

Deutschlands Zigarettverbrauch

Die 74,8 Milliarden des Rechnungsjahres 1940/41 wurden zu 10 Stück verpackt, einen gewaltigen Block von 100 qm Grundfläche und 436m Höhe ausmachen.

Unser Bild zeigt diesen Zigarettenturm neben den Kölner Dom gestellt.

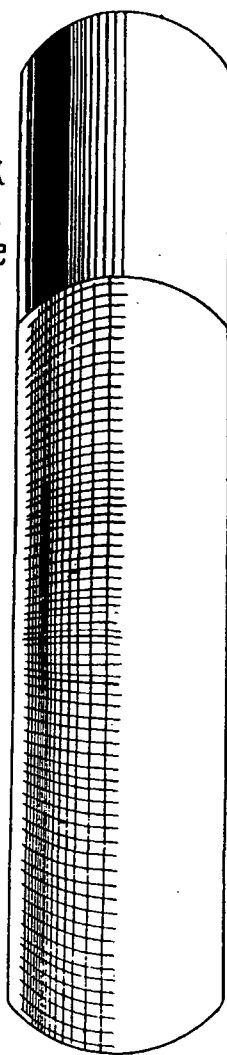
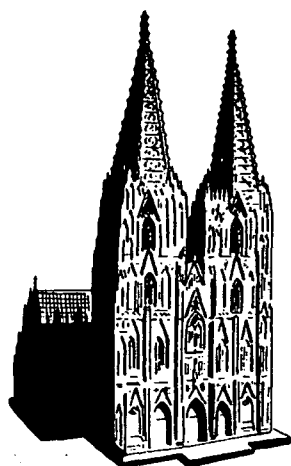


FIG. 6.22. In 1940/41, Germans smoked 75 billion cigarettes, or enough to form a cylindrical column of tobacco 436 meters high with a base of 100 square meters, dwarfing the Cathedral of Cologne by comparison. Source: *Reine Luft* 24 (1942): 70.

(Tobacco consumption actually grew more rapidly in Germany than in France: both nations consumed roughly 570 cigarettes per capita in 1932; by 1939 Germans were smoking 900 cigarettes per year while the French were smoking only 670.)¹⁷⁰ The argument has been put forward that smoking itself may have functioned as a kind of passive "resistance": young people smoked or listened to jazz or went to clandestine "swing" dance parties as a kind of cultural opposition to Nazi macho puritanism.¹⁷¹ It is difficult to say how ordinary citizens responded to the rhetoric and policies of the time, though we do have evidence that Nazi officials worried about appearing overly ascetic or "puritanical."¹⁷² Robert Ley, chief of the German Labor Front, tried at one point to distinguish between "indulgence" (*Genuss*) and "joy" (*Freude*)—the former bad, the latter good—but it is not really clear whether anyone grasped the gravity of the distinction. Nazi antitobacco activists were aware of the American backlash against Prohibition and clearly had this in mind when they cautioned against a total ban on cigarettes. As one activist articulated the predicament, "forbidden fruit is tempting" (*verbotene Frucht reizt*).¹⁷³

There is also evidence that some Nazi officials worried about public opposition to the antitobacco campaign, especially during the war. Propaganda chief Joseph Goebbels was basically in favor, but he also recognized a difficulty in that several Nazi luminaries—notably Reichsmarschall Göring, hardly the paragon of asceticism—continued to smoke in public. (Goebbels himself had been a heavy smoker since the 1920s, and though he tried to confine his habit to his home, some film clips from the era show him trying to hide his cigarette as the camera pans in his direction. He did finally manage to give up smoking in June of 1944, but the attempt on Hitler's life shortly thereafter drove him back to tobacco.)¹⁷⁴ Goebbels worried that the campaign might not be practical in wartime, and that its failure would reflect badly on the agencies involved.¹⁷⁵ On June 18, 1941, he ordered all tobacco propaganda to be cleared through his office.¹⁷⁶ Others worried about the impact of shortages on civilian morale. Reich economics minister Walther Funk complained that miners and armaments workers were not getting enough tobacco; he also cautioned that tobacco workers were