsführer-SS.

To conclude, what we know as the "SS" is a collection of the institutions often outside of the actual SS as an organization, but rather an amalgamation of offices and agencies subordinate to Himmler as a person and stemming from his constant new titles. Yet, because the SS was his initial original base of power, he "colonized" all the other offices with men from the SS, or integrated their "native" leadership into it with honorary or actual ranks.

Other

Apart from these 12 Main Offices of the SS, there were a few Staffs and positions in the SS directly under the RFSS. These included the Office of the Reichsarzt SS und Polizei [Reich Doctor/Physician of the SS and Police], which was the Office that handled overall medical affairs

of the W-SS and Police, while almost every branch of the SS then further had its own Medical department. This was attached administratively to the Personal Staff.

Another one would be Kommandostab Reichsführer-SS [Command Staff of RFSS] established in 1941, which served as an administrative body for Waffen-SS Brigades assigned to rear areas and not front-line service (in the territories of USSR only). It originated as a special "Deployment Staff of RFSS at the SS Operations Main Office", but was soon after formation taken out of the Main Office system and subordinated directly to Himmler. It was an SS equivalent of an Army Group Rear Area Command. It lost practically all importance after 1941, as Waffen-SS Brigades were sent to the front or used as cadres for formations of Waffen-SS Divisions. The Staff continued to exist, but it remained entirely unimportant, doing paperwork and such activities. The task of Bandit-Fighting was given to Police primarily, and was administered by the next independent SS formation we'll talk about.

In 1942 Himmler was appointed "Head of All Partisan Actions (outside the operational and rear areas)" (that means of all anti-partisan operations in areas of civil administration, ie those not under military jurisdiction) with the title of Chef der Bandenbekämpfung [Chief of Bandit-Fighting], he delegated the real management of this position to the Chef der Bandenkampfverbände [Chief of Bandit-Fighting Formations] (short: CdBKV), this was Erich von dem Bach, who in turn had the Staff of the CdBKV, he and the staff were subordinate directly to Himmler. A Bandit-Fighting Formation is any W-SS or Police formation assigned to anti-partisan operations. The designation is not permanent, but rather applicable to any unit on such duty, for the duration of said operation, and taken away after the end of the operation. The role of CdBKV was to serve as an inspector of all larger anti-partisan operations and coordinate them with the local HSSPF. He had no authority to issue orders to individual units, rather he had full authority over planning only, and went around organizing operations with the commands that held operational authority, who then issued the orders for the operations. He got authority of command only in cases in which he himself led an operation in question, which happened once during the war or in cases in which the operation was happening in an area that spanned multiple jurisdictions, thus authority was transferred to him so the operation would run smoothly. Furthermore this Staff issued regulations related to partisan warfare and collected, organized and forwarded the reports of various SS and Police formations regarding Bandit-Fighting to Himmler's field HQ which had a permanent liaison staff from the CdBKV assigned to it.

The German Police

The Security Apparatus: RSHA & Others

The SS was perhaps first and foremost after Nazis came to power an organization tasked with ensuring security of Germany and the Nazi regime, altho the majority of the security apparatus wasn't part of the SS directly, it was under its guidance and control. Most importantly for the SS, they were in charge of SiPo & SD; SiPo was never part of SS as such, rather de facto, as opposed to de jure commanded by it. RSHA was a weird creation, as it had both party (SD) and state institutions (Gestapo and Kripo), term RSHA was rarely if ever used in official documents and its chief was officially Chief of SiPo and SD. RSHA represents the pre-war attempt to create a Staatsschutzkorps [State Protection Corps], the idea was to "coordinate" SiPo officials into the SS, by making every employee of SiPo joined the SS and get a equivalent rank in the organization, even if this rank was in almost all cases, honorary. For plenty of reasons, however, this was never realised entirely.

To begin understanding RSHA, it must be noted that it was a product of the merger of SiPo and SD (and their respective Main Offices, HA SiPo and SD-HA, however neither SiPo nor SD were themselves single organizations. SiPo didn't even exist as such, it's just an umbrella term for Kripo and Gestapo. The two were never intended to be merged, as their duties were different. SD means Security Service, and that it was, a service of NSDAP working in the field of security, but it included multiple offices and types of officials that had little in common besides the SD diamond on the sleeve of their uniform. As Kripo, Gestapo and SD are the main components of RSHA, we'll discuss them each here;

The Kripo

Reichskriminalpolizei [Reich Criminal Police] (short: Kripo) was a criminal police, that is they were in charge of investigating actions in breach of the Reich Criminal Code, it's employees were civil servants and it had existed long before the Nazis. The Nazis made it more independent, they split Kripo from normal police stations and gave it its own vertical structure no longer connected to OrPo (altho it wasn't until 1944 that OrPo gave up fully its control of parts of Kripo). Its primary task was investigating and solving serious crimes such as rape, murder, burglary and arson after which point the accused would be sent in front of a judge, the difference being that in Nazi Germany there was another place where the murderers, rapists, kidnappers and such could end up, the camps.

It's HQ in Berlin, part of HA SiPo and thus Interior Ministry was Reichskriminalpolizeiamt (short: RKPA), after formation of RSHA it was renamed to Amt V (Combating of Criminals) of RSHA, not much changed besides the name tho, so RKPA and Amt V can be used interchangeably. Directly subordinate to the RKPA were regional Kripo offices, that is Kripoleitstellen and Kripostellen [Kripo Control Stations and Kripo Stations], which were large

offices with about 200 and 100 detectives respectively, of which there were about 20 and about 40 respectively in Germany. Below them were the much smaller and much more numerous Kripoaussendienststellen and Kripoaussepost [Kripo Field Offices and Kripo Outposts], of which there were about 700 with less than 10 detectives. These field offices were subordinate to regional offices. There were also career opportunities for females as detectives in Kripo, and the office of Female Criminal Police which was part of RKPA was the only office headed by a female in RSHA (it was led by Friederike Wieking).

Kripo was led by Arthur Nebe until 1944, when he participated in the July plot, so it was overtaken by Dr. Friedrich Panzinger.

The Gestapo

The Geheime Staatspolizei [Secret State Police] (short: Gestapo), or commonly simply Staatspolizei [State Police] (short: Stapo), was also a criminal police, that is they were in charge of investigating actions in breach of specific parts of the Reich Criminal Code, or some Government Decrees breaking of which was considered to be a politically motivated crime. These include: State Treason (Articles 87-93 of Reich Criminal Code), High Treason (treason with intent of overthrowing the government, articles 80-87 of Reich Criminal Code), public libel or slander against the Government or the NSDAP, rioting, avoidance of conscription in breach of the Conscription Law, offenses against Germany's war potential, failure to report treasonous activities, hostile acts against friendly states, crimes against the exercise of civil rights of another citizen, and also offenses against specific Laws or Decrees instituted during Nazi rule, which I will not list, but were related to economic treason, sabotage, breaking of price, wage, and goods and trade controls, forming of political parties, illegal activities around foreign exchange or defacing of national symbols. During the war extra decrees of wartime restrictions were imposed, enforcement for some of them fell on the Gestapo, primarily those related to illegal radio transmissions, illegal activity around Germany's borders, crimes committed by foreign workers, crimes committed by "Enemies of the People" as defined by September 5 (1939) Decree, and crimes against the German war effort.

Now that we know what Gestapo is and what it does, let's see how it came about to do these things. Gestapo was formed out of the Political Police that existed in the Weimar Republic, which ironically, amongst other things, prosecuted and spied on the Nazis themselves. The Political Police was part of Kripo, as one of its departments, not a separate police force, however after Nazis came to power, they split the two formally, and a Political Police was created in each German state individually until 1936 when Himmler took over as Chief of German Police and turned all agencies of German Police (including both Kripo and Gestapo) into national organizations, as opposed to state-level organizations (altho both remained also under the (limited) authority of the local Regierungspräsident, as provided for by police law).

It's HQ in Berlin, part of HA SiPo and thus Interior Ministry was Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt (short: Gestapa), after formation of RSHA, Departments II and III of Gestapa, together with the Office of Political Police of HA SiPo became Amt IV (Investigation and Combating of Opposition) of RSHA and was given to Heinrich Müller, a man who owed much to Heydrich after Nazis came to power, as Heydrich saved his career. Müller worked against the Nazis in the Bavarian Political Police pre-1933 and had ties with Bavarian People's Party,

Gauleiter of München, and a very influential Nazi, Adolf Wagner (same man in charge of Reichsreform) wanted him removed, but Heydrich protected him and another few former Weimar policemen who came to be known as the "Bavarian Group", who later made strong careers in Gestapo. The other two Departments of Gestapo, I and IV related to organization and administration became part of Amt I of RSHA under Dr. Werner Best.

Gestapo officers were also civil servants, the three main categories were administrative officials who were normal civil servants and executive officials who were police civil servants and thus their activity was regulated by police law, the last category was technical officials and staff, that is drivers, typists, radio operators, etc. who were themselves more than a third of Gestapo's employees. In fact, the Gestapo, despite being the largest organization of RSHA, was always undermanned, especially in executive officials. Administrative officials could be transferred from any other part of the civil service, transferee wasn't asked about the transfer, refusal to accept it meant dismissal from service and loss of civil servant rights, including the pension, this was in fact the case for all civil servants, both before and during the Nazis. Executive officials on the other hand couldn't be drawn from regular civil service, but rather from the police cadres, due to different legal status and training, and police itself was also overstretched, especially when they had to police half of Europe during the war. Persons who were not civil servants or policemen before joining Gestapo constituted only about 20% of workforce, and relatively average wages didn't help (but pension and benefits were good). This is why field work, that is arrests, were rarely done by the Gestapo officers themselves, but were instead often done for them by the regular police, and Gestapo would take it from there. The Gestapo had the same office structure on regional and local level as Kripo, but they were called Stapoleitstellen and Stapostellen and so on (same as before, just "Stapo" instead of "Kripo"). The manpower issue of the Gestapo was so bad, that over 30 of the 64 of these Stapo stations and control stations had to be liquidated during the war for lack of manpower and remnants consolidated into other stations. This was because the Gestapo was the primary source of manpower for SiPo-SD in the occupied territories, and by 1944, about 75% of all of its employees were deployed on duties outside of the border of the Reich. (22)

While they of course had to abide by all the laws and regulations, de facto a series of loopholes was invented that gave them a near unchecked capacity to exploit their biggest new weapon provided by the SS; protective custody. Without a conviction or a trial, or even an instruction by a prosecutor or a court Gestapo could take a person to a concentration camp for a period of up to 3 months for "protective custody", which was possible because under law a person could ask for protective custody, and Gestapo made all "protected" individuals sign a paper upon leaving the camp, where they state that they requested to be "protected" themselves to avoid "popular wrath". While this wasn't exactly the same as being sent to a camp proper, since camps had a special section for victims of "protective custody", which had better conditions, especially food, it was nevertheless something nobody wanted to experience. The prime victims of protective custody were "professional and habitual criminals", ie people who have been convicted for a period longer than six months more than three times for various crimes, as this was viewed as a political act against the Volksgemeinschaft, another group of criminals who were often sent to protective custody were those who had been sentenced by court to prison terms deemed too short by the Gestapo (especially those sentenced before the Nazis), so when they get released from prison, couple Gestapo officers would be waiting to

drive them off to a camp. Other groups targeted for protective custody would include "anti-socials", communist party functionaries, leaders of religious organizations, pacifists and others (average number of people in protective custody in Germany at the same time was up to 10,000, the total amount of people that were at one point or another "protected" was at least 34,500, one of the last detention orders in 1945 gives the individual who is to be "protected" number 34,591 (every documented person who was "protected" was given a number)).

Generally speaking, the Gestapo wasn't killing people in Germany, unless allowed to do so by law or a decree during the war (such powers were primarily given to it when dealing with serious crimes amongst foreign workers, such as murder or rape of a German or organizing of unrest), beatings on the other hand were possible (originally beatings with sticks or police batons were common, but this was too obviously visible and the Courts started asking questions when beaten defendants showed up). According to the 1937 third-degree interrogation decree issued by Heydrich, Chief of Gestapo (ie Müller) personally had to approve every third-degree interrogation, with this approval, an interrogator could strike the victim 10 times in the back, or deliver 25 punches in the back if a doctor is present. A person in Gestapo custody could receive this treatment only once during that particular imprisonment. Would the prisoner get more than 10 strikes was determined before the interrogation started, and the doctor would be present from the start. Despite violence during Gestapo interrogations being quite real, it wasn't the first resort tactic, verbal abuse and psychological pressure was by far the tool most commonly used, while beatings were generally not used until evidence was already found and a person was thus viewed as guilty, this way they would avoid beating up innocent Germans.

In 1942 Müller sent a new and updated decree regarding third-degree interrogations. It suggested new methods, primarily physical exhaustion tactics such as forcing the prisoner to stand up during the interrogations, which would then purposefully be made very long (leading to the victim collapsing from not being able to stand anymore). Importantly it also delegated the power to approve third-degree tactics to the BdS, making it no longer the prerogative of the Chief of Gestapo, but also making it much more accessible. While this was all still abiding regulations in occupied territories, SiPo-SD more or less did as they liked, as nobody was there to control what they do, nor cared to do so.

The mere threat of being sent to a camp, however, was enough to make the Gestapo a feared organization amongst those guilty of "political crimes", but also amongst the common Germans. For the duration of the war Himmler authorized special prisons to be set up by local Stapo Stations and Control Stations where persons who committed minor crimes (especially foreign workers) could be sent for up to 3 weeks, and the ability to send someone there was basically unchecked.

When it comes to major crimes or organized resistance groups, such as Elser Plot, Red Orchestra, White Rose, National Committee for a Free Germany or the July Plot, a Special Commission would be formed by the Gestapo, usually headed by one of their better investigators (mid-ranking officers, but well known for their detective work), who would gather a staff for the Special Commission which would then investigate every aspect of the crime or group in question. Special Commission for 20. July was even headed by Gestapo Müller personally due to its importance. One of top Gestapo investigators Horst Kopkow headed the Red Orchestra and later also NKFD commissions, while White Rose commission was headed by Robert Mohr.

In the Gestapo too, as in Kripo, women had career opportunities. Altho originally they had mainly been typists or telephone operators, as the shortage of manpower became a bigger issue, they started taking on administrative work. By the end of the war about 25% of all Gestapo employees were women. (23)

Gestapo had its own informants, but this network wasn't Gestapo's main source of information, rather it relied on denunciations by private citizens as the main source of intel, only a small minority of cases was started as a result of information provided by the Police or from within RSHA, that is by the SD. Gestapo's informants however were selected for infiltration of specific groups and their use thus very often resulted in arrests. About half of them were people who were formerly held in protective custody and were thus known to the Gestapo, but known also amongst the circle they were to infiltrate. Those people had little real choice, they had already been to camps once, and didn't want to go there again. These infiltration tactics were developed particularly in the early 30s, and were used quite effectively to wipe out KPD underground cells.

Closing notes on SiPo

Before we move on to the SD, a couple closing notes on SiPo. Kripo and Gestapo had the same ranks, separate from the SS ranks, as majority of their employees were not SS members, despite this they could wear grey open collar SS uniforms with insignia of SS rank equivalent to the rank that they hold in Gestapo/Kripo which causes confusion (such men were called Uniformträger [Bearers of the Uniform]). The English wiki page sums up the rank stuff nicely; *"Although an agent in uniform wore the collar insignia of the equivalent SS rank, he was still addressed as Herr Kriminalrat, not Sturmbannführer. The stock character of the "Gestapo Major", usually dressed in the prewar black SS uniform, is a figment of Hollywood's imagination"*. But both of these organizations in Germany mostly worked in plain clothes, SS uniforms were mainly used on ceremonial occasions.

The "Ge" part of Gestapo, short for Geheime [Secret] was actually seldom used in documents, they were often referred to as just Stapo [State Police], and their stations were formally called State Police Stations and State Police Control Stations as we've seen. In a similar manner Kripo was actually called Reichskriminalpolizei, but "Reichs-" part of the name was very rarely used.

Lastly, Stapo was not omnipotent, most of its offices were undermanned, in the Western occupied countries for example, Wehrmacht's GeFePo [Secret Field Police] was subordinated to local SiPo-SD in 1942 to overcome manpower shortages and its personnel were almost 50% of SiPo-SD staff there after the integration. Analysis of Gestapo's operation shows clearly that there was very few cases that Gestapo handled (from a few dozen to the low hundreds per year per Station), and out of this vast majority was from denunciation by fellow ordinary Germans, while only a minority came from NSDAP, regular police or Gestapo's own informants. After this, snitching during an interrogation of already arrested criminals was the second most common reason for starting an investigation into a person. Political crimes (being a functionary or prominent member of pre-1933 political parties) and race defilement (sexual relations with Jews) as well as being a "habitual criminal" were the primary cases investigated by Gestapo pre-war, during the war it shifted more to investigation of treasonous activity (anti-war activism

or organizing of anti-war activities). Here are some numbers; Gestapo had 1 officer per about 10-11k Germans. In the Protectorate it was 1 per 5800, for comparison Stasi (described by one historian as "largest secret police and secret service apparatus in world history") had 1 full-time agent per 166 (alternatively 180 in some sources) East Germans. KGB had 1 full-time agent per 610 Soviet citizens (in 1991).

Apart from this, I'll shortly summarize the vertical structure of Kripo and Gestapo. Both had their own independent police stations around the country as we have mentioned, however as part of 1936 reorganization of German Police, each Wehrkreis [Military District] had an Inspekteur der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD [Inspector of the Security Police and the SD] (short: IdS), who was like a mini RSHA boss, ie tasked with oversight and coordination of SiPo and SD in the region, tho he held no authority to issue orders. Each SS-Oberabschnitte, which had the same borders as the Wehrkreis, had one IdS, they were subordinate to HSSPF and attached to his staff. Since Gestapo and Kripo both had their own regional offices which were directly subordinate to their respective HQs in Berlin, the job of the IdS was not to command the security police, but rather to be its representative to the Military and the government in that region. In occupied territories IdS was called Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD [literally Commander of SiPo and SD, but it is translated as Commanding Officer of SiPo and SD because the lower territorial chief was called Kommandeur der SiPo und des SD, which is also literally Commander of SiPo and SD] (short: BdS), and they had much more authority, and as the name suggested, they did actual commanding of SiPo and SD in their regions.

The SD

Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers-SS [Security Service of the Reichsführer-SS], almost always simply referred to as Sicherheitsdienst [Security Service] (short: SD) was a party organization, not a state agency, all of its work was thus much more limited, as it was forbidden from taking "executive action" (it couldn't arrest people). What SD was and did is rather hard to describe, there wasn't really one SD, rather there were 2 and a half of them with 4 types of members... it can never be easy with these Germans...

What it wanted to be was a domestic intelligence agency, and a foreign intelligence agency, as well a public-opinion polling agency, as well as the leadership corps of SiPo, as well as an agency for ideological questions in regards to policing and crime, and a central archive these questions and... fuck it, I'll explain what it was, not what it wanted to be... as if that's any easier...

The 2 and a half SDs are Amt III (Spheres of German Life), Amt VI (Foreign Intelligence Service) and Amt VII (Worldview Research and Evaluation) of RSHA, the reason I mock Amt VII as only half a SD is because it was underdeveloped and unimportant. The 4 types of SD men were Interior Intelligence people, Foreign Intelligence people, whatever-the-fuck-Amt-VII-was people and a fourth group that doesn't have an office (administratively they were attached to Amt I of RSHA according to Nuremberg testimonies), but we'll call them SiPo & SD leadership corps, tho formally they belong to something called Allgemeinen SD [General SD], but that doesn't matter now. The first three groups originate from the office splits in SD-Hauptamt, tho many of these offices existed only on paper back then and it was common for multiple sub-offices to be headed by the same person due to very limited membership in SD. To be a member of the SD

one didn't need to be a member of the SS itself, but practically all people in officer-ranks were, and SD didn't have its own ranks, it used SS ranks (tho sometimes unofficially prefix "SS-" would be replaced with "SD-" in conversion or internal/informal documents).

Amt III of RSHA

Created out of Central Department II/2 (Evaluation of Life Spheres) from Amt II of SD-Hauptamt, its task was understanding life in Germany, that is Interior Intelligence, but not in a sense of Interior Enemies, that was Gestapo's job, in a sense of providing intelligence data on how the Germans live. As such it was made largely of younger intellectuals, who didn't serve in ww1 and often joined SD part-time while pursuing academic career upon completion of their doctorates or something like that (in Amt III out of 13 department and sub-department chiefs, all but 3 held a doctorate).

The main way SD collected information was via its informant network, which was in the beginning largely centered around universities but expanded to cover all of Germany overtime. The network was composed primarily of informants who were not SD members, and to lesser extent also honorary SD members. At the point when this was developing, since 1937, the Chief was Otto Ohlendorf (who remained so nominally until the end) who wanted to create out of SD an agency which would report the real feelings of the German people and give constructive criticism. Thus "Reports from the Reich" were born, regularly published reports by the SD, intended for high government functionaries, which gave out as objectively as possible in SD's view, the negative popular opinions of Germans on the policies of the Reich Government, and gave some recommendations on how to act. As the war turned against Germany these reports became increasingly more critical, and Himmler, who always believed they were too pessimistic, now viewed them as outright defeatism (Goebbels held the same view and banned Propaganda Ministry employees from reading them). Himmler stopped sending them to Hitler, and finally, under pressure from Bormann (the reports were very critical of the PLs) they were abolished in 1944, except for a special report after the July plot. At this point Ohlendorf largely moved into the economic sphere and worked as Ministerial Director (equivalent to Undersecretary) with the post of Deputy to the State Secretary in the Economic Ministry. Apart from being a negative-opinion-monitoring agency, the SD also reported crimes or suspected crimes to the Gestapo which would then investigate them, but this was a secondary activity for it and not very common, it was more a local independent action then an organized process.

Amt VI of RSHA

The other main component of SD was Auslandsnachrichtendienst [Foreign Intelligence Service] (short: AND) or Ausland-SD [Foreign SD], they did work in foreign intelligence, and had wider authorizations on use of force, they carried firearms if needed, and in some incidents had to use them. Their operatives were typically well trained, spoke foreign languages and acted as spies in foreign countries, sometimes they just gathered information, or smuggled money or other resources to political allies, while other times they kidnapped people or rescued them (Skorzeny led a special office in Ausland-SD for such commando operations, altho in reality he was in Waffen-SS). They collected information on government buildings, locations of this or that,

who were enemies of Germany or more accurately of the Nazis, and such things. When the Reich started invading everyone they also compiled lists of people to be arrested, the so called Special Search List which existed for UK, West (France + Benelux), Yugoslavia and USSR. The one for Poland was so thicc it wasn't called a list but a book, but it was published by Amt V for some reason. Ausland-SD suffered a major hit to its autonomy after the second Ribbentrop-SD agreement which effectively subordinated it to the foreign ministry's delegation in countries in which it operated. The first Ribbentrop-SD agreement was the opposite, allowing SD to operate out of German diplomatic establishments for intelligence gathering missions, while allowing it to have its own channels of communication, this was made back then Ribbentrop was just newly appointed as Foreign Minister and Himmler's ally. Later the relations between the two broke down completely and so a new much less favorable (for the SD) agreement was made.

Amt VI was headed by Heinz Jost, who was however not very bright, so a lot of the work was done by the Chief of Group VI A (General Matters and Tasks) and Deputy Chief of Amt VI Dr. Alfred Filbert. In June 1941 Filbert was sent to Einsatzgruppen duties in Russia, and Walter Schellenberg became the Chief of Group VI A and Deputy Chief of Amt VI in July. In March 1942 Jost was formally replaced by Schellenberg as Chief of Amt VI, and Schellenberg remained so until the end.

Amt VII of RSHA

Those amongst you with a keen eye, will notice that only half of Inland-SD became Amt III, so what happened with the rest? Central Department II/1 (Worldview Opponents) of Amt II in SD-HA and Central Department I/3 (Press and Museums) of Amt I in SD-HA became Amt II (Enemy Research) of RSHA. Both II/1 and I/3 were headed by Prof. Dr. Franz Six, and so he became the head of Amt II in RSHA. Amt II became Amt VII (Worldview Research and Evaluation) in 1941 because Amt I of RSHA was split into two. Six's office was from the start a long-term RSHA project to create an ideological department, most of its staff were part-time employees, intellectuals and academics who wrote a paper on some topic for RSHA here and there, the office also handled RSHA's archives. Six went on to serve as chief of Vorkommando Moskau on the Eastern Front. A special SS unit formed with the goal of seizing state, party and NKVD archives and other valuable state documents after the capture of Moscow, he returned to Germany in August 1941. After that point he focused on his academic career (he was Dean of Faculty for Foreign Countries at University of Berlin) and never continued to exercise his duties as Chief of Amt VII, instead RSHA appointed Gestapo lawyer Oberregierungsrat und SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Paul Mylius as his deputy, and effectively acting chief, who turned the office basically only into an archive of the RSHA. In 1943 Six was formally replaced as Chief of Amt VII by SS-Obersturmbannführer Dr. Paul Dittel was appointed as the new Chief.

The General SD and the SiPo & SD Leadership Corps

This fourth group of SD functionaries belonged to the SD at large and not any of its sub branches, this part of SD was called General SD usually. The General SD was part-time and honorary part of SD comprised of SiPo members who joined the SD, they were collectively called General SD, where as "actual" SD men, who weren't from SiPo were part of "Intelligence

SD". The term that I use, the SiPo & SD Leadership Corps, doesn't refer to the General SD at large, but rather to its higher ranking officers (typically Colonels) who were the coordinators of the security services, that is the IdS in Germany and BdS and KdS outside of it. In the vast majority of cases, the men for these posts were selected from amongst Chiefs of Stapo Stations and Control Stations, who were also members of the SD. Despite their service in the SD being honorary or part-time, they represented Heydrich's vision for Staatsschutzkorps.

In Heydrich's view, the SD should be to the SiPo what the SS at large was to the Party; the elite. SS fanatics and career officers considered themselves the elite of the Nazi movement. In the same manner Heydrich envisioned the SD as the elite of SiPo, taking from SiPo police training and education, since these men were already in the upper echelon of command in the Gestapo and taking from SD the Nazi ideology, and service to the Party. You needn't be a member of either the Party or the SS to be a member of the SD, but anyhow SD was Party's intelligence service and thus it served it. On a philosophical-ideological level, the SiPo-SD Leadership Corps represented the Nazified (police) civil servants who served though the SiPo, the State, and though the SD, the Party. In reality the Inspectors sat on their ass in Germany, doing little actual work, as most SiPo policing was done by Chiefs of Stapo and Kripo stations and their staffs and SD work by SD offices. Unlike the IdS, in foreign territories the Commanding Officers, but especially the Commanders did a lot of work, usually quite bad stuff, due to two main factors, firstly the work in occupied territories was more radical, and methods more murderous (tho this greatly dependend on the territory in question) and secondly there were no split services, and no Chiefs of Stapo and Kripo stations, the stations were merged, there was a single SiPo-SD and its overall commander was the KdS. The KdS command was split along RSHA lines with Department instead of Amt, so there was for example a Chief of Department IV (Gestapo) at each KdS, but it's not the same as Chief of Kripo/Stapo stations responsible to RSHA, he has an immediate superior in the Kommandeur der SiPo und des SD [Commander of SiPo and SD] (short: KdS), who in turn has an immediate superior in the BdS, who is then responsible to RSHA and also the local HSSPF. There is much more authority given to these commanders in the case of occupied states, whereas in Germany each service reports to their respective RSHA Amt and the IdS has pretty much no part in the command chain, he just supervises, as a liaison of CSSD to the region. Note; Germans for some reason said Departments of a KdS, or idk, officer X is attached to KdS, despite KdS being a Commander of SiPo and SD, like a person; for example Klaus Barbie was Chief of Department VI of KdS Lyon, it sounds a little odd, but that's the way they said it, alternatively, tho less common, it could be said Department of SiPo-SD (insert city). Same thing for KdS applies for SSPF and HSSPF, the title is that of a person, but it's treated as a name of a command too.

Other, related to SiPo and SD

Staatsschutzkorps idea demanded that all SiPo officers join the SS. Originally it was required of officers to have been either NSDAP or party affiliate members before Hitler's coming to power to be allowed to join SS, (which is ironic, because NSDAP membership was not required to join the SS itself, or to be an SS officer) but because this led to very low numbers of SiPo officers being eligible, the requirements were changed to 3 years service in either part of

SiPo. Even so, vast majority of SiPo's officers never joined the SS, for example, the authorized manpower of Gestapo was 6 times that of SD.

Reichssicherheitsdienst (RSD) [Reich Security Service] which was tasked with protecting key functionaries of the regime (Hitler himself, as well as Himmler, some ministers, as well as some governors of occupied territories) was recruited from investigators in Kripo and Gestapo, but it wasn't part of either (RSD was complicated, it was part of Geheime Feldpolizei [Secret Field Police], but its personnel were members of SS assigned to Himmler's staff, who wore uniforms of SD, while having Kripo/Gestapo ranks).

Lastly I didn't mention SD's regional structure, it was SD-Oberabschnitt and SD-Abschnitt and these then had individual offices, Hauptaußenstelle [Main Branch Station] or Außenstelle [Branch Station]. In 1939 SD-Oberabschnitt were abolished and became SD-Leitabschnitt [SD Control District]. Despite the name District, it was a regular office, just in a bigger city that other Branch Offices reported to. There were about a total 50 Districts of both types, about 50 Main Branch Stations and about 500 Branch Stations. These offices were sort of overall SD offices, but primarily Inland-SD offices and most of their activity was gathering information for Amt III. The SD Branch Offices often had only a few full time people, and a few dozen or even hundred informants or honorary members who sent their information to them, and they then processed it to a District, which itself might have a staff of a few dozen full- and part-time officers and more informants. Then the Districts send their compiled data to Control Districts which forward it to Amt III. Amt VI under VI A had representatives who took care of intelligence from many Districts at once, for example Representative V (South) took care of all foreign information from all Districts and Control Districts in Bavaria and Austria.

Finally the Einsatzgruppen, whose full name was Einsatzgruppen der SiPo und des SD were under RSHA, but more specifically under Heydrich. Despite the name, SiPo and SD couldn't provide 3000 men willing to go to the East and do the regime's dirty work, apart from mid-ranking officers hoping for a promotion upon coming home, enthusiasm for going to Russia was very low. Only about 15% of Einsatzgruppen personnel came from RSHA agencies, the rest were unlucky men transferred from Waffen-SS, OrPo, the German Army or native Auxiliary Police formations. All of its leaders, however, came from RSHA, although not all went happily. Ohlendorf refused multiple times and Himmler threatened to fire him and disband the SD if he refused again. Himmler threatened to disband the SD many times, he wasn't really that into it, it was more Heydrich's, Best's and Schellenberg's thing; Best was first one out in 1940, Heydrich in 1942, and so only Schellenberg was left as the kind of big man of the SD, although Kaltenbrunner was also into intelligence work and was appointed as Chief of the SiPo & SD exactly because of it, he was more focused on military intelligence, thus Inland-SD had no patron and was thrown to the Party wolves and Amt VII was by this point just an archive anyway, but Ausland-SD grew considerably, especially in 1944 when Abwehr was turned into Militärisches Amt [Military Office] of RSHA and Schellenberg was its Chief, on top of being Chief of Amt VI). Unlike Ohlendorf, Nebe was easier to persuade, but he suffered trauma in the East (his personal driver even shot himself during their deployment) and joined the resistance, with which he participated in the July plot, for which he was executed in 1945. While other men like Stahlecker, Rasch, Jost or Böhme viewed it as a step in their careers, and went to the East singing. Heydrich was however too important to go himself, and Himmler couldn't stomach watching an execution, let alone mass murder, but both were more than happy to order this "work" to others.

The Organization of RSHA, as of October 1943

In October 1943 the last organizational chart of RSHA was published, at that point RSHA was organized like this:

Amt I: Personnel, Training and Organization (partially SiPo, partially SD office)

Gruppe I A: Personnel

Gruppe I B: Education, Training, Instruction

Amt II: Budget and Economy (partially SiPo, partially SD office)

Gruppe II A: Budget, Salaries and Accounting

Gruppe II B: Economic, Prisoner and Judicial Affairs, etc.

Gruppe II C: Technical Matters

Amt III: Spheres of German Life (SD office, this is Inland-SD)

Gruppe III A: Questions of Legal System and Building of the Reich

Gruppe III B: Folklore

Gruppe III C: Culture

Gruppe III D: Economy

Amt IV: Investigation and Combating of Opposition (SiPo office, this is Gestapa)

Gruppe IV A: Enemy, Sabotage and Protection Service

Gruppe IV B: Political Churches, Sects and Jews

Gruppe IV C: Persons Card Index, Personnel File Administration, Protective Custody, Press and Party

Gruppe IV D: Greater German Sphere of Influence (ie foreign deployments)

Gruppe IV E: Defense (ie counterintelligence)

Gruppe IV F: Passports and Immigration Police

Amt V: Combating of Criminals (SiPo office, this is RKPA)

Gruppe V A: Criminal Policies and Prevention

Gruppe V B: Deployment (ie foreign deployments)

Gruppe V C: Police Records and Manhunt

Gruppe V D: Criminal-Technical Institute of SiPo

(also subordinate to Amt V were Institute of Criminal Biology of SiPo & Central Institute of Criminal Medicine of SiPo)

Amt VI: Foreign Intelligence Service (SD office, this is Ausland-SD)

Gruppe VI A: Organization of the Foreign Intelligence Service

Gruppe VI B: Western Europe

Gruppe VI C: Russian-Japanese Spheres of Influence

Gruppe VI D: Anglo-American Spheres of Influence

Gruppe VI E: Central Europe

Gruppe VI F: Technical Equipment for Foreign Intelligence Service Abroad
Gruppe VI G: Scientific-Methodological Research Service
Gruppe VI S (ie Skorzeny office)
Gruppe VI Wi: Integration of Economy into AND
Gruppe VI Kult: Integration of Culture into AND

Amt VII: Worldview Research and Evaluation (SD office)

Gruppe VII A: Material Registration

Gruppe VII B: Evaluation

Gruppe VII C: Archive, Museum and Special Scientific Questions

Furthermore, subordinate directly to Chief of SiPo and SD were:

I/Untersuchungsführer

II/Attachégruppe

III/Delegation of RSHA at Interpol

IV/Inspector of Schools of SiPo and SD (these were the schools:)

- 1) Officer School of SiPo in Berlin-Charlottenburg
- 2) SiPo School in Fürstenberg
- 3) SD School in Bernau
- 4) Reich School of SiPo and SD in Prag

The Security Apparatus: OrPo

OrPo, or Ordnungspolizei [Order Police] was a collection of police forces and other services that were collectively the regular civilian uniformed police of Germany. While the term OrPo was used previously, as a central office HA OrPo was only created within the Interior Ministry after Himmler became *Chief of German Police in the Reich Interior Ministry*, in 1936. It was under Kurt Dalwege, who held the title *Chief of German Order Police*. OrPo had countless formations under it, from Fire Protection Police to Air Raid Protection Police, but we'll now cover only the most important.

Altho never part of OrPo as it ceased to exist before HA OrPo was created as such, Landespolizei (also known as Police Army) was a very important branch of the "police" in early Third Reich. It was a barracked, uniformed, well-armed military force disguised as a police. It was created during the Weimar Republic as a second Reichswehr, and expanded during the early days of the Third Reich until it was entirely merged into the Wehrmacht in 1935 and 1936. Landespolizei fielded Reichswehr style units, such as regiments and even brigades. As with all police forces in Germany at the time, it had officers, NCOs and enlisted men, the vast majority of whom were transferred to the Wehrmacht (with equivalent rank given to them); dozens of its senior officers became Wehrmacht generals during the war. In a (at the time secret) war-time decree, Hitler stated that Waffen-SS post-war would perform the function of a State Police.

After its integration in the Wehrmacht, Landespolizei wasn't replaced, but new barracked heavy police units was created for riot situations called Kasernierte Polizei [Barracked Police] as part of Schutzpolizei (Schupo) des Reiches. On the topic of Schupo des Reiches, it was one of 3 major police forces that fall under the umbrella term OrPo. These were the two branches of

the Shupo, those being Schupo des Reiches [Reich Protection Police] and Schupo der Gemeinden [Municipal Protection Police] and also the Gendarmerie, which was the rural Police.

Each was tasked with the same job, general policing, but which branch existed in which place depended on the size of that place. Gendarmerie policed rural areas and towns with the population up to 2k (later changed to up to 5k, however the change was not implemented in all places, especially not in Altreich), Schupo der Gemeinden policed towns of between 2k and 100k (later 5k to 100k) and Schupo des Reiches policed towns and cities of over 100k.

Every police officer after completion of his training would be assigned to Schupo des Reiches, and only after a few years of service could he be transferred to one of the other two more specialized branches, as they policed smaller places it was believed policemen needed greater degree of experience, maturity and age. All police recruits had to be in good health (wearing glasses was a negative, but didn't automatically disqualify a person), unmarried (they could marry after joining the force, with approval of their senior officer), at least 170cm tall, pass entry test and to have already served in the Wehrmacht for between 2 and 5 years, or 4 years in SS-Verfügungstruppe, as well as to be members of NSDAP or one of its many affiliate organizations (date of entry didn't matter, so many joined just before going to the police). During the war married men were also accepted, and wearing glasses was no longer made an issue. On top of this during the war anyone with Wehrmacht service over 2 years could be appointed as a policeman if required by OrPo.

Promotions were based on length of service in the force, for the first twelve years all promotions were provisional and revocable, after that point further promotions were permanent (members of the NSDAP or its auxiliary organizations could receive credit for the time of their membership). Retirement age for men was 60, for officers and generals 50-56 depending on the rank. All new officers (as in people in officers ranks) had to graduate from SS-Junkerschule (SS officer cadet schools) and then from Police Officer Schools upon joining OrPo. NCOs could also become commissioned officers provided their service is satisfactory. Under Schupo des Reiches there were also specialized units and police forces: Mounted Police, Mountain Police, Motor Transport (for police), Schupo Veterinary Service, Water Protection Police, Schupo Medical Service, Signals Units and Barracked Police.

Each individual police area (a territorial command) was called Police Administration and the highest government official in the area (such as Regierungspräsident) was at the same time Police Administrator. Polizeipräsident [Police President] was the civilian manager of a police force in larger cities, this is a political appointment that doesn't require prior service in the police, but usually day-to-day operations of the agency were in the hands of professional officers.

OrPo was also in charge of various specialized police forces such as Luftschutzpolizei in charge of air raid protection, the firefighters and Technische Nothilfe. The Eastern native police (the Schutzmannschaft) were also under OrPo nominally, altho in reality in the East they were under whichever German authority was around. Lastly it was also in charge of Stadt- und Landwacht [City and Countryside Guard], which was a part-time auxiliary police made out of regular civilians who would perform police duties on the side (it was created during the war to maintain law and order and had about 1 million members), all in all OrPo had a total of about 3,5 million men and volunteers under its administration, but it should be noted that *majority* of these were not police officers, but part-timers in one of mass organizations subordinate to OrPo, such as those tasked with air raid protection, firefighter helpers or men in Stadt- und Landwacht.

As we have seen there was no such thing as "OrPo officer", every policeman belonged to some police force which was part of the umbrella term OrPo. There was however one exception, that is service in the East. The Police battalions and regiments (later given honorary prefix SS- as a "reward" for loyal service so they became SS Police Regiments). They were conscripted from all branches of the police for service in the East not so much as a regular police for the occupied areas (native police was set up very quickly in all occupied areas) but as a occupational force, assisting native police and performing duties for which it lacked manpower, such as larger raids or round-ups and partisan warfare. The native police in the East, or Shuma, which numbered about 300,000 men would often operate in support of these police regiments.

The Higher SS and Police Leaders

Now that we understand every branch of the German Police and also the A-SS, I can properly explain the functions of a HSSPF and Führer of SS-Oa. His main function is that he was Himmler's representative in that region, and thus a mini Himmler in it. These men were also almost always Führers of (Allgemeine SS) SS-Oberabschnitte and the function of HSSPF made them also chiefs of police in the region, at least nominally. With these two posts then, they controlled (nominally) the A-SS, SD, SiPo and OrPo in their regions (W-SS was not subordinate to them). Unlike BdSs who were mostly picked from SD and BdOs who were picked from OrPo, HSSPFs were almost always picked from A-SS officers, and since OrPo and SiPo had they own national-level HQs to which their regional commands were responsible and they also had BdS and BdO to represent them and coordinate their actions in the area of SS-Oa. the HSSPFs in reality mostly performed the duties of A-SS bosses for the area and political representatives of the SS to the Wehrmacht command and the government authorities. Unlike the other services subordinate to them, A-SS didn't have a national command and its highest level of organization was the SS-Oa. thus naturally the HSSPF had most authority in it and most duties around it. HSSPFs thus held very little power in the Reich itself, and in the occupied territories mostly served as coordinators of police actions and administrators for vast police apparatuses set up there. Their creations, as was the creation of BdSs two years previously was all part of Himmler's and Heydrich's idea of Staatsschutzkorps which called for SS-ization of police, but there is little that A-SS man could do with organizations which already had professional officers in charge of them at regional levels, who were in turn responsible to national-level commands, and thus their job as mini Himmlers and political representatives of the SS was something they were much more suited for.

The Armed SS

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After the Allgemeine-SS and German Police, we arrived at the Waffen-SS (W-SS). To understand it, we first have to examine its origins. It is often said that W-SS is basically an expansion of SS-Verfügungstruppe (SS-VT), and while this is true, it doesn't tell the whole story. Waffen-SS owed its existence to 3 formations and organizations, LSSAH, SS-VT, SS-Totenkopf-Standarten and to some extent the OrPo. While Waffen-SS was formed only in 1940, its roots go back to the very start of the NS regime and to Allgemeine-SS (A-SS).

After the Nazis came to power most SS-Abschnitte formed "Headquarters Guard" units, which were raised from volunteers amongst the A-SS members, who received weapon training by experienced SS men (usually former soldiers) and formed a company-sized "Sonderkommando", but sometimes it grew bigger than a company and was called "Politische Bereitschaft" [Political Alarm Squad]. These were intended to protect SS-Abschnitte headquarters, but also to be used as auxiliary police in case of unrest. These units were not official or authorized however, they were spontaneous formations; SS higher-ups and even Hitler took notice. One of these Political Alarm Squad in Berlin was officialized and put under Hitler's trusted man, Josef Dietrich, and in a few months it became LSSAH. However the SS at this point lacked any sort of military infrastructure, so the LSSAH was trained and equipped by the Reichswehr (the training was the task of 9th Infantry Regiment in Potsdam) and it was housed in military barracks in former Cadet College, Berlin-Lichterfelde. In 1934 after the end of the Rohm affair, all unofficial SS paramilitary units were dissolved and in agreement with the War Ministry, SS internal troops were created, the SS-Verfügungstruppe. They were militarized in their nature, but not part of the armed forces, the closest comparison would be Internal Troops of USSR and later Russia, or Bundesgrenzschutz in West Germany, or Kasernierte Volkspolizei in East Germany.

Men enlisted for a period of 4 or 12 years for service in SS-VT, during which period they would complete their RAD service, their service in the VT would qualify as regular compulsory military service Wehrmacht, however before Himmler could finally get his hands on proper armed units, he first needed military professionals who are going to make them, former NCOs like Dietrich weren't enough, lucky for him, Paul Scharfe, an SS judge and later head of the Main Office of SS Courts had a friend who was willing to take up the job, a real (retired) Reichswehr general and at that time reserve (=honorary) SA-Standartenführer Paul Hausser; Scharfe enquired whether he would like to join the SS. Hausser would. Hausser was a typical Prussian Reichswehr general, infantry training, staff college, staff officer on both fronts in WW1,

Chief of Staff in Wehrkreis II, Commander of 10th Infantry Regiment, Infantry Commander in Magdeburg and finally, in January 1932, retirement in the rank of Generalleutnant. Of course, he was a conservative monarchist and once in retirement he joined Stahlhelm and soon became its chairman for the Berlin-Brandenburg area, a "natural" position for a retired general as he put it. Once Stahlhelm was absorbed by the SA after Nazis came to power he was given the rank of reserve SA-Standartenführer, and after Scharfe approached him, he left the SA for the SS. Hausser became Inspector-General of the SS-VT and give it considerable legitimacy, he was however a rather old school officer, not yet versed in modern maneuver combat, altho he would become so later on, his main job at this point was in SS Junker Schools, he had to train the SS officers like real military officers would be. The real innovator in SS-VT and the doctrinal mastermind at this point was former Reichswehr Major, and future SS-Obergruppenführer, Felix Steiner who witnessed first hand storm-trooper tactics of late WW1 period and used them as a basis of his mobilize warfare doctrine. Peak physical condition and ability to run long distances in a short period of time was his greatest contribution; the SS-VT units in which he implemented his methods could regularly outperform their army counterparts in joint exercises and this impressed even the mistrustful Wehrmacht, further legitimizing the SS-VT.

SS-VT originally had 3 units, all of regimental size (at that point still called Standarten) "Germania", "Deutschland" and LSSAH, altho the last one had a will of its own until Dietrich understood that he can't make a respected unit alone and gave in. In 1938 after the annexation of Austria another regiment was added, "Der Führer". Per Hitler's August 1938 decree, they were at Hitler's disposal intended for use within Germany (to put down uprisings or civil unrest) in times of war however they were to be placed under Wehrmacht's operational command, as they were in 1939. Costs of SS-VT were borne by the Reich.

Apart from doctrine focused on sports and physical strength as well as great parade performance, SS-VT served as a training unit for SS's military "socialist culture" to quote Hauser (there was little distinction between officer and soldier, they ate and slept together, as a matter of principle doors of all rooms in SS-VT and later W-SS barracks were never locked, the "Herr" prefix to ranks that was mandatory in the Army (you would always say "Herr Leutnant" as opposed to just "Leutnant") was dropped, in SS-VT/W-SS prefix Comrade was used, altho no prefix to rank was allowed as well; just to note Herr was almost never used in SS in general and its use when talking to your superior was viewed as a bad thing, a notable exception was Heydrich who always called Himmler "Herr Reichsführer" when talking to him, as did Pohl sometimes). As part of this culture Christianity was targeted, there was a massive push to make SS-VT men leave the Church, those who didn't would be pressured to do so by officers and their peers alike, for example when men line up for inspection, before the inspection starts officer in charge would request that all men who didn't leave the Church yet step one step in front of the rest as a form of humiliation. In the end about 50% of SS-VT left their Church, the highest of any formation in Germany apart from SS-Totenkopfverbände where almost 70% left their Church.

The SS-VT had one major issue that hindered its growth, the Wehrmacht had full control over their recruitment and issued quotas that couldn't be surpassed, they made sure these quotas allowed just for replacements and not for large growth, they were relaxed a little in the first year of the war, but still, there was no space for new units to be formed out of SS-VT personnel. On topic of the war, originally SS-VT's regiments were attached to Army formations

and weren't allowed auxiliary units and heavy artillery of their own, however after Poland eventually a division was formed (SS-Verfügungsddivision) from the 3 regiments that were not LSSAH, it would later become the 2. SS-Panzer-Division „Das Reich“. The LSSAH remained an independent motorized regiment until 1941 when it was upgraded to a division and finally in 1943 it became 1. SS-Panzer-Division „Leibstandarte-SS-Adolf Hitler“. The third division of Waffen-SS was Totenkopf Division and here we have to go back a few years.

SS-Totenkopfverbände [SS Death's Head Formations], which we will talk more about later, was the branch of the SS in charge of concentration camp guard units, which were battalion-sized (Sturmbann) formations of camp guards, however it had another very important function, it had military-like regiments of its own. These were created to avoid the Wehrmacht's ban on recruitment as they were nominally part of the Police and thus not subject to it, Hitler's aforementioned decree gave those regiments called SS-Totenkopf-Standarten (short: SS-T-Standarten) the status of "police reinforcements" and they were thus allowed to recruit young men, mostly from A-SS, into them, their manpower was capped at 50k, but that was far more than SS-VT ever had anyway, these units were financed by the Interior Ministry. SS-T-Standarten were located near the 5 major concentration camps in Germany and Austria, altho their training areas were independent of the camp (back then SS didn't have military training areas, so it used areas around camps to build up all of its military infrastructure, from hospitals, to depots to shooting ranges and training areas) and they were not allowed to enter into the inmate zones, but they anyhow trained near them. The men SS-T-Standarten trained, would embark on training for 4 weeks and return to civil life afterwards, they were mostly recruits from A-SS who would act as reserve for SS-VT in times of war, however they were first mobilized for occupation of Czechoslovakia and some of their manpower was used to form various units guarding German buildings there and such. There were more officers in a single SS-T-Standarten than the entire office corps of SS-TV, and the SS-T-Standarten had themselves more men in 1939 than there were prisoners in all concentration camps at the time (22,033 men in SS-T-Ss compared to 21,000 camp prisoners). The SS-T-Standarten were one of the rare cases of large systemic intermixing between SS branches, especially in regards to SS-TV, which was otherwise a rather enclosed organization of the SS, where men served and NCOs served for 12 years, and transfer into it or out of it was quite rare, they trained their men themselves and they would stay in SS-TV until returning to civilian life upon completion of their time in SS-TV. In 1940 SS-TV was made "nominally part of Waffen-SS" by Himmler's decree, thus making its men exempt even from military service during their time in the organization.

Then the times of war came.

SS-Totenkopf-Standarten were never part of the W-SS as such or only for a short period of time, they were paramilitary training units with always-changing soldier composition after all. After Eicke started training his Division in November 1939, the Inspectorate of the SS-Totenkopfverbände and the Concentration Camps was split into two components, the following month. The camps, alongside their guard units (the true SS-TV) remained as Inspectorate of the Concentration Camps under Richard Glücks, who had been Chief of Staff of the Inspectorate since April 1936. The SS-T-Standarten were placed under a new bureaucracy, the General Inspectorate of the Reinforced SS-Totenkopf-Standarten. This office was under August Heißmeyer, at the time Chief of SS-HA, tho it was mostly ran by its Chief of Staff, SS bureaucrat, Siegfried Taubert, who was since 1938 the Castellan of Wewelsburg (and was so

until the end of the war). In April 1940, Taubert took over the General Inspectorate formally, and in May he was replaced by an instructor from SS-Junkerschule Braunschweig and Waffen-SS bureaucrat Hans Schwedler. The General Inspectorate was organized along the lines of a military General Staff type command, and had a staff of about 160 officers, NCOs and men, as well as about 80 medical staff. It controlled all the SS-T-Standarten, their training and replacement units and 2 guard battalions in Prag. The strength of its subordinate units was increasing rapidly as the SS-T-Standarten were mobilized and went from about 20,000 at the start of April 1940 to almost 35,000 by late July. The General Inspectorate existed in the period of Waffen-SS's formation, when there was no single office to administer it. In August 1940 when SS-FHA was formed, the General Inspectorate was abolished. The medical department was merged into SS-FHA's medical offices and the rest of the General Inspectorate became part of Amt II of SS-FHA (Command Office of Waffen-SS), to which all the remaining SS-T-Standarten and related units were subordinate until their abolition and integration into existing or newly formed W-SS units.

SS-T-Standarten, which went from 6 (5 regular and 1 cavalry) before the war to almost 20 (tho not all at once) were disbanded when the war started or in 1940, new units of Waffen-SS were formed from their manpower, first of those being the Totenkopf division, which had little to do with what remained of SS-Totenkopfverbände, apart from most of its original composition coming from SS-T-Standarten (most died during the defense of Demyansk Pocket), but bore its tradition and was thus authorized to wear the Totenkopf collar patch instead of the runic  patch the other German formations wore, it would one day become the 3. *SS-Panzer-Division „Totenkopf“* (on topic of the runes, on an interesting note, the larp went so far that  was the only way SS was written in Germany, typewriters had  button added to them, it was -Untersturmführer and Waffen-, even in stuff written by hand runes were used instead of letters SS (no idea which is correct, but there seem to be three types of runes that can be used in the doc ,  and ). SS-T-Standarten were also used to provide the basis for the "Nord" division, and 2 cavalry regiments, SS-Totenkopf-Reiterstandarten 1 & 2 were used to form the SS Cavalry Brigade which later became 8. *SS-Kavallerie-Division „Florian Geyer“*. OrPo also raised a division in 1939, the Police Division; it was not considered to be an elite unit and was not equipped as such until much later. In 1942 it also joined Waffen-SS and was motorized/mechanized becoming the 4. *SS-Polizei-Panzergranadier-Division*. Those 3 units, LSSAH motorized infantry regiment, and Totenkopf and Verfügungs Divisions, alongside several still remaining SS-T-Standarten were the original formations of W-SS when it was officially created in 1940. Together with W-SS, a new Main Office was created, the SS-Führungshauptamt [SS Operations Main Office] (short: SS-FHA) which was basically HQ of Waffen-SS and tasked with overall administration, supply, equipment and training of Waffen's NCOs and Officers. It was in a way a copy of Wehrmacht's Replacement Army, as it controlled the replacement and training units of Waffen-SS (these were the only units under its direct control), tho recruitment itself was the task of SS-HA. After SS-WVHA was formed it also took part in administration of Waffen-SS, especially its property, and also took over supply and procurement for W-SS.

Waffen-SS was throughout its entire existence under the command of the Wehrmacht, altho it maintained its own officer corps, mixing between the two was not rare, Waffen succeeded in building up a solid base of field officers, but it always lacked staff officers, and it

wasn't at all uncommon (it could be perhaps said it was even the norm later on) for it to borrow Heer staff officers, especially for Corps level formations (these borrowed officers would remain in Heer, not be transferred to Waffen, unless they so wanted). Transfer from Heer to Waffen-SS during the war became a matter of paperwork, and was easily possible for those who wanted it. Tedious work of completing a family tree back to 1750 which was required of all SS officers pre-war, was not required during the war (altho the officers-transferees were told they should provide it post-war), in case of transfer back to the Army promotions during one's service in Waffen were generally accepted, in a sense its entirely correct to call W-SS the Fourth Branch of the Wehrmacht, tho it never formally was. W-SS also relied heavily on reserve Officers, especially since it grew very quickly, and would have outgrown the capacity of its pre-war Officer Corps very quickly. Mid-level and higher A-SS functionaries very often undertook reserve officer training and served in Waffen-SS for a few tours at the front. From about 130 full-time staffers of SS-Oa., Führer and staffers of SS-Abschnitt and SS-Standarten in rank of Standartenführer or higher (not counting Führer of SS-Oa, ie HSSPFs), that I counted in November 1944 Seniority List, a bit less than half, about 60 didn't hold a reserve Waffen-SS commission, the rest did.

Without going into details for every division, the "original" Waffen-SS formed largely without conscription was the first 8 divisions (altho 7th was mostly conscripted), officer cadres for new divisions were usually provided by „LSSAH“ or „Das Reich“. The popular image of Waffen-SS as this elite tank force was indeed true on the Western Front in 1944, but it doesn't tell the whole story of Waffen-SS, for one thing, majority of its divisions formed after number 8 only ever reached the fields of battle in 1944, however Waffen earned its reputation long before that. Its focus on mobile infantry warfare resulted in good battle performance, but also heavy casualties, and with that many highly-trained men who lived to experience the pre-war culture of SS-VT quickly died off, however as the war in Russia came around, it wasn't only the enlisted men of the pre-war VT that died off, but also the main cadres in the units, its NCOs and lower-ranking field Officers. By 1942 the original units had to be withdrawn from combat and refitted, the opportunity was used to upgrade the divisions as well, infantry into panzergrenadiers, panzergrenadiers into panzers. However throughout all this time the replacements allowed by Wehrmacht weren't enough to provide German manpower for new units. LSSAH, for example, was devastated and rebuilt four times and then rekt again towards the end of the war, yet despite the rebuildings it remained an elite formation. Partially responsible for this type of casualties and style of fighting was the doctrine and the manner in which Waffen-SS elite formations fought, often staying in the fight until the last man, but even more responsible was the type of engagement these units got. Together with the likes of „Großdeutschland“ Division of the Army these units were the "fire brigades" of the Wehrmacht (this was even the popular nickname of „Großdeutschland"), always sent to deal with the most volatile sections of the front.

To deal with constant need to replacements, Gottlob Berger, in charge of SS-Hauptamt, and thus also in charge of replacement and recruitment for Waffen-SS, found a new pool of manpower outside of Wehrmacht's control; the Germanics and the Volksdeutsche. As early as 1940 Germanic units were raised, which were then used to form the 5th SS division Wiking (later 5. SS-Panzer-Division „Wiking"), Volksdeutsche from Yugoslavia, or to be more specific Banat were used (and conscripted) to form the 7th division, 7. SS-Freiwilligen-Gebirgs-Division „Prinz Eugen". Romanian Volksdeutsche were used in many units, but from the original few,

they were most prominent in the "Florian Geyer" division (as well as "Wiking" to some extent). Later these pools of manpower were exhausted as well, so volunteers and even conscripts from non-Germanic states were also accepted, firstly the Bosnians Muslims, then western Ukrainians and Baltic peoples, and later any peoples in Europe who were willing or to serve the German cause. In the end Waffen-SS had at various points fielded 40/41 divisions under 38 numbers (depends on how the second 30th is counted, it was either 40 or 41), numbers of failed divisions were reused (23 from "Kama" Division, and 29 from the 29th (popularly known as "RONA", but it never held that title during its short existence in the W-SS), and 30 (if second 30th is counted as a new division)).

The portrail of Waffen-SS as this elite force of German Army is correct if we look at the main divisions of the W-SS, units such as the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 17th and a few others, these units, especially the first 4, existed for longest, and performed very well consistency throughout their existence, not to say that the Heer didn't have such divisions, it did, elite formations such as „Großdeutschland“ were on part with these SS formations, but Waffen had a larger number of them compared to its overall size. Thus on the one hand, it fielded some of the finest combat divisions in the German military system, sent to bolster the toughest sectors of the frontline, conversely, some of the late-war Waffen-SS formations were little more than cannon-fodder. After 1943 it was allowed to conscript Germans and it was also given priority in equipment which further cemented this view of Waffen as an elite formation when its panzer divisions fought the Western allies. However as the war went on and Germany became more and more desperate, W-SS raised multiple garbage units or units which were under-trained or undermanned. Out of the 41 total divisions (I count the second 30th as a separate unit) 11 were raised in 1945 or upgraded to divisional status from existing regiments or brigades (without actually getting any extra manpower or equipment), further 13 were raised in 1944, some of which were capable combat units who had been training since 1943, while others were ad-hoc formations that got destroyed as soon as a soviet shock army stepped over them. On top of this, formations raised in 1943 spent most of that year in training, as back then quality was still preferred to quantity, so they rarely saw combat before 1944. Number of Waffen's divisions never saw front line service at all, while at the same time some 25% of all German panzer divisions wore the SS runes. Overall combat performance of Waffen-SS, judged by performance of its longest serving formations, was consistently strong, but the fact that the unit belongs to Waffen-SS does not mean it's an elite formation.

Finally I'd like to touch upon foreign and reserve officers in Waffen-SS. I'll pass over it in more detail in the SS ranks and career path section, but it's also appropriate here. There were 3 types of W-SS officers (in SS speak führer is the same as officer, so SS-Führer just means SS officer):

- 1) Aktive Führer, that is full-time active-service career officers of Waffen-SS, who would hold full Waffen-SS rank, for example SS-Hauptsturmführer der Waffen-SS.
- 2) Reserveführer, that is reserve officers of W-SS. Most commonly these would be A-SS officers or Hauptamt staff who would go for a tour on the front, and be given a relatively low reserve officer commission. Usually they would be company/battalion commanders. For example Ernst Kaltenbrunner was commissioned as Untersturmführer d.R. (d.R. being short for "der Reserve", that is "of the Reserve") in 1940, despite being a Gruppenführer in A-SS at the time; Leader of Germanic SS in Netherlands, Henk

Feldmeijer was Standartenführer in A-SS and Hauptsturmführer d.R. in Waffen; Léon Degrelle only ever held a reserve commission in Waffen (Standartenführer d.R.) and no rank in A-SS.

- 3) Fachführer, that is civilian working for Waffen-SS due to some special skill, usually in propaganda services or some administrative/economic function under SS-WVHA.

Apart from these there were also (Waffen-)SS-Führer im Verwaltungsdienst [SS Officers in Administrative Service], tho this is branch of service, rather than a type, Administrative Service SS Officers can themselves be any of the 3 types listed above, they are the non-combat, primarily economic and troop administration functionaries, akin to Wehrmacht Officials we'll mention later.

There was also Waffenführer (and also reserve Waffenführer), these were foreign officers in SS, ie not German, not Volksdeutsche and not Germanic, so French (but not Waloons, they were considered Germanic), Hungarians, Italians, Bosniaks, Balts, Russians, etc. (but only if they serve in their national unit, if they joined W-SS before this was instituted and thus served in a German/Germanic unit, they'd get full SS rank, so there was no mixing, Waffenführer were all in foreign-only units, with prefix "Waffen-"). Any foreigner willing to do so could join Waffen-SS, complete SS Junker School training as any SS cadet would and get a W-SS commission (or reserve commission) and then go to serve in his national unit as an officer. People who already held ranks in their native armies before the Germans occupied them could get a commission based on that. Their promotion prospects were the same as with German officers, they could, and about 8 men did, reach ranks of generals, and dozens reached the ranks of colonels (SS had two colonel ranks).

There were three main differences however.

- 1) Until late-war natives couldn't command divisions (foreign divisions were established in 1943, until 1944 only a German citizen could be divisional commander), as under German law a divisional commander had the same authority as a judge, thus due to his disciplinary prerogatives had to be a citizen; regimental and brigade command was allowed, however later the rules changed, so in late-war period even divisional command was given to Waffenführer as it provided a moral boost for the troops.
- 2) Secondly, Waffenführer had a little different ranks, unlike the normal prefix "SS-" that would go before a rank (**SS**-Hauptsturmführer), foreigners had prefix "Waffen-" (so **Waffen**-Hauptsturmführer), same thing with reserve officers (Waffen-Hauptsturmführer d.R.).
- 3) Lastly this rank was just a rank in Waffen-SS, it wasn't a general SS rank, these men were not going to serve in Allgemeine-SS positions like staff of some Oberabschnitt. It was a rank valid only in military units of Waffen-SS. Waffenführer were furthermore not considered members of SS at large, they were not issued SS numbers (SS number is a sign of membership in SS and is given to every SS member regardless of branch of SS where they serve, except to Waffenführer and foreign volunteers in W-SS). They were equally as officers as German ones, but they were limited to service in Waffen, whereas as German SS officers *could* transfer to some of the other branches of SS.

On the topic of SS numbers, not every soldier of Waffen-SS was even a member of the SS, in fact, the majority weren't, the highest SS numbers issued (and they were universal for all branches of SS) were around 500k, whereas W-SS alone had about 1 million soldiers during its existence, then also count the other SS services... This was largely because many divisions and soldiers were not German, and while Germanics could join the SS via their Germanic SS in their home country it wasn't required and the non-German(ic) W-SS men couldn't join the Black Guard proper at all.

Ranks and Career Paths in the SS

While I'll be discussing primarily complicated crossovers between various services and the associated rank system, I'd just quickly want to help you understand the SS ranks so that they don't just sound like some German nonsense and explain why and how the SS ranks came to be (and the ranks of other NSDAP paramilitaries, as they are all more or less the same). SS ranks are quite stupid as such, they are literal meanings of what the person is doing, based on the command structure of the SA, inherited by the early A-SS. Its basically "[insert prefix] [insert unit] führer", and SS-Führer is just SS Officer, word führer and officer are synonyms in the SS.

The possible prefixes are "Unter" which means like under or junior, "Ober" which means like higher or senior, "Haupt" which means like head or main and "Sturm" which as a prefix only exists for Sturmscharführer. Then you just add the unit size and word führer, lets start from the bottom:

Rotte = Section, basically lowest subunit; Rottenführer = Section Führer, highest enlisted men (non-NCO) rank and despite the name doesn't have any authority (in German armies enlisted men didn't get any authority of command with rank increase, only NCOs started getting it)

Schar = Squad; (Unter-, Ober-, Haupt- and Sturm-) Scharführer = variations of Squad Führer, these are the NCO ranks (in W-SS there was also SS-Stabsscharführer, this is an appointment, not a rank, basically senior company NCO)

Then we have officer ranks, a Sturm in this context is a Company; (Unter-, Ober-, Haupt-) Sturmführer = variation of Company Führer (Note SS-Untersturmführer, the lowest officer rank, was originally just SS-Sturmführer, as it remained in other paramilitaries, but SS changed the name)

A Sturmbann is a Battalion; (Ober-) Sturmbannführer = variation of Battalion Führer

A Standarte is a Regiment; Standartenführer = Regiment Führer

Now these were relatively simple, the next rank, Oberführer, is where the old SA nature of the ranks start to be obvious. These later ones are less logical as they bear names of structures which no longer existed by 1933 in the SS, tho kept existing in the SA.

Back in the day (created in 1928) Oberführer [insert region] was the highest regional command, this was created by Franz Pfeffer von Salomon, when he was OSAF (Supreme SA Führer). There were 7 of these around Germany and they controlled the SA Standarten. For example Oberführer Ost [Senior Führer (in the) East] was Walter Stennes, and he ruled the SA in Berlin and surrounding regions. This existed in the SS too, but it was called SS-Oberführerbereich, or Oberführer Area.

As for the General level ranks, well, Oberführer used to be a territorial command as I just said, but SA outgrew the previous highest unit, Standarten, and a single Oberführer couldn't manage dozens of those, and so multiple Standarten formed Brigaden, hence Brigadeführer (= Brigade Führer). Higher command was then Gruppe, controlling multiple Brigaden, hence Gruppenführer (= Group Führer) And highest territorial command was Obergruppe, hence Obergruppenführer (= Senior Group Führer). In 1942 the SS added Oberst-Gruppenführer, there never were any Oberst-Gruppe or anything, Oberst was used in a sense of Supreme Gruppenführer.

Above any territorial command is the national level, that is the Reich itself, hence Reichsführer-SS, originally (1925-1926) called Oberleiter, it was actually an appointment and not a rank until 1934, as the SS used to be subordinate to OSAF (Supreme SA Leadership), Himmler was just an SS-Ogruf. until '34, first one and one of only 3 promoted to that rank before Operation Kolibri, the other two being Rudolf Hess (who left the SS in 1933, shortly after the promotion), and Franz Xaver Schwarz (who was eventually be promoted to Oberst-Gruf in '42).

The SS unlike the SA didn't have many men, and most of these commands in the SS existed on paper only, if they existed at all, or were understaffed. The SA-Oberführer type commands were created, but instead of 7, there was only 3, the so called SS-Oberführerbereich (Oberführer Area). This territorial command was in 1930-31 turned into SS Gruppen, but no Obergruppen existed, since there was no need for them due to lack of men and units to justify that. Oberabschnitte were only created in November 1933, from the Gruppen, and were about equivalent to SA Obergruppen in size of territory they covered (tho never in manpower), and Abschnitte were about equivalent to a Gruppen, but in reality in size more to a SA Brigade. SS also tried to introduce SS-Brigade, but by March 1931 all of these were reverted to Standarten or became Gruppen, as SS didn't have the men to maintain proper number of Standarten to form a Brigade. The idea was to have one Brigade per NSDAP Gau, but that was impossible for the small little SS. And that is more or less the SS ranks, the most literal descriptions of what the officer did, except based on ancient SA formations.

Anyhow, as we've seen Himmler's empire was a group of organizations sometimes completely unconnected from each other. We'll concern ourselves here with officer ranks. We'll take for example SS-Hauptsturmführer (short: SS-Hstuf), this is the person's overall SS rank, depending on the branch of service it would be SS-Hstuf der Allgemeinen SS or der Waffen-SS, but this addition wouldn't really be said, its assumed based on which part of the SS the person works in, tho the Seniority Lists do of course state which of these it is. Active service members of the SS would only have one of those two, for the appropriate branch. Upon switching career path from one branch to the other, he wouldn't need the rank of the old branch, because he doesn't serve there anymore. Obviously transfer from A-SS to W-SS was a longer process, due to W-SS being a military and A-SS being a lot of different things. Transfer really only went one way, that is A-SS to W-SS, I'm not aware of any major examples of the opposite (mostly due to the war going on), if a W-SS officer is not needed he could be assigned to one Waffen function not on the front, like command of training areas, garrisons or recruitment centers, or some posting in SS-FHA which was Waffen HQ after all, he wouldn't be transferred to A-SS.

A case in which a person would hold double rank, one is A-SS and one in W-SS, did exist, that is if a A-SS officer got a reserve commission in Waffen. For example Dr. Joachim Cäsar who is mentioned in Burgundy was an SS-Oberführer in A-SS (promoted in 1939) and was a Fachführer in Waffen-SS as agricultural expert before switching to a reserve commission,

his final rank was SS-Obersturmbannführer d.R. he held a rank in both branches, but as with everyone else, he had active rank only in one.

A good example of a transferee would be Hermann Fegelein, he was SS-Standartenführer der A-SS between 1937 and 1942, in the meanwhile in 1940 he joined Waffen as a SS-Obersturmbannführer d.R. and finally switched to active Waffen-SS service in 1942, he was given a Waffen commission as a SS-Standartenführer der W-SS which overrides both of his previous commissions, he wouldn't get further reserve officer promotions because he wasn't a reserve officer anymore, he was in active W-SS service, and the fact he transferred to W-SS meant he wouldn't get A-SS ranks anymore, because he doesn't serve in it.

It was impossible for an SS officer to be in active service in 2 places, he couldn't be a functionary in RuSHA and also an officer in RSD. At most one could be a member of SD while working full time in Gestapo or Kripo, but his SD membership would be in that case honorary, and wouldn't require him to do actual work for it. The only well-known exception (but not really) would be Josef Dietrich, he was a general in the W-SS from the start of the war, but remained (he was appointed in late 1933) Führer of SS-Oberabschnitt "Spree" (that is A-SS territorial command in Berlin and Brandenburg regions). However he didn't perform duties of this office since at least 1938 and other A-SS officers were substitute (acting) Führers of SS-Oa. "Spree" (Paul Moder and Max Schneller).

Now that we've handled the base SS rank we should cover other ranks that can be attached to it. First we will cover officers below generals (that is all below Brigadeführer). There were 2 sorts of rank that one would attach to his SS rank, those of SiPo and those of OrPo. Kripo and Gestapo had the same ranks, and they would use their professional ranks, not SS ranks, but in SS papers and such they would appear with both. In this case it would look something like this SS-Hauptsturmführer und Kriminalrat. In OrPo in case the officer is also SS officer, which was relatively rare except for Generals, it would be SS-Hauptsturmführer und Hauptmann der Polizei (instead of "der Polizei" the exact branch of service could be placed, so "der Schutzpolizei" or "der Gendarmerie").

For generals there were 2 possible additions, Police rank (which police didn't matter, all had the same general ranks) and Waffen-SS rank. During 1941 standardization of ranks was implemented, and thus a promotion in General's main branch of service instantly meant he would get an equivalent SS rank, since 1942 all promotions within General ranks had dual commission with equivalent ranks in SS (which was effectively honorary) and their main branch of service, previously it was possible to first be promoted in native branch of service and only later receive equivalent SS rank. Combination of both Police and W-SS ranks was also possible, thus giving 4 rank combinations for SS generals, this will be demonstrated on a Brigadeführer:

- 1) SS-Brigadeführer (honorary rank or service not connected to either Police or Waffen)
- 2) SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Polizei (Police General's rank)
- 3) SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS (Waffen-SS General's rank)
- 4) SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS und der Polizei (combination)

Foreign generals had a prefix "Waffen-" instead of "SS-", the rest of the rank was the same, as mentioned before they always only served in W-SS, so the rank was as follows:

Waffen-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS

The last possibility is when somebody is allowed to wear a uniform of a rank they don't actually hold. This was by far most common with Police Presidents, that is a position basically equivalent

to Police Commissioner in the US, a civilian manager of a police agency in larger cities. Since this appointment was political, many Police Presidents weren't actual policemen, but were SS members, but due to their position they were allowed to wear police general uniform but weren't actually given a police general ranks, so their rank would look like this:

SS-Brigadeführer m. d. U. d. Generalmajor der Polizei

"m.d.U.d." meaning "mit der Uniform der" or "with the Uniform of". Same thing was possible with a Waffen-SS uniform, but was much more rare. Wolf-Heinrich Graf von Helldorff is perhaps a best example of a "m.d.U.d.", altho he was never an SS member, that is a wikipedia myth, he wore a uniform of a full Police General, which is similar to a W-SS uniform, which is where the confusion might come from. He was in the SA, with the rank of SA-Obergruppenführer m.d.U.d. General der Polizei. "m.d.U.d."-ers were generally honorary SS members and many joined following their appointments for a free rank, as SS rank was a prestigious thing back then, and also, more importantly, high SS rank, as well as high ranks in party and other affiliates held by civil servants, provided them de facto with extra protections from being fired or transferred.

Now, I said before that an SS officer can't be in two services at once, yet here we are seeing that the generals could have both a Police and Waffen rank, so what is going on?

There were two groups of people that held these dual ranks;

- 1) Career Police Generals who took command of the Waffen-SS Police Division mentioned before, they could even be appointed as Corps commanders in W-SS. The division had many commanding officers during its existence and since it belonged to the Police and to the W-SS, the Police General in charge would get W-SS rank on top of his SS/Police rank.
- 2) The other group who got dual ranks de facto actually didn't serve in either branch. This group was the HSSPFs, or Higher SS and Police Leaders and Führers of SS-Oberabschnitt. Since their duties as HSSPFs made them nominally in charge of the police in their area they got full police ranks (in reality they were not in command of the police, and OrPo retained its own structure comprised of career police officers, only in occupied areas did HSSPFs actually have operational command of police units, as they were used in partisan warfare). This was the state of affairs until June/July 1944. After Allies landed in France, Allied POWs started arriving in POW camps. POW camps were placed nominally under the control of HSSPFs after the July plot. Thus Himmler gave equivalent Waffen-SS ranks to many high and mid ranking SS security officials, including almost all HSSPFs in June/July/August 1944 to conform with the Geneva convention rule that only military officers were allowed to be in charge of POWs, as well as to allow them to issue orders to Wehrmacht officers actually in control of the POW camps. As the war was coming closer to German soil, these new ranks also allowed HSSPFs to command ad-hoc military units, and made them count as military POWs if captured.

Vast majority, if not all people who did not fall under one of these two groups, had a rank appropriate for their service only.

Regarding the dual Police and W-SS rank; originally the order in which Polizei and W-SS was placed depicted the base branch of service of the person in question, so for example the two or three HSSPFs who held dual ranks before late summer '44, as well as the Police Generals who

formerly commanded the Police Division would have their rank as "Generalmajor der Polizei und Waffen-SS" instead of the other way around. However some time between February and November 1944 this was dropped and Waffen-SS would always be listed before Polizei in the person's rank. I don't know if the SS Personnel Main Office found it difficult to track the ranks now because of mass issuing of W-SS ranks to HSSPFs or if there was some proper reason for dropping this way or doing it, but anyhow neither in books nor in late war documents would this original method be used to show the dual rank.

Generals of Waffen-SS

I'd like to briefly touch upon Generals of Waffen-SS and their terrible relations with Himmler. While Waffen-SS was imagined by some (namely Theodor Eicke) as an army led by political officers, not the "despicable" professionals, in reality, as we have seen, Himmler needed actual trained officers to make him an army, WW1 NCOs like Josef Dietrich weren't gonna cut it, and neither were mere WW1 soldiers like Eicke. These officers, amongst them most prominent being Felix Steiner, Herbert Gille, Paul Hausser, Wilhelm Bittrich, Walter Krüger and Georg Keppler formed the actual core of Waffen-SS Officer Corps. They all held pro-Wehrmacht and anti-Himmler views and wore the SS runes either because they retired from the Army and saw the W-SS as a force in which they can attain further ranks and prestige quickly, or because they disagreed with still relatively old school pre-war Officer Corps of the Wehrmacht, so they joined SS-VT pre-war. Amongst these the worst "offenders" were Bittrich and Steiner, to some extent Gille as well. Bittrich refused to leave the church, and in fact posted Church Mass times on the announcement boards in his units; he was dismissed by Himmler following D-Day, but simply refused because his Wehrmacht superior (and Waffen-SS was under Wehrmacht's command in wartime) supported him staying in command of his formation. His treatment of Allied POWs was also above average even for Wehrmacht standards, British paratroopers not only received medical attention, but chocolate and brandy as well, while in other formations they might have been shot as commandos. He was also involved with the Rommel/Speidel resistance circle in France. Steiner was no better; he refused to leave the Church and refused to marry (a must for an SS officer of mid-high rank), he signed orders as General Steiner, as a Wehrmacht general would, and refused to use his SS rank even after practise of using Wehrmacht equivalent rank was banned by Himmler in 1941, and Himmler personally requested he use SS rank. He was also aware of the July 20th Plot, Fritz-Dietlof Graf von der Schulenburg was his old friend and he had gone to meet him in Berlin during his leave time from the front, where he was informed about the plans, altho they weren't entirely developed at that point. These examples however define the older generation of officers, who had risen to become Generals in W-SS during the war, or shortly before it, but those aren't the only officers who wore the SS runes, and the soldiers of W-SS often didn't follow in the examples of these officers, especially early on when majority of the men had been pre-war SS-VT or SS-T-Standarten, they were fanatical and political. As the war dragged on, and as more and more new (forced) volunteers and even conscripts joined the ranks of W-SS, the fanaticism of its troops and their faith in Hitler was considerably reduced however.

Broadly speaking, taking their leadership as examples, one can group the men of the Waffen-SS in four categories. There were such officers as Theodor Eicke, altho extremely

unpopular except with his own troops, Eicke epitomized several characteristics of some Waffen-SS men, particularly brutality and aggressiveness in combat. Among these "butchers", alongside Eicke, one could place Friedrich-Wilhelm Krüger, a commander of "Nord" division, who had earlier been HSSPF in Generalgouvernement from 1939 to 1943, before he switched to Waffen-SS after being dismissed (while appointments of security officials in Waffen positions was rare, it was common for security officials who had been dismissed or disgraced to be sent to W-SS, of course with much lower ranks (either as reserve officers or straight up demotions)). Heydrich's former subordinate Bruno Streckenbach, who had commanded the second Latvian SS Division, could also be counted in this group, Streckenbach served a head of Amt I in RSHA, and expected to be promoted to Chief of SiPo and SD, yet Kalten got the post and he left RSHA for W-SS.

The second category includes professional officers of the old school (not in terms of tactics, but in terms of behavior), these are men mentioned above; Bittrich, Hausser, Steiner, Gille, etc.

The third class are the foreign volunteers, such as Artur Phleps, Voldemārs Veiss, and of course Léon Degrelle. Phleps joined for opportunistic reasons, as he was an officer in multiple armies and a capable commander, he had a guaranteed position as W-SS's top general in the Balkans. The rest joined as political collaborators who fought out of fascist/nazi/fierce anti-communist conviction, or volunteers who believed they were fighting for their country, or good post-war position in case of Nazi victory.

Last group were younger men who couldn't not achieve rank and glamor nearly as quickly in the Wehrmacht and so gave Waffen a shot. These include Theodor Wisch, who assumed command of LSSAH at only 37. Or Otto Kumm, who was only 36 at the end of the war, he commanded the "Prinz Eugen" Division. Fritz Witt, who was killed by naval gunfire while commanding "Hitlerjugend" Division, and had previously commanded a LSSAH battlegroup in Russia, or "hero of Belgrade" Fritz Klingenberg. After the invasion of Russia, he was appointed commander of the officer training school at Bad Tolz, where he himself had trained. In 1945 he was given command of "Götz von Berlichingen" Division and was killed in action a few days before the end of the war.

Dietrich really falls into no category. Uneducated and bluntly outspoken, he had really very little idea of military command and owed his success to his early support of Hitler. While he wore the SS uniform, he didn't care much for Himmler, as he would always have support from Hitler had he needed it. So he did what he wanted, during the pre-war period it was said that Himmler's authority ended where the entrance to Berlin-Lichterfelde barracks started (in which LSSAH was stationed). He wasn't fit for command of a unit larger than a regiment and relied on his professional military staff, and senior officers of his units to do the actual work. Bittrich once said post-war: "I once spent an hour and a half trying to explain a situation to Sepp Dietrich with the aid of a map. It was quite useless. He understood nothing at all."

Germanic SS

The main source for this chapter is:

Uniforms of the SS, Volume 2 - Germanische-SS (Germanic SS), 1940-1945; Hugh Page Taylor; Windrow Greene (1991)

Which is really the only book that covers Germanic SS in some detail, despite the name suggesting its just uniforms, the majority of the content in the book is general history of Germanic SS.

Germanic SS is a very complicated and under-researched topic. The first thing people think of is Germanic Waffen-SS units, but in fact these had nothing to do with Germanic SS. Units and formations of Waffen-SS have something to do only with Waffen-SS and they are not influenced or connected to any outside organization, be it HJ, Latvian Self-Administration, Ukrainian Central Committee or any other such organization which helped in recruitment.

Germanic SS was an Allgemeine-SS copy in other countries, its functions and the way it operated are the same as A-SS in Germany.

It was comprised of part-time volunteers who formed local Sturmbann (battalion) formations which in turn formed Standarten, which were in turn subordinate to the territorial divisions. It was run by part-time or full-time functionaries in its own departments, which were similar to departments of SS-Hauptamt before the 1939/40 reform of SS-HA. They each had a leader and a chief of staff, but were also subordinate to local German-appointed HSSPF. Each had its own ranks, which were the same as SS ranks but in native language (except in Danish Germanic SS, we will talk about that one later, it's different then the rest). The only difference is that in some of them (all but Dutch SS) the higher ranks didn't exist. For example in Flemish SS, Brigadeleider was the highest rank, it was the same rank as a German Brigadeführer, there simply was no option for a promotion beyond it, as it was deemed that due to its small size Flemish SS doesn't need a higher rank.

(On a side note; as I think I mentioned before, SS ranks were largely tied to a person's function. So a function had a rank or ranks that "should" fill it, and typically a person who is newly appointed to X function, would have held a function that "should" be filled by one lower rank before the new appointment. Thus he would be under-ranked for the function in the first few months, until a promotion arrives, after which point he would never or really rarely be appointed to another function that "should" be filled by a lower rank. Thus a promotion in the SS didn't just increase a person's rank, but it also increased the level at which this person works; he had advanced to the next level in the SS. This was just the general rule, it wasn't always respected, but it was really rare for a person to be appointed to functions that are intended for an officer two or three steps up or down the rank chain)

Anyhow. There were 4 Germanic SSs, 3 proper ones and 1 odd one. The three proper ones were Germaansche-SS (in) Vlaanderen (Flanders), Germaansche-SS in Nederland (Holland) and Germanske-SS Norge (Norway); the odd one was SS-Schalburgkorps in Denmark. Note that originally, these were called Algemeene-SS Vlaanderen, Algemeene SS in

Nederland, and Norges SS, but then in 1942 all were renamed to follow the established formula [Germanic-SS (in) [insert country]].

Ranks in Germanic SS were accepted in German SS (altho nobody called it that, it was just the SS), and its officers were included in SS Seniority Lists (officer lists). There is some confusion around SS numbers, namely it seems Danes never received them, while in the other three there were both native number sequences and general SS numbers, but it's unclear what determines if a person is going to get a number in German SS or their own SS.

The uniforms of Germanic SS were black uniforms formerly worn by A-SS, but they had their own insignia and stuff added to them. As with German A-SS officers, they could hold a reserve commission in Waffen-SS, but those were exactly the same as German ones, because there was only one Waffen-SS.

The Germanic SS in Norway was the smallest, it never formed a single Standard during its existence, the largest was Dutch one with 6 Standarten (5 normal ones and 1 for police officers) and then the Flemish one with 3, SS in Denmark one was organized a little differently.

Each of these published its own newspapers, and had its own source of income in the form of "Supporting members" or "Aiding Members" (this also existed in normal SS). These were men who for whatever reason didn't want to join the SS, but wanted to support it, so they gave SS money instead (however much they wanted, the minimum was 1 Reichsmark per year in Germany, as 1 [insert native currency] in Germanic SS). Two out of 4 Germanic SSs were officially (altho none in reality) formations of their native nazi parties (Dutch and Norwegian), while the other two (Danish and Flemish) were independent organizations. SS itself was of course a "division" of NSDAP, but on paper only.

Before 1939/40 SS-Hauptamt, or SS Main Office was the HQ of SS, however at this point it was reorganized and many of its parts were split to form new Main Offices. (Inspectorate of SS-VT alongside officer training departments, SS-VT medical department and a few others went on to form SS-FHA, Concentration Camp Inspectorate was added to SS-WVHA, as were welfare and supply departments, etc.). What was left of SS-HA, now under Berger, was mainly in charge of recruitment and replacement for Waffen-SS, but also Germanic SS. Amtsgruppe D [Office Group D] of SS-HA was in charge of recruitment, education and supervising of Germanic SS.

Germaansche-SS in Nederland

I will only briefly touch upon each branch of the Germanic SS, starting with the largest, the Dutch Germanic SS. It was created much like the German SS, from the NSB leader's guard, the "Mussert-Garde" formed in 1939. Its leader, Johannes Feldmeijer, became the Voorman or leader of Dutch SS. (Note that leader of Germanic SS is an appointment, not a rank, together with the appointment, came a special set of collar tabs that the leader wore, but he anyhow held a normal rank in his (and thus also German) SS, in the case of Feldmeijer, he was SS-Standartenführer in A-SS (sometimes listed as Standartenführer in Germanic SS, but there is no difference) and also SS-Hauptsturmführer d.R. (in W-SS, as he had served two tours on the front and was an officer of the Dutch Army in the 30s). On May 17th, 1942 Massert formally handed the Dutch SS over to Himmler, its men swore an oath to Hitler now, described in it as

Germanic Führer, yet it still formally remained part of NSB and officially subordinate to Van Geelkerken as Inspector of all NSB para-military formations.

During the war many members were pressed into service in Waffen-SS, so to some extent Dutch SS acted more as a recruitment organization than as A-SS in Holland; nevertheless it had 6,127 members in its last published register. It was led by its own equivalent of Reichsführung-SS, called *Staleiding der Germaansche SS in Nederland* (Staff Leadership of Germanic SS in Netherlands) which consisted of the following offices:

Training; Organization; Welfare: Soldier & Genealogy; Sport Leadership; Personnel; Legal Section; Administration; Aiding Members; Medical Services; Acceptance of Aspirants; Education; Radio; Press and Propaganda.

Also attached to Staff Leadership was "Germanic Research Association Netherlands".

Dutch SS is the only one which started integrating police into its ranks, as did the SS proper. Commander of SS-Politie-Standaard was SS-Onderstormleider Broersen, who was also Plenipotentiary for reorganization of the Dutch Police. Yet, despite its size, being the largest Germanic SS, and its (slow) integration of police, none of this is to say that SS gained much influence in the RK Nederland due to its existence. The SS had long lost the battle over the RK administration to Bormannites.

Germaansche-SS (in) Vlaanderen

Formed at some point in 1940, it was originally very small and formed 1 Standard of which all members were a part of (1. SS-Standaard Vlaanderen). Men over age of 35 were assigned to their own version of SS Reserve called originally SS-Militie (SS Militia) but later renamed Vlaanderen-Korps, its members had prefix "FK-" instead of "SS-" before their rank (FK being from the German version of the name Flandern-Korps).

Altho Germanic SS in Flanders remained an independent organization during its existence, it was closely tied with DeVlag, a Flemish Nazi organization of which Gottlob Berger was made President (while the real man in charge, Van de Wiele, was made "Landesleiter" in Flanders). As many men of the Flemish SS went to fight in Waffen-SS, its membership was reduced drastically, and DeVlag became the main SS-sponsored organization in Flanders. In May 1944 DeVlag and Flemish SS were merged to form Sicherheitskorps (Security Corps), but Belgium was soon afterwards liberated by the Allies.

Original commander of Flemish SS was René Lagrou, he was replaced in early 1941, as he went to fight in W-SS, with Jozef de Langhe, but he too joined W-SS and its possible that Raf van Halse was its next leader until late 1942 when he was succeeded by Jef François.

Only the 1st Standard actually properly existed, the other two existed more or less only on paper, due to constant recruitment for W-SS. The total number of members of the Germanic SS in Flanders was 3,5k in mid 1944. 500 of these were in the Flemish Corps, of the rest 1660 were serving in Waffen-SS, and further 1k in other German organizations outside of Flanders, only 399 members were in Flanders at this point of which 98 were probationary members. Flemish SS had its own youth organization, Youth Front, but it was small and overshadowed by DeVlag's Hitlerjeugd Vlaanderen (Flemish Hitler Youth). The HQ of the Flemish SS was in Antwerp.

As with other Germanic SSs Flemish SS men wore black uniforms. And as with other SSs, Aiding members existed. By late 1944 Flemish SS ceased to exist.

Germanske-SS Norge

The Norwegian SS was in the making since the start of the occupation, however Quisling was strongly against it and delayed the efforts significantly. Finally HSSPF in Norway, alongside Himmler and Terboven (not because he liked SS, but because he didn't like Quisling) succeeded in organizing the Norwegian SS in May 1941. Its men had been drawn from Hird which was Nasjonal Samling's SA equivalent. Some Norwegians had already volunteered for service in Waffen-SS and together with the Danes served in the "Nordland" regiment, which was incorporated into the "Wiking" division.

Leader of Norwegian SS was a cabinet minister and Chief of Police, Jonas Lie, to whom Himmler gave the rank of SS-standartfører (note that Norwegian SS ranks didn't have first letter capitalized as did all other SS ranks). He was possibly later promoted to SS-nestbrigadefører which was the Norwegian version of Oberführer, which would make him the highest ranking officer in any Germanic SS. Lie and Terboven had known each other long before the war, and he was neither a member of Nasjonal Samling nor liked by Quisling, which all helped him get the position. Even so, the Norwegian SS was an organization of Nasjonal Samling, on paper at least. In reality recruitment was done behind Quisling's back and in defiance of his various orders trying to limit it, there was little crossover in membership, as Norwegian SS tried to find men not associated with Quisling and Quisling told his loyalists not to join the SS; despite this Norwegian SS continued to grow due to backing by Lie's State Police and large parts of German occupational authorities.

Upon German declaration of War against USSR, a Norwegian Volunteer SS Legion was formed ("Den norske Legion") in which many Norwegian SS men served for a tour at the front, including Lie himself, who achieved the rank of Sturmabführer d.R. in Waffen-SS.

On February 1st, 1942 Quisling became Minister-President of Norway, he was no longer just a leader of a collab party, but now a leader of a country (at least partially), this increase in power also allowed him to assert himself more over the SS in Norway, while he also became less rejecting towards it as well. He issued a Party Order on July 21st, 1942 that made clear guidelines for recruitment and laid out the position of Germanic SS in Norway within Nasjonal Samling. All new members must have been either:

- 1) male members of the Nasjonal Samling
- 2) Norwegian citizens who served at least one year in Waffen-SS or the Volunteer Legion
- 3) Norwegian citizens who don't fulfill either category but their application is approved by the General Secretariat of the Nasjonal Samling

And also be between 17 and 40 years of age and no less than 170cm tall. Their duties as part-time members of Norwegian version of A-SS were to train with their local SS-Storm during off-hours each Wednesday evening and every second Sunday.

The same decree also renamed the organization from "Norges SS" to "Germanske SS Norge" and made it an independent subdivision of the Nasjonal Samling, directly subordinate to Fører thereof while also being a subdivision of Greater Germanic SS [sic!]. Cross membership between paramilitary groups of the Nasjonal Samling was banned, but exceptions existed.

As the war went on Norwegian SS was more and more used to provide recruits for Waffen-SS, in March 1943 it provided some men for "Norge" regiment, although as was typical this regiment was also composed mostly of men who were not members of their native SS. On March 13th, 1943 Olaf Lindvig was appointed Deputy Leader of the Germanic SS in Norway. In August 1943 (the law was passed either on the 16th or the 14th) Norwegian SS, alongside Hird, the Police and Quisling's bodyguard became part of "Norwegian Armed Forces".

A report from September 30th, 1944 says total membership in Norwegian SS was 1,247 at the time of which only 161 men were actually performing their A-SS type duties, as 330 were at the front, 245 in the police and 511 in emergency units (armed guard formations and such). On top of this there were 3,422 Aiding Members and 9,137 subscribers to Norwegian SS's newspaper "Germaneren".

Sverre Riisnæs replaced Lie as head of SS in Norway on January 1st, 1945; he was supposed to be replaced much earlier, but for an unknown reason it took until January for that to actually happen. Riisnæs was possibly promoted to SS-standartfører, he was SS-neststandartfører in 1943 (that is the Norwegian version of Obersturmbannführer). Leif Schjøren replaced Lindvig as Chief of Staff (Stabsleder G.SS.N.) and Deputy Leader when the latter went to serve in Waffen-SS in 1943, on March 1st, 1945 Lindvig took the post again.

Germanic SS in Norway also had its own offices, as did all the others, in G.SS.N. they were called sections; and these sections existed in the Hovedstaben, that is HQ Staff of GSSN in 1943 was as follows:

Press & Propaganda; Organization Section; Economics Section; Personnel Section; Staff Doctor; Sport Leader; Administration Leader; Culture & Radio; Legal Consultant; Germanen & School Journals; Aiding Members; Norwegian Riding School and SS-School (there were 3; SS-Skole Elverum, SS-Skole Kongsvinger Festning, SS-Rideskole)

By 1945 the organization had shrunk in size due to the war and recruitment of GSSN men into Waffen-SS. Sections that existed in 1945 were these:

Organization Section; Personnel Section; Economics Section; Staff Doctor; Sport Leader; Administration Leader; Reception; Germaneren and SS-School.

As mentioned before Norwegian SS had no Standart, its largest unit was SS-Stormbann Oslo-Akershus, which was its only Stormbann formed from merging SS-Storm Oslo and SS-Storm Akershus.

The smallest unit of GSSN was a Rode, which consisted of 3 men; 3 Rode were formed in a Lag, which had 9 men; 3 or 4 (in practice always 3) Lag formed a Tropp; 3 or 4 Tropp formed a Storm, which was the basic unit of GSSN, in theory 2-4 Storm should have formed a Stormbann, but only one existed with 2 Storm. There were probably 17 Storm, including the two in Stormbann Oslo-Akershus.

GSSN lasted until the end of the war. Lie consumed more akevitt than was good for him, for it induced a heart-attack and he died of malarial shock. Quisling refused to flee or commit suicide, he was put on trial and shot in 1945

SS-Schalburgkorps/Germanische SS (in) Dänemark

Schalburgkorps was a Danish branch of the Germanic SS, but because Denmark was an independent state and they didn't like SS much, it was more Danish than is typical of a

Germanic SS, in order to attract Danes. They used danish army ranks, not SS ranks (altho later they were also used, it seems in German, not Danish), and they were not part of Danish nazi party, which Germans considered a failure, and it was established only in 1943 after the "peaceful occupation" ended.

It was named after the commander of Frikorps Danmark (Danish volunteer unit on the Eastern Front), Christian Frederik von Schalburg (born Konstantin Fedorovitch Schalburg) who died on the eastern front in 1942 and had a kinda cult of personality around him. Born and raised in Russia, where he attended cadet school, he was half Danish (mixed Danish and Baltic German) and half Russian, both sides were from noble families. He left Russia for Denmark during WW1 and married a German (noble)woman, and when Nazis came he helped organize the unit (he had been an active Danish Nazi since the 30s).

Anyhow, the Korps was formed as Germanic Corps, but was renamed to Schalburg Corps because the W-SS formation III (Germanic) SS Panzer Corps was created around the same time. It started out as a sort of Danish Allgemeine-SS, with both a part-time paramilitary component and a political/propaganda component, but then the political branch was formed into separate organization, but it failed, so it was reformed, but now under a different dude, and then it was merged back, but then the part-time paramilitary branch broke away, but instead a barracked pre-war SS-VT style unit was formed.

It also had its own intelligence organization, kinda like SD, called ET, but then ET became an independent organization under the control of (German) SS commander for Denmark (HSSPF). And the hole thing might have been renamed into "Germanische SS (in) Dänemark", but maybe not, we don't know, researchers can hardly find good info on it in late '44/45 period But the thing is the whole organization kinda backfired for SS, as it was quite anti-German, not like that they didn't like Germans or Nazis, but they were politically anti-German because they were fierce Danish nationalists and wanted strong Denmark as a sister-state to Germany, not Denmark under German rule. They were also not very popular with the Danish government (and when I say not very popular I mean Danes asked for it to be disbanded at least once, maybe twice) So in the end it was effectively a danish SS-Verfügungstruppe regiment, but it started as a Danish Germanic SS.

Its Corps Chief was Knud Børge Martinsen, the position of Chief of Staff existed, held by certain Svend Birkedal-Hansen, but it was later abolished. It was also organized in sections; the following existed:

Political Consultants; Propaganda Section; Department for Schooling and Worldview; Personnel Section; Department for Training and Regulations; HQ Commandant; Administration Leader; Department for Racial Questions and Information Service (ET).

The SS in TNO

The issue of bad personnel choices

There are plenty of Ls to be taken for people who made personnel choices around Europe for SS leaders in the mod. The Kaiserreich Russia issue (nobody changing positions after 2 decades) is very much present here as well, not only is that absolutely impossible for an organization that had very short appointments and constant personnel shifts, but the SS coup seems to have had no impact either. Retirement age also seems to not exist. As mentioned before Police Generals retired at 56 at the latest, the general SS retirement age for high-ranking officers was 60, with possible extensions of few years. Obviously IRL, as per the law, retirement age was suspended during wartime unless the person in question requested retirement, which was possible, but seldom done for reasons of honor and patriotism.

By far the worst situation is in the East with people seemingly not moving back to Germany at all, even if they came back during the war IRL. It has to be understood that appointments to the East were no different from any other, and were in their nature temporary, it's simply hilarious to use the people who went to the East during the war IRL as officials in the East 20 years later. And if you are now thinking "well it would be dumb to just send someone who didn't go to the East IRL to the East" then exactly the opposite is true, it would only make sense to do so, as these deployments are temporary and thus people who haven't gone there would go there over time and personnel who went there during the war would come back.

Apart from this, there seems to be no consideration for honorary SS or part-time SS membership, as men like Backe, Hanke, Conti, etc. who are used in various tags were honorary members of the SS and thus not eligible for appointments requiring full-time work in the SS.

There are also nonsense transfers between branches of the SS, difference of Waffen-SS, A-SS or SS-TV is not understood, SS officers who never had Waffen rank are seen as generals and vice-versa, men like Fritz Klingenberg who were only ever Waffen-SS officers are seen in charge of A-SS formations like SS-Oberabschnitt Westfalen (which didn't exist btw, it was called just SS-Oberabschnitt West).

The situation with SS-TV is even worse, SS-TV officers are present in wide range of position entirely outside of Totenkopfverbände, and then there are also some weird picks, like Kaltenbrunner leading a concentration camp city (which would be impossible as he would outrank the Führer of SS-TV, who was at most a Gruppenführer and he couldn't be W-SS city garrison commander as that was a post for mid-ranking officers and Kaltenbrunner wasn't in W-SS at all in active service capacity) and Eichmann, an SD officer working in Gestapo is apparently Führer of SS-TV, which is odd, as men in the Inspectorate leadership were picked from SS-TV officer corps.

I don't think separation of services is hard to understand, you couldn't put a random Sheriff as Chairman of Joint Chiefs in US, the same way you can't put a Camp Commandant as HSSPF or Waffen-SS general and be like "but it's been 20 years", it's not that I don't like the picks for some of these posts, its that those picks are not possible (not in any way trying to compare US police with SS-TV, it was just an example). The only transfers from SS-TV to other services are from SS-TV to W-SS, but that is already done. Those officers that transferred from

camp staff to SS-T-Standarten or joined SS-T-Standarten from the start and then transferred to W-SS when SS-T-Standarten were abolished have already been transferred back in 1939/40.

It's not like there is a shortage of SS officers to use for W-SS and A-SS; appointments should be kept within the person's branch of service, a 40 or 50 year old SS officer isn't going to switch service, perhaps a 20-30 year old could, but there is almost always a better pick available. It's different for normal soldiers, in theory regular members of A-SS (who are all part-timers performing training or parade guarding from time to time) could be drafted into W-SS or SS-TV, but this sort of forced reassignment was seldom used after 1933/34 for them, because it reduced quality of the troops, instead volunteers were sought, and if there weren't any, pressure would be to use to get some, altho by that point when volunteers were sought en-mass (1942-43) most men of A-SS had already been called for service in Wehrmacht or had joined W-SS on their own, as they were in prime group (18-35 and in peak physical condition) to be called up to take arms.

There also is, but shouldn't be, a weird mix of commands and formations. Here too a clear split of services should be enforced. An officer of the A-SS couldn't issue orders to an officer of W-SS, he can try, but they are not going to be respected. The same goes for Wehrmacht, but there the A-SS officer wouldn't even try, as it would cause embarrassment when the Wehrmacht officers start laughing.

For example HSSPF Ost (in General Government) at one point started issuing orders to a SS-VT Regiment stationed in his territory, only to get a reply that they are not under his command and that he should request their services via Berlin. Actually this would be true of the East too, Jeckeln wouldn't have command over Waffen-SS there, but if this was enforced, their whole paths would collapse, so some things will have to be overlooked.

The orders in the SS worked the same as they do in Wehrmacht, each person, each officer, everyone, has their superior officer or institution and they take orders from them. A commander of let's say 6th Army can't go to an Army Corps commander serving in the 4th Panzer Army and start ordering around, those officers would politely tell him that they have their own superior and he should go to him. Of course in reality an officer that reached Generalship or such higher command wouldn't even try and he would know this very well. Borrowing of units from other commands in the Wehrmacht was very common, but done in agreement between both superior officers. In SS this was rarer and borrowing units from other branches of service was even more rare and only happened in exceptionally desperate situations, after all A-SS doesn't have standing units, its men are members of a unit, but that unit doesn't exist 24/7, there are no unspecified unmarked "SS units" wearing black as in the movies, each has a specific branch of service and is under its own specific command.

There is no unity of command in SS, as there couldn't be unity of command in any organization that includes stuff from furniture companies to intelligence services to military frontline units, just because a guy outranks another guy, this doesn't mean he has authority over him, I don't think this needs further explaining, its literally how this stuff works anywhere, a NY City Police Commissioner has no business ordering 101st Airborne what to do, just because in Nazi German equivalents of both wear SS runes on their collars doesn't mean this is any different.

The Murder Squads (Einsatzgruppen)(20)

The Einsatzgruppen of SiPo and SD, as mentioned before, were formations of SiPo and SD, and later of wherever personnel could be found that were hastily organized for the task of securing Army rear areas, originally in Austria (Einsatzkommando Österreich under Prof. Dr. Franz Six), Sudetenland (Einsatzgruppe I "Dresden" under Heinz Jost & Einsatzgruppe II "Wien" under Dr. Walter Stahlecker), rest of Czechoslovakia (Einsatzgruppe I "Böhmen" under Dr. Dr. Otto Rasch & Einsatzgruppe II "Mähren" under Dr. Walter Stahlecker) and in Poland, they were mobile armed police squads whose main task was to arrest people based on pre-made lists, yet soon, already in Poland, their task became murder, and after August 1941, it included liquidation of Soviet Jewry, party functionaries, NKVD personnel and partisans. They were independent militarized units of the Security Police, directly under the command of the Chief of SiPo and SD. RSHA officers sent to lead them received basic military training before going East if they didn't have it already. They were by nature temporary, ad-hoc, single-use formations which were disbanded after they reached their designated location and their task was completed, and were converted into regular SiPo-SD commands (25).

In 1939 seven small (200-350 men) numbered (I, II, III, IV, V, VI and z.b.V.) Einsatzgruppen were raised for the Polish campaign, personnel were mostly from SiPo, SD and one group was made of elements of various OrPo battalions transferred temporarily to Einsatzgruppen. Their task in Poland had been to secure and pacify the region and conduct arrests of people whose names were on the Special Warrant Book for Poland, but they also oversaw deportation of Jews from countryside to cities, identified and seized Jewish-owned businesses and fought Polish Army remnants and stragglers. As well as this they had participated in the liquidation of the Polish elite, the vast majority of deaths caused by the Einsatzgruppen (in the range of 20k) in Poland were of Poles (as part of liquidation of Polish elite), with only a minority of those shot being Jews. Jews were instead deported to ghettos from where they were sent to extermination camps in the following years). The Einsatzgruppen in Poland were all disbanded on November 20th, 1939 and the personnel were used to form SiPo-SD commands in new territories, EG I became KdS Krakau and so on.

Einsatzgruppe Norwegen was raised in 1940 for Norway with about 200 men, under Stahlecker. It was disbanded quickly after the invasion and Stahlecker became first BdS Norwegen. This was a common pattern, in Czechia, Rasch became first BdS Prag, followed by Stahlecker, and it will continue in Russia.

For the Soviet Union new Einsatzgruppen were raised, this time they were considerably larger and had a much larger task, they were A (900-1000 men), B (665 men), C (700-800 men) and D (650 men), each with affiliated subunits. Their task again was to secure areas taken by the army, alongside these duties they started the liquidation of Soviet Jewry, from July until August they mainly shot Jewish males of military age and from August onwards they murdered all Soviet Jews they found. Alongside Jews, Einsatzgruppen also fought partisans and participated in pacification operations. The Einsatzgruppen consisted of staff and HQ and multiple Einsatzkommandos which were actually doing the dirty work, while staff and HQ were handling administration, supply, coordination, etc. On average Einsatzgruppen had to cover areas of 300 to 400 square kilometers with about 500 men. What is called the first sweep in Holocaust research was the most murderous period of Einsatzgruppen deployment in Russia

and lasted while the EGs were on the move, until the winter of 1941 set in. The second sweep was in 1942 and consisted of liquidation of Ghettos for Soviet Jews, mainly in Ukraine and Belarus set up by the Germans the previous year, by that point 2 of the 4 EG didn't exist as mobile units anymore and native auxiliaries were more properly organized and used extensively. In 1941 native auxiliaries were primarily active in the Baltics where anti-Soviet sentiment was very high, as was anti-semitism and where anti-Soviet partisans were already active and organized, the Germans let them murder the Jews for them. In Lithuania, for example, where anti-semitism was particularly high, the native murder squads did about half the killing.

Einsatzgruppe A and C were converted into BdS commands in late 1941, Stahlecker became BdS Ostland and Max Thomas became simultaneously BdS Ukraine and commander of EG C, the commander of the Gruppe while it was on the move has been Rasch, who was an SD officer, unlike Thomas who was a policeman, but Rasch had the required ruthlessness for the first sweep. EG A and C both technically continued to exist until the end of the war, as neither in Ostland or in Ukraine the Germans occupied all of the intended territory, so a few Einsatzkommando remained waiting for those lands to be conquered attached to the Rear Areas of Armies on the front, some of these were abolished after the Second Sweep.

Einsatzgruppe B, intended for Moskowien, was only made stationary in Nov. 1943 following the reorganization of HSSPF Russland-Mitte, and became its BdS command as BdS Minsk, tho it was short-lived.

Einsatzgruppe D, the smallest one, it was intended for the Caucaus, and had been commanded by Ohlendorf from June 1941 to July 1942, it was first EG to be fully disbanded in March 1943 and was converted into a full-time partisan fighting unit, as a Kampfgruppe which was itself soon disbanded. BdS Ukraine and with it Einsatzgruppe C were disbanded in March 1944, BdS Minsk was disbanded in July, and EG B briefly reactivated and then soon abolished in August 1944 and BdS Ostland and with it EG A remained in existence basically until the Red Army pushed the Germans out of the USSR and were disbanded in October 1944.

In total the Einsatzgruppen alone had killed about 900k people in both sweeps, half of whom were killed by Einsatzgruppe A and its auxiliaries.

Einsatzgruppen however, have absolutely no reason to exist in TNO anymore, in fact it would go entirely against the whole point of them. The whole point is that they are special units created to "secure" the rear area of the Wehrmacht and under the cover of this task also do Himmler's dirty work. As well as this, they had another purpose. As Germans advanced EGs were used to form new territorial commands of SiPo and SD. EG or EK would become stationary and its assets and SiPo-SD personnel used to form the HQ of SiPo and SD for a territory, that is a BdS or KdS level command.

For example Sonderkommando 1b of EG A became KdS Weißruthenien, Einsatzkommando 2 of EG A became KdS Lettland, Einsatzkommando 3 of EG A became KdS Litauen, Einsatzgruppe A itself became BdS Riga. Einsatzkommando 5 of EG C became KdS Kiev, Sonderkommando 4b of EG C became KdS Stalino, Einsatzgruppe C became BdS Kiew, and Einsatzgruppe B became BdS Minsk, and so on.

The German Wehrmacht

General Overview and History of the Reichswehr/Wehrmacht

Ok so let's start with the Wehrmacht (irl it would often be said German Wehrmacht, not that another existed, for some reason it had to be specified). Obviously I do not think that I need to tell you the basics, Wehrmacht was split into three branches of service, Heer or the Army, Kriegsmarine or the Navy and Luftwaffe or the Air Force. From these three branches the Army and the Navy existed from before 1933. The Luft was created under the Nazis.

The Wehrmacht was always very independent from the civilian government; they always represented a state within a state and this was indeed an accurate representation of what they really were. There was a rigid seniority system which was tied to promotions and the majority of the Officer Corps, somewhere around 50%, came from officer families meaning that their fathers were also officers in the (Imperial) German Army, sometimes the Officer Corps was referred to as "hereditary officer class" because of this. During the Weimar Republic the army which was at that point the biggest branch in the military and always remain so, had considerable independence from the civilian government and after the initial days of the German Revolution it succeeded in forcing a rule that the Ministry of Defense was de facto ruled by the Officer Corps, and was really more of a General Staff (Troop Office), then a civilian oversight body. General von Seeckt was de facto the minister, while the de jure minister was Otto Gessler, who was picked with approval of the military because he allowed them to rule themselves. Officers or enlisted men were also not allowed to enter political parties during their service, or if they had entered parties previously had to leave them or freeze membership while on duty, furthermore they were not allowed to hold function outside of the military, either in state service, political functions or otherwise. The same remained true during the Third Reich, officers couldn't join NSDAP, and the the only way to gain membership was to receive Golden Party Badge from Hitler which usually automatically granted membership, however for the Wehrmacht only the first wave of awards in 1937 gave membership by default, albeit one that was frozen from the get-go (the recipients were Blomberg, Raeder, Fritsch and Milch). After that point those awarded the Badge could chose to be automatically enrolled in NSDAP or not to.

Other Wehrmacht recipients were: Keitel and Brauchitsch (1939), Karl Bodenschatz (Göring's Liaison to FHQ) (1940), Dietl, Jodl, Hermann Passe (Chief of PK Office for Wehrmacht Questions), Reinecke, Julius Ringel, Rudolf Schmundt, Schörner and Adolf Sinzinger (1943), Dönitz and Rendulic (1944) and last recipient was Greim (1945).

Enlisted men in both Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS also had to suspend their membership during their service at the front. Party functionaries who wanted to go for a tour at the front (they were exempt from military service otherwise) didn't perform their Party duties while there and their tasks were either handled by a temporary replacement or if they are mid to high ranking functionaries, their staff.

As we have seen with the civil servants; the army also gained considerable further independence during the emergency governments of the late Weimar period. Since the majority of the Officer Corps was either aristocrats or from military families, the prevailing political leanings were conservative. When the Nazis came to power the Army's reaction was split on

one hand they ideologically didn't like the Nazis entirely and especially disliked the SA, they did however like the idea of expansion and military, reintroduction of conscription, building of an air force, increased spending and other policies which went against the Treaty of Versailles. What the Officer Corps was not willing to give up was however was its autonomy from the civilian government, and this could later cause some issues, but Nazis never succeeded in taking this away until perhaps after the July plot, but even then, nothing really changed at the front.

The only civilian with any influence in the Armed Forces was the President of the Republic who was also Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht. While the civilian government did draft the national budget, and thus budget for the military, the budget of the Reichswehr was always to be enough to fund its activities.

Failed last-ditch Nazification

After the July plot, a section of the military law prohibiting political activity and party membership was changed, thus allowing officers and men to join the Party while on active duty, but not much else was different, despite Bormann's attempts. The NSFO, Nationalsozialistische Führungsoffiziere [National Socialist Leadership Officers] introduced to the Wehrmacht in 1944, as some sort of political commissars, were entirely professional military officers approved on paper by the Party Chancellery, but in reality the Army selected potential NSFOs itself (usually less promising officers). They weren't Party's Alter Kämpfer as Bormann wanted (he thought them useless and wanted to dump them somewhere), and unlike in USSR, NSFO held no authority of military command by the virtue of their post and couldn't overrule or change orders issued by unit's commanders, and many commanders on company level got nominal appointment as their own unit's NSFO. In fact all Bormann's attempts at creating Soviet-style political commissars with no military experience were quashed not by the old aristocrats in the Wehrmacht's establishment, but by the most Nazi officers around. After the overall Wehrmacht NSFO staff was created in OKW (Nationalsozialistischer Führungsstab) under much-hated General Reinecke, OKH, OKL and OKM each formed their own NS-Führungsstabe. Reinecke had no love or respect from generals, officers and soldiers cause he was a desk-general who never commanded in the field and made his whole career as an opportunist military bureaucrat and later also fanatical Nazi. So when Schörner was appointed chief of NSFS-OKH his officers immediately started feuds with NSFO guys from the OKW, as who had which authority wasn't made clear. They went so far as to say they would not recognize the leadership of Reinecke who never held front command and operated the Army's NSFO program independently from the OKW staff. When Bormann learned about this, he immediately tried to remove 3 of Schörner's senior officers from NSFS-OKH agency for being anti-Reinecke. But Schörner told Bormann to get lost as he was subordinate to Hitler directly (cause Hitler was also Supreme Commander of the Army since 1941 and all staff of OKH was subordinate to him). Bormann then used his influence to replace Schörner with general Georg Ritter von Hengl. But this also didn't go well as Hengl was even more anti-Reinecke than his predecessor. Furthermore Bormann and Army's NSFO officers didn't agree on the very nature of the program. While Bormann wanted NSFO to conduct mostly cabinet paperwork and evaluation of officer's faith in National Socialism, Schörner wanted NSFO to actually be always with the troops on the front and try to exert their personal influence on every soldier as part of the "Weltanschauungskampf" [Worldview

Warfare]. Schörner and his guys (from NSFS-OKH) also believed these NSFO should be battle-hardened decorated combat veterans, as ideology of National Socialism was born from the trenches of WWI and comradeship-in-arms, so any NSFO without extensive combat experience should be fired immediately. In the end the Army had its way, as PK didn't have the power to enforce its will on it. What I mainly want to cover is the parts interesting for TNO, which is mainly the command chain, and we'll start from the bottom.

Structure of the Wehrmacht

The most basic semi-independent unit was the regiment. Regiment is comprised of battalions, typically 2 or 3 of them. Since WW2 composition of divisions doesn't matter anymore and it varied from type to type and also from time period to time period, I'll skip that, but the main thing is that the base regiments of X division type together with a regiment of artillery and support battalions formed a division. Support units in the German Army were usually the size of battalions.

A division always had a Divisional Staff, which was organized always in the same manner, comprised of Tactical Department, Supply Group and Adjutancy. Tactical Department consisted of Operations Officer of the division (Ia type officer) and the divisional staff as well as Chief Intelligence Officer (Ic) and his staff, as each division also had its own intelligence capabilities. Apart from intelligence, Ic was in charge of reconnaissance, GeFePo and propaganda in a Division. Other officers for specific tasks were part of Tactical Department, such as liaison officers. The tactical headquarters was known as Command Post or CP.

Note that Divisions didn't have Chiefs of Staff, just Operations Officers only from Corps level and above did a dedicated Chief of Staff post exist. Ia, usually a Oberstleutnant i.G. or a Major i.G. was essentially a chief of staff and deputy commander. In case the Divisional Commander is wounded, ill or otherwise unavailable, Ia would typically take over as acting Commander until the actual Commander recovers or a replacement is sent by higher command. Ia had O1 (First Orderly Officer, usually a Hauptmann or Leutnant), as his own adjutant.

Supply Group was headquartered separately and handled all supply and medical demands of the unit, it was lead by a Chief Supply Officer (aka Divisional Quartermaster, that is Ib) and included Chief Administrative Officer (IVa), Chief Medical officer (IVb), Chief Veterinary Officer (IVc) and Motor Transport Officer (V) as well as their staffs and subordinates. Unlike the officers of Tactical Department these officers were not members of the General Staff, except Ib, as all I-type officers had to be General Staff members (you'll see what I mean later).

The last group, the Adjutancy was headed by a IIa (Chief Personnel Officer, aka Divisional Adjutant), he handled all officer personnel matters for officers already in the unit (transfers in and from the unit were handled by higher authorities), subordinate to him was Second Personnel Officer aka Adjutant Two (IIb) in charge of enlisted personnel matters. In this section were also III (Chief Judge Advocate) and IVd (Chaplain) and various small sections necessary for functioning of the staff HQ, such as security detachments and the like.

Other miscellaneous officers and their staffs assigned to the unit on temporary or permanent basis (such as Commander of Divisional Supply Troops, Senior Military Police Officer, Commander of Projector (flame-thrower) Troops, Gas Protection Officer, and after July plot NSFO) would be attached to one of Chief officers from one of the 3 Divisional Staff

department. Germans also had General Headquarters artillery units (ie., those loaned to the unit from Corps or higher command) which could be attached to a division if needed and would be commanded by Arko (Senior Artillery Commander), this was the most commonly seen miscellaneous officer attached to the Divisional Staff. Below the divisional staff were the regiments, as mentioned before.

If we take a look at an Army, we'll notice similar layout. Because Germans have to complicate everything, Army HQ was called *Armeeoberkommando* [Army High Command] (short: AOK) and Army's staff *Generalstab* [General Staff], which shouldn't be confused with OKH. Each AOK had a *Oberbefehlshaber* [Supreme Commander] and Chief of General Staff (normally in literature called just Chief of Staff not to cause confusion). AOK had 3 Departments, Department I (Operations) consisting of Ia, Ic and Id (Training Officer), later also NSFO, Department II (Adjutancy / Administration) consisting of IIa and IIb, as well as III and IVd and Senior Quartermaster Department consisting of the Senior Quartermaster, Ib, IVa, IVb, IVc and V. As is quite obvious the structure was basically the same with addition of another Quartermaster and a Chief of General Staff. Similar officers that could be attached to a Divisional staff if needed, could also be attached to Army staff. Army Commander was typically a *Generaloberst* and Chief of General Staff, a *Generalmajor*.

All Infantry Regiments, which were the backbone of the German Army IRL were renamed Grenadier Regiments in 1942, and the Infantryman was renamed Grenadier. Same thing happened with Mechanized AND Motorized Infantry between December 1942 and May 1943, both became Panzergrenadiers. About 25% of them were mechanized and the rest were motorized troops (one battalion in a Panzergrenadier or Panzer division was usually mechanized, out of 4 that existed in them, the rest were motorized, or mixed). Only fully mechanized unit in the German Army was the elite Panzer Lehr Division.

Divisions were not territorial units, just like in hoi4 they could be moved around and deployed wherever the armed forces needed it, however each division was connected to the military region in which it was raised. These Military Regions, or *Wehrkreis* were territorial commands of the *Wehrmacht*. *Wehrkreis* had significant importance for the divisions which were raised in it, as it was in charge of recruiting, drafting, inducting and training soldiers for them, thus each division was usually associated with a single *Wehrkreis*. This was also done so soldiers of a single division came from the same region, which increased unit cohesion. Think about it like Vicky 2 where you have units from an X state and it gets reinforcements from that same state, just a *Wehrkreis* is the size of 3-4 of those Vicky 2 states. Exceptions to this rule were SS divisions which were all-German and Army's elite *Großdeutschland* division which was purposefully recruited from every part of Germany. Divisions created from *Großdeutschland* and a few other elite formations followed the same principle.

During the Weimar era *Wehrkreise* were under the Reichswehr Ministry (they were and remained numbered in roman numerals). Before 1934 the *Wehrkreis* commander was also commander of a Reichswehr Division with the same number, in personal union, as Reichswehr had 1 division per *Wehrkreis*. After Hitler created the *Wehrmacht* they were under OKH, and finally in 1938 the Replacement Army was set up to manage them. In 1935 a *Wehrkreis* Commander became Commanding General of an Army Corps of the same number, as *Wehrmacht* had more divisions than *Wehrkreise*. After the war began training of replacement became the main job of the *Wehrkreis*, this was done in replacement units. The *Wehrkreis* staff

was mobilized in 1939 as the staff for the Army Corps of the same number, and a new staff was raised, alongside new "Deputy Army Corps" or Secondary Army Corps. So for example in 1938 Adolf Strauß was Commanding General of the General Command of the 2nd Army Corps & Commander of Wehrkreis II, but when the war started, he went to war with his 2nd Army Corps and Hans Feige became Commanding General of the Deputy General Command of the 2nd Army Corps and Commander of Wehrkreis II. The Deputy 2nd Corps didn't exist as a combat formation, it was a paper command that all units in Wehrkreis II were attached to.

Elite Army division and SS formations each had their own replacement unit, up to a brigade in size, which trained men specifically for service in that Division. The unit which was most employed in the July plot, and which then "crushed" it, Wachbataillon "Großdeutschland" under Major Otto Ernst Remer was part of Ersatz-Brigade [Replacement Brigade] "Großdeutschland", which was the replacement unit for that division. Ironically Goebbels, who was supposed to be arrested by the unit, was honorary colonel-in-chief (ceremonial patron) of the battalion. Regular Army Divisions didn't have a specific replacement unit only for them, but rather shared a replacement unit with another 1 or 2 divisions from the same Wehrkreis. Sometimes these training units were organized into reserve divisions, and thus detached from the Wehrkreis and put directly under the Replacement Army and sent to train in occupied areas closer to the front or merged with divisions that needed reinforcements. Many new divisions after 1941 were also made by taking the cadre of these replacement units, and new replacement units would have been built from scratch.

Position of the Wehrmacht in the Reich and Authority within it

In order to not cause major issues with the balance of power, the Wehrmacht should remain as it was before the war, an enclosed organization of Prussian-minded and rigorously trained professional officers. A few things could change tho. For one, to make things easier the rule of the Artillerie Mafia in the General Staff could end. The Artillerie Mafia was a name used to describe the fact that Artillery Officers were overrepresented amongst General Staff Officers. You see, each officer had a "specialization" ie a Branch in which he trained, this could be Infantry, Artillery, Panzer Troops, Signal Troops, Cavalry and so on. Apart from this specialization, which all officers had, an officer could attend War Academy or other staff training and become a member of the General Staff (for such officer "i.G." was added to their rank (not for General ranks, only for ranks below) meaning im Generastab (in General Staff)). This was required for all type I positions mentioned before. Artillery Officers attended staff training and became Staff Officers at higher rates than other branches. While there wasn't any sort of a plot by the Arty Officers to keep themselves in high positions, due to them being the most present officers in the General Staff, they tended to reach top posts at higher rates than others.

High ranking Arty Officers included Wilhelm Keitel (Chief of OKW 1938-1945), Walther von Brauchitsch (Commander-in-Chief of the Army 1938-1941), Ludwig Beck (Chief of Army General Staff 1933-1938), Werner Freiherr von Fritsch (Commander-in-Chief of the Army 1934-1938), Friedrich Fromm (Chief of the Replacement Army 1940-1944), Franz Halder (Chief of Army General Staff (1938-1942) and Alfred Jodl (Chief of Operations Staff in the OKW 1939-1945).

Again this is not to say it was exclusively Arty Officers who held top stops in the General Staff others like Rudolf Schmundt (Infantry), Kurt Zeitzler (Infantry), Heinz Guderian (Panzer Troops) or Friedrich Paulus (Panzer Troops) also had accomplished General Staff careers. For the sake of simplicity the prominence of Artillery Officers in large numbers in top positions in the General Staff shouldn't be purposefully pursued when making personnel choices for the Wehrmacht.

The General Staff Officers were one of the 4 categories of men serving in Wehrmacht, the other 3 being Soldiers (ie all men and officers not part of General Staff), Sonderführer [Specialist] and Beamte [Civil Servant, more commonly translated as Official]. The first two categories are rather clear, the third and fourth need some explaining. Specialists were non-combat personnel but who were not Officials, such as interpreters, logistics specialists, war correspondents, often drafted men who didn't serve as common troops due to their skills. During the war they were pushed into taking military training and gained reserve officer commissions. In Waffen-SS Specialists were called Fachführer and had a "[F]" added to the end of their ranks. Their use in Waffen-SS was very common for jobs typically done by the Officials in the Wehrmacht, but also for administrative duties in anti-partisan staffs and other security matters. For economic and troop administration duties SS used (Waffen-)SS-Führer im Verwaltungsdienst, trained by SS-WVHA, and serving in (non-concentration-camp) branches of WVHA. These also filled the economic staffs of SS in occupied territories.

Wehrmacht Officials were career civil servants with the Armed Forces, they had the same 4 career paths as with regular civil service discussed in the Chapter about State under Nazis. They wore regular military uniforms, but with distinct insignia, and had to undergo military training. For simple service and middle service 100% and 90% of the jobs, respectively, were reserved for Military Candidates (ie former professional soldiers who completed their contract-required service (12-years for enlisted men), during the war as need for these jobs increased, professional soldiers who haven't yet completed the 12 years were allowed to join the Wehrmacht civil service as War Candidates. Wehrmacht Officials included bakers, cooks, paymasters, chaplains, construction and logistics experts, military administration staff (we'll get to them later), economic and agricultural functionaries, Wehrmacht judicial staff, military postal workers, as well as GeFePo [Secret Field Police].

For simple service just elementary school was required, the middle and senior services required high school diploma, but also required study at Wehrmacht technical schools, senior service with only high schools required up to 3 year of education in Wehrmacht schools. Higher service required university degree or above depending on the post, in senior service 50% of the jobs were reserved for Military Candidates, in higher service none. Jobs in higher service were usually ones that required education, such as judicial or technical services, engineering, pharmacist, administrative staff, etc. In their dual capacity as Officials in the Wehrmacht in officer or general ranks and as Reich civil servants, these men were subordinate both to Civil Service Law and Military Law, following this trend they were subordinate both to Interior Ministry and to the immediate Wehrmacht superior on who's staff they work. During the war as further military laws were issued and as area under military administration expanded, the Officials were given disciplinary powers over all soldiers and NCOs and officers of lower rank than their own, tho the extent of their powers was much lower than would be of an actual officer in the same rank. The subordination of Officials to Military Law, giving them disciplinary powers, making

them complete military training, as well as having them wear uniforms of equivalent rank to the civil service rank they held was all part of a process to build a "Soldierly Civil Service" for the Wehrmacht which wouldn't be looked down upon by either soldiers or officers, furthermore in May 1941 OKW directive they were given status of combatants under the Hague Convention, the same directive made them eligible to bear arms if the situation requires, something that previous to that was a "privilege" of soldiers only. From all the Officials about ¾ served for 12 years or more as soldiers or officers, tho most of the higher career Officials didn't.

During the war any Reich civil servant was eligible for a transfer to Wehrmacht civil service, thus for example almost all officers of GeFePo were Kripo policemen transferred to GeFePo for the duration of an offensive or for the duration of the war. Most Military Administration Officials, ie men who worked in higher careers in military administration were only temporarily transferred to Wehrmacht, and their appointments to these positions were administered by the Operational Staff of OKW and were usually no longer than 2-3 years, and were often even less than that.

Back to Authority and command structure;

The authority in the Wehrmacht functioned along clear lines, officers in almost all situations knew whose orders to follow. Disputes over issues of critical importance didn't arise or were concluded quickly. The July Plot is a perfect example, at every step of the way; Wachbataillon "Großdeutschland" under Remer followed orders from its superior command (the Replacement Army HQ) and went to arrest Goebbels. Upon arriving Remer and Goebbels had a little talk, as arresting a Reich Minister isn't exactly a normal situation. Hitler, as the C-i-C of the Wehrmacht (as Head of State) and C-i-C of the Army ordered Remer to arrest the conspirators. Under orders from the highest source possible Remer went to do his business. By the time Wachbataillon GD switched sides, 1st Company of Army Pyrotechnical School (despite the name "School" all Army and SS Schools were organized as proper units (usually of regimental size), split into battalions, companies and so on and could be raised as a combat formation if needed) which was at the time still under the orders of Replacement Army HQ. Despite having the exact opposite orders there was no firefight, no officer would order his men to shoot at a fellow officer, instead they discussed their orders and decided that Hitler was the highest authority, GD went on its way and 1st Company went back to its barracks.

Another, entirely unrelated example, would be the Replacement Army HQ itself, after the conspirators couped Fromm and overtook the Replacement Army their orders became effectively illegal as they got into the position to issue them illegally, however nobody knew that, which is why the plot was underway for most of the day. Over time some officers in the Replacement Army HQ figured out what was going on (the fact that Fromm had been put into the mini-prison which existed as part of the complex, but wasn't locked, rather just left there didn't help; this was done out of the respect for his rank, another thing very present in the Wehrmacht). By the time Remer and GD arrived at Replacement Army HQ, officers of the Replacement Army like Franz Herber, Bolko von der Heyde and Karl Pridun, who had already figured out it was a coup, overpowered the putschists. That's why Fromm was already freed and in command when Remer came, and could conduct a summary court-martial.

Further evidence for the mentality prevalent in the Wehrmacht Officer Corps, that of following the orders from the legitimate source in the hierarchy, can be seen in the reactions of the Wehrkreise to Operation Valkyrie orders arriving from the Replacement Army HQ.

In Wehrkreis II (Stettin), the commanding General, General der Infanterie Werner Kienitz, who was sympathetic to coup (but not a conspirator) called Keitel and Replacement Army HQ upon receiving the Valkyrie orders, he received contradictory information from the two calls and since Keitel as Chief of OKW, outranked everyone else except Hitler, he followed his orders and did nothing.

In Wehrkreis IX (Kassel), the staff of which had many conspirators on it, received the orders, commanding General wasn't present, or Chief of Staff, Oberst Claus-Henning von Plate (who wasn't a conspirator, but was very sympathetic) acted on the orders and a few buildings of NSDAP and SS were occupied, Keitel called, the operation was canceled and troops went back to the barracks. Von Plate was dismissed from his post and from the Army by the Court of Honor, but immediately returned with a demotion to Major and was sent to a frontline unit.

In Wehrkreis XVII (Vienna) the Wehrkreise staff couldn't get OKW until much later in the day, they organized a staff conference and acted upon the orders after calling Stauffenberg, they arrested senior party figures. Upon receiving the orders to replace all men in top political positions with new appointees, all of whom were known to be anti-Nazis and resistance members, the Wehrkreis called Keitel again, he explained the situation and the orders were rescinded and the arrested men freed. Top three officers in the Wehrkreis were arrested the next day and remained in prison until the end of the war.

In all other Wehrkreise the commanders either called Keitel immediately before acting, or were called by him and dismissed the Valkyrie orders, in a few of them troops were put on alert, but didn't leave the barracks until the phone call with OKW, after which they were put off alert. In quite a few cases Stauffenberg also called, in all such cases it was Keitel's orders that were followed. The case of Wehrkreis Böhmen und Mähren (Prague) is interesting. The commander put troops on alert and called a conference with Karl Hemrann Frank, State Minister for B&M and chief SS functionary in the Protectorate. In Prague the strength of the SS almost matched that of the Army (because W-SS had a massive, newly-built training area near Prague and a SS Junker School in the city as well as a few other NCO and Officer Schools for specialized training such as Panzergrenadier School, Grenadier School, etc.). Frank called Wolf's Lair and was told what was going on, he passed the info to the Wehrkreis commander, who canceled alert orders. He was nevertheless arrested the following day and put in prison until the end of the war.

These had been multiple events, which were entirely unrelated, and the officers exactly in all of them acted as expected of them, they followed orders from the highest-ranking legitimate source, even when sympathetic to one or the other side. In fact this was the exact reason Remer wasn't sent off duty that day. The conspirators were aware that Remer had been in the HJ and was a committed National Socialist, yet Berlin City Commander, Paul von Hase who had met him before, convinced other conspirators that he would, as an Officer of the German Wehrmacht, follow orders. He was right (just because Hitler didn't die, the orders from the Wolf's Lair were legal and those from the Replacement Army weren't).

The Civil War Problem

This plays perfectly into the next chapter of the document, the civil war problem, the main one being the Wehrmacht. There is no scenario in which the Wehrmacht would split into multiple factions to fight for different "contenders". Even if the Officer Corps was split ideologically between them, the majority would overpower the minority. If an unruly General orders his division to secure a city for lets say Speer, his junior officers would arrest him as the order would have been unlawful. Even if we, let's say for the sake of hypothetical argument, bypass these impassable issues and part of the Wehrmacht somehow declared for Speer under the influence of the Stauffenberg-Trescow-Speidel clique (or whatever you want to call them), and these units didn't just disintegrate because of desertion or revolt by junior officers against illegal orders, they would have been crushed by the majority of Wehrmacht which would stand behind the legitimate source of orders.

Furthermore Operation Valkyrie itself was exactly created under the pretext that the Replacement Army should be prepared to intervene in case of unrest in Germany. As part of the "Valkyrie organization" practically every company and battalion of the Replacement Army had a designated regiment that it would become a part of following the issue of Valkyrie orders, and furthermore every regiment had pre-planned posting around every town and keypoint in Germany. To make the plans even more flexible, the plan provided an option to the Commander of the Replacement Army to call up individual regiments independently of the rest of the troops in that Wehrkreis. And the Replacement Army was used before the July plot as well, for example during the firebombing of Hamburg in July 1943, Replacement Army was mobilized to keep order in the aftermath. In Berlin as well, it had been mobilized during training exercises multiple times. During a drill in November 1943 in Berlin, the Infantry and Panzer battalions of the Replacement Army occupied the town center in 1 hour.

But I hear you say, when Hitler dies there is no legitimate successor!

Wrong, let me explain.

Mechanism for electing the next Führer, that is the Reich Senate, had been discussed before, there is no reason to assume it wouldn't function as intended, especially as it would have been introduced after the war in the NS Constitution and thus would have already been in existence for 15 years (the room for the Senate in the Brown House in Munich had been built already in the 30s as has been shown before), and especially since the Senate is really just a formalization of Reichs- and Gauleiter conferences, thus it is nothing very new. Furthermore the Senate was envisioned exactly for the purpose of avoiding a fight over the Führership, as well as this, in the same speech in which Hitler declared Party Comrade Göring as his successor he said that in the case of Göring's and Hess' death, the Senate shall decide on the next one, and while no such body existed yet, provisions for it had been laid out in Hitler's memorandum in the 30s, which ends exactly with the phrase, the Senate will be created "...if only for the reason that, in the event of my death, the question of the new Führer of the Party will not be decided in a ferocious struggle among the Party Comrades, but will be decided by the Senate" [rough translation, I also have it in original German if you like].

Unless the article in the constitution about the succession is changed, the Head of State (and thus the Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht) upon Führer's death would be the Chief

Justice of the Supreme Court (the Supreme Court and the People's Court are separate entities for those wondering, the People's Court was a *sondergericht* (special court) for cases of treason, which is why it had a lot of publicity) the reason this wasn't followed in 1934 is because a law was passed giving Hitler the post of Head of State and there was a referendum about Hitler's new appointment.

Otherwise things can be said to have changed in the new constitution where it may perhaps say that the Chairman/President of the Senate (Senate was supposed to have a sort of Presidium of 7 men, with one of them chairing the session) was the acting Head of State after Führer's death. Or, the President of the Reichstag could be made to perform those duties. Alternatively the 1934 law clearly stated that Hitler may appoint a Deputy. Altho Göring was not formally given the title of Deputy to the Reich Chancellor that Papen had, he was referred to by Hitler in at least two decrees as his deputy, and the position of acting Führer and Reich Chancellor may be given to him. Either way, whoever it is, it would have to be clearly stated in the constitution (the option with the President of the Senate being the acting Head of State is probably most interesting). Thus the question of who is the Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht during the period between Hitler's death and next Führer's election would be clearly settled. Even without it being clear, Chief of OKW would be the highest ranking officer around and in absence of the Supreme Commander, the Wehrmacht would respond to him, as Commander of Military Districts for the most part did during the July plot.

Shit going down during the Führer elections

Yes, I know that you have been thinking about this since the moment I mentioned the Senate. Short answer it would not have been possible, long answer, for gameplay some exceptions may have to be made.

The Führer elections, as was the Führer himself, wouldn't have been guarded by a single branch of service. RSD would have been present to investigate all the possible threats to the building or the men involved, considering how many high-ranking functionaries would have been present, essentially the entire RSD minus the Berlin and Obersalzberg department would have been present (RSD was split into detachments which were each assigned to a person or an area, in this case almost all of the person with a RSD detachments assigned to them would have been in the Brown House). Führerbegleitkommando would have provided bodyguards to physically protect the men involved. The guards around the building would have been provided by some elite unit in the Munich area, either LSSAH (which did have men in Munich for when Hitler comes there), "Großdeutschland" Division or "Feldherrnhalle" Division (which had a special guard unit in Munich). Perimeters around the Brown House would have been guarded by Führerbegleitdivision, specifically made for perimeter defense and defense in case of organized mass paratrooper attack, it was an associated formation of "Großdeutschland" Division from which its men were recruited. Attack from within, or from without would have been quickly suppressed, and infiltration of an elite police formation (RSD), the most important bodyguard unit in the Reich (Führerbegleitkommando) AND all of the most elite divisions in the Wehrmacht would have been impossible, and would have been an extremely stupid idea lore-wise.

So what happens in the Senate?

There are 2 issues, namely that in the Reich Senate neither Speer nor Heydrich have much of a chance to be elected, I would make you the list of all the Senators, that wouldn't be an issue, but the majority would have come from the Gauleiter corps, meaning Bormann would have the advantage, but Göring could still call upon old glory to win the vote perhaps. Speer however was hated by the Gauleiters, he is partially guilty himself, as he had infringed openly on Gauleiters authority. As Reich Defense Commissars, they, together with Gau Economic Advisors and Gau Economic Chambers ruled the local civilian economy during the war. The economic power had shifted from the pre war rule of the ministerial bureaucracy in the Economic Ministry, the Reichsbank and the Office of the Four Year Plan to the Armaments Ministry, Armament Committees, Wehrmacht Armament Inspectorates and on local level, the Gauleiters. Speer, who was allied politically with the Wehrmacht Armament people, effectively tried to push the Gauleiters out of the equation (he largely succeeded, but that's not what matters here). The issue is that he openly told them this multiple times and they weren't happy to hear it. Bormann and the Gauleiters, for their own reasons and not just out of ill will, tried to sabotage Speer's attempt to take away their authority (their reason was that they didn't trust Speer, the Gauleiters cared a lot about popular opinion and each had tried to preserve the civilian economy in their Gau as much as they could, they were afraid that Speer is just going to utilize the economy to his fullest capacity without considerations for public opinion or the health of local economy). Despite Speer getting his way more or less, he had taken one big L on the way. Speer wanted to appoint his friend, and Gauleiter, Karl Hanke as the General Plenipotentiary for Labour Deployment (one of only two friends Speer had in the Gauleiter Corps, the other being Emil Stürtz), but Bormann and other Gauleiters succeeded in getting an old "giant" of the party, and a fellow Gauleiter, Fritz Sauckel to the post instead. He then appointed all Gauleiters as representatives of his office for their region, thus giving them a say in labour deployment (the practice of appointing people as regional representatives of offices such as Plenipotentiaries or Reich Commissars for something was rather common).

The SS had influence and friends amongst the Gauleiters, many of whom were honorary SS generals, but only a few would have given the SS their vote over Bormann or Göring, but without the SS Coup in the 50s, Heydrich would not be without a chance to pull a victory.

These two issues will be further discussed in the next section.

Second Kampfzeit

The Kampfzeit ("Times of Struggle") was a term used in NS historiography to refer to the period between 1919 and 1933, when NSDAP was fighting for power. It was made by propaganda to have been this sort of legendary mythical period of immense struggle of NSDAP and the German people against the Treaty of Versailles and the evil forces of reactionaries and communists working against the German people. It was finally ended by Hitler's appointment as Chancellor and the "National Socialist Revolution" (or just "National Revolution"). While in reality only a minority of members of NSDAP, SA or SS had been members of these organizations during the Kampfzeit, it was anyhow used extensively in propaganda, as a sort of domestic political war where the Nazis represented the "Fighting Community" of the German people.

The term was reused in Austria to refer to the period from July 1933 (when the party was banned) until 1938 when Austria was annexed. I suggest that the Kampfzeit be reused for the purpose of thoroughly reworking the German Civil War and abolishing it as such while allowing to keep the post-GCW relatively similar, thus not causing major issues with current content. It would only require editing a couple hundred events and focuses, but it isn't that much considering it's really changing just changing the word GCW with Kampfzeit. Again, I've been doing modding for well over 2,5 years, mainly as a designer, I know very well how reworking old content goes, and then reworks of the rework start and so on, I emphasize that if planned properly, the rework of the GCW could be carried out shiftly. Furthermore, the Kampfzeit could be referred to as the German Civil War in the international media, in order to reduce the amount of events that would need to be edited, thus making the removal of the Civil War as such and its replacement with an internal power struggle even easier.

The issue of GCW-based Gameplay Loop

I think that it's fairly evident that especially in Europe, but outside of it as well, the GCW is a key event in early game, and many other events supposedly stem from it. Within two days of the German explosion, the whole of Europe starts exploding as well, processes like uprisings and revolts that had been going on, presumably, for the past 20-25 years suddenly erupt, countries start "collapsing" and shit hits the fan. This is by design, rather than by accident, I remember an old TNO dev stream or two, in which Panzer said as much himself.

What I offer with the Kampfzeit is the same thing that exists right now, but far more controlled. The events that happen right now right away could be extended over a longer period of time, and not just all happen at once, and probably most importantly for game design, with the Kampfzeit the time frame in which Germany consolidates itself after Hitler died could be properly determined, allowing for much easier content planning for countries that depend on Hitler's death for their own content. Let me explain the Second Kampfzeit and you'll see what I mean, as I said before, I'm an experienced designer, not an idiot suggest wild shit that would require reworks of $\frac{3}{4}$ of the mod, the way I present it here, it could be implemented with very little, if any, changes to the contenders current content, bar some expansions to their into trees.

Changes to Germany

The election of the next Führer would not be the main event of Kampfzeit, as it would just happen within a few days of Hitler's death and would require the player to lobby the Senate beforehand. The consolidation of power by the new Führer would be the actual main event of the Second Kampfzeit and it would take some time to complete. For reference, the best 2 places to look would be the Night of the Long Knives, and Bormann's appointment in the Party Chancellery. Unlike can be seen in TNO at times, Nazis were not in the business of killing their own, and in fact apart from the Night of the Long Knives I doubt any other such case could be brought up. What most people, mistakenly, think is that the killings in the Night of the Long Knives were the main aspect of the event but, actually they were not, the death toll of Night of Long Knives was rather small for a purge in a totalitarian state (85 people, maybe 90), especially compared to Soviet purges in the 30s. It was the post-Operation Kolibri purges, and by purges I mean retirements, transfers and layoffs of large number of party functionaries connected with the SA or otherwise deemed unreliable, that were the main event within the party structures, almost 30% of party functionaries (altho majority part-timers) across basically every Gau in Germany were fired or replaced, and this helped consolidate the power of the Control clique. Apart from replacements of many party functionaries, what followed the purges were extensive Party Court investigations into high-ranking PLs, who needed a reminder to stay in line. Most of these did not end with retirement, but rather simply acted as means of intimidation. Another effect of these firings and the post-Operation Kolibri purges were that the younger PL in the party hierarchy succeeded in getting appointments in some of these new functions, the purge sped up the generational change in the PO.

The fired functionaries were not prosecuted, let alone murdered, but instead returned to their civilian lives. In fact, the parts where Germans kill their own, and this is especially present in SS-related events, has absolutely no basis in reality. Although removals of functionaries that one did not like, or that they're superior deemed incapable was not uncommon, in the SS as much as in the Party, instant retirement, let alone illegal murder, was not the main course of action. For the most part, these officials would be transferred to lower-ranking jobs, with few promotion prospects. Furthermore, in A-SS as well as W-SS, the most common form of punishment was transfer to frontline units followed by a large demotion to a junior officer rank, while in the party it would be someone's release from Party service for conscription. While the front does not necessarily exist anymore, Africa, as well as Moskowien, would be used as dumping grounds for these types of officials.

In the case of Bormann's takeover of the Party Chancellery other offices such as that of ROL or Rosenberg immediately tried to take some authority away from the PK, the struggle between Egghead and these others took a while but it did not result in firings, let alone murders, rather it was simply back and forth between various offices as well as Hitler and some Ministries about the powers of each office involved and so none of them could issue decrees with certainty that they would have legal force behind them until the conflict was resolved.

With Hitler dead and one of the men now holding Führer's powers, the new Boss would have to go through all this to secure his hold, some like Bormann would rely on the Party cadres and structures for that, while others like Göring would rely on the State to fill the power vacuum. Even so there was always a degree of formality and respect in interactions between the Party

"giants", one cannot just fire the rest of the Reichsleitung overnight, hence why the Kampfzeit would take time, and adaptation of the Reich to the new normal (ie a rule of someone who isn't Hitler) can't be instant.

The Political Arena of the Reich

The Komi-like political arena based on coups and influence within coalitions is not exactly replicatable within the Reich's post-Hitler arena. Military coups are not feasible within the structures of the Reich, however threats of a military coup, or even perhaps military interference in such a critical moment could be used to create an environment of instability in the early post-Hitler period. Specifically, reduction of garrisons and withdrawals of Wehrmacht troops from around Europe to Germany would be a first step in raising the domestic tension. A Brezhnev-style inner party coup however could be done, not against Bormann, but against grandpa Göring, *especially if there was a security crisis, such as a failed attack on the Reich Senate that would increase the importance of security services*. Similarly if let's say Göring threatened to use military force and the Chief of OKW Hans Speidel instead endorsed Speer, and let's say Hitler decided to expand the Senate before his death to include representatives of the Wehrmacht, perhaps even Speer might be elected in the end.

I'm not a fucking ideas-guy, I'm not here telling ya what to do, just saying what could be done. I'm obviously not even on the team right now, so you'd have to figure it out yourself, I'm just laying the technical and historical basis for the V&J rework of the GCW, unless you accept me to the team in which case I would definitively help design it alongside the German team.

Changes to the Pakt

A major change would be that the Pact doesn't collapse as it does right now, but since it inevitably gets rebuilt a year later anyway, this wouldn't really be a big change. Furthermore it allows for fixing of one rather big hole, and that is the RKs in Africa. The African RKs really have to reason to be able to wage war on South Africa without German help and the Reich should really be made to pay for it in equipment especially, and this commitment would essentially serve to drain the Reich of the equipment it would have lost in GCW in the current build, while avoiding the bullshit moment of Reich descending into a civil war but then suddenly within a matter of years returning to somehow be a player in world politics again.

Issues that might arise like Germans for some reason not caring about English CW or the events in the East are already an issue anyway, the current German civil war contenders would have no reason to stop at Reichs borders, they are already on war footing, and would have just sent the Wehrmacht to the East, if it was built in a realistic way, then every contender, bar Heydrich, should start the civil war already at war with all the revolt tags in the East and the English resistance, so the Second Kampfzeit doesn't at all impact this, it doesn't help solve the problem, but it doesn't really expand it either, and considering the expansion of crazy explosions and revolts coming in EN, it doesn't seem that a fix for the problem is planned anyway, but I said I wouldn't talk about the East here, so I digress.

Conclusion

With all that said, in conclusion, provided you have read everything, you now possess a decent understanding of the monstrosity that was the Third Reich. I tried to explain practically every important feature of the Nazi regime in a relatively short, but at the same time detailed format. There is plenty more to be said about most of the topics covered, but that would make this document even longer, and it's plenty long as is.

The major political event that isn't really shown would be the 1933 Reichstag elections. The Greater German Reichstag was elected every 4 years, at least it should have been.

The way elections worked is that there was the List of the Führer that included some 2000 people, split into many smaller lists for each Wahlkreis [Electoral District], the population would vote Yes or No to the list, no other electoral lists were offered. One seat was given per 60k votes IN APPROVAL of the list on the national level (total number was divided by 60k, then the seats were distributed amongst the Electoral Districts), thus the number of seats depends on how many people voted to approve NSDAP's list, not how many were registered to vote or turned out to do so, this is why the number of seats is usually odd, ending with 1 or 3 or such.

As Germans expanded to new territories inhabited by Germans they added more seats to the Reichstag, during peacetime these were elected, during war they were appointed. Wahlkreise weren't expanded, rather new areas had ad-hoc elections basically, so the Wahlkreise would have been reformed as well during the Reichsreform, their borders I mean. In 1933 elections there were 813 elected Members of the Reichstag (short: MdR from Mitglied des Reichstages) from Greater Germany (Germany and Austria), later more were added; 41 were elected from Sudetenland, 5 were appointed representing the Germans living in the Protectorate, from cities with large German minority (1 for Ingau, 1 for Budweis, 1 from Brünn and 2 from Prag), 2 more were added with annexation of Memel, following invasion of Poland 13 more members were added (4 from Wartheland, 4 from Danzig-Westpreußen, 3 for the new part of Silesia and 2 for Zichenau) and finally 2 more were added for Eupen-Malmedy. These were provisional numbers and appointments and would have been reevaluated later, but anyhow Reichstag would have about 1,258 MdR from Germany in 1933 and 5 from the Protectorate (maybe more at this point) and a few from Krim, perhaps 4, idk. The elections are an opportunity for various factions to get a major power boost compared to their opposition if they can push senile Hitler to allow for their election lists instead of the ones made by their opponents.

The German Nobility

I'd like to just briefly go over how you write their names and titles, since I've seen it was off here and there.

There are nobles without a title, who are just Junkers, and they simply have a "von" between their name and surname. Baldur von Schirach for example.

Then there are those with the titles. The most common titles are Ritter (Knight), Freiherr (Baron) and Graf (Count), there are also others like Fürst (Prince) and Herzog (Duke), and also variations of those titles with a prefix Reichs- denoting that the title was given to the family by

the Holy Roman Emperor. Before the abolition of nobility in Germany and Austria the title would be written before the person's name, for example *Graf* Wolf-Heinrich von Helldorff.

In Austria the nobility was abolished and together with it all noblemen lost their titles and can't legally add them to their names, meaning that *Freiherr* Otto von Wächter (Nazi Governor of Krakau and later Galicia) become just Otto Wächter in 1919. For example the former Austrian PM, Alexander Schallenberg would have been *Graf* Alexander von Schallenberg, as he comes from a noble family.

In Germany the nobility was abolished in 1919 as well, but they kept their titles as part of their name, just the position was changed, instead of being before the name, the title was moved to after the name, but before the surname, thus for example, Helldorff was Wolf-Heinrich *Graf* von Helldorff. When you write just the surname, you shouldn't include "von", so in a sentence it would be "Helldorff did X" and not "von Helldorff did X", altho it can be "Graf von Helldorff did X". Anyhow the title or the "von" isn't actually part of their surname, just an addition to it, so if you were to search for Helldorff in some alphabetical list, he would be under H, not under G or V. But when you are using a character's full name in an event, it should be "Wolf-Heinrich Graf von Helldorff said X" not "Wolf-Heinrich von Helldorff said X".

Lastly the title Ritter in this period is most commonly not a hereditary title, but instead a personal title that a Bavarian got when they received Military Order of Max Joseph during WW1, for example Wehrmacht Generalfeldmarschalls Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb & Robert Ritter von Greim both got their titles this way, so Leeb's son was just Leeb, not Ritter von Leeb. The only Heer Marshall with a title who wasn't just a Junker, was Maximilian Reichsfreiherr von und zu Weichs an der Glonn, and damn he had quite a title. Generally the older the title, the longer it is.

If the title is hereditary or not doesn't impact the way you write it, I just thought I'd mention it for no particular reason.

Glossary and abbreviations

Term - German full name

[English full name]

(short description)

Random glossary and abbreviations

FHQ - Führerhauptquartier

[Führer Headquarters]

(Hitler's field headquarters)

GBA - Generalbevollmächtigter für den Arbeitseinsatz

[General Plenipotentiary for Labour Allocation]

(Functionary responsible for mobilization and deployment of labour across Germany including POWs, eastern worker, and forced labour)

GBK - Generalbevollmächtigter für den totalen Kriegseinsatz

[General Plenipotentiary for Total Warfare]

Functionary responsible for coordination of the total war effort

GG or GGV - Generalgouvernement

[General Government]

(Civil administration in Poland)

NSBO - Nationalsozialistische Betriebszellenorganisation

[National Socialist Organization of Factory Cells]

(Industrial propaganda units and union wing of the NSDAP; absorbed by the DAF)

OT - Organisation Todt

[/]

(German public construction agency)

RK - Reichskommissar

[Reich Commissar]

((In context of a position within Germany) Title of an official having administrative responsibility for a function given to him by the federal government)

((In context of the East) Official in the Eastern Ministry who governs over one part of the East)

RKK - Reichskommissariat Kaukasien

[/]

(Planned territorial division of the Eastern Ministry and a civil administration in the Caucasus)

RKM - Reichskommissariat Moskowien

[/]

(Planned territorial division of the Eastern Ministry and a civil administration in Central Russia)

RKO - Reichskommissariat Ostland

[/]

(Territorial division of the Eastern Ministry and a civil administration in Baltics and Belarus)

RKU - Reichskommissariat Ukraine

[/]

(Territorial division of the Eastern Ministry and a civil administration in Ukraine)

RNS - Reichsnährstand

[Reich Nutritional Estate]

(Government agency regulating and administering food production)

Rsth. - Reichsstatthalter

[/]

(Governor of a region outside of Prussia)

VJP - Vierjahresplan

[Four-Year Plan]

(self-explanatory)

VJPB - Vierjahresplanbehörde

[Office of the Four-Year Plan / Four-Year Plan Authority]

(Office that executed the economic planning done as part of the VJP)

Wi Fü Stab Ost - Wirtschaftsführungsstab Ost

[Economic Command Staff East]

(Organization under Plenipotentiary of VJP for unifying Eastern economic administration)

Wi Stab Ost - Wirtschaftsstab Ost

[Economic Staff East]

(Staff in charge of the Eastern economy for Wi Fü Stab Ost (about 2k officials and experts))

ZAVO - Zentralstelle für die Völker des Ostens

[Central Agency for the Peoples of the East]

(Welfare agency of the Eastern Ministry)

z.b.V. - zur besonderen Verwendung

[for special assignment / duties]

(Designation given to some units or positions with unclear or changing task)

ZO or ZHO - Zentralhandelsgesellschaft Ost
[Central Trading Company East]
(Main company that conducted trade business in the East)

Glossary and abbreviations related to the NSDAP

NSDAP - Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
[National Socialist German Workers' Party]
(The Nazi Party)

AO - Auslandsorganisation
[Foreign Organization]
(Organization of Nazi Party members living outside the borders of the Reich or its occupied territories)

APA - Außenpolitisches Amt der NSDAP
[Foreign Affairs Office of the NSDAP]
(NSDAP's office for planning foreign policy, mostly powerless after 1933)

Arb. NSDAP - Arbeitsbereich der NSDAP
[Working Sphere of the NSDAP]
(Name given to the regional NSDAP structures in occupied territories of the Reich)

GL - Gauleiter / Gauleitung
[/]
(Regional party boss / Regional party staff)

OPG - Oberstes Parteigericht
[Supreme Party Court]
(Highest Court of NSDAP)

PK - Partei-Kanzlei
[Party Chancellery]
(Central office of the Nazi Party)

PL - Politischer Leiter
[Political Leader]
(Nazi word for party cadres, ie part-time or full-time party functionary)

PO - Politische Organisation der NSDAP
[Political Organization of NSDAP]
(General term for the NSDAP's territorial and administrative cadre organization)

PZK - Politische Zentralkommission
[Political Central Commission]
(Central organizational commission established during reorganization in December 1932)

RL - Reichsleiter
[/]
(Second-highest position in the party, leader of one of party offices)

ROL - Reichsorganisationsleiter
[Reich Organizational Leader]
(Person in charge of organization of NSDAP, in reality powerless after Gregor Stasser left)

Rschm. - Reichsschatzmeister
[Reich treasurer of the Nazi Party]
(self-explanatory)

BDM - Bund Deutscher Mädel
[League of German Girls]
(Part of HJ; Girls' wing for girls aged 10 to 21 (split into 3 suborganization for different ages))

DAF - Deutsche Arbeitsfront
[German Labour Front]
(Affiliated Organization of NSDAP; State trade union and workers welfare organization)

DJ or DJV - Deutsches Jungvolk
[German Youngsters]
(Part of HJ; Separate section of the HJ for boys aged 10 to 14)

HJ - Hitlerjugend
[Hitler Youth]
(Division of NSDAP; Main youth organization, mandatory for all)

NSKK - Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps
[National Socialist Motor Corps]
(Division of NSDAP; State motor club, driver-training and roadside assistance organization)

NSDDB - Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Dozentenbund
[National Socialist German Lecturers League]
(Division of NSDAP; Nazi organization for university and academic staff; also abbreviated as NS-Dozentenbund)

NSDStB - Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Studentenbund
[National Socialist German Students' League]
(Division of NSDAP; Nazi student organization)

NSFK - Nationalsozialistisches Fliegerkorps

[National Socialist Flyers Corps]

(NS Organization; Organization for pilot training, as well as organization for air sports)

NSF or NS-Frauenschaft - Nationalsozialistische Frauenschaft

[National Socialist Women's League]

(Division of NSDAP; Nazi women's organizations)

NSV - Nationalsozialistische Volkswohlfahrt

[National Socialist People's Welfare]

(Affiliated Organization of NSDAP; Main welfare organization of Germany)

RAD - Reichsarbeitsdienst

[Reich Labour Service]

(NS Organization; Compulsory labour organization for all men and women)

SA - Sturmabteilung

[Storm Detachment]

(Division of NSDAP; The SA)

Glossary and abbreviations related to Reich Ministries

AA - Auswärtiges Amt

[German Foreign Office]

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

RAM - Reichsarbeitsministerium

[Reich Ministry for Labour]

RFM - Reichsfinanzministerium

[Reich Ministry of Finance]

RJM - Reichsjustizministerium

[Reich Ministry of Justice]

RLM - Reichsluftfahrtministerium

[Reich Ministry of Aviation]

RMEL - Reichsministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft

[Reich Ministry for Food and Agriculture]

RMI - Reichsministerium des Innern

[Reich Ministry of the Interior]

RMO or RMfdbO - Reichsministerium für die besetzten Ostgebiete
[Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories]

RWM - Reichswirtschaftsministerium
[Reich Ministry for Economics]

Glossary and abbreviations related to the SS

SS or , ,  - Schutzstaffel der NSDAP
[Protection Squadron of NSDAP]
(The SS)

A-SS - Allgemeine-SS
[General SS]
(Paramilitary part of the SS)

HA OrPo - Hauptamt Ordnungspolizei
[Main Office of the Order Police]
(Office of OrPo at the Reich Interior Ministry, tasked with administering all branches of OrPo)

HA Pers. Stab RFSS - Hauptamt Persönlicher Stab Reichsführer-SS
[Main Office of the Personal Staff of RFSS]
(Himmler's personal staff and SS organizations that didn't fit under any other office)

HA RKF or HA RKFDV - Hauptamt Reichskommissar für die Festigung Deutschen Volkstums
[Main Office of the Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of German Nationhood]
(Office for the staff of RKF, ie settlement and Germanization planning staff)

HA SS-Gericht - Hauptamt SS-Gericht
[SS Main Court Office]
(SS and Police court system)

HA VOMI - Hauptamt Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle
[Ethnic German Assistance Main Office]
(Office for management of the Volksdeutsche)

HöSSPF - Höchster SS- und Polizeiführer
[Supreme SS and Police Leader]
(Regional A-SS and Police chief for very large regions outside of Germany)

HSSPF - Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer
[Higher SS and Police Leader]
(Regional A-SS and Police chief)

SS-PHA - SS-Personalhauptamt
[SS Personnel Main Office]
(Office for overall SS personnel matters and statistics)

RFSS - Reichsführer-SS
(Second highest rank in the SS and de facto its chief, Himmler's rank in the SS)

RFSSuChdDtPol - Reichsführer-SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei
[Reichsführer-SS and Chief of German Police]
(Himmler's full title after 1936)

RKF or RKFDV - Reichskommissar für die Festigung deutschen Volkstums
[Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of German Nationhood]
(Position Himmler got in 1939 that made him in charge of settlement and Germanization)

RSA - Reichssicherheitshauptamt
[Reich Security Main Office]
(Umbrella term for various security agencies under the same boss (SD and SiPo))

RuSHA - Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt
[Race and Settlement Main Office]
(Office which checks backgrounds of every SS man and keeps statistics about it)

SD - Sicherheitsdienst der RFSS
[Security Service of the RFSS]
(SS intelligence and public opinion monitoring organization)

SS-FHA - SS-Führungshauptamt
[SS Operations Main Office]
(HQ of Waffen-SS)

SS-HA - SS-Hauptamt
[SS Main Office]
(Office with various tasks at different points in time)

SSPF - SS- und Polizeiführer
[SS and Police Leader]
(Regional A-SS and Police chief in smaller regions outside of Germany (always under some HSSPF))

SS-TV - SS-Totenkopfverbände
[SS Death's Head Formations]
(Camp guard formations)

SS-VT - SS-Verfügungstruppe
[SS Dispositional Troops]
(Pre-war military part of the SS, akin to Internal Troops of USSR and Russia)

SS-WVHA - SS Wirtschaft- und Verwaltungshauptamt
[SS Economic and Administration Main Office]
(Office for all SS economic adventures)

W-SS - Waffen-SS
[Armed SS]
(Military part of the SS, under OKW command)

Glossary and abbreviations related to the German Police

Gestapa - Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt
[Secret State Police Office]
(Gestapo HQ in Berlin)

Gestapo - Geheime Staatspolizei
[Secret State Police]
(Political Police)

Kripo - Kriminalpolizei
[Criminal Police]
(Criminal Police)

OrPo - Ordnungspolizei
[Order Police]
(Umbrella term for various uniformed police agencies)

Schuma - Schutzmannschaft
[Auxiliary Police]
(Collaborationist police made from native population, includes both regular police and combat units)

Schupo - Schutzpolizei
[Protection Police]
(Umbrella term for Schupo des Reiches + Schupo der Gemeinden, ie most uniformed police)

SiPo - Sicherheitspolizei
[Security Police]
(Umbrella term for Kripo + Gestapo)

Glossary and abbreviations related to the Wehrmacht

FHO - Fremde Heere Ost

[Foreign Armies East]

(General Staff intelligence branch concerned with the Red Army)

GFP - Geheime Feldpolizei

[Secret Field Police]

(Military Police for counter-espionage, counter-sabotage, investigations treasonable activities, primarily formed from conscripted Kripo officers and to lesser extent from Gestapo)

OKH - Oberkommando des Heeres

[High Command of the Army]

(Army General Staff)

OKL - Oberkommando der Luftwaffe

[High Command of the Luftwaffe]

(Luftwaffe General Staff)

OKM - Oberkommando der Marine

[High Command of the Navy]

(Naval General Staff)

OKW - Oberkommando der Wehrmacht

[High Command of the Wehrmacht]

(German General Staff)

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