

SIGNIFICANCE OF NÜRNBERG FOR THE HISTORY OF HUMAN GENETICS

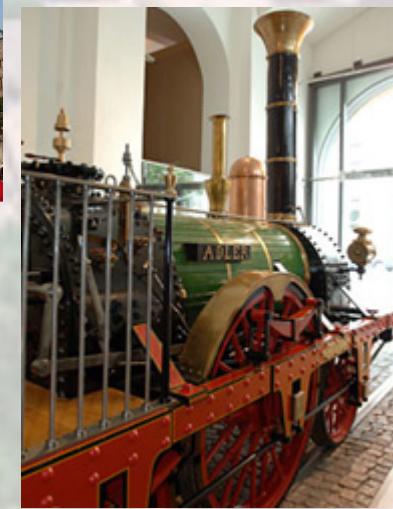
Heike Petermann

Institute for Ethics, History and Theory of
Medicine, WWU Münster

NUREMBERG



NÜRNBERG IN THE 16TH CENTURY



THIRD REICH -



Foto: o. Ang. | 8. September 1936



NS-POWER AND GENETICS

- In 1933: „Gesetz zur Verhütung erbkranken Nachwuchses“ (Law for Prevention of hereditarily diseased (unfit) offspring)
- „*Er [der völkische Staat] muss dafür Sorge tragen, dass nur wer gesund ist, Kinder zeugt, dass es nur eine Schande gibt: bei eigener Krankheit und eigenen Mängeln dennoch Kinder in die Welt zu setzen (...).*“
(aus „Mein Kampf“ 1923)

NÜRNBERG AND GENETICS

- „Racial Laws“ of 1935, so called „Nürnberger Gesetze“ (Nuremberg Laws)
- Antisemitic laws introduced at the Nuremberg Party Rally (passed parliament)
- Law for Protection of German Blood and Honour (Blutschutzgesetz)
- State citizen law (Reichsbürgergesetz)

WIDESPREAD THOUGHTS

- Eugenics: negative eugenics = racial laws
- „Vernichtung lebensunwerten Lebens“ (1939)
- Euthanasia
- Holocaust

NUREMBERG TRIALS



NUREMBERG CODE

- Research ethic principles for human experimentation (decision of the doctor's trial)
- Principles f.e.
 - ✓ Informed consent (essential)
 - ✓ Beneficence towards experiment participants
 - ✓ Based on animal experimentation
 - ✓ Avoid unnecessary physical and mental suffering and injury

SIGNIFICANCE FOR GENETICS?

- Idea of Concentration Camps in Munich (Dachau, March 1933)
- Experimentation at the Universities (less or more)
- Research Institute in Berlin: Kaiser-Wilhelm-Institut for Anthropology, Human Heredity and Eugenics
- Nürnberg: Racial Laws (Nuremberg Laws)
- **BUT:** Being in Nuremberg, one should remember that the same will never happen again!!