The spread of nazism as a diffusion process: methodological considerations and some results from an analysis of the recruitment to the nasjonal samling in Norway, 1933-1945

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*Methodological Considerations and some Results from an Analysis of the
Recruitment to the Nasjonal Samling in Norway, 1933—1945*

In this essay I will explore the so-called diffusion approach in an effort to analyse
trends in the recruitment process to the Nasjonal Samling (NS) in Norway through-
out its history of existence. The diffusion approach will be used in order to spell
out some general propositions about party recruitment as well as to illustrate the
type of problems encountered when using this design of quantitative analysis.
The essay begins with a brief overview of the background of the development of
Norwegian nationalism and state-building followed by a short outline of the NS'
history leading up to the dissolution of the party by the end of world war II. The
analytical section introduces the concept of diffusion and its relevance for the stu-
dy of the spread of nazism in a few paragraphs. I then try to summarize some of
the elementary mathematical ideas combined with a few of the best known dif-
fusion models including a few examples of how the general process of recruitment
took place over time with comments on the shape of the actual recruitment curves.
I then present some tests of diffusion models in recruitment between various occu-
pational groups. The notion of spatial diffusion is considered in the following sec-
tion in addition to some material on how the NS spread throughout the country.
The question of how the diffusion mechanisms work is taken up very briefly in the
last section with reference to some recent interview material.

Historical Overview

The history of Norwegian state- and nationbuilding is both very long and very
short, depending upon which perspective is chosen. By 1390 the Medieval kingdom
of Norway was amalgamated with the kingdom of Sweden and Denmark in a politi-
cal union which meant for Norway a more or less complete dependence on the poli-
tical center of Copenhagen in Denmark up to 1814. Norway was "Danificated" in
most cultural, economic and political areas, but the swift bloodless revolution in
February 1814 in Norway at the close of the Napoleonic war brought this to an
end. The few nobles and elected representatives rapidly introduced a new constitu-
tion and re-established the sovereign Norwegian State. However, as part of the

agreement between the allies who defeated the former Marshall of Napoleon, Carl Johan, was granted "the province of Norway" as extended Swedish territory. After a short war-effort in November 1814, Norway succumbed to its new union partner, but now on the principles of mutual agreements and, for the Norwegians, on the basis of state- and citizens rights newly formulated in the Constitution of 1814.

Until 1905, when Norway finally broke away from Sweden and established a sovereign nation-state of her own, the political scene was dominated by three main streams of conflict: The efforts to establish national consciousness at first against former Danish influence and later the incorporating of the growing anti-Swedish tensions; the long and fierce fight for the introduction of a more democratic, modern system of government; the conflict over economic, social and political redistribution and equalization, with the same opportunities for all sections of the population. When the NS was introduced officially on May 17, 1933 (the anniversary of the 1814 Constitution), the time may seem to have passed for a typical nationalist and radical modernization movement. The Liberal Party (Venstre), which had taken the lead on all the main policies of political, economic, and social change in the 19th century, and the Social Democratic Party (Arbeiderpartiet) which also introduced reforms in the same areas in the twenties and thirties, seemed to have embodied most of the elements of radical issues of change. Therefore, the introduction of the new NS party seems to have been based upon either a *rejection* of the policies so far implemented, or as the introduction of issues related to the actual situation created by international and national events in the 1930's.

The platform of the NS clearly reflected this position. It was launched as an anti-parliamentarian party (even if it contested two national and two local elections). It was to some extent anti-democratic and favoured a corporative system of government with a strong emphasis on the personal responsibility of one or a few leaders. On the other hand, it was very nationalistic, taking the pre-Union and early Medieval Norwegian nation-state as a model, introducing symbols, names and style from the Viking age as representing the "pure" Norwegian identity. The international situation was reflected in the party platform by its strong denounciation of communism, by its vigorous attack on ideas that intensified class-conflict, and also, to a less extent, by anti-capitalism. Its more puritan views on the role of christianity, morals, education and national standards of life were typical for many other parties in Norway in the thirties. In the national election in October 1933 the party won 2,8 per cent of the votes. Three years later, in 1936, hopes for a rapid success were disappointed when the NS was not able to broaden its popular support but instead achieved only the same percentage of votes. No Member of Parliament were elected in either of the two elections. The two local elections gave less general public support to the party, even if it received very strong support in some rural urban communes. In early 1937, an intense internal dispute had broken out. In February, Quisling's deputy leader, J. P. Hjort, resigned or was expelled from the party, leaving the organization much weaker. Gradually the organization dwindled and became more or less a personal sect around Quisling.

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By the outbreak of world war II new opportunities arose. Quisling was introduced to Hitler through Alfred Rosenberg in the autumn of 1939. Through various, not very well known activities, the NS received German financial support; it was also gradually being influenced by contacts with the NSDAP. On the 9th of April, 1940, Quisling, seemingly on his own initiative, appeared on the Norwegian broadcasting station in Oslo declaring that he had taken office as prime minister in the absence of the Social Democratic government. They had left the capital early in the morning together with the royal family and the Storting as the Germans conquered the country by a rapid surprise strategy. This individual effort by Quisling to take power on behalf of the NS lasted for only one week. New directions from Berlin placed a Reichskommissar in Norway as the German responsible for the running of civil affairs, and Quisling had to resign.

The actual fighting in Norway ended on June 7th, and the government left for London where it continued business during the war. September 25th, 1940 the German Reichskommissar, Joseph Terboven, appointed a new NS-government without Quisling but placed formal responsibility of government on the party, forbidding any other political organization to appear on the scene. It was not until February 2nd, 1942 that Quisling at last was installed as Ministerpresident and head of the NS-government. At that time the war started to turn against the Germans, and room for the proliferation of Norwegian Nazi politics could be tolerated by the Germans. However, the Reichskommissar never allowed the NS authorities to gain much initiative and he retained the steering of the country in his own hands.

In the Nasjonal Samling, the position of the party between Germans on the one hand and non-NS-Norwegians on the other caused much disagreement within sections of the party on how to pursue their own policy. Some groups favoured a stonger "Germanization" with complete absorption into a German Reich based on a Nordic nation and race. Others were strongly nationalistic and tried to establish an independent Norwegian NS-policy. Quisling himself tried in vain to formulate a policy of Norwegian independence in coalition with Germany on the basis of mutual understanding. This policy would have given him a platform at the end of the war to negotiate with the Norwegian government in London for a joint peace proposal. He failed because the Germans refused to slacken their grip on Norwegian affairs; he also failed because the legal government in London would not have anything to do with Quisling, and he failed generally because the whole plan was removed by the realities of the actual situation.

In terms of recruitment of members, the history of the NS shows four very different phases. The first phase begins on May 17th, 1933 and ends around February 1937. The party had a rapid inflow of members during the first two or three years, and very few newcomers after the split in 1937. The second period is from 1937 until autumn 1939 with a complete stop in recruitment. After talks with the Germans in 1939, the organization received new inputs, and the third phase definitely started on September 25th, 1940 when the NS was made the „state-party" and the largest recruitment process began. This ended in 1943 and the NS went into the last period of slow decline. On the one hand, the party gained members up to the last

months before May 8th, 1945, but lost more on the other. The fourth period is the sad phase when everybody must have had the feeling that they could no longer hope for a bright future.[1]

The Concept of Diffusion

The recruitment of members of the Nasjonal Samling in Norway will be described as a diffusion process. Diffusion is a very general concept which has been used to assess various processes of growth like the infection of a disease through contagion, the spread of bacteria in an organism, or the development of telephone link systems. In general systems analysis diffusion processes have been considered important in performing valuable cross-disciplinary links in many sciences.[2] Other people, however, have strongly denounced the indiscriminate use of general growth models of diffusion to "fit" all kinds of phenomena.[3]

The idea of using the diffusion concept in this essay is to build upon some of the general *theoretical* foundations developed in the literature dealing with the recruitment to the NS, as well as to utilize some elements of the methodological ideas developed in diffusion research.

There is no need per se to use the analogue concept of diffusion studies. One could just as well label the approach "trend studies of recruitment" or "growth processes of recruitment", but the diffusion concept seems to designate a particular growth process which has a definite beginning and an easily identifiable end. It seems to make sense to use diffusion as characterizing the process of NS recruitment,

[1] The most important works on the history of the NS 1933–1945 and related events during the World War II is Breving, Hans Olaf, NS – Fra parti til sekt (From Party to Sect) 1933–1937, Oslo 1970; Loock, Hans Dietrich, Quisling, Rosenberg und Terboven, Stuttgart 1970; Kontrast, 3 (1966), special edition with articles on The Fascism in Norway 1920–1940; Wyller, Thomas Chr., Nyordning og motstand (Reorganization and Resistance) Oslo 1957; Skodvin, Magne, Striden om Okkupasjonsstyret (The struggle on Occupational Rule), Oslo 1954; Kjellstadlie, Sverre, Heimestyrkene, Vol. 1 (The Home front), Oslo 1959.
In addition to these few major works there exists a wide variety of monographs, biographies, general historical works of the war efforts, and works related to various specific areas of events just before and particularly during the war.
[2] The perspective of the interdisciplinary analogy are discussed in Bertalanffy, L. van, An Outline of General Systems Theory, in: British Journal of Philosophy of Science, 1 (1950), S. 134.
[3] In Feller, William, An Introduction to Probability Theory and its Applications, Vol. III, 1966, S. 52 he dismisses the general value of using the logistic model (distribution) on the grounds that many other well known distributions (the normal, the Cauchy) may be fitted to many of the growth processes where the logistic have been used with even better fit. The universiality of the logistic model is therefore questioned as to its value as an explanation of what takes place during the process.

although I include different recruitment processes within the overall total NS-recruitment from 1933 to 1945.

What is then covered by the concept of diffusion? In the social and behavioral sciences, diffusion has been defined as (1) acceptance (2) over time (3) of some specific (4) channels of (5) communication, (6) to a social structure, and (7) to a given system of values, or culture.[4]

The spread of nazism, i. e. people becoming members of the NS, will thus be looked upon as a diffusion process, in terms of the definition mentioned that people enrolled themselves in various local branches of the NS after having been exposed to various communication stimuli from other NS-members or NS-organizations, while linked to their specific local and traditional Norwegian culture.

It may, however, be argued that the recruitment to the NS, or more trivially phrased, the spread of nazism, is substantially very different from adopting some neutral items, ideas, or habits as studied by various forms of diffusion analysis. Certainly the adoption of fluoridation systems in local water supplies, the buying of TV-sets, the introduction of old age pensions systems in communes, the entering of people into marriage etc. are very different from becoming a nazi.[5] In the particular Norwegian case NS membership after April 9th was declared as an act of treason and liable to punishment. However, the recruitment process to the NS will be analysed as the spread of a certain social *message*, to a social *system* within social *channels* of communication. Thus, the analogy in the choice of concept may be fair, and I do not see any strong argument against its use.

[4] This reference is taken from Katz, Elihu, Hamilton, Herbert and Lewin, Martin L., Traditions of research on the diffusion of innovations, in: American Sociological Review, 28 (1963), S. 238—252.

[5] The following list of works in political science along with others cited elsewhere in this essay may be cited as good examples of the variety of approaches to diffusion analyses Østbye, Helge, Om innføringen av fjernsyn i Norge (On the introduction of the TV in Norway), Mimeographed, University of Bergen 1972; Berhard, Richard M., Political Environment and the Adoption of Progressive Municipal Reform, in: Journal of Urban history, 1 (1975), S. 149—174; Crain, Robert L., Fluoridation: The Diffusion of an Innovation Among Cities, in: Social Forces, 44 (1966), S. 467—476; Feller, Irwin and Menzel, Donald C., Diffusion Milieus as Focus of Research on Innovation in the Public Sector, in: Policy Sciences, 8 (1977), S. 49—68; Walker, Jack L., The Diffusion of Innovations among the American States, in: American Political Science Review, 63 (1969), S. 880—899.

Formal Models for Diffusion Processes

There exists a variety of mathematical models which have been used to describe time-processes of either long-term cyclical variations or various coherent short-term diffusion processes.[6] The simplest, but perhaps the least realistic model, is the general equation for a straight line which projects a constant proportional growth. This is usually written

$$p_t = a + bt$$

p_t is the proportion being recruited to the NS at time t; a is the intercept of the p_t axis and shows how large a proportion of p_o has been recruited at time t_0 when the process starts, while b is the constant of conversion, or the constant proportional increase per time unit.

Fig 1: **Linear model**
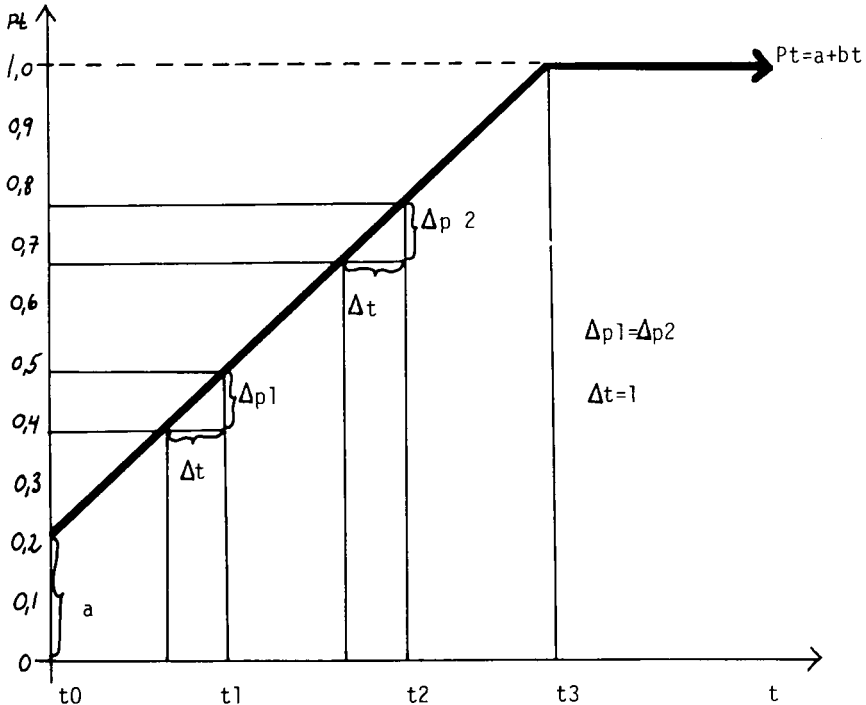
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In fig. 1 I have drawn the equivalent to the linear model. It starts at t_0 when a proportion of a population (p_0) (in the figure c. 20 per cent) has already become members. The process may extend infinitely over time, but no new members are recruited after time t_3 (asymptote $p_t = 1.0$). All the Δ t's are equal time units which is typical for a time-process.

The linear model and the corresponding figure give a very simple explanation of how the diffusion process generates itself. But due to its poor fit to empirical diffusion processes, its explanatory value exists primarily as a demonstration of comparing various "bad" fits to a variety of actual processes.

However, at some stages of the NSDAP's recruitment drive in Germany, the actual inflow of members was regulated by certain proportional growth figures. The party restricted the enrolment at certain stages, giving the impression that party membership was an exclusive citizen's right and only a fixed number of people should be allowed to join each month (the delta p's were fixed as constant proportions of entrance).[7]

In Norway, some sort of "linear" entrance process was designed by the NS headquarters in the autumn of 1940. The plan was that the party should recruit a fixed proportion of members in each county totalling 100 000 new members. But the recruitment had to be realized on equal rates from each county on the basis of the census of 1930. However, they never reached the 100 000 limit and the recruitment process later developed as an open diffusion process stimulated by the party's recruitment efforts and strongly influenced by contemporary political events.[8]

Diffusion models based on various powers of t are often written in the following form:

$$p_t = a + bt + ct^2 + dt^3 \ldots zt^n$$

Such models describe curves with shifting increase or decrease, or represent curves with "bends" or "breaks". The models may, with convenient procedures at hand, show a good "fit" to actual distributions, but it is very difficult to give meaningful interpretations.

The two best-known diffusion models are perhaps the modified exponential model and the logistic model.

In diffusion analyses with processes that are closed and that have an upper asymto-

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[7] A short illustration of both the actual entrance rate and some arguments used by the NSDAP in freezing the proportions of entrance is given in the paper of Michael Kater presented to the QUANTUM Conference on Quantitative Analyses of National Socialism, Bad Homburg, October 1977: Quantifizierung und NS-Geschichte. Methodologische Überlegungen über Grenzen und Möglichkeiten einer EDV-Analyse der NSDAP-Sozialstruktur von 1925 bis 1945, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft, 3 (1977), S. 453–484, and in this volume.

[8] A short description of the 100 000 members plan, and the outcome and evaluation of the recruitment drive is given in Magne Skodvins chapter Historisk Innleiing til Landssvikoppgjøret (Historical introduction to the trial of treason) in Innstilling om landssvikoppgjoret. Avgitt til Justisdepartementet, Oslo 1962.

te (p_t max equals 1.0) and whose time units are all equal to 1, the ordinary exponential model ($p_t = ab^t$) is written in the following form:

$$p_t = k + ab^t$$

This model describes a process that has its maximum increase at the beginning of the period and the amount of increase decreases at each time unit. With the assumption already mentioned for a "closed" diffusion process, we will have a gradual increase in the total amount of people being recruited (based on cumulative per cent "growth") but a potentially declining growth as the process goes on. This model has been named 'the external exposure model'. The diffusion effect works as long as the external medium of exposure works. Each person is recruited on an individual basis with direct exposure from the central stimulus, not through social contacts.
The logistic model has also been called "snowball-effect" or "internal exposure model". It may be written like this

$$Pt = \frac{1}{k + ab^t}$$

The model describes a slow increase in the beginning, then an accelerating increase, followed by a decreasing proportion of recruitment. The highest rate of increase may be at the middle of the period, and the lowest at the two "tails".

Fig. 2: Exponential model

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Logistic model.
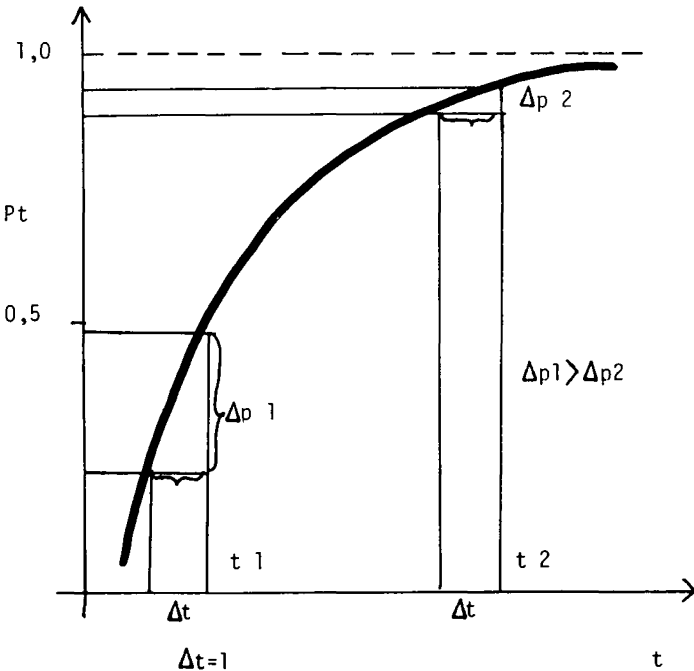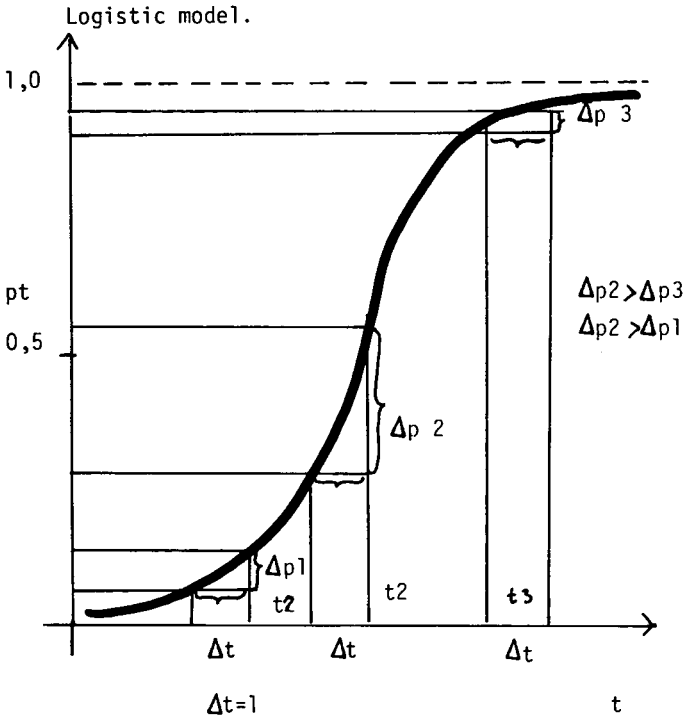
This process is a recruitment process which works through social contacts. It starts when a few people are recruited, then it grows when they influence their social networks, and it decreases when the last isolated individuals finally are contacted.

In the diffusion literature two other models have been proposed. The one is the Gomperts curve written like this

$$p_t = ka^{b^t}$$

The flexibility of the curve, when fitted to empirical distributions, has often been mentioned as a recommendation for its use, but as in the case with models of several powers of t, the interpretation of the results may be difficult.

Due to the general assumptions underlying the logistic model, particularly the idea that the process is smooth and spreads through a homogeneous population, efforts have been proposed to modify the model in order to account for structural differences in the diffusion population. The non-homogeneous diffusion model is written like this:

$$P_t = \frac{1}{1 + (1-p_o) a \over p_o a^{b^t}}$$

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The idea behind this model is that one has to account for the fact that the diffusion process (internal exposure) will show a higher "adaptiveness" in the first part of the period than in the latter. It is more reasonable to think that there will be a slower recruitment drive at the end of the period than in the beginning so that the diffusion process will not be homogeneous in terms of having the same "speed" for the first as for the last part of the population involved. The accelerating mid-term part of the process does not have to be affected by this.

Finally, one may theoretically assume that one is analysing a diffusion process which is a result both of the "snowball-effect" and the external exposure effect (plus the effect of the two in combination!). Some models have been proposed to account for this double effect, but will not be commented on in this essay.[9]

To sum up the arguments so far I will stress two important points: First of all, one always needs a theory or a fixed idea of what kind of process the NS recruitment comprises. At least, one has to have some hunches as to what was actually happening during the various stages of the recruitment process. With such an intuitive understanding one is able to ask to which kind of questions some of the models may give an answer.

Secondly, depending upon the fitting of the models employed, one should be able to interpret the results: If the model does not fit the actual process, one has to rethink the assumptions on which the choice of the model and the structuring of the data (time periods, choice of units, etc) is based. If it fits well, one has to study in detail the actual communication channels to find out from information other than the aggregate recruitment data, how the mechanisms on the individual and the local level worked to make people become members of the NS.

[9] The method of non-homogeneous diffusion analysis has been developed by Gudmund Hernes: First published in his article The process of entry into first marriage, in: American Sociological Review, 37 (1972), S. 173—182. In this article he stresses the weakness of the traditional assumption of the logistic model which does not take into account the structured differences in the population where the diffusion takes place.

In his article Diffusion growth — the non-homogeneous case, in: The Scandinavian Journal of Economics, 78 (1976), S. 427—436, Gudmund Hernes further extends his development of the non-homogeneous model, while discussing the weakness of the modified exponential model, the Gomperts model and the logistic model. In the conclusion he proposes a new model that may both incorporate the external exposure model and the internal social diffusion model written in this way:

$$\frac{dP}{dt} = q_1 (t) (1 - P) + q_2 (t) (1 - P) P$$

where the q's are the two parameters of conversion and $\frac{dP}{dt}$ the change of increase in the curve. Hernes also refers to the work of Lekvall, P. and Walbin, C. A., A study of some assumptions underlying innovation diffusion functions, in: Scandinavian Journal of Economics, 75 (1973), S. 363—377 where they also point to how the combined processes may be accounted for in one model. James Coleman mentioned the same idea earlier in Introduction to Mathematical Sociology, New York 1964, S. 494 (footnote).

Hamblin, R. L., Jacobsen, R. B., Miller J. L. L., A Mathematical Theory of Social Change, New

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The Overall Recruitment to the NS[10]

There are good reasons to discuss whether recruitment to the NS for the entire period between 1933 and 1945 can be defined or considered as one, continuous diffusion process. On the other hand it is safe to say that there is some kind of continuity in the process, since we very often find that the successful recruitment areas in the early period also became the best recruitment areas in later periods. The process may thus be viewed as continuous, but stimulated by different diffusion mechanisms. In fig 3 I have drawn the curve for the complete cumulative recruitment to the NS. By using cumulative growth as a continuum on the axis when drawing the curve, and the year as basis for time units, the curve looks more smooth than a cyclical curve and more details would have been revealed.

Fig. 3:
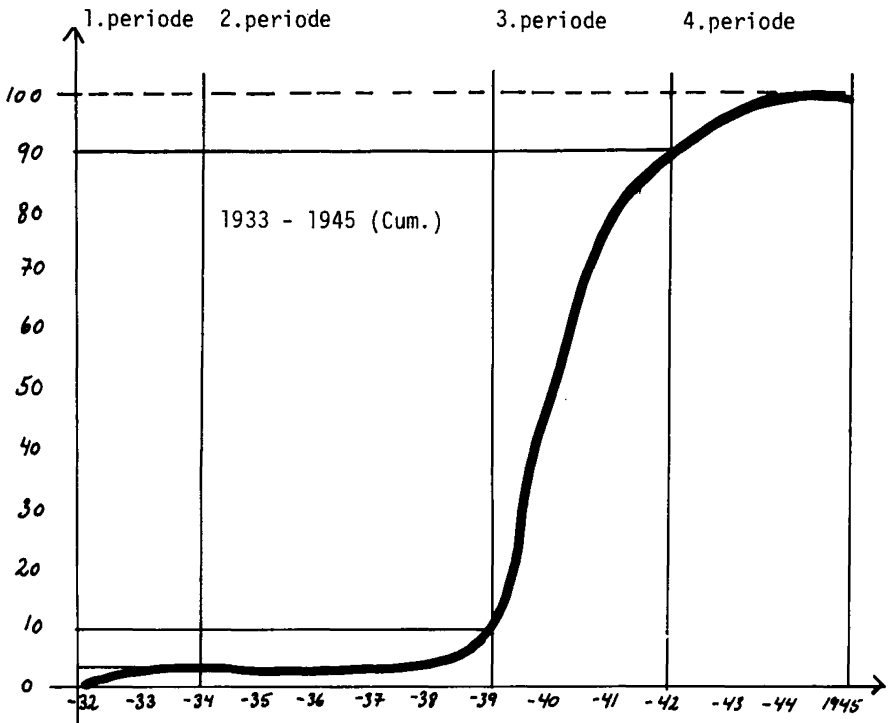
York 1973, contains numerous applications of various diffusion models to a wide variety of data as well as a broad discussion of the conceptualization of growth, diffusion, innovation and adaption.

[10] The data on recruitment to the NS were coded from a central card file collected by the Bureau of Retribution from 1945 to 1952. That file was made by taking information from all the

The party started from zero in early 1933 and culminated at 100 per cent i. e. 54 651 enrolled members, by the 8th of May, 1945. There are two rapid inflows between 1933 and 1940, and two more stable periods of little or no increase in membership in the second and fourth periods (as I have labeled them in the figure). What kind of shape does the curve represent in terms of the models discussed?

If we take period two (from 1934 until 1939) it is possible to define it either as a delayed diffusion process or as a complete break in the process. There were members who joined the NS but many more who left the party; they either just disappeared or formally withdrew from it. However, one may regard this period as a "tail" (at the beginning or at the end) both to the first and to the third period. There are also problems as far as the fourth period is concerned. After 1943, new members enrolled, but due to withdrawals the party was reduced from about 43 000 "active" members at the beginning of 1943 to about 39 000 at the end in 1945. These withdrawals have not been accounted for in the cumulative curve which focuses only on new entrants. But since the impulse of becoming a member of the NS continued to work up to the final days, the process of diffusion went on. This leads us to think that the diffusion of recruitment is one process; however, it consisted of various sub-processes where diffusion mechanisms of various kinds worked at different time periods. If we pick out two of the most interesting periods, the first and the third, the growth rates show a comparatively similar shape.

The first rapid inflow of members came after the summer of 1933. The formal inauguration day of May 17th was chosen for symbolic reasons. The main idea was that the party organizers wanted to have some time before the Storting (parliament) election took place that year in order to organize a campaign. Figure 4 shows a relatively strong period of entries in May and in June, followed by a weak period in the summer before the real drive came in September. The election was held late in October 1933 and after the election, which certainly was no big success, the party had a very low recruitment rate. At the beginning of 1934 this set-back was followed by a slow and stable increase (not shown in the figure) until the local election in October the same year. Then another decline followed. The cumulative percent curve below the ordinary percent curve reflects this uneven process with

actual cases including all NS-members that were brought to the police and the courts during the great Trial. From this file we coded all individuals which were marked as having been members. This results in an overall figure of members on 54 651 persons from a total of 92 000 cases.

The main problem in assessing the total number of NS-members comes from the missing information on members who left the party before 1940, or who re-joined but were registered as new members. The party gave out figures at one time indicating that they had 15 000 members in 1936, and later they maintained that the figure should be 10 000. One investigation by the Germans in 1940 concluded with a figure of c. 8.500 but this may very well have been exaggerated. If we take the ordinary membership rate for Norwegian party membership according to votes at elections, we arrive at a figure between 10 and 15 per cent. With 28 000 votes in 1933 and in 1936, a figure of about 3000 should be a fair estimate of the Nasjonal Samling's membership strength before the war. By a total figure of 2 545 we are, however, still somewhat short of the possible total number of members.

Fig. 4

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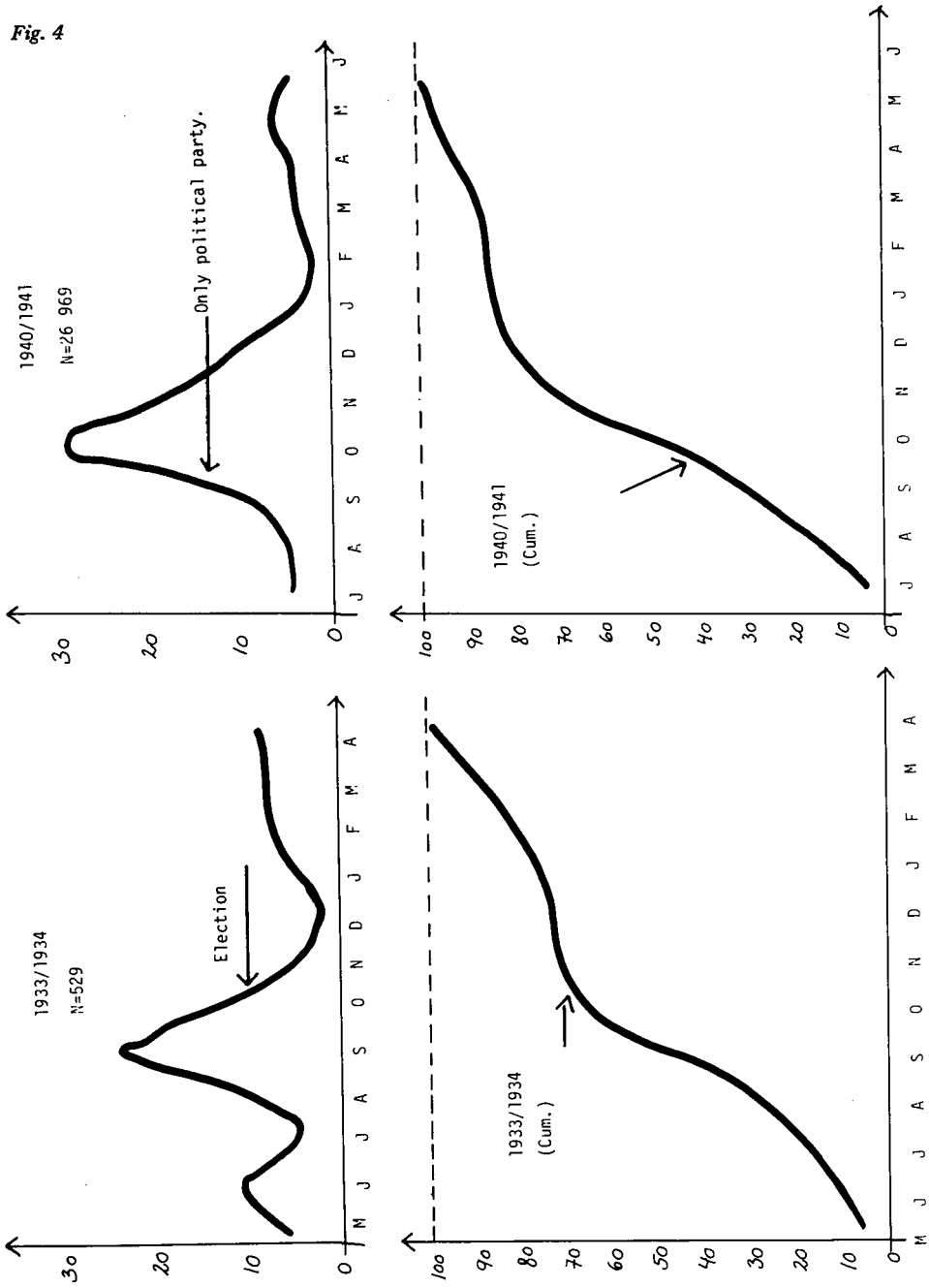
the particular "elbow" in the middle of the period. It may look like something in between a modified exponential and a logistic process.

If we look at the other rapid recruitment drive in the third period, we can also observe a sudden increase from September 1940 with the curve culminating in October. From that time on a gradual decline, with the lowest mark in February 1941, can be observed. After this minimum increase, the curve starts to rise, it stabilizes in the spring and summer months, and starts to accelerate again (not shown in the figure) in autumn 1941.

The most important single stimulus in the process was certainly the declaration from the Reichskommissar on September 25th, 1940; this declaration assigned an official status to the NS as the recognized partner to rule in Norway together with the Germans, and also a status as the only "legal" political organization.

When comparing the curves of period 1 and period 3 in fig. 4, there are some similarities like the characteristic "elbow" in the middle of the period and then the decline which is followed in both cases by a declining rate of increase. The important difference (not counting the total number of people in the two processes $N = 529$ and $N = 26\ 969$) may be the different location of the actual point of external exposure entered in the two processes. The election in October 1933 came *after* the culmination of recruitment, but the declaration of the Reichskommissar came during the acceleration process and *before* the culmination of the curve.

These two examples of details in selected periods of recruitment, being parts of an extended long-term process, show how specific problems may arise and new questions may be asked in connection with the actual shape of the curves and the forces behind the recruitment trends. If we want to find a perfect "fit" for a logistic or a modified exponential model, we may start to divide the process into time intervals in such a way that we will achieve the maximum or best fit. Let us take the example of fig. 3. We may find that we will get a good fit for an exponential model, if we "start" the process in July 1933 and conclude it in December. By ignoring the two "tails" we may conclude that the first recruitment to the NS was a result of a direct appeal from Quisling and his organization in Oslo with the October election as the primary goal for recruitment. If the actual test of the modified exponential model supports this conclusion we may look for information elsewhere to find support whether this had been so in "reality".

However, if we "bring back" the two tails and the particular "elbow" in the cumulative curves, the whole process from May 1933 until April 1934 may look like a curve described by a logistic model. We then will have to state that recruitment was primarily the result of internal social contacts and exposure through the "snowball effect". When the NS was founded on 17th of May, it started by just enrolling the few founding fathers. Slowly they committed a certain number of other people, who in their turn persuaded others to join through their social contacts (friends, colleagues, family, etc.), but that process did not start to show results before a certain time had elapsed. Then, the main "snowball started to roll" from August and all through September.

We can apply the same approach to the interpretation and the testing of the accele-

rating recruitment process from July 1940 to July 1941. When employing either the exponential or the logistic method we will be able to gain an understanding of the process through a systematic manner of reasoning. Intuitively we may have a typical external exposure effect if we "start" in August 1941 and "stop" in February 1941, or a logistic or internal exposure effect if we "start" in April 1940 (or even in January) and "stop" in February.

This discussion, based on the material presented, illuminates some of the basic features of employing the formal diffusion approach to the recruitment process: On the one side one may be convinced that recruitment to a nazi party must work as an external exposure process, as a result of the loud appearance of the uniformed military, the harsh propaganda in all streets and the thorough use of all communication channels; the single individual would be "hit" directly and join as an impulsive act of response. Then one may start to "fit" such a model to actual recruitment data by changing time units, changing time periods etc. in order to find the perfect time interval. Whith that in hand one will have to judge which of the designs and the intervals are sensible and if they seem plausible when confronted with independent information on what was going on during that period. The importance of the approach is that it is based on a pre-formulated theory that has been the guiding principle for research in otherwise unwieldy processes, and finally the findings may be interpreted in the light of information that may qualify the assumptions underlying the theory.

On the other hand one may look at one completed process or at various short-term, unequal time intervals within the total recruitment process and search among many models in order to find the one which fits best. One may then describe the recruitment process successively as being an external exposure process, and internal exposure process, both being at overlapping intervals, etc. When one is finding intervals, which e. g. fit with the modified exponential model, one may start to look for the moment of the crucial exposure. Or one may go the other way round and select the exposure moment and then start to measure the effect of it by seeking an interval in the actual time period when the modified exponential model fits better. The "amplitudes" of various exposure events can thus be measured when having a continuous and changing recruitment process as in the case of the history of the NS 1933—1945.

Diffusion in Occupational Groups.
Test of Models[11]

The basic idea in one of the most famous projects on diffusion analysis was based on the problem of how knowledge of a certain kind was spread within one particular professional group. Since occupational milieu — and not only that which is restricted to the same job site or office — often produces the most effective social networks, it is therefore of special interest to study how the recruitment to the NS spread among various occupational groups. Such kinds of analyses may provide another important clue to the understanding of recruitment processes in general.[12]

When looking at the over-time recruitment processes for several occupational groups one will find that they do have — with important exceptions — a common shape corresponding to the general recruitment curve in fig. 3. This is mostly due to the uneven recruitment process with the heavy inflow of 40 per cent of the members in 1940: All major occupational groups also had their highest recruitment rate in that year.

With its long left hand "tail" mentioned in the previous section, the recruitment curve does not really look like a typical diffusion curve directly derived from the models described. After several tests had been made for the degree of fit, only the non-homogeneous model turned out to be appropriate for describing the general growth rate of the occupational recruitment processes. This model is generally the most appropriate when accounting for uneven increases in growth. It will fit better because we thus are able to incorporate quite well the second period which had no or very little growth. This long left hand "tail" has a very disturbing effect on the suitability of all the models for the whole period of 1933—1945, whether special or occupational diffusion.

After having gone through several iteration procedures, we were able to find the best fit using this model. The problem is illustrated in fig. 5 which shows the recruitment curve for higher public servants through 1933—1945. The plot (broken lines) is the non-homogeneous diffusion model. One plot is shown without adjustment (squared deviation from the actual curve equals 19352.78). Through arithmetic iterative processes "moving the curve to the left", and "putting it closer down to the time-axis", to speak in figurative language, we got a better fit with a squared deviation of 5206.26. This is a much smaller figure than for the non-adjusted model.

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[11] The computer program for diffusion analysis made by Mr. Helge Ostbye at the INSS in Bergen and gradually developed by Mr. Jarle Brosveet and Mr. Terje Sande at the NSD. Helge Østbye and Bjarne Kristiansen built the data base from which the curves were computed and programmed the various test plots.

[12] One of the classics on analysis of diffusion of innovations in professional groups is Coleman, James, Katz, Elihu and Menzel, Herbert, Medical innovation. A diffusion study, New York 1966, especially chapter 7, A Snow-Ball Process of Drug Adoption, S. 95—112.
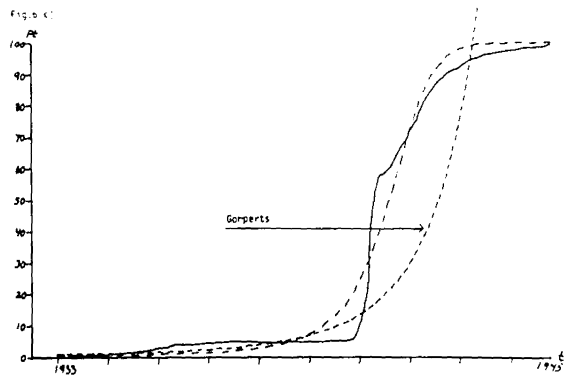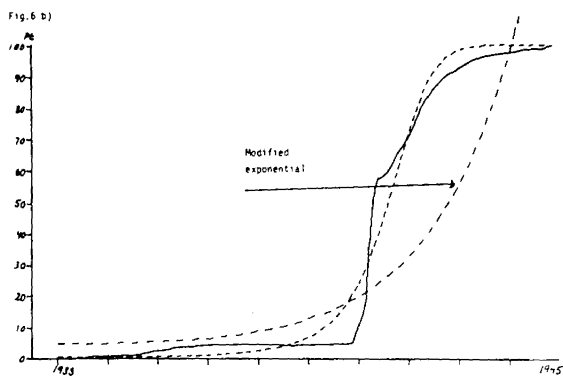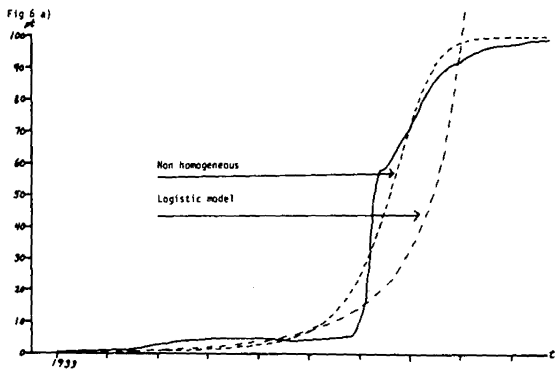
Fig. 5
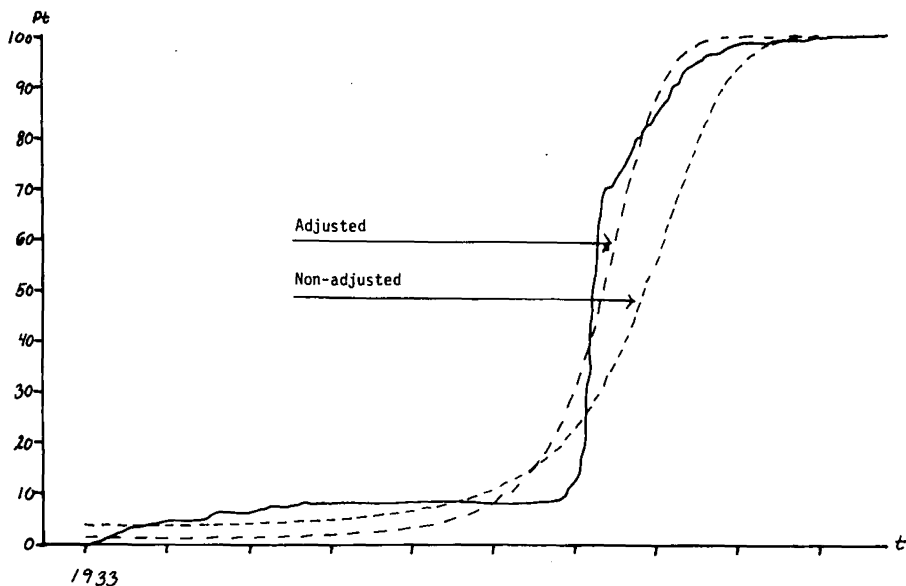
Diffusion model (non-homogeneous) fitted to the higher civil servant's occupational group (N = 460; 0.8% of the total Nasjonal Samling).
Adjusted coefficient of squared deviation = 5 206.26. Non-adjusted coefficient of squared deviation = 19352.75.

The actual adjustment thus involves a reducing of the effect of the small proportion at the left tail and the effect that the highest growth rates in 1940 stronger influenced the total shape of the curve. Altogether the non-homogeneous diffusion model is, as previously mentioned, a modified version of a logistic model and does describe a process of diffusion which spreads through internal social networks.

When looking at fig. 6 we can see how bad the other three models worked when applied, after iterations, to the distribution of all farming, forest and fishing occupations taken together. This can be seen by comparing each of the three curves with the curve for the non-homogeneous model and the actual recruitment curve. The visual illustration can be matched to the numbers of the squared deviation coefficients of the non-homogeneous model (4108.97). The number for the modified exponential model is 62.956.20, and when using the fitting procedures for the logistic and the Gomperts models the numbers were too large to be written out by the program. Both curves do not show a decline in increase at the end of the period, which should be one of the assumptions for using them, a result which again demonstrates their limits in this actual case.

Fig 6 a)

Non homogeneous

Logistic model

1933

Fig.6 b)

Modified
exponential

1933   1945

Fig.6 c)

Gomperts

1933   1945

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If we do split up the total diffusion process in intervals of shorter processes, we may find a more suitable application of the models. This is done in fig. 7 where we have "started" the diffusion process in the occupational group of farmers, forest owners and working fishermen at the 9th of April, 1945 and ended it by 8th of May, 1945.

Fig. 7

Non-homogeneous

Modified exponential

9/4 -1940   1945
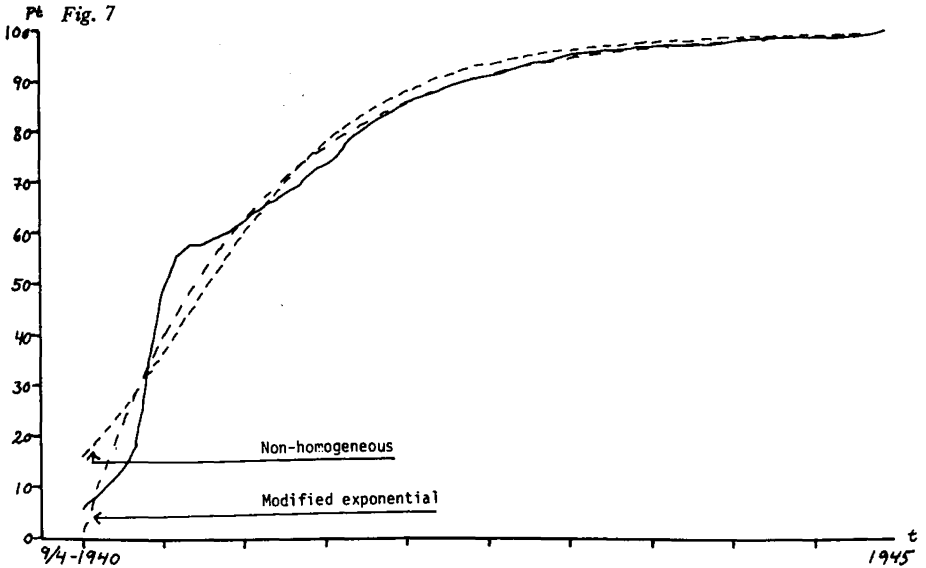
Curve fitted by modified exponential and non-homogeneous models. Coefficients of squared deviations: modified exponential = 646,39, Gomperts = 1.163,23, non-homogeneous = 1.465,52, logistic = 5.132,92.
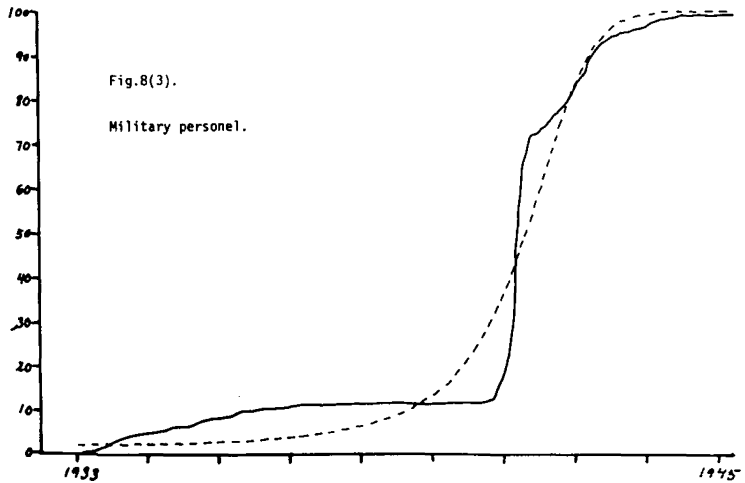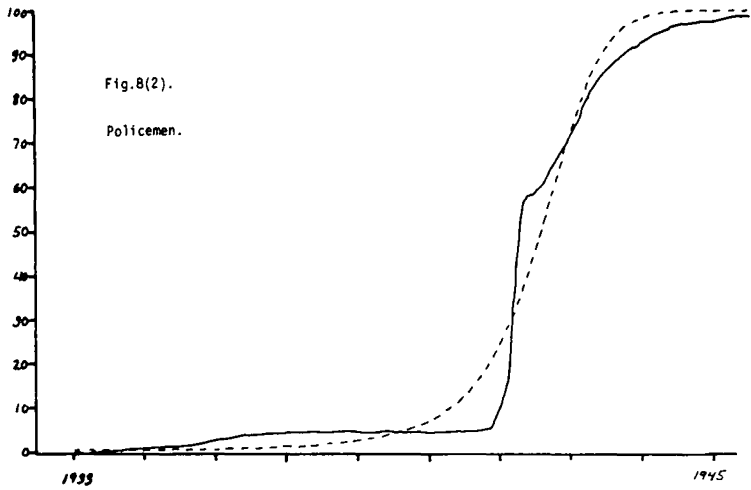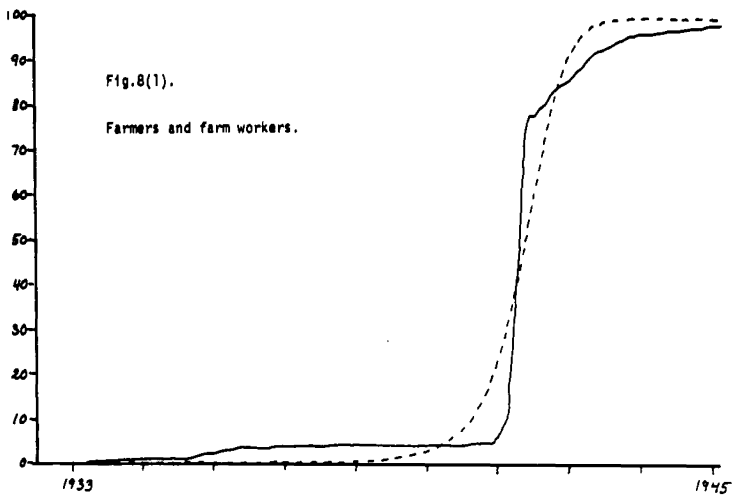
In the figure we have drawn the non-homogeneous and the modified exponential model curves and afterwards fitted them to iteration procedures. By looking at the squared deviation coefficients printed in fig. 7, we find that the Gomperts model fits better than the non-homogeneous model. The logistic model is least suitable, indicating that the assumptions underlying the use of that model is not met by this process.

The modified exponential models definitely shows the best fit (646.39) and some of our arguments of explaining the third period of recruitment as an external exposure diffusion process may thus be valid.

The following questions may then be asked: Which occupation's joining rate showed the best fit to the various models of diffusion? Or what kind of diffusion processes took place within the different occupations when enrollment in the NS was taking place?

In fig. 8 we can see how six occupational groups were recruited to the NS from 1933 to 1945. All the empirical curves resemble well the general overall growth curve, but the contrasts are also interesting. If we first compare the appropriateness

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Fig. 8

Fig.8(1).

Farmers and farm workers.

Fig.8(2).

Policemen.

Fig.8(3).

Military personel.

Fig.8(4).

Teachers.

Fig.8(5).

Lawyers.
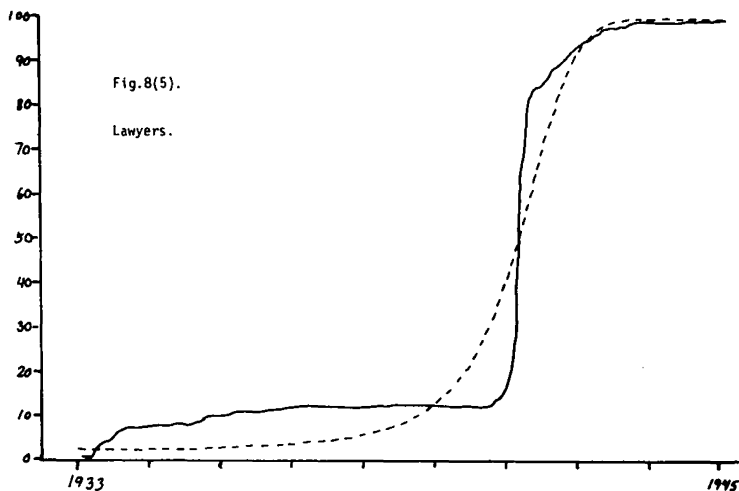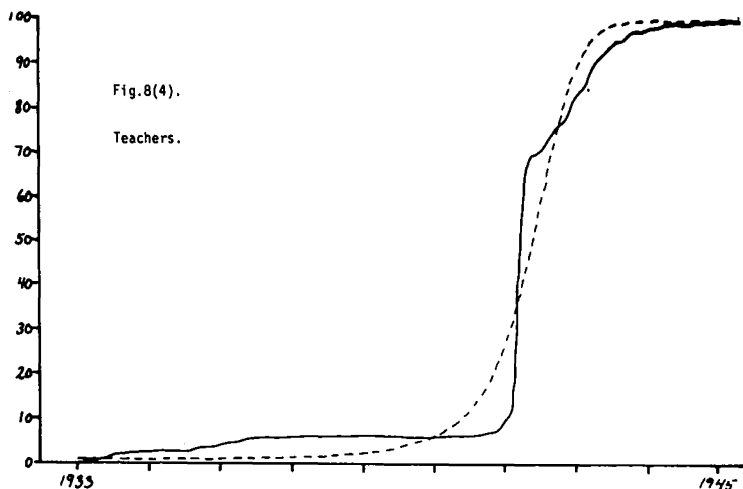
by looking at the squared deviation coefficients of the non-homogeneous model, we can see that the farmers and farm workers (excluding forest owners and workers and fishermen) have the best fit (3980.54) and the others in the following order: teachers (4634.38), policemen (4852.14), religious occupations (5037.25), military personnel (5964.39) and lawyers (8816.38). None of the occupational groups showed any really good fit (0.00 as maximum "complete fit") and therefore all of them only "compare" to a non-homogeneous diffusion process rather than "fit" to only one. The recruitment to the Nasjonal Samling was for no group a continuous, non -homogeneous diffusion process. However, the differences between them are of some interest and correspond to the overall diffusion process in the NS previously mentioned as follows: The "higher status occupations formed the party, while the lower status filled the ranks".[13] The better fit of farmers and farmworkers and

Fig.8(6).

Religious occupations.

1933   1945
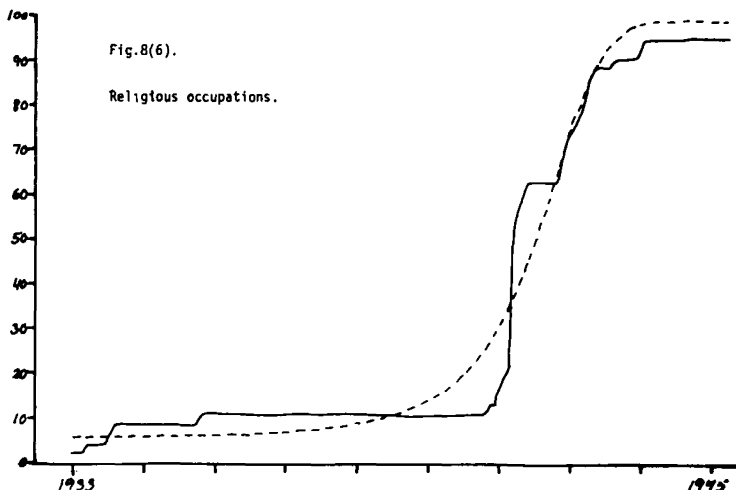
Six occupational groups fitted with the non-homogeneous model.
Coefficients of squared deviation (k):
8.1. Farmers and farm workers, N = 8.972, per cent NS = 16,4, k= 3.980,68.
8.2. Policemen, N = 2.121, percent NS = 3,9, k = 4.852,14.
8.3. Military personel, N = 1.885, per cent NS = 3,4, k = 5.964,39.
8.4. Teachers, N = 885, per cent NS = 1,6, k = 4.635,38.
8.5. Lawyers, N = 331, per cent NS = 0,6, k = 8.816,39.
8.6. Religious occupations, N = 47, per cent NS = 0,1 k = 5.037,25.

the bad fit of the lawyers demonstrate that this professional group joined in larger proportions in the early period of the party then the farmers and farmworkers. This can be seen by comparing visually the empirical curves of farmers and farmworkers to those of lawyers. The curve for the recruitment of lawyers went above the ten percent value very early in the process (around 1936) and while the curve for farmers and fishermen did not reach the ten percent mark until the largest acceleration of recruitment started in September 1940. The occupational groups which had a slower decline in increase or to relatively more persons joined after 1942 also fit better to the non-homogeneous model, i. e. occupations with exceptionally few entrants in that period, and many in the first two periods. The general shape of the empirical curves also reflects the total number of people in each group. The group of the religious occupations has a recruitment-curve shaped as definite "steps", while the farmers and farmworkers have a smoother curve. This difference is clearly understandable because a ten percent increase in the religious occupational group requires only four new members compared to the farmers' and farmworkers' occupational group which would require around 90 new members to have a ten percent increase.

[13] See Larsen, Stein Ugelvik, Who were the Norwegian Nazis?, in: Who were the Fascists?, edited by Bernt Hagtvet, Stein U. Larsen, J. P. Myklebust, to be published in 1980. For a general set of propositions of the importance of high status in various diffusion processes see Rogers, Everett, Shoemaker, M., Floyd, F., Communications of Innovations. A Cross Culture

Geographical Diffusion

I have briefly mentioned two general approaches to geographical or spatial diffusion: The center-periphery-effect, and the „neighbourhood-effect". In this section I will go into some detail as to how this geographical recruitment to the NS spread throughout the country.

The NS party was officially founded at Eidsvold, a small village near Oslo, but there was never any doubt that the capital should be the main and most important place for all NS activities during the whole history of the NS. Oslo also remained the largest NS local county organization with about 10 000 or c. 20 per cent of the members registered from 1933 to 1945. The head office was established in Oslo and all propaganda, directives etc. were sent from Oslo to the rest of the country. The German Reichskommissar had his residence in Oslo, and in a type of centralized movement like the NS, based on the "Führer-principle", all basic activities spread out from there.

In line with this strong dominance recruitment to the NS grew with unequal regional strength in the various parts of Norway. When the party, aided by German expertise and money, started in the autumn of 1940 to recruit members systematically, the results were, like many other diffusion processes, very much dependent on various local factors. In some areas a few important individuals, strategically placed in the local milieu, contributed very much to a high rate of recruitment, while in others the NS did not get any response.[14] In table 1 I have computed the results of recruitment in various regional areas, and in rural versus urban localities. The table clearly shows the main NS strength in the Oslo area (the three counties of Østfold, Akershus, Vestfold and Oslo city) and in the rest of the Eastern part of Norway. All in all this area comprised 64.4 per cent of the membership, but had around 50 per cent of the total population of the country.

The table also reveals that during the whole period the rural areas had a higher percentage of membership than the urban. However, the important trend in the regional recruitment took place in the last three to four years of the party's history. Looking at the horizontal percentages, one can see how the Oslofjord and the rest of Eastern Norway before 1940 and also in 1940 had more than 70 per cent of the

Approach, New York 1971. Appendix A: Generalizations about Diffusion of Innovations, S. 346—387. It may be difficult to restrict the concept of social networks to occupational group networks. There may be more influence from various neighbourhood contacts of influence through e. g. superior persons from other occupations on the job. But in many ways influence through occupational contacts will legitimize the NS membership status more than will happen when one is influenced through neighbourhood contacts. However, for some occupational groups there are obvious problems connected with the concept of occupational group influence, particularly housewives, isolated farmers etc.

[14] More details of the recruitment process in the various rural areas of Norway is given in Bernt Hagtvet and Jan Petter Myklebust in their essay Regional Contrasts in the support for Nasjonal Samling, in: Who were the Fascists?, op. cit.

Table 1: Regional variation of recruitment to NS at various intervalls from 1933 to 1945

	Oslofjord area	Rest East Norway	South and West	Trøndelag Mid.-North	North areas Norway	Urban areas	Rural areas	No information on region	Totals
1933–1939	49.2 / 6.1	20.8 / 4.1	13.4 / 4.2	6.9 / 3.4	3.0 / 2.2	53.5 / 6.3	39.8 / 3.5	6.7 / 12.3	100 / 4.9
1940	43.7 / 45.1	27.7 / 45.3	14.8 / 37.2	7.3 / 29.6	4.4 / 25.9	41.7 / 40.7	56.2 / 41.3	2.2 / 33.0	100 / 40.8
1941	40.7 / 24.2	23.1 / 21.8	16.6 / 24.6	10.4 / 24.3	6.7 / 22.5	44.2 / 24.9	53.2 / 22.6	2.6 / 23.1	100 / 23.5
1942	32.3 / 14.8	23.2 / 16.8	17.9 / 20.5	11.7 / 20.9	12.0 / 31.1	38.6 / 16.7	58.6 / 19.1	2.9 / 19.5	100 / 18.1
1943	28.4 / 4.0	22.2 / 4.9	17.9 / 6.2	17.2 / 9.4	12.2 / 9.7	36.7 / 4.8	61.6 / 6.1	2.1 / 4.4	100 / 5.5
1944	24.1 / 1.3	26.8 / 2.3	13.1 / 1.8	23.6 / 5.0	10.7 / 3.3	35.5 / 1.8	62.8 / 2.4	1.8 / 1.4	100 / 2.2
1945	17.6 / 0.3	11.9 / 0.3	8.4 / 0.3	55.8 / 3.4	4.8 / 0.4	24.4 / 0.4	74.3 / 0.8	1.5 / 0.3	100 / 0.6
1941–1945	35.3 / 44.6	23.1 / 46.2	17.0 / 52.2	12.7 / 63.0	9.4 / 67.0	40.7 / 48.6	56.7 / 51.0	2.6 / 48.8	100 / 49.9
No information	38.2 / 4.2	25.1 / 4.4	15.9 / 4.4	9.2 / 4.0	7.9 / 5.0	42.8 / 4.5	53.6 / 4.2	3.6 / 5.9	100 / 4.4
Totals	39.5 / 100	24.9 / 100	15.9 / 100	10.0 / 100	7.0 / 100	41.8 / 100	55.5 / 100	2.7 / 100	100 / 100
Persons	21607	13610	8864	5511	3807	22868	30333	1452	54651

total membership in the NS. This overall percentage is greatly reduced in the following years. In 1941, the Oslofjord and Eastern Norway contributed with 64 percent of the total recruitment that year, reducing to 55 per cent in 1942, 51 per cent in 1943 and in 1944, and only 29 per cent in 1945. This demonstrates how the recruitment took place as a diffusion from Oslo and the East of Norway to Southern, Western and Northern regions. At the same time there was a diffusion from urban to rural areas. Before 1940 the NS was a typically urban phenomenon, but in the first year of the world war this changed, and during the war the recruitment from rural areas increased making the total figure of membership 55.5 per cent rural and 41.8 urban (2.7 per cent not known).

The diffusion from the center to the periphery can be studied in more detail when we take as example the most effective recruitment drive of the NS during the autumn 1940. I have shown in fig. 3, how the curve indicating the recruitment had a particular rise with the heaviest inflow in October and November 1940. In fig. 9 I have illustrated how differently this process occured in the various counties in Norway. I have compared the recruitment in Oslo City with one county on the west coast (Rogaland) where the NS did relatively well, and two counties in the far North where the NS had less success (Nordland and Finnmark).

From the curves we can clearly see how the lag in recruitment was apparent in the most peripheral counties compared to Oslo. In Rogaland the NS did have a stronghold, in both the city of Stavanger and other communes, before the war, and the recruitment started out from a 5—7 per cent level in July, but culminated in rapid
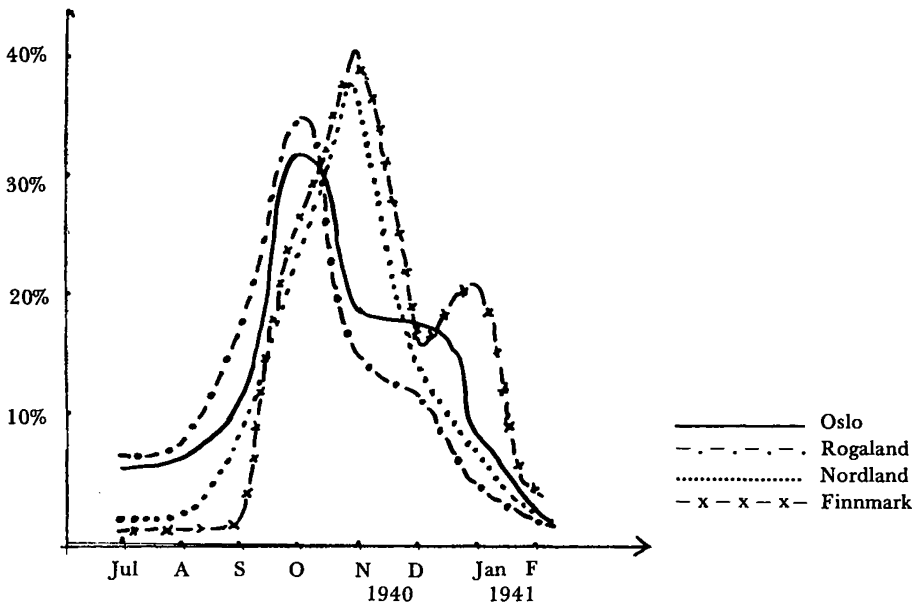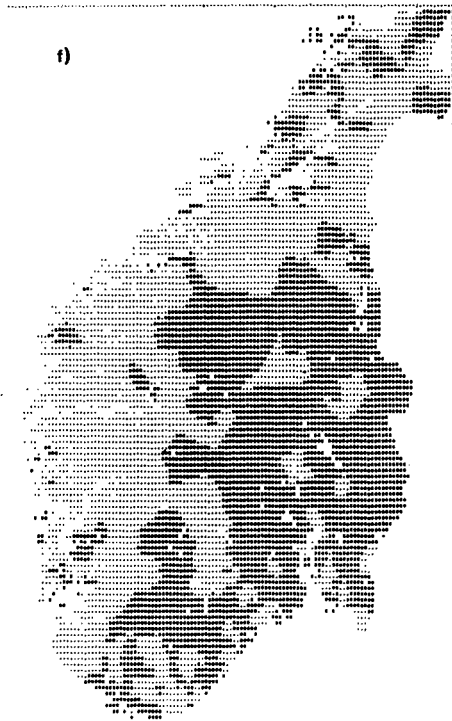
Fig. 9a

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Fig. 9b): The geographical diffusion of NS membership 1941 and 1943.

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Maps a, b and c: membership by January 1941.
a = communes with more than 0.5 per cent of members to total electorate (n = 335), b = communes with more than 1.0 per cent of electorate (n = 108), and c = communes with more than 2.0 per cent of the electorate (n = 22).
Maps d, e and f: membership by December 1943.
d = communes with more than 0.5 per cent of the electorate (n = 481), e = communes with more than 1.0 per cent of the electorate (n = 378), and f = communes with more than 2.0 per cent of the electorate (n = 261).

decline after a peak in October. Both Nordland and Finnmark have their peak of recruitment in November, and in addition to that Finnmark has a high percentage in January before all counties experienced a drastic decline in February 1941.[15]
Taken together we can see from table 1 and fig. 9 how the diffusion process developed as a general swing from a total domination by the Oslofjord area to ihe re-

[15] The war in Norway during the spring of 1940 developed in two steps. First the Norwegian government was forced to give up most of the Southern part of Norway including the Trondelag counties on May 8th. Then, with support from French, British and Polish allies, the war con-

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gions outside the Eastern part of Norway. The swing is seen both in terms of delayed yearly proportions of recruitment, but also as a slower monthly and even weekly growth in non-central areas.

Thus, there is much evidence which accounts for the center-periphery effect in the diffusion process of recruitment. NS-membership gradually spreads in time and across the country from center to periphery. How then was this process affected by the "neighbourhood-effect" within the various counties?

This question will not be fully answered here, but I will demonstrate, by an intuitive method, how some aspects of the problem can be illuminated. The seven maps below, from the southern part of Norway (excluding the three northern counties), show the spread of NS membership in relative proportions to the electorate in each commune. They are drawn at two separate intervals, at the beginning of 1941 and the end of 1943. Depending upon how we define a commune with regard to "adopting" nazism (per cent of NS-members to electorate) we find various connected (neighbour) communes which "adopted" nazism during the period, but also some very isolated communes having "adopted" it with a high relative percentage of the total electorate. Comparing the two maps of 1941 and 1943 we can also get a feeling of how widely the growth spread in relative membership rates. By the beginning of 1941 only 335 of the 583 communes had more than 0.5 per cent of NS members in relation to the electorate, but in 1943 481 communes had more than 0.5 per cent of the electorate as members. The change from 1941 to 1943 is shown by the "spreading" of the dark shaded (0.5 per cent and 1.0 per cent) areas from the east of Norway in 1941 to the connected areas and then to wider areas of Norway.

In the last map of 1943 we can see the few shaded areas which had more than 5 per cent NS members of the total electorate. Due to the problem of mapping towns and cities adequately, it is difficult to compare the relative weight of towns with rural areas. One therefore never obtains a complete picture of the regional varieties. But the maps give us few but high ratings of isolated communes in the counties of Aust Agder and Telemark and a few communes in North opland, Hedemark and Trønde-lag. On the 5%, the 2% and the 1% maps the white areas of the west coast and parts of Trondelag show a striking profile. Besides the high ranking communes mentioned, we also find strong "belts" of communes at the isolated border area in the east near to Sweden, and the border communes in the far north (not shown on the maps).[16]

tinued in the north until the armistice in June 7th, when the Germans started the war on Benelux and France. Thus the NS party could start their recruitment campaign from Oslo when the war still was going on in other parts of Norway. Oslo was already taken over by the Germans in the afternoon of April 9th, 1940.

[16] Among the highest ranking communes, in terms of the percentage of members to the total population, one will find such isolated communes as Valle in Aust Agder, Fyresdal in Telemark (Quislings birth place), Dovre and Lom in Gudbrandsdal. In these communes the recruitment to the NS was based on a strong nationalistic ideology to some extent on a reaction against for-

This section clearly verifies the hypothesis that NS' recruitment shows the typical features of spatial diffusion both in terms of the central impulse to the periphery and the impulse of nazification by the neighbourhood effect.[17] I have, however, not presented any kind of strict measures or any formal model for how this diffusion took place. This will be the next step in my work, and there is a considerable amount of literature concerning spatial distribution and location analyses.[18]

The Mechanisms of Diffusion

During the active years of campaigning the NS used many and various forms of propaganda, persuasion and threats to make Norwegians opt for membership. Reading the huge files of material produced by the long and extensive trials after 1945, one will find many examples of how individuals, particularly in public service positions, were forced to join the party. Others tell stories of how their closest relatives and friends put continuous pressure upon them to join, and others claim that since their husband or wife had joined there was no other choice but to join themselves.

mer economic policy and party government which the farmers felt had hit them drastically in the early thirties.

Various studies of local recruitment processes have been done in Norway, e. g. Johnsen, Bodil Wold, Nasjonal samling i Stavanger, Mimeo, University of Bergen 1974. Tunshelle, Torgeir, Nasjonal samling i Sogn og Fjordane, Mimeo, University of Bergen 1974. Rognaldsen, Svein, Nasjonal samling i Bergen, Mimeo, University of Bergen 1973, Nordberg, Nine, Kvinner i Nasjonal samling (in Bergen), Mimeo, University of Bergen 1977. Hestvik, Finn, Nasjonal samling i Salten, Mimeo, University of Bergen 1974. Hendriksen, Hans Erik, Mennesker uten makt. Nasjonal samling i Sor Østerdal, Mimeo, University of Bergen 1974. Shorter versions of some of these theses are published in Danielsen, Rolf and Larsen, Stein Ugelvik (eds.), Fra ide til Dom, Oslo 1976.

[17] The idea of diffusion as a process of contagion is very often used as an analogy when analysing the spread of various ideas, items etc. accross a geographical space. One example from Norway is Sande, Terje, The expansion of local government activity, Mimeo, University of Bergen 1977. He explores how the adoption of old age pension schemes spread to various communes from 1916 to 1922. like a "political disease". See also Kuhnle, Stein, Patterns of Social and Political Mobilization: A Historical Analysis of the Nordic Countries, London 1975, S. 28 −35. He sees increasing electoral turnout as analogous to infection through contagion.

[18] The many works in geography on population analysis, on analysis of migration, on analysis of urbanization etc. will serve as good examples of the broad range of fields where spatial distribution and spatial location are frequent themes for study. In the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, Vol. 4, 1968, S. 169−185 three articles on a) Cultural diffusion (by Heine-Geldern, Robert), b) Diffusion of innovations (by Hägerstrand, Torsten) and c) Interpersonal diffusion (by Katz, Elihu) cover (with a short bibliography) the broad traditions of development of the concept and theories in diffusion. Hägerstrands article is particularly interesting as an overview of ideas of spatial diffusion.

There does not seem to be any uniform way of entering, or any identifiable event which is common to all, as the single and decisive factors which caused them to make the decision to join. In table 2 one will find how in 1971—1972 previous NS members answered to the direct question of what kind of persons influenced them to become members.[19]

Table 2: "Question: Did any particular person contribute to your decision of becoming a member of the NS?"

	No of responses	Percent
It was totally my own decision. I made up my mind individually.	260	53.8
One member of the family persuaded me. One or several members of the family influenced me.	41	8.5
A close friend. Some close friends influenced me.	44	9.1
A member of NS persuaded me.	35	7.2
A high-ranking NS member influenced me.	43	9.0
A high-ranking person. A community influential persuaded me.	28	5.8
No answer	32	6.6
Total	483	100.0

More than fifty per cent answered that they joined because they felt it was right to do so, that it was a free decision, and that they were under no kind of identifiable pressure. A little less than 20 per cent said that they were influenced or persuaded by ordinary or high ranking NS-members to join, while about the same proportion reported that family and friends influenced them. 5.8 per cent reported that a high ranking community leader influenced them to become a member without having known whether or not this person belonged to the NS.

What interpretations are reasonable in the light of these answers when commenting on what model of diffusion process had taken place? Can we identify the kinds of mechanisms that were at work during the recruitment period of looking at the interview data?

If one thinks that the recruitment process developed as an external exposure process of diffusion, the effect at the individual level should be that all or most of the members should have responded that they decided to join because they liked the speeches they listened to, because they were influenced by the program the party distributed, and because they admired the acts and the policies the NS performed during the period. One would have expected responses such as: I joined, because I thought it was the right thing to do, or I joined without consulting anybody.

On the other hand if one thinks that the recruitment process was diffused by social networks, one would expect to find responses such as: other people, some already recruited NS members, friends and family influenced me to join. Equipped with these two opposite propositions of outcome in interviews on the individual level, the results from table 2 give credence to both. There is, however, a stronger support for the external exposure effect than for the "snowball-effect".

But, in using interview data and particularly interview-data with a 30-years retrospective perspective on previous experiences, many disturbing factors may be at work. Some of them are trivial, such as: the weakening of memory, the desire to give the best and proper answer for actions which have been condemned as treason, or a mixture of several reasons that all in all had influenced a person to become a member.

The most difficult problem to solve is, however, how the *combined* effects of direct exposure and social networks caused people to become a member. One example of how these combined effects may have been in operation is illustrated by what is sometimes called the contextual effect. A potential member may have been exposed to direct exposure from NS headquarters. He may also have been influenced by — or have been talking of becoming a member with — his family and friends, but the final decision to join was made when he saw that many other people in the area where he lived joined. The general social acceptance of the NS was thus the effect which was decisive for joining. How would such a person answer to our question? He might have been registered in the table under the first alternative, but for him it is difficult to state that it simply was the direct exposure effect which made him join the Nasjonal Samling.

Such and many other problems will be discussed in future analyses of the material. Particular attention will be paid to the responses and the date when the person was

recruited to the party. If the answers received in the interview data support one of the well fitted models of diffusion, it would seem plausible that a correct or meaningful solution had been found. One difficulty in this analysis is the small number of interviews. If the total recruitment process is split into many short intervals, one may not get very reliable distributions (few cases) in the actual interview table corresponding to one of many possible recruitment intervals.

Conclusion

In this essay I have tried to give a very general and very tentative outline of how one may use the diffusion approach when analysing recruitment data from the NS. In no way has the treatment of the problems in the essay been treated thoroughly, concerning either the methodological and theoretical part of it, or the empirical tests and demonstrations of data from what was actually happening.

The purpose has been to illuminate some of the aspects from which one may begin to work when exploring the opportunities offered by an analysis of the spread of nazism. Some of the ideas in the essay also reflect the present state of my own work, and I am thankful to any reader who may communicate to me his/her own experiences and ideas so that I may improve what I shall eventually accomplish as the end product.