

General

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Hitler's Willing Executioners

*Ordinary Germans and
the Holocaust*

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GOLDHAGEN

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Jews were poison. And, as discussed above, these accusations were hurled with enormous frequency and obsessiveness throughout German society, and, so widespread were they that they were increasingly held to be true even by those in Germany who had once been the Jews' allies.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, it became impossible to discuss the German *Volk* without conjuring up notions of race, and hence of Jewish exclusion from Germany. The concepts of "*Volk*" and "race" overlapped and became intertwined, so that it would be hard to define precisely the differences between the contemporary usage and meaning of the two terms. The fusion of Germanness and Christianity, moreover, also stripped away from the ideational repertoire of religious antisemitism the old baptismal standby—the means by which Jews could wash away their imputed sins and renounce their putative nature. The animus derived from Christianity against the "Christ-killers" remained, the capacity of the old canards to mobilize hatred against the Jews endured, but Germans' changed understanding of the source of the alleged deicides' nature no longer made the Jews redeemable. The symbolic power and metaphorical implications of the new master concept of race gave antisemitism an explosive new charge.

The pervasiveness and power of the new racially informed Volkish conception of Germanness was so great that it undermined a fundamental precept of Christianity which was unable to maintain itself under this new hegemonic outlook. The cognitive model of ontology that underlay the essentialist, racist Volkish worldview contradicted and did not admit the Christian one that had held sway for centuries. Racist antisemites denied the dated Christian notion that all souls could be saved through baptism, and the notion that conversion would remove the only difference between Jewish Germans and Christian Germans. Johannes Nordmann, a popular, influential pamphleteering antisemite, expressed this putative physiological barrier to the Jews' assumption of Christianity during the height of one antisemitic wave in 1881 in unmistakable terms: The conversion to Christianity could no more transform the Jews into Germans than the skin of Blacks could be turned white.⁸² Germans came to see conversion to Christianity as a deceptive Jewish maneuver, a sham. Because of the constitution of Jews, it could not have been otherwise. And so conversion became irrelevant to the designation of who was Jewish, and to a person's moral evaluation. Even some Christian theologians began to hedge on the reach of baptism's power, agreeing that a "Volkish consciousness" (*völkisches Bewusstsein*), which by definition was alien to Jews, was a requirement of being German.⁸³

The ineluctability of the conflict between Jews and German, the ceaseless attempts by Jews to dominate and destroy Germany, was inherent in this racial Volkish conceptualization of Jews that coalesced in the latter part of the

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opment of our modern means of communication, the Jewish Problem would become in the course of the twentieth century a global problem and as such, it would be jointly and decisively solved by the other nations through total segregation and (if self-defense should demand it) finally through the annihilation of the Jewish people."⁹⁴ In their redemptive proposals, nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century racial antisemites were true to the implication of their conceptualization of Jews.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the view that Jews posed extreme danger to Germany and that the source of their perniciousness was immutable, namely their race, and the consequential belief that the Jews had to be *eliminated* from Germany were extremely widespread in German society. The tendency to consider and propose the most radical form of elimination—that is, extermination—was already strong and had been given much voice. German society continued to be thoroughly antisemitic, as it had been at the beginning of the nineteenth century, yet the nature of the transformed, modernized racial antisemitism suggested more comprehensive, radical, even deadly “solutions” to the perceived “Jewish Problem.” With the arrival of the twentieth century, the seeds for Nazi antisemitism and Nazi anti-Jewish policies had been widely sown, had already sprouted, and had flourished considerably. The antisemitism found expression mainly through talk and individual discriminatory actions, and also through intense political activity. As powerful and potentially violent as the antisemitism was, it nevertheless failed to erupt during this period into concerted and sustained violence because the conditions to transform it into a program of physical assault did not obtain; the state would not allow it to become the basis of collective social action of this sort. Wilhelmine Germany would not tolerate the organized violence for which antisemites appeared to long.⁹⁵ Without political mobilization, antisemitism remained for Jews an extremely unpleasant, prominent feature of German culture and politics, resulting in continuous verbal assaults, social discrimination, and incessant psychological wounds, but it did not generally threaten the physical security of German Jews.

Throughout the nineteenth century, particularly in its second half, no non-antisemitic alternative image of the Jews found *institutional* support (the Social Democratic Party partially excepted), certainly not widespread institutional support in Germany. This was true not only of political institutions but also of the Tocquevillian substructure of society, the associations that provided the staging ground for people's political education and activity. As the historian of German antisemitism Werner Jochmann writes, “a wealth of examples shows how, in the [18]90's, anti-Semitism infiltrated in this way into every last citizens' association, penetrating folk clubs and cultural societies [my emphasis].” By this time it was the reigning ideology of most middle-class

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to a "work" camp near Lublin.⁴¹ The men of Police Battalion 101 were now ready to enter into the climactic stage of their first genocidal enterprise. New assignments were given to the men, and so they were set to begin the systematic slaughter. They had already been instructed in the recommended shooting technique during the initial assemblage around Trapp. "About Dr. Schoenfelder I recall with certainty. . . . We stood, as I said, in a semicircle round Dr. Schoenfelder and the other officers. Dr. Schoenfelder sketched on the ground—so that we could all see—the outline of the upper part of a human body and marked on the neck the spot at which we should fire. This picture stands clearly before my eyes. Of one thing I am not sure, whether in drawing on the ground, he used a stick or something else."⁴² The battalion's doctor, their healer, who tutored the men on the best way to kill, obviously did not deem his Hippocratic oath to apply to Jews.⁴³ Further discussions on refining the killing technique took place. "It was discussed how the shooting should be carried out. The question was whether [to shoot] with or without a bayonet mounted on the rifle. . . . The mounted bayonet would avoid misfirings and the man need not come too close to the victims."⁴⁴

From the market square the Germans trucked the Jews, one group at a time, to woods on the outskirts of Józefów, whereupon "the Jews were ordered by the policemen in escort to jump down from the trucks, and were naturally, as circumstances warranted, given a 'helping hand' [*nachgeholfen* 'murde'] to speed things up."⁴⁵ Even though this was their first killing operation, it was already, according to this killer, "natural" for the men of Police Battalion 101 to strike Jews (the obvious meaning of the euphemistic "helping hand," which appears in his testimony in quotation marks). So "natural" was it that the killer mentions it in an offhand, passing manner, not deeming it worthy of any further attention or elaboration.

The men of First Company, who were initially assigned to shoot the Jews, were joined around noon by members of Second Company because Major Trapp anticipated that they would not otherwise finish the slaughter before nightfall.⁴⁶ The actual killing duties ended up being shared by more of the battalion than Trapp had originally planned. The exact manner of transport and procedure of execution differed a bit from unit to unit and also evolved during the course of the day. The platoons of First Company, to focus on it, had broken down into killing squads of about eight. The initial procedure was some variation on the following. A squad would approach the group of Jews who had just arrived, from which each member would choose his victim—a man, a woman, or a child.⁴⁷ The Jews and Germans would then walk in parallel single file so that each killer moved in step with his victim, until they reached a clearing for the killing where they would position themselves and await the firing order from their squad leader.⁴⁸

The walk into the woods afforded each perpetrator an opportunity for reflection. Walking side by side with his victim, he was able to imbue the human form beside him with the projections of his mind. Some of the Germans, of course, had children walking beside them. It is highly likely that, back in Germany, these men had previously walked through woods with their own children by their sides, marching gaily and inquisitively along. With what thoughts and emotions did each of these men march, gazing sidelong at the form of, say, an eight- or twelve-year-old girl, who to the unideologized mind would have looked like any other girl? In these moments, each killer had a personalized, face-to-face relationship to his victim, to his little girl. Did he see a little girl, and ask himself why he was about to kill this little, delicate human being who, if seen as a little girl by him, would normally have received his compassion, protection, and nurturance? Or did he see a Jew, a young one, but a Jew nonetheless? Did he wonder incredulously what could possibly justify his blowing a vulnerable little girl's brains out? Or did he understand the reasonableness of the order, the necessity of nipping the believed-in Jewish blight in the bud? The "Jew-child," after all, was mother to the Jew.

The killing itself was a gruesome affair. After the walk through the woods, each of the Germans had to raise his gun to the back of the head, now face down on the ground, that had bobbed along beside him, pull the trigger, and watch the person, sometimes a little girl, twitch and then move no more. The Germans had to remain hardened to the crying of the victims, to the crying of women, to the whimpering of children.⁴⁹ At such close range, the Germans often became spattered with human gore. In the words of one man, "the supplementary shot struck the skull with such force that the entire back of the skull was torn off and blood, bone splinters, and brain matter soiled the marksmen."⁵⁰ Sergeant Anton Bentheim indicates that this was not an isolated episode, but rather the general condition: "The executioners were gruesomely soiled with blood, brain matter, and bone splinters. It stuck to their clothes."⁵¹ Although this is obviously viscerally unsettling, capable of disturbing even the most hardened of executioners, these German initiates returned to fetch new victims, new little girls, and to begin the journey back into the woods. They sought unstained locations in the woods for each new batch of Jews.⁵²

In this personalized, individual manner, each of the men who partook in the shooting generally killed between five and ten Jews, most of whom were elderly, women, and children. The approximately thirty men of Lieutenant Kurt Drucker's platoon of Second Company, for example, shot between two hundred and three hundred Jews in three to four hours.⁵³ They took breaks during the killing, for rest, for relief, and for smoking cigarettes.⁵⁴ Uncharacteristically for German killing operations, the men of Police Battalion 101

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neither forced the Jews to undress nor collected valuables from them. They had one single-minded mission that day. In total, between the wild slaughter in the ghetto itself and the methodical executions in the woods, the Germans killed that day somewhere over 1,200 Jews, perhaps a few hundred more. The Germans abandoned the bodies where they lay, whether in the streets of Józefów or in the surrounding woods, having left the burial for Józefów's Polish Mayor to arrange.⁵⁵

Among the victims was a considerable number of German Jews from the northern part of Germany, who spoke German in an accent similar to that of the men in Police Battalion 101. The linguistic strangeness of Polish Jews (who were the majority of the victims) and their alien Polish Jewish customs served to buttress the monumental cognitive and psychological barrier that effectively prevented the Germans from recognizing the Jews' humanity. However much the Germans could dissociate the Polish Jews from themselves, the Jews from their own region of Germany, who addressed the killers in the cadences of their mother tongue, might nevertheless have shocked the Germans into considering the humanity of these Jews. Two members of Second Company remember a Jew from Bremen, who was a veteran of the First World War, having begged for his life to be spared. It did the Jew no good,⁵⁶ just as the rest of the German Jews' Germanness yielded them nothing but the Germans' egalitarian bullets, which—in the Germans' eyes and in reality—leveled all Jews, German or Polish, male or female, young or old.

What was the effect of the killing on the killers? Their assiduousness in killing is not to be doubted. They applied themselves diligently to their task with telling effect. The gruesomeness of it revolted some, but not all, of them. One killer describes a vivid memory from that day:

These Jews were brought into the woods on the instruction of [Sergeant] Steinmetz. We went with the Jews. After about 220 yards Steinmetz directed that the Jews had to lay themselves next to each other in a row on the ground. I would like to mention now that only women and children were there. They were largely women and children around twelve years old. . . . I had to shoot an old woman, who was over sixty years old. I can still remember, that the old woman said to me, will you make it short or about the same. . . . Next to me was the Policeman Koch. . . . He had to shoot a small boy of perhaps twelve years. We had been expressly told that we should hold the gun's barrel eight inches from the head. Koch had apparently not done this, because while leaving the execution site, the other comrades laughed at me, because pieces of the child's brains had spattered onto my sidearm and had stuck there. I first asked, why are you laughing, whereupon Koch, pointing to the brains on my sidearm, said: That's from mine, he has stopped twitching. He said this in an obviously boastful tone. . . .⁵⁷

Germans' manner of treatment of conquered and subject peoples. This view divided human beings into a hierarchy of races, race being understood in biological terms. The Nordic peoples—tall, blond, blue-eyed—were at the apex. Below them were various western European racial strains. Below them were southern Europeans. Below them, already far down, were Slavs. Still below them were Asian peoples. At the bottom, somewhere near the boundary separating human beings and primates, were Blacks.⁸¹ Although all sorts of hazy notions informed the conceptualization of the continuum, it was essentially a continuum of putative capacity, with valued attributes, such as intelligence, to be found in diminishing quantity the lower a people's position was in the hierarchy. Corresponding quite well with this conceptualization—and obviously derived from it—was the Germans' treatment of conquered countries. The Nordic Scandinavians received the finest and most lenient treatment. The western Europeans, treated less well, still fared better than did southern Europeans. So powerful was this delusory ideology that the Germans treated the Slavic peoples with an enormous brutality and murderousness that greatly harmed the German war effort by arousing enmity where sometimes they had initially found a willingness to cooperate. As the discussion of Jewish "work" has shown, the German people's differentiated manner of treating the different foreign workers in their midst, and not only those remaining in the conquered countries, also reproduced this racial hierarchy.

This hierarchy of humanity also suggests the singular position occupied by the Jews in Germans' imaginations. Jews were not even accorded a place on the continuum. As one 1936 children's book put it:

*The Devil is the father of the Jew.
When God created the world,
He invented the races:
The Indians, the Negroes, the Chinese
And also the wicked creature called the Jew.*⁸²

Walter Buch, the supreme judge of the Nazi Party, made clear in a 1938 contribution to the esteemed journal *Deutsche Justiz* that this "wicked creature" should not be seen as having kinship even with "inferior" races: "The National Socialist has recognized [that] the Jew is not a human being."⁸³ Jews belonged not to the hierarchy of the human race, but to a race *sui generis*, an "anti-race" (*Gegenrasse*). The term "subhuman" (*Untermensch*), used loosely by Germans, was applied to the allegedly inferior "races," such as Slavs, as a description of their putative diminished capacity. The Jews were deemed to be "subhuman" not because Germans believed them to be of such inferior capabilities. In fact, Germans considered the Jews to be greatly capable, in the

* A.H! Who wrote this - that is a
talented person who wrote this

sense of being highly intelligent and able foes. According to Hitler, "the mental qualities of the Jew have been schooled in the course of many centuries. Today he passes as 'smart,' and this in a certain sense he has been at all times."⁸⁴ The clever Jew, devilishly conniving to harm and cheat Germans, whether as a Machiavellian international financier or as a local merchant, was a prominent figure in the German mental landscape; the Jews' putative capacity to live parasitically off honest German labor was the strategy and achievement of a dangerous foe. The "subhumanity" of the Jews was of a character different from that of all other "subhumans": the Jews were understood to be morally depraved, and their depravity was so vast that Himmler could say in 1938, to a conference of SS generals, that the Jews were the "primary matter of everything negative" (*Urstoff alles Negativen*).⁸⁵ Germans' belief that the Jews combined great intelligence and cunning on the one hand, and implacable malevolence on the other, made the Jews seem to them the deadliest of foes, to be dealt with as no other people, as a people whom the Germans ultimately had to annihilate.

The distinctive quality of Germans' cognitions and values, principally the character of their antisemitism—in addition to having produced different German treatment of Jews and of other devalued peoples—also imparted to the Holocaust features not to be found in other genocides. This comparative investigation indicates that a number of the Holocaust's distinctive features stand out.

Although there are exceptions (the Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia is a partial example), almost all other large-scale mass slaughters occurred in the context of some preexisting realistic conflict (territorial, class, ethnic, or religious);⁸⁶ the Jews of Germany, it need hardly be emphasized, wanted nothing more than to be good Germans; the Jews of eastern Europe felt no prior enmity towards Germans, if anything the opposite, since large segments of eastern European Jewry were Germanophile.⁸⁷ The Germans' characterization of the Jews and their beliefs about them were absolutely fantastical, the sorts of beliefs that ordinarily only madmen have of others. When it came to Jews, the proneness to wild, "magical thinking"—by the Nazi leadership and the perpetrators—and their incapacity for "reality testing" generally distinguishes them from the perpetrators of other mass slaughters.

The geographic scope of the Germans' exterminationist drive against the Jews has no parallel, certainly not in the twentieth century. The Germans sought to uncover and kill Jews everywhere that they could, outside their country and the territories that they controlled, ultimately throughout the world. Not just its spatial reach but the comprehensiveness of the Germans' extermination of the Jews is also distinctive. Every last Jew, every Jewish child, had to die. Hitler had articulated the logic behind this already in the

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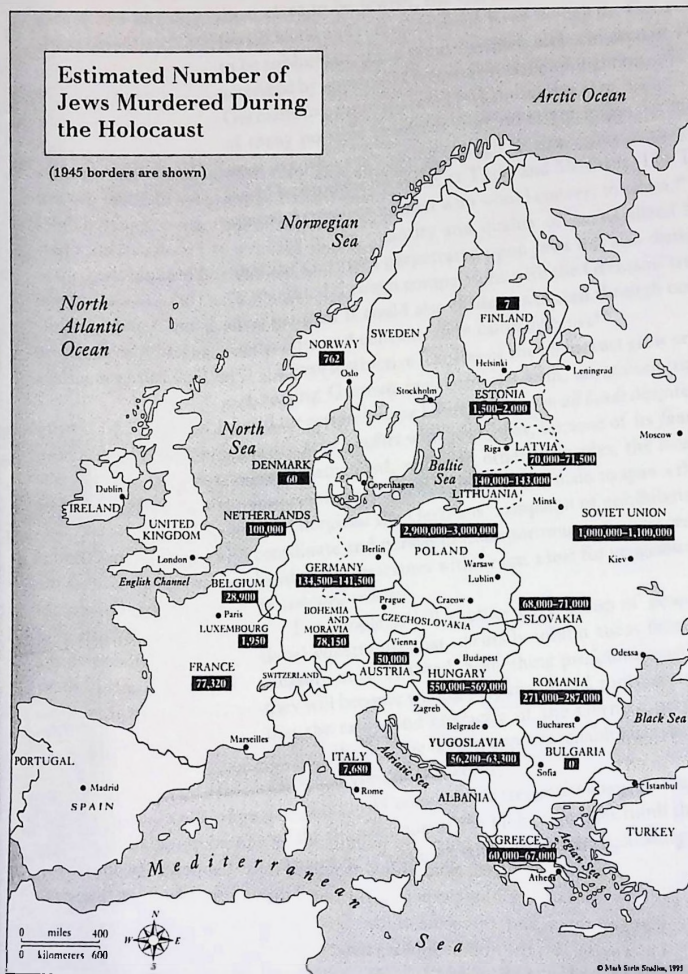
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Estimated Number of Jews Murdered During the Holocaust

(1945 borders are shown)



early 1920s: "This is the point: even if not one synagogue, not one Jewish school, the Old Testament and the Bible had not existed, the Jewish spirit would still be there and have its effect. From the beginning it has been there and no Jew, not one, that does not embody it."⁸⁸ People of Jewish ancestry who by deed had renounced their Jewishness by converting to Christianity, or even those who had never had any Jewish identity (having been the baptized children of Jewish ancestors), people who, in other words, did not consider themselves to be Jewish, the Germans treated as Jews, for they too were of Jewish blood and therefore spirit. Even though the Germans considered Poles to be subhuman, these same Germans stole children of Polish parents, characterized by approved Germanic racial physiognomy, and brought them up as Germans to be incorporated into the master race.⁸⁹ The Turks, to cite but one of many possible examples from other genocides, let many Armenian children live who were young enough to forget their heritage and who therefore could be brought up safely as Turks and Moslems. The Turks also sometimes spared Armenian women who would convert to Islam.⁹⁰

Finally, the quantity and quality of personalized brutality and cruelty that the Germans perpetrated upon Jews was also distinctive. This has been highlighted through comparisons with the Germans' treatment of other subject peoples. It could also be demonstrated through comparisons with other genocides and concentration camp systems.⁹¹

These distinctive features of the Holocaust grew organically from the demonizing German racial antisemitism, an antisemitism that produced the will for *comprehensive* killing of Jews in *all lands* despite the absence of any *objective prior conflict* with Jews; that, because of its *fantastical* construction of Jewry, demanded, unlike in other genocides, the *total* extermination of the Jews, so that no "germ-cell" would remain to spawn this eternal enemy anew; that energized the Germans' campaign of annihilation such that they could coordinate and persist in this enormous, *continent-wide* project; and that imbued the perpetrators with a rage, a lust for vengeance, that unleashed the *unprecedented cruelty*.

For people to kill another large group of people, the ethical and emotional constraints that normally inhibit them from adopting such a radical measure must be lifted. Something profound must happen to people before they will become willing perpetrators of enormous mass slaughter. The more that the range and character of the German perpetrators' actions become known, the less the notion appears tenable that they were not tuned in to the Hitlerian view of the world.

This brief comparative treatment suggests that the cognitive explanation of the perpetration of the Holocaust does fulfill the criteria of a powerful explanation. It achieves still more than accounting for the difficult-to-fathom

the Germans' *motive* to opt for a genocidal "solution" ignores, for no good reason, Hitler's oft-stated and self-understood intention to exterminate the Jews. This argument also implies, counterfactually, that had these putative motivation-engendering circumstances not been brought about—had Hitler's allegedly volatile moods not allegedly swung, had the Germans been able to "resettle" millions of Jews—then Hitler and the others would have preferred some other "solution" and then millions of additional Jews would have survived the war. This counterfactual reasoning is highly implausible.¹⁵ It would have necessitated that during this *Vernichtungskrieg*, this avowed war of total destruction, some circumstances would have led the Germans to spare their "anti-Christ," the Jews, even though Hitler and Himmler were planning to dispossess and kill millions of, in their view, the far less threatening Slavs (before the attack on the Soviet Union, Himmler once set the expected body count for that country at thirty million), when creating the planned "Germanic Eden" of eastern Europe.¹⁶

Hitler, on January 25, 1942, after affirming that "the absolute extermination" of the Jews was the appropriate policy, himself pointed out to Himmler, the head of his Chancery, Hans Lammers, and General Kurt Zeitzler how nonsensical it would have been not to be killing the Jews: "Why should I look upon a Jew with eyes other than [if he were] a Russian prisoner [of war]? In the POW camps many are dying, because we have been driven by the Jews into this situation. What can I do about it? Why did the Jews instigate this war?"¹⁷ In addition to the general implausibility of the counterfactual notion that Hitler and Himmler preferred or would have preferred a non-genocidal course once they had unleashed their forces against the Soviet Union, the facts do not support such speculative reasoning. Once the extermination program began, the Germans conceiving and implementing the mass slaughter did not consider any other "solution" to be preferable;¹⁸ they did not lament that the "Jewish Problem" could not be solved through emigration or "resettlement." All indications suggest that they understood the genocidal slaughter as the natural and therefore appropriate means to dispose of the Jews now that such an option had become practicable.

The idea that death and death alone is the only fitting punishment for Jews was publicly articulated by Hitler at the beginning of his political career on August 13, 1920, in a speech entirely devoted to antisemitism, "Why Are We Antisemites?" In the middle of that speech, the still politically obscure Hitler suddenly digressed to the subject of the death sentence and why it ought to be applied to the Jews. Healthy elements of a nation, he declared, know that "criminals guilty of crimes against the nation, i.e., parasites on the national community," cannot be tolerated, that under certain circumstances they must be punished only with death, since imprisonment lacks the quality

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of irrevocableness. "The heaviest bolt is not heavy enough and the securest prison is not secure enough that a *few million* could not in the end open it. Only one bolt cannot be opened—and that is death [my emphasis]." ¹⁹ This was not a casual utterance, but reflected an idea and resolve that had already ripened and taken root in Hitler's mind.

In the discussion that ensued with members of the audience about the above-mentioned speech, Hitler revealed that he had contemplated the question of how the "Jewish Problem" is to be solved. He resolved to be thoroughgoing. "We have, however, decided that we shall not come with ifs, ands, or buts, but when the matter comes to a solution, it will be done thoroughly." ²⁰ In the speech proper, Hitler spelled out, with a candid explicitness that he prudently would not repeat in public after he had achieved national prominence, what he meant by the phrase "it will be done thoroughly." It meant that putting the entire Jewish nation to death—or, as Hitler himself had stated publicly a few months earlier in another speech, "to seize the Evil [the Jews] by the roots and to exterminate it root and branch"—would be the most just and effective punishment, the only enduring "solution." Mere imprisonment would be too clement a penalty for such world-historical criminals and one, moreover, fraught with danger, since the Jews could one day emerge from their prisons and resume their evil ways. Hitler's maniacal conception of the Jews, his consuming hatred of them, and his natural murderous propensity rendered him incapable of becoming reconciled permanently to any "solution of the Jewish Problem" save that of extinction.

The road to Auschwitz was not twisted. Conceived by Hitler's apocalyptically bent mind as an urgent, though future, project, its completion had to wait until conditions were right. The instant that they were, Hitler commissioned his architects, Himmler and Heydrich, to work from his vague blueprint in designing and engineering the road. They, in turn, easily enlisted ordinary Germans by the tens of thousands, who built and paved it with an immense dedication born of great hatred for the Jews whom they drove down that road. When the road's construction was completed, Hitler, the architects, and their willing helpers looked upon it not as an undesirable construction, but with satisfaction. In no sense did they regard it as a road chosen only because other, preferable venues had proven to be dead ends. They held it to be the best, safest, and speediest of all possible roads, the only one that led to a destination from which the satanic Jews are absolutely sure never to return.

THE INTERACTION of a variety of influences on the Germans' treatment of Jews on all institutional levels can be seen also, in a manner still more complex than in the evolution of the Germans' general eliminationist assault on

It is remarkable were too extraordinary at this point, secretly, he did not believe he would come to power. So he had to relieve himself by not releasing.

* Later on the war in party he enjoyed being uncomfortable. Officially, he knew now that he was closer to the Holy Grail—a final solution.

cidal exploits of their nation and its representative men. A member of Police Battalion 105 wrote to his wife on August 7, 1941, from the Soviet Union, in explicit and approving terms, of the total annihilation of the Jews, and then added; "Dear H., don't lose sleep over it, it has to be." Having borne witness to continual, ongoing genocidal killing, and written openly and with the obvious expectation of his wife's general understanding (whatever misgivings she might have had notwithstanding), this man could write to her again one month later that he was "proud" to be a German soldier, because "I can take part up here and have many adventures." These were the beliefs that led him, now filled with pride in the German national accomplishments on their genocidal march through the Soviet Union, to take photographs (he did not specify of what), as did legions of other Germans, so that he would have a document of his time, which would be "extremely interesting for our children."⁷³ These same beliefs led an air force sergeant, Herbert Habermalz, to write in June 1943, candidly and proudly, of what he considered to be a German national accomplishment—the final, utter destruction of the largest Jewish population in Europe, the Warsaw ghetto, which once housed almost 450,000 Jews: "We flew several circles above the city. And with great satisfaction we could recognize the complete extermination of the Jewish Ghetto. There our folks did really a fantastic job. There is no house which has not been totally destroyed."⁷⁴ Habermalz, as did many German soldiers, sent this and other letters to his former place of employment, a firm producing farm equipment. These letter writers knew that employers often circulated the letters' contents to their workers, in order to solidify between the workers and their brethren at the front a sense of common purpose in the pursuit of the war. Habermalz, governed by exterminationist beliefs about Jews—beliefs which he apparently believed, no doubt correctly, that his co-workers shared—wanted to convey to those at home his thrill at having had such a rare and satisfying visual overview of this "fantastic" genocidal job.

These were the beliefs that prepared officers of Police Regiment 25 to boast, like so many other Germans engaged in the slaughter, and to believe themselves "to have accomplished feats of heroism by these killings." These were the beliefs that led so many ordinary Germans to kill for pleasure and to do so not while trying to hide their deeds but in full view of others, even of women, girlfriends and wives, some of whom, like those in Stanisławów, used to laugh as their men picked off Jews from their balconies, like so many ducks in a shooting gallery.⁷⁵ These same beliefs moved the men of Police Battalion 61's First Company, who guarded the Warsaw ghetto and eagerly shot Jews attempting to sneak in or out of the ghetto during 1941–1942, to create a recreational shrine to their slaughter of Jews. These German reservists turned a room in their quarters into a bar, adorned its walls with antisemitic caricatures

and sayings, and hung over the bar itself a large, internally illuminated Star of David. Lest some of their heroics go unnoticed, by the door to the bar was a running tabulation of the number of Jews whom the company's men shot. After successful kills, these Germans were in the habit of rewarding themselves by holding special "victory celebrations" (*Siegesfeiern*).⁷⁶

The beliefs about Jews that governed the German people's assent and contributions to the eliminationist program of the 1930s were the beliefs that prepared the men of Police Battalion 101 and so many other Germans to be eager killers who volunteered again and again for their "Jew-hunts," and to call Międzyrzec, a city in which they conducted repeated roundups, killings, and deportations—playing on its name with obvious reference to its many thousands of Jews—"*Menschenschreck*," or "human horror."⁷⁷ These were the beliefs that led Germans, in the words of Herbert Hummel, the Bureau Chief of the Warsaw District, to have "welcomed thankfully" the 1941 "shoot-to-kill order," which authorized them to kill any Jews found outside ghettos.⁷⁸ These same beliefs moved the men of another police unit, ordinary Germans, to shoot Jews whom they found even "without express orders, completely voluntarily." One of the men explains: "I must admit that we felt a certain joy when we would seize a Jew whom one could kill. I cannot remember an instance when a policeman had to be ordered to an execution. The shootings were, to my knowledge, always carried out on a voluntary basis; one could have gained the impression that various policemen got a big kick out of it." Why the "joy," why the eager voluntarism? Obviously, because of these ordinary Germans' beliefs about the Jews, which this man summarizes definitively: "The Jew was not acknowledged by us to be a human being."⁷⁹ With this simple observation and admission, this former executioner uncovers from below the shrouds of obfuscation the mainspring of the Holocaust.

These were the beliefs that led so many ordinary Germans who degraded, brutalized, and tortured Jews in camps and elsewhere—the cruelty in the camps having been near universal—to *choose* to do so. They did not choose (like the tiny minority who showed that restraint was possible) not to hit, or, if under supervision, to hit in a manner that would do the least damage, but instead regularly chose to terrorize, to inflict pain, and to maim. These were the beliefs that prepared the men of Police Battalion 309, ordinary Germans, not to hate, but to esteem the captain who had led them in their orgy of killing and synagogue-burning in Białystok in a manner similar to the glowing evaluations of "Papa" Trapp given by the men of Police Battalion 101, esteem which echoed the sentiments of men in many other killing institutions towards their commanders. This captain, according to his men, "was entirely humane [*sic*] and as a superior beyond reproach."⁸⁰ After all, in the transvaluated world of Germany during the Nazi period, ordinary Ger-

MICHAEL STÜRMER

THE GERMAN EMPIRE

1870-1918



A MODERN LIBRARY CHRONICLES BOOK

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NEW YORK

or these countries. This has been since Europe began to evolve a strategic and cultural interdependence. The European Empire for many centuries in system, but far from being the destinies, the German lands be a peacetime chessboard or a competition of the European powers in statehood and sovereignty and the German constitution, forever in equilibrium between the Emperor, became more "Europeanized," outlook and intent: today's map the changes that took place in unified within the framework of a quantum leap in European integration and monetary union—is nothing but a lightened variation upon a very

the rise and fall of the German Empire after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 to the evolution, in 1918. Otto von Bismarck and to the age-old European role of the vast and unwieldy Habsburg Empire. The new German nation-state was a strategic challenge to the established order. It has lost a mistress and won a mistress. It heard around London after Disraeli, later the Earl of Beaconsfield, in the House of Commons in 1871 to the recent Franco-German war, "a greater political evolution," and "a greater political evolution of last century. I don't

say a greater, or as great a social event. What its social consequences may be, is in the future... there is not a diplomatic tradition which has not been swept away... What has really come to pass? The balance of power has been entirely destroyed." There was an ominous tone of warning in his analysis, and it was heeded by the contemporary generation of German leaders, especially by Bismarck—whose epithet of the "Iron" Chancellor disguised his heroic pessimism—and by his successor Count Caprivi. But by the end of the century the European stage had been superseded by a global one. The United States and Japan had become world powers in their own right and markets, resources, battle-fleets and sea-lanes had become vital components of national power and identity in Europe, Germany being no exception. And there was no longer Bismarck to sound the alarm.

Why did the Empire end in war? Was this, to put it into ancient Greek terms, nemesis following hubris? Were the inevitable stresses of transforming an agricultural society into an industrial one uncontrollable? Or was Germany caught in its geography, its politicians blind to the troubling fact that the country was too big for the old balance of power to continue but too small to impose a new equilibrium? Was German militarism any worse than French chauvinism, Russian expansionism or British jingoism and imperialism? Perhaps Germany's sudden rise after centuries of defeat and suffering overtaxed the historical and strategic imagination of its power elites whose outlook and sensitivity to danger were essentially continental rather than global in reach. It was the industrialist Walther Rathenau who said, not long before the outbreak of World War I, that the Germans knew their map but were ignorant of the globe.

CHRONOLOGY

Please note that some dates are approximate or speculative.

1848-49 Social and political revolutions throughout most of continental Europe. The German parliament convenes in Frankfurt's Paulskirche under pressure from the radical left as much as from the old guard. After the parliament adopts the "Little-Germany" concept (a nation-state excluding Austria), the Prussian king refuses the Imperial crown offered by the Frankfurt parliament. The liberal and democratic constitution drawn up there is never put into practice.

1852 Napoleon III becomes Emperor of France after a *coup d'état*.

1854-56 Crimean War. Great Britain, France and Piedmont-Sardinia go to war against Russia in the Crimean Peninsula to preserve the Ottoman Empire. Prussia is neutral, but pro-Russian. Peace of Paris. Russia surrenders her claim on the Ottoman Empire.

1859 Piedmont-Sardinia, supported by France under Napoleon III, goes to war against Austria. Prussia, Russia and Great Britain are neutral. The Prussian army is mobilized to put pressure on Austria.

1861-65 American Civil War. France sends troops to Mexico.

1862 William I makes Otto von Bismarck Prime Minister of Prussia.

- 1864 February–August: Prussia and Austria at war with the Kingdom of Denmark over national self-determination for the largely German-speaking provinces of Schleswig and Holstein. Condominium between Vienna and Berlin collapses. A promised referendum never takes place. After 1866 Schleswig-Holstein annexed by Prussia.
- 1866 April: Bismarck concludes a military alliance with Italy to prepare for war against Austria.
- June–August: “the German War” between Prussia and Austria and the majority of the states of the German Confederation. Italy, on the side of Prussia, wins Lombardo-Venetia. After the battle of Königgrätz an armistice and preliminary peace are made at Nikolsburg. After the Peace of Prague the electorate of Hesse, the Grand Duchy of Nassau, the Free City of Frankfurt and the Kingdom of Hanover are annexed by Prussia.
- 1867 The North German Confederation is founded under Prussian hegemony. The constitution provides for democratic elections and a liberal parliament, but control of the administration and the army remain firmly in the hands of the “presidium,” i.e., the King of Prussia. Bismarck becomes Prime Minister, foreign minister and chancellor.
- 1867–68 The Customs Union, comprising both northern and southern states, acquires a parliament and passes the liberal “Gewerbeordnung” (“trading regulation”), setting free market forces. The four German states south of the river Main are linked to Prussia through military integration. There is popular resentment in the south against Prussian domination.
- 1870–71 The Spanish Parliament offers the crown to a Prince from the Catholic, South German line of the Hohenzollern. King William of Prussia declines the

- offer, but Bismarck uses this to public opinion against Prussia himself forced into war with France, the whole of Germany. An Imperial army, war is fought with the French Republic. Uprising of the Commune.
- January 1871: King William I becomes German Emperor at Versailles.
- May 1871: the Frankfurt Peace Treaty. France pays reparations to Prussia.
- 1871–72 Deutsche Bank and D. M. Bank founded. German population at 41 million in 1913.
- 1873 “Three Emperors’ Alliance” to prevent war between Russia and Germany begins—a campaign of the States General.
- 1874 Richard Wagner moves into Bayreuth.
- 1876 Nikolaus Otto invents the internal combustion engine.
- 1876–77 Balkan wars: Serbia and the Ottoman Empire ends in Russian victory. Russia ratifies the peace treaty of San Stefano.
- 1878 Bismarck calls the Congress of Berlin to settle the conflict between Great Britain and Germany over the Eastern Mediterranean. The Congress ends German interference in the Balkans and Hungary.
- In Germany an anti-socialist party but allows them parliament. Socialists dissociate themselves from terrorism.

and Austria at war with the national self-determination of provinces of Schleswig between Vienna and Berlin never takes place. After led by Prussia, es a military alliance with st Austria. War" between Prussia and the states of the German side of Prussia, wins the battle of Königgrätz and peace are made at Nikols- me the electorate of Hesse, the Free City of Frankfurt are annexed by Prussia. Confederation is founded. The constitution provides a liberal parliament, but ion and the army remain presidium," i.e., the King of s Prime Minister, foreign

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offer, but Bismarck uses this to create a storm of French public opinion against Prussia and Napoleon III finds himself forced into war with Prussia and, by implication, the whole of Germany. After the surrender of the Imperial army, war is fought and lost by the Third French Republic. Uprising of the Commune of Paris.

January 1871: King William I of Prussia proclaimed German Emperor at Versailles.

May 1871: the Frankfurt Peace Treaty takes Alsace and Lorraine from France and demands five billion francs in reparations.

1871-72 Deutsche Bank and Dresdner Bank founded.
German population at 41 million (as compared to 68 million in 1913)

1873 "Three Emperors' Alliance" is initiated by Bismarck to prevent war between Russia and Austria. *Kulturkampf* begins—a campaign of the State against the Church.

1874 Richard Wagner moves into Haus Wahnfried in Bayreuth.

1876 Nikolaus Otto invents the internal-combustion engine.

1876-77 Balkan wars: Serbia and Russia's battle against Ottoman Empire ends in Russian victory. The Tsar dictates the peace treaty of San Stefano.

1878 Bismarck calls the Congress of Berlin to settle the conflict between Great Britain and Russia over controls of the Eastern Mediterranean. Resentment in Russia against German interference on behalf of Austria-Hungary.

In Germany an anti-socialist law bans the Socialist party but allows them parliamentary representation.
Socialists dissociate themselves from anarchism and terrorism.

First football club is founded in Hanover.

1879 Germany makes a dual alliance with Austria-Hungary to deter Russian attack and to stabilize the Balkans. Anglo-Russian confrontation over Afghanistan: conflict over territory in Asia at its height.

German agriculture comes under competitive pressure from the U.S. and Russia and Germany turns from her traditional free-trade policy to protectionism.

Siemens Company builds first electrical locomotive.

1881 Bismarck achieves a new secret "Three Emperors' Alliance" to last for three years.

A telephone network is launched in Berlin.

1882 Robert Koch develops antidote to tuberculosis. New colonial expansion of the European powers is led by Great Britain and France. In the following years Germany acquires colonies in east Africa and south-west Africa.

1884-85 Congo Conference in Berlin is called. To prevent major colonial confrontations boundaries are drawn to delineate spheres of influence between the great powers in Europe.

1886 Gottlieb Daimler and Carl Benz have their four-wheel cars patented.

1887 Emil Berliner develops the gramophone record-player. Heinrich Hertz discovers electrical waves.

1887-90 Germany makes a secret Reinsurance Treaty with Russia specifying both their neutrality should war break out with Russia or France.

1888 Hertz discovers the wireless telegraph, hence laying foundations for the invention of radio and television.

Emperor William I dies aged 88; Emperor Frederick III, suffering from cancer, dies after 100 days in power and is succeeded by William II, aged 28.

1889 Major strikes in the coal fields of Upper Silesia.

Great Britain begins to build a fleet.

April: Adolf Hitler is born the family of a customs official.

1890 March: Bismarck resigns Prussia and Germany.

Emil von Behring develops diphtheria and tetanus.

1890-94 Count Leo von Capri, Chancellor on Bismarck's fall, left majority in the Reichstag. Britain Zanzibar for Heligoland against heavy opposition from Germany. The Aldeutsche have formed the export industries tariff in a trade agreement with Russia.

1891 A Franco-Russian military alliance. Hauptmann (winner of the Nobel Prize in 1912) writes *Die Weibliche*.

1894 Kaiser William II approves a completely modernized fleet. Capri is dismissed and P. Capri is Chancellor.

1895 Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer publish *Über Hysterie*, the first study of hysteria.

1896 Otto Lilienthal dies in a plane crash he had invented.

1897 Foreign Secretary Bernstorff. Germany's right to a colony is recognized. Preparations are made for the invasion of China.

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April: Adolf Hitler is born in Braunau in Austria into
 the family of a customs official.

1890 March: Bismarck resigns after 28 years in power in
 Prussia and Germany.

Emil von Behring develops a serum against diphthe-
 ria and tetanus.

1890-94 Count Leo von Caprivi, a general, appointed
 chancellor on Bismarck's fall. He works with a center-
 left majority in the Reichstag. He exchanges with Great
 Britain Zanzibar for Heligoland in the North Sea,
 against heavy opposition from the nationalist right who
 have formed the Alldeutscher Federation. To help Ger-
 man export industries tariffs are considerably lowered
 in a trade agreement with Russia.

1891 A Franco-Russian military alliance is formed. Ger-
 hard Hauptmann (winner of the Nobel prize for litera-
 ture in 1912) writes *Die Weber*.

1894 Kaiser William II approves Admiral Tirpitz's plans
 for a completely modernized German battle fleet.

Caprivi is dismissed and Prince Hohenlohe becomes
 Chancellor.

1895 Sigmund Freud and Josef Breuer publish *Studien
 über Hysterie*, the first study of psychoanalysis

1896 Otto Lilienthal dies in a crash in the glider that he
 invented.

1897 Foreign Secretary Bernhard von Bülow decides
 Germany's right to a colony "in the sun": the Kaiser
 travels to Istanbul, Baalbek and Jerusalem.

Preparations are made for the "Baghdad Railway"

planned to modernize the Ottoman infrastructure and expand German influence.

The first Zionist Congress is held in Basle.

1898–1901 Boer War in South Africa results in pervasive anti-British sentiment in Germany.

1900 A Civil Code is instituted for the first time in Germany.

The first Zeppelin flies.

1901 Alfred Nobel endows the Nobel Award: among the first four recipients are two Germans—Conrad Röntgen for physics and Emil von Behring for medicine.

→ Thomas Mann's *Die Buddenbrooks* is first published (and wins the Nobel Prize for literature in 1929).

1902 Robert Bosch develops the spark plug.

Historian Theodor Mommsen wins the Nobel Prize for literature.

1904 The *Entente Cordiale* is made between Paris and London, in the hope of containing German power and influence.

1904–5 War breaks out between Russia and Japan heralding the beginning of Japanese expansion in East Asia.

1905 Richard Strauss's *Salome* is first performed and Albert Einstein's *Theory of Relativity* is published.

The "Schlieffen Plan" is drawn up constituting a fatal narrowing of German strategic options. The strategy plans to mass the majority of the German army on the western front to force France to surrender, on the assumption the Russians will take at least six weeks to mobilize their troops on the Eastern Front.

1906 July: German attempts to reverse the Franco-Russian alliance fail at a meeting between the Tsar and the Kaiser at Bjorkoe near St. Petersburg.

1908–9 Both Britain and Germany to continue their ship building programs budget fails to do so and Britain. Bülow also fails to a special tax on champagne
October: Austria-Hungary. The Russians are announces a "Nibelungen
1909 Fritz Hofmann invents Theobald von Bethmann
cellor.

1912 British War Secretary seek naval arms control in agreement fails, but both management in the Balkan
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April: the unsinkable *Titanic*, the artists' group "der Blaue" is founded by, amongst others Wassily Kandinsky. August

1912–13 Balkan wars: the ser the Ottoman Empire.

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1914 June: Archduke Franz Ferdinand is assassinated by a Bosnian terrorist while on an
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1908–9 Both Britain and Germany forced to find tax rev-
enue to continue their respective Dreadnought battle-
ship building programs. Lloyd George's "butcher"
budget fails to do so and leads to constitutional crisis in
Britain. Bülow also fails to raise the necessary funds, but
a special tax on champagne remains.

October: Austria-Hungary annexes Bosnia and Herze-
govina. The Russians are humiliated in defeat. Bülow
announces a "Nibelungen loyalty" to Austria.

1909 Fritz Hofmann invents artificial rubber.

Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg becomes Chan-
cellor.

1912 British War Secretary Lord Haldane visits Berlin to
seek naval arms control in Germany. An Anglo-German
agreement fails, but both powers cooperate in crisis
management in the Balkans and prepare plans for divid-
ing Portuguese colonies in case of Portugal's default.

April: the unsinkable *Titanic* hits an iceberg. In Munich
the artists' group "der Blaue Reiter" ("the Blue Riders")
is founded by, amongst others, Franz Marc, Paul Klee,
Wassily Kandinsky, August Macke.

1912–13 Balkan wars: the smaller Balkan powers against
the Ottoman Empire.

1913 As a response to the growing strength of French and
Russian armies, Germany intensifies conscription.

Banque de France and Reichsbank inconspicuously
withdraw gold from circulation.

1914 June: Archduke Franz Ferdinand, successor to the
crowns of Austria and Hungary, is assassinated by a Serb-
Bosnian terrorist while on an official visit in Sarajevo.

July: war breaks out.

August–September: all major European powers go to

war; German troops march through neutral Belgium towards Paris. German strategy fails in the west but in the east its troops block and reverse the Russian invasion. War begins in the trenches. Censorship is instituted and strikes are banned.

1914-15 Turkey and Bulgaria join the war on the side of the Central Powers; Japan and Italy on the side of the *Entente*.

1915 April: the Germans are the first to use gas in battle.

May: The sinking of the *Lusitania*, with many American citizens on board, brings U.S. closer to war with Germany.

1916 February-September: battle of Verdun. Losses on both sides come to

December: all out mobilization of the population in Germany begins through "Vaterländisches Hilfsdienstgesetz" ("Patriotic Emergency Drafting"). In a *quid pro quo* trade unions become partners of management and government.

Central Powers offer peace negotiations; *Entente* powers refuse.

Kingdom of Poland proclaimed, under German influence.

1916-18 Third High Command under Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff assumes informal dictatorial powers.

1917 February: the German admiralty announces the launch of unlimited submarine warfare, thus making U.S. intervention in the war almost inevitable. A revolution takes place in Russia. The moderate Aleksandr Kerensky becomes Prime Minister.

March: the Brusilov offensive fails: a dual winged attack by Russian troops into Vilna Naroch as a counter to

German activity in V halt in the mud of the April: the Kaiser's East reform.

July: in the Reichstag predecessor of the We out in favor of "peace tions."

November: furnished High Command, Leni allowed travel through in St. Petersburg. The civil war ensues. Leni peace through world r

1918 January: the "Four President Wilson in a gress. They include nation of the League of diplomacy.

March: at Brest Litov Central Europe is reso the silent assumption imminent and will enal

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German activity in Verdun. The offensive grinds to a
halt in the mud of the spring thaw.

April: the Kaiser's Easter message promises democratic
reform.

July: in the Reichstag a center-left majority forms, the
predecessor of the Weimar coalition of 1919, and comes
out in favor of "peace without annexations and repara-
tions."

November: furnished with money from the German
High Command, Lenin and his band of Bolsheviks are
allowed travel through German territory to stage a coup
in St. Petersburg. The Russian front breaks down and
civil war ensues. Lenin's message to his people offers
peace through world revolution.

1918 January: the "Fourteen Points" are pronounced by
President Wilson in a message to both Houses of Con-
gress. They include national self-determination institu-
tion of the League of Nations, free trade and open
diplomacy.

March: at Brest Litovsk a German peace in Eastern
Central Europe is resolved: the Bolsheviks sign under
the silent assumption that a German revolution is
imminent and will enable them to recoup their losses.

June-July: on the Western front German troops stage
last offensives which fail.

August: British tanks break through German lines at
Amiens.

September: the German High Command demands a
Parliamentary government be installed to offer armistice
to *Entente* powers.

October-November: Chancellor Prince Baden heads
a center-left coalition and initiates sweeping constitu-
tional reform, offering an armistice to President Wilson

respect and to look with disdain on the mushroom growth of the two French Napoleonic empires, he had a deep aversion to seeing a similar title invented for himself. He used to call it a mere *Charaktermajor*, referring to the rank conferred on officers who actually retired as captains. When Bismarck greeted him on the morning of the 18th, rather like Mephisto to his Faustus, the old King observed, sadly, "Today we are carrying the old Prussia to its grave." Bismarck could have replied that, after the recent strong injection of democracy into the body politic, after the alliance made with the moneyed classes and the advances made to the proletariat, old Prussia was doomed anyway. Had His Majesty forgotten 1848, or that only a few years ago he had been locked in a bitter struggle with his own parliament? It was certainly not of Bismarck's choosing that he was now riding the wild horses of modern nationalism.

As instructed by Bismarck, the Grand Duke of Baden stepped forward to cry "Long Live Emperor William," swords were drawn—quite dangerous given the crowd—and the Emperor was installed. One person conspicuous by his absence was King Ludwig of Bavaria, second only to the new Emperor in power and precedence. Ludwig's reputation for mental instability and homosexuality meant that Bismarck was quite happy that he had not taken the trouble to come to Versailles. Ludwig had in any case already performed the one vital task that Bismarck required of him—to send a letter, drafted of course by Bismarck, to the King of Prussia, asking him to become Emperor. Bismarck knew that one of Ludwig's more expensive passions was palace building, something much appreciated by today's tourists as they view Herrenchiemsee, Hohenschwanstein, and Linderhof, but not by the Bavarian parliament and treasury at the time. The reward

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Bismarck proffered for Ludwig's letter was 5 million thaler,
in cash if desired. The money was procured from secret
funds derived from the wealth of the deposed King of
Hanover, who, like the King of Bavaria, had been unwise
enough to back Austria against Prussia in 1866. Bismarck's
lavish bribe meant that the palaces continued to rise
among the Bavarian lakes and mountains, and Ludwig
could continue to underwrite the expensive ideas of his
favorite composer, Richard Wagner. It was not until after
World War I, when the empire that these payments had
facilitated was no more, that this transaction was revealed.
The German "Reich," or empire, put on the map of
Europe by the kingdom of Prussia, was the very antithesis
to the pre-modern, supra-national empire of the past mil-
lennium. The old empire had been a republic under a ruler
elected during the last 500 years of its existence almost
invariably from the house of Habsburg. The English or
French translation of "empire," especially after the brutal
rise and hellish fall of the "third Reich," is misleading with
its implications of aggression. The medieval Reich was a
conglomerate of spiritual and temporal powers: of princes,
bishops, free cities like Hamburg or Frankfurt, and various
other autonomous components. Its legitimacy derived
from its claim to be a continuation of the Roman Empire. It
was not a precursor of the modern dynastic state let alone
the nation-state of the nineteenth century. The Lutheran
translation of the *pater noster* mentions the Reich twice,
meaning God's kingdom. But the vastness of the term cor-
responded to the looseness of its organization and the
undetermined nature of where it began and where it ended.
Worse still, after Napoleon the Holy Roman Empire was no
more and the term emperor was no longer associated with
the largely impotent and ceremonial authority of the Habs-

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Berlin decided that moderation was the better part of
 valor. In the Prussian parliament, tempers were hot; the
 liberals were ready to go to war, while the conservatives
 were for peace and the status quo with Austria. Bismarck
 saved the day for His Majesty's government, talking, with
 utter contempt, about the "national swindle" and that it
 was unworthy of a great power, such as Prussia, to go to
 war over anything but its own manifest interest. This
 sounded reassuring, and in due course Bismarck became
 Prussia's chief diplomat at the Bundestag in Frankfurt,
 meeting under Austrian presidency. But it was here that
 the Prussian diehard turned into the man of *Realpolitik*—a
 key term of the times. Bismarck understood two important
 things: that Austria was too old to survive and that it was up
 to Prussia to try and harness the great national passions of
 modern times, which otherwise would be left to the pro-
 tagonists of 1848, the liberals and socialists, who were
 down but not out.

Better harvests, the injection of government silver and
 gold reserves into the general banking system, political
 frustration and foreign intervention—the Russians sent an
 army into Hungary, while the British navy staged a show of
 strength in the Baltic—all helped to overcome the revolu-
 tionary furore. The old rulers of Germany escaped catas-
 trophe, but only by the skin of their teeth. And they had
 learned their lesson. They granted constitutional compro-
 mises in order to bring the moneyed classes on to their
 side. But the chief remedy was economic—a powerful
 drive towards industrialization and capitalism throughout
 the German lands allowed private bankers to follow the
 lead of the French *Crédit Mobilier* and to set up the joint-
 stock universal banks, which were to be at the heart of cor-
 porate Germany's rise and rise. Money came out of its

* the key: know who was coming
 up & who was going down.

giant proportions. The same was true of Meister Lucius & Brüning in Hoechst on the Main, and of the Bayer works, best known for aspirin, in Leverkusen on the Rhine.

Germany's industrial revolution had started on the principle of free trade and this remained the keynote well into the 1870s. But then the business climate changed throughout the Atlantic world. In May 1873 the Vienna stock exchange collapsed, then Berlin's and Frankfurt's followed suit. For the past fifteen years or so, stocks had been rising with new companies springing up left and right, bringing fortunes to investors, banks and speculators—*Gründungsfeber*, "founding mania," as the conservative Cassandras called it, had become a contagious disease. But now the tide turned inexorably, and no longer could the liberals hope that it would carry them to power. Conservative fundamentalism came into its own, seeing the old Prussia, with its Protestant value system and its rigid social hierarchy, going to ruin. Frustration with the capitalist wealth machine that had suddenly come to a halt gave rise to anti-Semitism, the losers finding the root of all evil in the lust for money and the stock exchange; seeing the new Reich as some giant, godless casino.

To add to the dark mood of pessimism, German heavy industry began to suffer from British and Belgian competition. The reaction was twofold: pressure on the government to revise trade policy and protect "national work," and the formation of special interest groups to change the mood in the Reichstag, the media and the population at large. The National Liberals proved to be most attentive to the lamentations—and the money—of the barons of heavy industry, while the Fortschrittspartei, the left wing of the liberal movement, represented more the export-oriented

machine-tool industry, which saw profit in its booming business with the rest of the world.

An even more serious blow to the liberal equilibrium came from Russia, which was exporting increasing tonnage of wheat and rye to Germany. The vast prairie, recently connected by railroad to the Atlantic, could produce at very low cost the grain at cheap rates thanks to the cheap labor. The landowners and farmers on the eastern frontier soon became desperate and brought the Conservative Party and on that day received a sympathetic hearing from the Reichstag. His agricultural instincts had easily survived the lessons that his banker Gerson Bleichroeder administered. He immediately undertook to use the material to forge a solid and doctrinaire policy of *Rittergut und Hochofen*, the landowner and the furnace.

In 1879 the first protectionist tariff was passed by the Reichstag, helped by vast unemployment and the implication of the social democratic movement in the attempts on the old Kaiser's life. For the tariff was welcome not only as a means of increasing the revenue of the Reich, but also as a way to increase the revenue of the Reich, then often dependent on transfers from the poorer states, especially Prussia. In this, however, it was only a half a victory. The states, led by the Prussians, were strong enough to ensure that the tariff collected at the customs offices went to the states, then, if they so wished, to the Reich.

* H. "perfekter" mit 900 witzig

HITLER

THE MAN & THE MILITARY LEADER

PERCY ERNST SCHRAMM

TRANSLATED, EDITED &
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
DONALD S. DETWILER

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particularly germane. and synthesize this use, to his background it might seem hardly so much of his life and emperors, focus. Yet in Schramm's documentation, such as ved for many of the had to turn to other e, is material written lamations, privileges, it them, such as indi- es. But Schramm has s to visual ones. For the sculptured repre- inces these were often eness might not have of the limitations of f the age; still, in the uted, the representa- r the kind of man he rk he was. Similarly, uld indicate what an ges in them during a rptions on thrones, a king's understand- ical role. The formal ial, and particularly termining what was hority from God. ieval detective work, ity original sources, to cut through spuri- ographical tradition. generally applicable ge eye and cultivated

instinct for the significance of apparently trivial gestures and observations most certainly are.

In constructing his portrait of Hitler, Schramm has not hesitated, particularly in "The Anatomy of a Dictator," to describe the positive as well as the negative side, the areas of light as well as darkness, thereby bringing out the shadows and contrasts of Hitler's extraordinary personality. When this portrait was serialized early in 1964 in the leading German newsweekly *Der Spiegel*, it provoked a heavy and varied response. While many of the more than one hundred published letters to the editor reflected appreciation of the candor and insight of Schramm's portrait, others expressed misgivings and even hostility. One recurring objection was the apprehension that many Germans would read Schramm's description of Hitler's "nice characteristics" with a nostalgic yearning for the "good old days" of the Third Reich, never grasping the study's wider import. This is one reason why some Germans are, in fact, opposed to the publication of anything which might conceivably be construed as favorable to National Socialism or to Adolf Hitler, lest it lead to a sort of socio-psychological relapse. Schramm has consistently maintained the opposite position, insisting that the German people, and particularly the youth in the schools and universities, be told the whole truth about the Third Reich. That Adolf Hitler may prove posthumously beguiling to certain elements in the population is a risk that must be taken. To the many who protest that this is also dangerous because of the German susceptibility to authoritarianism, Schramm answers that it is precisely this which makes it so urgent to immunize the people intellectually with as much knowledge as possible of the most terrible regime ever to tyrannize Germany.

We already know the contours of Hitler's life. We know that he was an extraordinary demagogue able to play on the sensitivities of the masses with breathtaking virtuosity, mesmerizing listeners with his infectious conviction that he could not fail. We know, too, of his appeal to many intellectuals and his acceptability, to say the least, to important leaders of the Church.⁴ We know of his ele-

⁴Long before Hitler came to power in Germany, National Socialism was strong in the universities, with support not only among a large number of

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spared us from having to confront the abyss, is once and for all
stripped off. No reader can reflect on Schramm's pages without
realizing the folly of the common trivialization of Hitler, inspired
in America by war propaganda and in Germany by understandable
postwar revulsion together with a psychological reaction to un-
bearable tension. Although such an attitude may be as satisfying as
name-calling is to a child, ultimately it is no less immature and
irresponsible. So far as intelligent historical understanding is con-
cerned, such trivialization does not deal with the crucial question:
Who was this man Hitler?

Many studies have been made of him—the course of his life, his
impact upon history. But Schramm has gone beyond these to analyze
the man himself, his personality, his relationships with his friends,
associates, and environment, his values and concepts, and those
countless innocent details of his personal life of the sort which would
once have been dismissed as inconsequential, but which have, ever
since Freud, been acknowledged as significant and in some cases
even vitally important in comprehending the whole man.

Schramm's study does not, of course, claim to offer a compre-
hensive understanding of Hitler. That is not its purpose. It has more
the character of a key to such an understanding. Working from
Hitler's conversations, Schramm extracts the most significant ma-
terial and lays it out on the page for the reader. But as he does so,
thereby sketching in the details of his word-picture of the dictator,
he never loses sight of the fact that the primary value of his study
lies in its quasi-documentary character as a direct commentary on
and interpretation of Hitler's conversations. His title, after all, is
not "*Diagnosis . . .*" but rather "*Anatomy of a Dictator.*"

Only in one instance does Schramm radically depart from the
basis of the conversations. That is when he reports on his confer-
ences with Hitler's personal physicians immediately after the war.
Schramm's reason for this is that Hitler had said relatively little
about his own health, and that what he did say could hardly be
regarded as dependable. The insight of his physicians, however,
could be extremely valuable in assessing the conversations and the
man; hence Schramm incorporated this material in order to make
his study as objectively useful as possible, just as he drew on other

lessness in exercising it. minorities, the German, Schramm has brought Hitler the man. Schramm is basically revising, the to be accepted by most as suggested that it may scrutable dictator's per- its, certainly, Schramm Hitler than we have had. interpretation of Hitler consummately evil man, d virtues so clearly mir- re genuine. Hitler was, -discipline who led what e personal life. It is not not congenial to see him quick wit and a whole- a personally brave man been a common soldier jimental courier. Before ted Iron Cross Second Germany's highest deco- basis of a close reading little doubt that Hitler es was a sensitive and y hard worker. oul and did command

It was the Catholic Center stag that were essential for tatorial powers in March year, was the first foreign ind still rather widely dis- at moral prestige both in urse, exceedingly valuable

World War I, see Chapter 's dated but still valuable 14), pp. 77-86.

respect, aside from the particular admiration inspired by his extraordinary mind and exceptional abilities.⁶ Today, of course, we know that in Hitler's case these conventional standards were not adequate and perhaps not even relevant. We know that everyone who attempted to deal with him as though he were just another cunning politician or even a gifted statesman was gravely underestimating him. It is now clear that during the years before the Second World War, for example, the reasonably sensible leaders of France and Britain were mistaken in trying to find an honest and practical accommodation with him.

More than any other characteristic, it is Hitler's ambivalence which Schramm singles out as the key to understanding him. It was not merely the superficial duplicity of a crude liar or even a shrewd dissimulator. It was a Janus-like ambivalence reaching to the very ground of Hitler's being. German politicians and foreign statesmen who dealt seriously with Hitler could not have known that he would betray them as he did. Many ambitious politicians may exhibit a ruthless opportunism; but who, except a fool or fanatic, will insist that his antagonist is intrinsically evil and therefore can be dealt with only by force of arms? Even as late as the Munich Conference of 1938, who could have predicted that the German Führer and Reich Chancellor was an historical phenomenon no less radical than the type suggested in literature by *The Picture of Dorian Gray* or *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*?

Hitler's success, despite his compulsive candor and the relentless directness with which he pursued his goals, was not due merely to the inefficiency or ineptitude of European politicians and statesmen during the thirties. Hitler did not get as far as he did because other

⁶One aspect of the all too common trivialization of Hitler has been the tendency to regard him as a man of limited intelligence. Ten years before the initial publication of Schramm's detailed evaluation now translated as the first essay in this volume, the distinguished British historian H. R. Trevor-Roper, author of *The Last Days of Hitler* (London, 1947), wrote a brilliant essay which did much to correct this, "The Mind of Adolf Hitler," published as the introduction to an English translation of Hitler's table conversations, *Hitler's Secret Conversations, 1941-1944* (New York, 1953). The Oxford professor writes of Hitler's mind as being "like some huge barbarian monolith, the expression of giant strength and savage genius, surrounded by a festering heap of refuse. . . ."

leaders failed to do their homework. It was a problem of an entirely different quality and dimension. This is dramatized by Schramm in "The Anatomy of a Dictator" in a powerful allusion to the myth of Medusa, whose face was supposed to have petrified those who beheld it. Schramm explains in detail how Hitler in a sense actually had two faces, both of which were real. The mealtime companions with whom he held conversations saw only one of his faces. Had they been able to see the other, writes Schramm, "even the most loyal and devoted of them would have turned to stone."

This phenomenal ambivalence accounts in part for Hitler's extraordinary historical stature. In terms of the sheer magnitude of what he wrought during his twelve years and three months in power, he was one of the "great" men of history. But his perverse greatness was informed less by creative energy than by some malevolent genius, so that even his most positive intentions and deeds acquired a dubious and ultimately sinister character. His ambivalence contributed to his great impact upon history; had he been anchored by that integrity and respect for law, human dignity, and the tradition of civility which has generally inhibited even the most cynical of tyrants, he would never have been able to achieve all he did through brutal threats. But Hitler was not inhibited. As Schramm shows, there was something frigid about him; in Hitler's own words, he was "ice-cold." Others also sensed this—when he wanted them to. Realizing that he was indeed not bluffing when he threatened drastic retaliation for any resistance, and unwilling to risk the consequences of denying him whatever momentary object he sought, most of his antagonists backed down again and again, permitting him to reach that pinnacle of power from which he was torn only at enormous cost.

Unfettered by the discipline of custom and law, drawing on unholy drives within himself and others, Hitler built within Germany the power base for his foreign expansion by the same unrestrained methods, achieving far more than he conceivably could have if he had not moved with such complete disregard for any authority that challenged his imperious will. By comparison, the autocracy of previous despots seems almost timorous and halting.

Hitler's unique tyranny was rooted in his undisputed control of

the masses. Though and the cunning prop the foundation always the people. As his b greatest demagogue in part be attribute success was so great He was utterly ruthless prejudices, and anim the dark forces with as he could sweep t baser natures, bring genius. As he had v able to move the masses

Hitler had extraordinary ends. If ever there was the traditional teaching human nature, it was which can ultimately logical level. Here is untold evil; that if he have achieved much and, finally, that the Führer, did not know what he would do to excuse the German: condemn nor to excite and consequently innocent their intent their representatives incites, resoundingly regime without effect for registering the outcome, therefore.

¹Alan Bullock, *Hitler* 68.

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the masses. Though at times the administered terror of Himmler and the cunning propaganda of Goebbels were all but indispensable, the foundation always remained Hitler's own incomparable hold on the people. As his biographer Alan Bullock writes, "Hitler was the greatest demagogue in history."¹ Just as his effective diplomacy can in part be attributed to his cynical opportunism, his demagogic success was so great in large measure because he had no scruples. He was utterly ruthless in his exploitation of the sentiments, fears, prejudices, and animosities of his listeners. He was able to play on the dark forces within their souls with diabolical mastery. Insofar as he could sweep the masses into his camp by appealing to their baser natures, bringing out the worst in them, he did so with evil genius. As he had written in *Mein Kampf*, "To lead means to be able to move the masses."

Hitler had extraordinary gifts, then, but turned them to hideous ends. If ever there was a man in history who illustrated the validity of the traditional teaching of the Church concerning the demonic in human nature, it was Hitler. And this perspective raises questions which can ultimately be dealt with only on the metaphysical or theological level. Here it must be sufficient to say that Hitler wrought untold evil; that if he had not embraced such evil means, he would have achieved much more modest but probably more lasting results; and, finally, that the German people, in accepting him as their Führer, did not know and could hardly have been expected to know what he would do with them and make of them. To say this is not to excuse the Germans for following Hitler. The point is neither to condemn nor to exculpate them, but rather to understand the motives and consequences of their actions. It is clear that, however innocent their intentions, the German people, first indirectly through their representatives in the Reichstag and then directly through plebiscites, resoundingly endorsed Hitler's Third Reich—a totalitarian regime without effective provision for separation of powers or even for registering the dissent of the governed. In terms of the final outcome, therefore, it was tragically irrelevant that the German

¹Alan Bullock, *Hitler, A Study in Tyranny* (rev. ed.; New York, 1964), p. 68.

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I

The Anatomy of a Dictator

1. Hitler the Man

He fascinated people with his deep blue, slightly protruding, almost radiant eyes. Many who met him were unable to stand up to his gaze; knowing this, Hitler looked people straight in the eye without blinking. Although he had always had good vision, he became increasingly farsighted during the war and was forced to use glasses, particularly while working over situation maps. Care was taken to conceal this fact, but some pictures show Hitler wearing glasses. To facilitate his reading written material that demanded his personal attention, it was transcribed on special typewriters in so-called "Führer script," which had letters about twice normal size.

Hitler had his eyes so well under control that in jest he was able to cross them. He also had keen hearing, and could recognize people by the sound of their footsteps. His nose was ugly, having something of the shape of a pyramid. The unpleasant impression of the large, broad nostrils was minimized, however, by his closely trimmed moustache. His mouth was relatively small, his chin not well developed. His lips were thin and pinched. He had a high forehead but it did not stand out because it was covered by his forelock. He had few lashes on his eyelids, but his eyebrows were thick, and above them slight bulges appeared in his forehead. His cheeks were rela-

like Clara's.

A 18 *Hitler: The Man and the Military Leader*

tively broad, his ears well formed. Hitler's complexion and coloring could be described as almost girl-like. He was sensitive to light and to the sun and would probably have found sunglasses a help, though he chose not to wear them. When a bright light bothered him, he would shade his eyes with his hand. Heat also disturbed him, as did the *Föhn*, that warm, dry Alpine wind often felt in parts of southern Germany.

Toward the end of his life Hitler was evenly grey-haired, though he showed no tendency toward baldness. His beard was not heavy. He did his own shaving, cutting himself only rarely. He cared for his teeth meticulously, but they were poor and a number of them had been replaced by permanent bridges.¹ Hitler must have been instinctively self-conscious about this; when he laughed he held his hand in front of his mouth.

The man's head seemed to dominate his entire body; torso, arms, legs—all seemed to hang down from it. Hitler generally let his arms dangle carelessly, putting his hands in his pockets only when he was in the most intimate circles. His legs were not strong. He strode on his heels and, keeping his knees straight, walked quickly. His other movements were quite deliberate. If something caught his attention, he would stop to investigate whatever it was. When he discovered that he had a tendency toward obesity, he found it sufficiently embarrassing to cut down his eating.

¹In postwar internment I shared a room for a time with Hitler's dentist, a competent man who had gotten the job by accident and had received the SS rank corresponding to major general (anyone without a uniform and a rank around Hitler's headquarters was out of place and would have found himself in an awkward position). The dentist was given plaster and took by our American captors and reconstructed from memory models of Hitler's upper and lower jaws. They lay for days on our table; thus I know that there were more gaps than teeth. The models were probably turned over by the Americans to the Russians, in order to determine whether the remains discovered near the Reich Chancellery were really those of Hitler; if his jaws were found, positive identification would be possible. (The American writer Cornelius Ryan received, according to *Der Stern*, June 2, 1963, the information from Marshal Sokolovsky "that Hitler's burned body was identified by means of his dental bridges"; for the official Soviet autopsy report, see Lev Bezymenski, *The Death of Adolf Hitler* [New York, 1968].) The dentist reported to me that Hitler maintained his composure while dental work was being performed on him, whereas Himmler had been frightened.

Hitler kept himself changed underclothes visitors with dirty than once. After each haircut was an imposition outdoors. Yet he never him like a sack; his he could not bear to shapeless. He wore of caps, he preferred provided him with

In civilian clothes the same cut. His had to be inconspicuous rather dull color. uniform, he disliked which were made buckled at the top knees. As far as he have felt that the *Führer*—suffered to

Hitler required the fact that where difference between During the years of his speeches in the During the Second reports coming in was of no great concern before noon. him to make until day nap was out

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a time with Hitler's dentist, a cident and had received the ne without a uniform and a place and would have found as given plaster and took by memory models of Hitler's table; thus I know that there probably turned over by the rmine whether the remains ly those of Hitler; if his jaws ssible. (The American writer n, June 2, 1963, the informa- urned body was identified by oviet autopsy report, see Lev York, 1968). The dentist re- asure while dental work was been frightened.

Hitler kept himself very clean. He washed his hands often. He changed underclothes frequently and made sarcastic remarks about visitors with dirty underwear. He bathed daily, sometimes more than once. After eating, he rinsed out his mouth. Having a good haircut was an important matter to him. He took care to wear gloves outdoors. Yet he never achieved elegance. His jacket hung about him like a sack; his trousers did not sit well; and his coat, which he could not bear to have constrict him in any way, was completely shapeless. He wore his cap pulled down over his eyes. In the matter of caps, he preferred the older fashions, but his entourage discreetly provided him with caps in the new "sharper" style.

In civilian clothes, Hitler always chose double-breasted suits of the same cut. His neckties were selected by Eva Braun, but they had to be inconspicuous, so they were invariably of a subdued, rather dull color. Whenever Hitler wore the National Socialist uniform, he dispensed with the belt. His high double-soled boots, which were made of thick though soft leather, were inelegantly buckled at the top. His riding breeches were cut quite loose at the knees. As far as his uniform was concerned, even his admirers must have felt that their "Leader"—the literal meaning of the word *Führer*—suffered by comparison with many of them.

Hitler required only a minimum of sleep. He attributed this to the fact that when he was a courier in the First World War, the difference between day and night had been gradually lost for him. During the years of his rise to power, he would eat only after making his speeches in the evening and would then go to bed quite late. During the Second World War he would stay up to look at the first reports coming in after midnight and finally retire. Actually this was of no great consequence, for the situation usually was not clarified before noon. Since there would normally be no decisions for him to make until then, he would sleep late in the morning. A mid-day nap was out of the question.

With his excellent memory, Hitler had an uncommon ability to recognize people. He could react quickly under all sorts of circumstances, and thus adjusted himself fairly easily to unexpected situations. He considered himself to be rational, yet able to rely upon his instincts.

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who knew exactly what the masses wanted to hear and who under-
stood how to move them with stirring slogans. But he never
succeeded—as Bismarck, on the basis of his literary culture, was
often able to do—in fashioning an enduring phrase or a memorable
epigram.

According to the testimony of Dr. Hans Karl von Hasselbach,
one of his personal physicians, Hitler regularly had English, Amer-
ican, and French magazines delivered to him. "Apart from some
French he had learned in school, he had picked up on his own a
working knowledge of the languages. Primarily for this purpose,
before the war he often had French and English films shown to him
in the original version." This knowledge was naturally far too slight
to penetrate the spirit and structure of the foreign languages. But
it did not deter Hitler from claiming that the English language was
incapable of expressing thoughts which went beyond generally
proven ideas and matters of fact—a cliché once popular with the
ideologists of German nationalism.

As he explains in one of the Conversations, in his youth Hitler
was a lonely outsider with no desire for company: "But now I simply
cannot stand to be alone. . . ." Even in Munich he had preferred to
go to an inn he liked, rather than eat at home alone. During the war
he had a particular need for companionship as a means of relaxing,
and generally took a full hour for lunch. His evening meal occasion-
ally lasted more than two hours.

Hitler loved jokes. Since he had a phenomenal memory, he was
able to tell a great many of them, revealing a striking ability to imi-
tate expressions, voices, and dialects. But he never told off-color
stories, let alone dirty jokes. His personal photographer, the south
German Heinrich Hoffmann, who occasionally did tell such stories
and jokes, was quite an exception in Hitler's circle. Apart from
Hoffmann, the restaurateur Kannenberg, who had been brought to
the Führer Headquarters on account of his organizational ability,
sparkled with native Berlin wit. Hitler also enjoyed the practical

³Hitler could also express himself differently. According to the testimony of
Dr. Karl Brandt, one of his personal physicians, he considered the English
language as something special—the simplest and clearest in expression and
at the same time the most masculine in tone.

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omission

jokes that his table companions occasionally played on each other; he would slap himself on the thigh as he laughed or hold his hand in front of his eyes or mouth.

Company at meals was the sole "luxury" Hitler allowed himself during the war years, for his style of living was otherwise quite Spartan. In peacetime he had enjoyed visiting the *Skala* and the *Wintergarten*, though he had never had any use for the circus. The cinema had been his chief means of relaxation. After the beginning of the war, he never again visited a theater except for one production of *Die Götterdämmerung* at Bayreuth. As for films, he looked only at newsreels, since he regarded them as an important medium of propaganda and would often give instructions for revising them before distribution. But after the newsreels he would leave the room, preferring not to watch the screenplays shown for the entertainment of his staff. He did not want to be better off than German soldiers on the front. Since he did not smoke, avoided both coffee and alcohol, and subsisted solely on vegetarian fare, he felt he could certainly look any soldier in the eye in respect to diet as well. To this extent Hitler even outdid William II, who in his wartime headquarters at Pless had strictly limited his eating and drinking.

Throughout his life Hitler remained an inland-oriented German, his imagination untouched by the sea. He had never been exposed to the uncanny power of the storm, the pulsing rhythm of the rolling waves with their foam and spray, the shimmering sunlight on the placid surface, or the sun descending into the deep; nor had the struggle of mankind against the primeval element water and the hauntless courage of the mariner ever penetrated the deeper levels of his consciousness. But Hitler was not only inland oriented; he was completely rooted within the cultural boundaries of the old Roman Empire. He clung to the civilization of the Mediterranean world and took no part in his followers' grotesque glorification of the Teutons. He had no use for pine forests, and once even declared, "I would rather walk to Flanders than bicycle to the East. It is only the force of reason which dictates our moving eastward."

Hitler had great plans for Berlin, which, as capital of the "Greater German Empire of the German People," he was planning to rename

"Germania." But unsuited to be a the atmosphere capital in the two and music, and arts.

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"Germania." But his heart was not in the idea. He thought Berlin
unsuited to be a center of the arts: "For this purpose it simply lacks
the atmosphere." A grotesque judgment if one thinks of the Reich
capital in the twenties—Berlin was the first city of Europe in theater
and music, and set the tone for all Germany in every branch of the
arts.

Hitler had skied when he was younger, and he continued to love
the mountains. But in his mature years he lost the desire to climb
them and to be rewarded for his effort by the view. In fact, he ceased
to participate actively in any sport, and walking became his sole
exercise.

2. Hitler's Ambivalence

Hitler's associates were impressed by how concerned the "Chief"—
as they referred to him—was about their welfare and what an active
interest he took in their individual joys and sorrows. He would, for
example, devote serious thought to what sort of birthday gifts would
be particularly appreciated. In this regard, the summaries of Hitler's
Table Conversations by Dr. Henry Picker, the young lawyer respon-
sible for transcribing them, are quite revealing. Picker, who previ-
ously had known Hitler only as a distant political figure, was greatly
impressed by the human qualities Hitler revealed in the inner circle
of his associates: by the good will he showed the younger among
them, by his readiness to laugh, and by the magnanimity he demon-
strated when someone committed a faux pas in his presence. Within
this circle, in fact, Hitler, the man without family or friends, was
a good "comrade." He had learned the meaning of comradeship in
the First World War and had never forgotten it.

Hitler's associates also knew how strongly he reacted to beautiful
and cultivated women. They knew of his affection for children and
for his German shepherds, Blondi and Bella, and what pleasure he
got out of watching the animals. In the *Wolfsschanze*, or "Wolf's
Lair," as his headquarters near Rastenburg in central East Prussia
was called, he had an obstacle course constructed, similar to those

3. Hitler's Relations with His Associates

During the years before the war, so much information about Hitler's more intimate associates had already become common knowledge that even people who admired the dictator began to question the personalities in his inner circle. How could he tolerate around himself men who clearly were not equal to the responsibilities of the offices they held, or who provoked misgivings on moral grounds, or who were possibly even unsuitable in both respects? One answer to this question was given by Dr. von Hasselbach, Hitler's personal physician, several months after Germany's defeat.²

"Hitler repeatedly asserted," Hasselbach reported, "that one of his essential capacities, which he could depend upon absolutely, was the ability to judge men. Even a brief impression was sufficient for him to be able to say what sort of person a man was and how he could best be used.

"The selection of his associates makes this conviction seem dubious from the very beginning. One would like to assume that a man in Hitler's position would have done his utmost to surround himself with particularly intelligent and experienced men of character who were beyond reproach. Yet, to cite only a few examples, Hitler made Martin Bormann his closest associate, Schaub his chief adjutant, and Morell his personal physician.³ He tolerated people like Heinrich Hoffmann, Hermann Esser, and Adolf Wagner as frequent and welcome guests in his private household. All were men of a kind the German people, insofar as it knew them, would much rather not have seen in the company of their Führer. Often enough Hitler had pointed with pride and satisfaction to the 'Guard' comprised of his *Reichsleiter* and *Gauleiter* [the highest echelons of the

²Hasselbach was "the most critical and reliable of Hitler's doctors," according to H. R. Trevor-Roper, who notes, on the basis of a credible source, that he was "probably one of the few people associated with Hitler who did not fall under his spell." (*The Last Days of Hitler*, p. 120). For their captors, Drs. Brandt and Hasselbach prepared memoranda on Hitler and his associates, of which Schramm acquired mimeograph copies.—ED.

³Hitler had several personal physicians, as Schramm explains later, but most of the others were finally dismissed when they warned Hitler against the strong preparations Dr. Theo Morell was giving him.—ED.

* He trusted no one except for
those he decided to trust personally.

National Socialist leadership and extraordinary ability, history. He continued to surround himself with a number of these men in their personal style of life public. The most important such unsuitable men as Ribbentrop while Hitler meanwhile continued in ominous fashion.

"If we ask how such blunders continued, 'we can hardly find place, we must consider the of the reliability and competence by no means found the person in his immediate environment not able to bring himself positions.

"Throughout his entire life, War, Hitler was dominated by loyalty, and gratitude in his time of his struggle and comrades in arms—even at the cost of injury and great economic sympathy for Mussolini's movements, faithfully changed, felt obligated in his relation a great deal before finally did it come to that.

"Clearly, an important factor in his conservatism in his personal routine if they could be avoided. He wore the same old-fashioned Munich flat. By the same time, he was getting himself off from people, nevertheless, he would certainly have been capable of making associates who were incompetent

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National Socialist leadership], whom, in terms of personal character and extraordinary ability, he claimed to be virtually without equal in history. He continued to speak this way when the failure of a great number of these men in many different respects, but particularly in their personal style of life, was notoriously clear to the German public. The most important posts of the Reich were occupied by such unsuitable men as Ribbentrop, Hess, Frick, Rust, and Axmann, while Hitler meanwhile underestimated many of his opponents in an ominous fashion.

"If we ask how such blunders were possible," Hasselbach continues, "we can hardly find a single satisfactory answer. In the first place, we must consider that although Hitler was indeed convinced of the reliability and competence of his corps of political leaders, he by no means found the personal composition of the group constituting his immediate environment particularly felicitous. Yet he was not able to bring himself to make any basic changes in these positions.

"Throughout his entire life, and particularly since the First World War, Hitler was dominated by a strong feeling of comradeship, loyalty, and gratitude in his relationship with the men who in the time of his struggle and persecution had been faithful and devoted comrades in arms—even at the cost, in some cases, of serious physical injury and great economic sacrifice. Consequently, he had no sympathy for Mussolini's method of frequently and, so far as he was concerned, faithlessly changing his associates. For his own part, he felt obligated in his relationships with old supporters to put up with a great deal before finally drawing the line, and only very rarely did it come to that.

"Clearly, an important factor in this outlook was Hitler's extreme conservatism in his personal life. He wanted no changes in his daily routine if they could be avoided. He took the same walk every day. He wore the same old-fashioned kind of cap, and held on to his old Munich flat. By the same token, wherever possible he avoided cutting himself off from people he had grown accustomed to. Nevertheless, he would certainly have decided to do so more often had he been capable of making an objective appraisal of those of his associates who were incompetent or had serious character deficiencies.

Occasionally he in fact acknowledged that he knew his old comrades in arms were not all angels; but he would dismiss these shortcomings as understandable in light of their competitive personalities. The real problem arose when Hitler saw weaknesses which he believed he could accept as the price of having men around him whom he had long been used to, who would be loyal, and with whom he could feel at ease. Yet the all too gross character deficiencies of some of them had the most fateful consequences precisely because of the positions they held. . . . Ribbentrop and Morell in particular, to neither of whom, in view of their background, Hitler had reason to feel obligated, are resounding proof of his poor ability to judge men. Otherwise it would have been impossible for Hitler to call Ribbentrop a second Bismarck and Morell an unusually competent physician and scientist.

"In many cases we do have to assume, however, that Hitler managed to suppress an entirely correct judgment which was congenial in order to justify persons who seemed to him useful and devoted. His attitude toward others was also conditioned by the fact that he had an extraordinarily high estimation of his own capabilities and consequently measured his fellow men by far more modest standards—despite the great demands which he now and again might make. And when he insisted that a great man had to have an insignificant wife because he would not be able to devote himself to her sufficiently, he may also have harbored similar thoughts regarding his immediate associates."

*
Reagan
There is only one point to add to Hasselbach's analysis: Hitler did have an amazing ability to judge people to the extent that he was able to sense immediately whether the person standing in front of him was for him, could be won over or would be immune to his personal dynamism. In this respect he had a sort of "sixth sense." There was only one person whom Hitler had not been able to see through, and this was Admiral Canaris, chief of the Wehrmacht intelligence service. Canaris was so perfect an intelligence officer that in his dealings with Hitler he was able to dissimulate successfully enough to deceive Hitler's intuitive sense about people being with him or against him. Consequently, Canaris was arrested only in 1944, when the facts spoke all too clearly against him.

* D.T. They were not at all alike except for our not insignificant similarity.

It is almost impossible to imagine the personal impact that sometimes seemed like a magnetic field. As widely there were nevertheless no effect. A colonel going to Hitler along with aversion to the man noting that Hitler did not have the reverse reaction to a cratic background. By chance she met him and grazed for a brief moment struck by lightning, he was a great man were of course more transformed into his

4. Hitler's Views on

Many photographs and pictures were liberated for the masses and how he had said

"At the end of the war I had experienced it which found it repulsive. His conversations with others not merely spiritually and untruthfulness, but sickness. Nothing was shades and degrees—fr of the 'Führer,' or an fear for life itself in various forms of life were still middle of April." [Sel

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that he knew his old comrades could dismiss these shortcomings and competitive personalities. The weaknesses which he believed men around him whom he had and with whom he could feel deficiencies of some of them solely because of the positions held in particular, to neither of Hitler had reason to feel obliged to judge men. Other than Hitler to call Ribbentrop a fully competent physician and

assume, however, that Hitler's judgment which was unconsciously seemed to him useful and was also conditioned by the fact of his own capabilities as men by far more modest as which he now and again that a great man had to have and be able to devote himself to ordered similar thoughts regard-

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It is almost impossible to convey to those who never experienced it the personal impact of Hitler. Such could be its strength that it sometimes seemed a kind of psychological force radiating from him like a magnetic field. It could be so intense as to be almost physically tangible. As widely attested as this strange power of Hitler's was, there were nevertheless many people upon whom it had absolutely no effect. A colonel once described to me how, when he was reporting to Hitler along with several others, he felt a steadily rising aversion to the man as he watched him at close hand. (It is worth noting that Hitler dismissed this colonel and the others very quickly.)

The reverse reaction was provoked in a sophisticated lady of aristocratic background and Christian convictions, who abhorred Hitler. By chance she met him on the boardwalk of a Baltic Sea resort, was grazed for a brief moment by his glance, and declared, as though struck by lightning, that while she still did not like him she felt that he was a great man. Those whom Hitler tolerated close to himself were of course more than just grazed by his glance, and they were transformed into his willing satellites.*

4. Hitler's Views on Family and Women

Many photographs exist showing Hitler with happy children. These pictures were liberally exploited in party propaganda; they documented for the masses how kind and good the "Führer" really was, and how he had sacrificed any family life of his own to be able to

*At the end of the war, an atmosphere developed around Hitler which was described shortly after the catastrophe by an elder General Staff officer. He had experienced it while briefing Hitler during March and April 1945, and found it repulsive. He wrote: "My impression—and as I determined in conversations with others, by no means mine alone—was that a person was not merely spiritually crushed by this atmosphere of servility, nervousness, and untruthfulness, but that one could even sense it as a sort of physical sickness. Nothing was genuine there except the fear. There was fear of all shades and degrees—from being afraid of somehow provoking the displeasure of the 'Führer,' or annoying him by some ill-advised comment, to naked fear for life itself in view of the impending end of the drama. The external forms of life were still scantily preserved, but even they disappeared after the middle of April." [Schramm does not identify the man.—ED.]

A.D.T. To the degree that they were
our people, they would feel under
his spell.

devote himself night and day to the welfare of the German people. Hitler's joyful expression in these pictures was not a mask put on for the photographers. He truly loved children, and made genuine contact with them as they swarmed about him.

Public welfare support for children, particularly illegitimate children, was a subject to which he gave considerable thought. He was also genuinely concerned with the problem of providing security for the family, which he regarded as the natural unit of social existence, as well as with making it easier for newlyweds to get a start in life.⁵ This was not something he talked about only in his public speeches, but a theme he frequently returned to in his *Table Conversations*. Many of the expressions he used in this connection had something almost homespun about them, and many things he said could be accepted even by those who might otherwise despise him.

Hitler felt that premarital intercourse was not objectionable, but rather that it assured that a man and his "maiden" really belonged together. This no longer provoked much opposition in 1941, particularly as he needed only to cite the customs among the country people of his own homeland, and as there was no denying much of what could be pointed out about the double standards of morality of the "upper ten thousand." Hitler's term for the aristocracy together with the wealthiest members of the upper middle class. On this subject, then, Hitler seems the kind of man who accepts life as it is and merely wishes to replace a crumbling façade with "natural" ethics dictated by reason.

Beneath this, however, lay other thoughts which Hitler did not, and could not, express publicly if he wanted to retain the esteem of the masses. Here the *Table Conversations* give us a deeper insight. In them we see unveiled the conclusions which Hitler drew from the fusion of his basic views with his biologically oriented conception of

⁵Schramm could presuppose, on the part of many of his German readers, a certain familiarity with the Nazi policy of granting marriage loans and baby bonuses. Not a few of them, as a matter of fact, could attribute the circumstances of their birth to the calculated largesse of the state during the 1930's. These policies not only had the effect of increasing the birth rate but also of removing women from the labor market, thereby reducing unemployment.

selective breeding. He saw no legitimate children. Indeed he paign in 1940, for example, F better "human material" and 1914-1918 than he had found felt that "German and Englishing process." the results

In Hitler's eyes, this Nordic enemy territory. On the contrary within Germany as well. When Berchtesgaden, he explained in population there that he really to improve it. "Credit has to be for the fact that today there are dren running around the area. be sent wherever the composition to improve it. . . . Sometime in elite troops in the Masurian I If someone objected that such morality of the German people jibes at the Prussian princes' the upper classes' repudiation gorically dismissed convention more. He was prepared to might be bound together by the

This was one of the many thought derailed into inconsistency his ideas, he would obviously irreconcilable with his other family and "Nordicization" by patible. Had he thought the constrained to consider whether from the painful humiliation a —would not result in such in

⁶Literally, *Aufnordungswerk*, or Nordic upgrading by selective breeding.

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Hitler reflected on the fact that
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crumbling before his eyes, when he was prepared to accept the con-
sequences of his annihilating defeat by taking his life, did Hitler
finally give undivided attention to Eva Braun. His formal civil mar-
riage to her was perhaps the only humane scene in the inferno of
the concluding act of the Third Reich. Yet it, too, was grotesque—
finding the proper official to perform the ceremony was understand-
ably very difficult at that point—and had something petty and
provincial about it. With everything crashing down in ruins, it hardly
mattered what posterity thought about Eva Braun.

What role did Hitler assign women in his view of the world? From
the *Table Conversations* it is evident that for him woman was still
the creature who wanted to be protected by man and to look up to
him: "The world of the woman is the man. Only now and then does
she think of anything else." She was not suitable for politics, Hitler
asserted, because of her inability to discriminate between reason and
emotion. She should be as attractive as she could, and might also
be jealous, but she should not concern herself with philosophical
questions. It was essential for her to bear children: "If a woman
does not have a child, she will become hysterical or sick."

As a basis of comparison with Hitler's ideas, we can take the
middle-class ideal of woman during the period before the war, when
the intellectual equality of the educated woman was already a gen-
erally accepted fact and the relationship between man and wife
had accordingly become far more complicated than during earlier
generations. By this standard, what Hitler had to say sounds ex-
tremely reactionary: "A man has to be able to stamp his imprint
on any woman. As a matter of fact, a wife does not want anything
else!" Hitler simply was not aware of what had been going on during
the past decades. As we shall see, this was not the only respect in
which he was behind the times.

5. Hitler's Social and Philosophical Resentments

Anyone whose rise in the world had been as hard as Hitler's would
perforce have been marked with strong affinities and bitter hos-
tilities. The *Table Conversations* clearly demonstrate the extent to

* D. T. When he expressed himself
on himself
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used professorial scholarship, that "instinct" which Hitler overall view of the world. : uncomfortable feeling that ticular analysis and evalua-

antage to call in leading pro- kept up to date on scientific was done only with medical s I know, with scholars of so forth. If such men had almost certainly have been very easy for him s to be invited from time to ultime companions, thereby ew information. The reason gested after the war by Dr. ans, in the following terms:

ns reciprocated by the German segment supported him months loubtedly lending him and his many uncertain observers. The incke, a professor at Berlin, almost fourteen months before t how he had vainly attempted o support an anti-Nazi public g themselves to the "coming

vaivered in his abhorrence of n of Austria had "thrust the d fulfilled old aspirations and nce filled him with "profound as unable to identify himself he wrote on August 7, 1940, : had a terrible sense of appre- i and Adolf Hitler. "It almost d necessary revolutions stems n nature. This brings us once But we will never be able to or us to do but to be modest

inscke, 1940

* LVB J

"It is possible that he felt the need, in his conversations, for a sound- ing board so uncritical and unpretentious that he could freely pour out his thoughts 'in rough draft' in order to reach the goal of clarifying them." This would account for Hitler's not wanting to have representatives of the educated middle classes and the intelligentsia around him but rather people, as Dr. Brandt suggests, "whose lives had somehow been disturbed or whose background as self-made men was similar to his own."

Hitler criticized secondary school teachers for failing to make clear to pupils in their history classes the broad relationships between events, and for laying stress instead on the biographies of individual monarchs and insignificant dates. In doing so, he thereby overlooked all the reforms which, at least since 1919, had successfully improved the instruction of history. Hitler had a particular distaste for elementary school teachers, most of whom, in Germany, even up to the Second World War, were men. He had a completely stereotyped conception of them, as expressed in April 1942: dirty tainted with socialism, a "stupid and un-self-sufficient intellectual proletariat." Hitler wanted to replace these teachers with women, thereby freeing the men for the war effort. He also felt that the discharged noncommissioned officers who were entitled to civil service positions should be brought into the teaching profession, since they had been drilled in both cleanliness and leadership. If education were carried too far, Hitler felt, it would simply drive the children to idiocy by brain massage. Consequently, elementary school teachers should learn only what was absolutely necessary for elementary instruction—and nothing more. A teacher who planned to spend his whole life in a country village would not need academic preparation. Hitler found himself repeatedly angered "that in the teacher training schools a tremendous amount of material is funneled into future elementary school teachers, although afterward their only job will be to teach the elementary principles of reading, writing, and arithmetic. How much does a person need to know from every possible branch of knowledge in order to teach six-year-olds the correct pronunciation of a, a, a . . . b, b, b! It is sheer insanity to try to pound everything possible into the children in school. If you ask them a year or two after they have left school about all these things, they

hardly know anything about them any longer. It should therefore be the responsibility of the school administration to set up curricula so that children will be taught only what they actually need to know in order to measure up later in life. Incidentally, it would also be a lot smarter to have them spend as much time as possible out in the fresh air. That way we would get a healthy younger generation which would be able, when the time came, to endure physical exertion without taking sick right away."

If these intentions of Hitler had actually been realized, it would have meant the reversal of the epoch-making reforms of Dr. Carl Heinrich Becker, the Prussian Minister of Culture from 1925 to 1930, who had established respectable educational standards for elementary school teachers, comparable to the requirement of bachelor's degrees in America, instead of the once acceptable certificates from two-year normal schools. But beyond that, Hitler's ideas would actually have set back the development of the elementary school system by still another generation, for the assignment of veteran non-commissioned officers to the schools was an old Prussian policy.

Hitler could hold such convictions because he simply did not take cognizance of the generally accepted modern pedagogical theory that no person can discover and develop his talents fully without the benefit of as comprehensive an education as possible. "Why does a boy who wants to study music," he once asked, "need geometry, physics, and chemistry? What does he remember about them later on? Nothing!"

It goes without saying that Hitler hated lawyers. After all, they had made it very difficult for him during the long years of his rise to power. Lawyers had also created all sorts of problems for him after he had come to power, constraining him again and again to hew to the letter of the law. The only really surprising thing about Hitler's attacks on lawyers is the degree of bitterness in his remarks. The expressions which he used, and which were accepted without question by his companions during the *Table Conversations*, today seem almost embarrassing, even to those willing to acknowledge that there may have been an element of truth in them. So far as Hitler was concerned, every lawyer was either defective by birth or would have to become so in the course of time. The law was not a re-

spectable profession and led, in its play-acting. There was, moreover, criminals, Hitler asserted, and "absolutely no difference between the two." Clearly he claimed that lawyers systematically assumed responsibility. To him they were scoundrels.

From the beginning, Hitler had regarded experts as rogues and villains, for everywhere they presented him with a largely prejudiced against administrative petty and egotistical, lacking in so far as the exigencies of daily life were concerned. A number of different experiences had convinced him of the incompetence of administrative officials. Until 1918 contact with the bureaucracy, in order to report here or there, or when he in some minor way. After 1918, he began holding mass meetings, he "threw out the authorities." Then, after 1933, he was throwing one obstacle after another. Plans violated the law or ran counter to practice in one respect or another.

The Prussian reformer Baron von Bülow, the bureaucracy early in the nineteenth century Otto von Bismarck, whose rage stemmed from lifelong experience. Until he came to power, Hitler never held an administrative office, and was in fact completely unacquainted with administration.

Now and then the Freemasons were mentioned in the *Table Conversations*. Hitler was absolutely certain that the Masons played a vitally important part in the life of the world. For example, that Franco did not accept Hitler when they met at Hendaye on the border between France and Spain, was by Hitler, in the last analysis, the fault of the Freemasons. After the SS had confined the Freemasons and brought them all

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From the beginning, Hitler had been inclined to regard financial
experts as rogues and villains, for whenever he let them get a word
edgewise they presented him with uncongenial facts. He was simi-
 larly prejudiced against administrative officials. In his eyes they were
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of the exigencies of daily life who thought only in abstract terms.
 A number of different experiences helped form Hitler's distaste for
 administrative officials. Until 1914, after all, he had only passive
 contact with the bureaucracy, insofar as he received instructions
 to report here or there, or when his personal life was interfered with
 in some minor way. After 1918, as he set out to build his party and
 began holding mass meetings, he had repeated collisions with "the
 authorities." Then, after 1933, his own bureaucracy seemed to be
 throwing one obstacle after another in his way by insisting that his
 plans violated the law or ran counter to established administrative
 practice in one respect or another.

The Prussian reformer Baron vom Stein had thundered against
 the bureaucracy early in the nineteenth century, and toward the
 end of the century Otto von Bismarck had also done so, but their
 rage stemmed from lifelong experience in administrative matters.
Until he came to power, Hitler never spent a single day in a govern-
ment office, and was in fact completely foreign to bureaucracy and
administration.

Now and then the Freemasons are mentioned in the Table Con-
versations. Hitler was absolutely convinced that behind the scenes
 the Masons played a vitally important role in world affairs. For
 example, that Franco did not accept his bid to bring Spain into the
 war when they met at Hendaye on October 23, 1940, was attributed
 by Hitler, in the last analysis, to the "fact" that the Caudillo was a
 Freemason. After the SS had confiscated the records of the German
Freemasons and brought them all together in Berlin, the Nazi party

it went, on and on, might still evoke some would be the startling suddenly, as though an outburst against against the Jewish- or against the alleged y fashion. No matter in what country it specially was this the prable for Germany. ated Hitler from ana- on a rational course the medieval person here. But whereas in —if he had the cour- er's mania led to his o fell into his hands e.

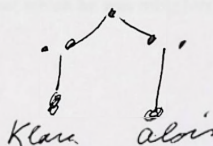
early impressions of ve years he spent in our, to the Bavarian rs in Vienna were, as the period when the d by the city's anti- ck troops, while the o made use of anti- ther intensified during its very vehemence in many forms.⁵ In frequently republished

since 1903, made a deep impression on him. There it was in black and white—the Jews were out to destroy existing states in order to rule the world! Hitler never seems to have taken cognizance of the fact that *The Protocols* had been discredited time and again as a crude falsification whose origins had been fully accounted for by serious scholarship.

Many different factors help to explain Hitler's anti-Semitism, but no matter how far one goes to account for it, something darkly inexplicable always remains. There were many people before Hitler and during his own lifetime who did not like the Jews, or who hated them, or who even despised them, but no one has ever surpassed him in the extent to which he allowed anti-Semitism to grow into so intensive a mania that it completely shattered the faculty of reason. Where has there ever been anyone who let himself be driven by his hatred to such gigantic crimes?

The attempt has been made to explain Hitler's anti-Semitism by demonstrating that there were Jews among his own ancestors. According to this theory, the church records where Hitler's family originated are supposed to have been falsified to cover up the fact that a Jewish master who took advantage of a young girl in his employ should actually be listed as one of Hitler's immediate forebears. It may sound plausible that Hitler, enraged about this illegitimate strain in himself, turned his hatred outward and took revenge on the Jews in general as scapegoats for the ancestor who escaped punishment. But when subjected to close examination this explanation has turned out to be highly questionable, especially since the chronology is dubious.⁶ In the end, all attempts to explain the unprecedented and immeasurable intensity of Hitler's anti-Semitism finally founder on the inexplicable.

⁶Schramm refers to the suspicion that Hitler's paternal grandfather was Jewish. It has been discredited. For an account of the tale and its flaws, see "Appendix I: The Alteration of the Name and the Jewish Grandfather Story," in Bradley F. Smith, *Adolf Hitler: His Family, Childhood and Youth* (Stanford, 1967), pp. 157-160. According to Dr. Werner Maser, author of serious studies of the early history of the Nazi party and of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, his "missing" paternal grandfather probably was Johann Nepomuk Hüttler, his mother's grandfather.—Ed.



anti-Semitism is given in *Hitlerism in Germany and the study of Hitler's anti-Semitism*—*The De-*

The *Table Conversations* demonstrate why to particular countries would that before the Second World War firsthand were Austria and France in which he had served the period of his rise to power across the German border. For around the United States, an idea of a wealthy Munich pub-ound to it, he was deterred by finances. Once in power, Hitler did his visits with Mussolini were a rough he had no opportunity to do. What little Hitler saw of for- of the Second World War was sine or special train. So far as then, Hitler remained dependent inema, and the reports of others. evelt or Churchill and more like st time when he attended the 943.

in mind to understand Hitler's untries. He thought in terms of nt propaganda put out before d more racially oriented nation- defeat in the First World War tlectual and artistic circles, so y fruitful exchange with foreign is was all lost on Hitler, who had ently rejected the new art and wish conspiracy had infiltrated g to the idea that the loss of the nuine defeat, he saw no reason of nationalistic superiority. On ny's recovery under his leader-

ship, not to mention its victories until 1942, he felt that his funda- mental belief in Germany's superiority had been absolutely vindi- cated.

It may surprise some to learn that Hitler spoke with so much respect about Stalin. The explanation lies in his sense of solidarity and identification with another dictator. Hitler's comments about Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, on the other hand, are shocking. To be sure, no one would expect him to show any sym- pathy for them. The most intense hatred would, in fact, be under- standable, for these were the men who checked his ambitions. But the notion that hatred often brings special insight was not borne out by Hitler. He not only defamed and cursed both Roosevelt and Churchill continually, but he also trivialized them—which no one should ever do with one's enemies and which, of course, Hitler paid for sorely. Thus, once again we are confronted with the phenom- enon of a man who read so widely, who had so much information at his disposal, and who was able to think so sharply in certain areas, nevertheless allowing himself to be mastered by groundless delusions which blocked his clear vision.

The *Table Conversations* reveal a good deal about Hitler's atti- tude toward England, an attitude determined by that strangely vacil- lating mixture of love and hate which led so many Germans in the nineteenth century to admire the British at one moment and despise them the next. "They are incomparably insolent, but I admire them nonetheless. We still have a lot to learn from them." Before the war the film *The Bengal Lancers*, which showed English officers in the Indian Army to best advantage, arrived in Germany, and Hitler had it played for himself three or four times. T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* also made a lasting impression on him.

Hitler's hope that the "London Naval Agreement" of 1935 would be the first step toward a genuine Anglo-German understanding was not realized. If he had been better informed about Great Britain, the idea would never have occurred to him in the first place. As it was, however, he clung to the vision that the future would draw England and Germany closer together, if for no other reason than that their interests were linked by a common rivalry with the United States— another matter about which he was misinformed.

At the very latest, one might have been able to speculate about an Anglo-American rivalry around 1900. In a notorious article in the London *Saturday Review* in 1896, which contained the key phrase "*Germaniam esse delendam*," the United States was cited as England's other potential enemy.⁷ But in 1911 a treaty was concluded between London and Washington which assured that any difficulties that might arise between the two powers would be settled by arbitration. The First World War led to the symbiotic relationship between the two great English-speaking peoples which has been maintained ever since. Again Hitler was the victim of an antiquated delusion of his own making.

7. Hitler's Conception of Economics and Administration

Hitler seldom spoke of economic questions in his *Table Conversations*. In the main, he was simply uninterested in them; the subject of economics had eluded his otherwise very broad general knowledge. He operated on the maxim that the state gives the orders and the economy complies.

In this respect Hitler had been spoiled by the course of events. There is no telling how many Germans who opposed Hitler were absolutely convinced that he would be brought down by the realities of the economic world—or if not brought down, at least forced to pull in his horns. But they were wrong. As things worked out—with the help of Hjalmar Schacht's economic policy, which in its own way was a work of genius—Hitler seemed to be vindicated by the development of the German economy. The recovery of the economy, its consolidation in the course of his policy of achieving autarky, and

⁷The *Saturday Review* article asserted that in "all parts of the earth, in every pursuit, in commerce, in manufacturing, in exploiting other races, the English and Germans jostle each other. . . . Were every German to be wiped out tomorrow, there is no English trade, no English pursuit that would not immediately expand. Were every Englishman to be wiped out tomorrow, the Germans would gain in proportion. Here is the first great struggle of the future: here are two growing nations pressing against each other, man to man all over the world. One or the other has to go; one or the other will go."—ED.

the financing of rearmament were tating a severe economic crisis. staggering outlays of the war, wh First World War, was smoothly the public even learning how. N tionship with this sector of public his finance minister, traditionally the civilian cabinet officers during Count Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk Krosigk's subsequent attempts to almost certainly sensed that the annoying statistics and unwelcome end, Schwerin von Krosigk's memoranda reaching Hitler's through Dr. Heinrich Lammers, whom Martin Bormann was not

To his mealtime companions, in the iron, oil, coal, and power wanted to retain private industry wise be a terrible bureaucratized system to a grinding halt. Inc smothered, he said repeatedly. TI private enterprises that were m: owners were in any case readily i companies were to be eliminat stocks as abominable objects of profits of labor to nonworkers. against public corporations own private ones, and cons former a long-range goal. The national bonds to be offered at a

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the financing of rearmament were all accomplished without precipi- tating a severe economic crisis. Even the problem of covering the staggering outlays of the war, which had been so difficult during the First World War, was smoothly handled in the Second, without the public even learning how. Nothing characterizes Hitler's rela- tionship with this sector of public affairs as well as his treatment of his finance minister, traditionally considered the most important of the civilian cabinet officers during wartime. The last time Hitler saw Count Lutz Schwerin von Krosigk was in 1942. All of Schwerin von Krosigk's subsequent attempts to reach Hitler were in vain. Hitler almost certainly sensed that the minister would come to him with annoying statistics and unwelcome recommendations. Toward the end, Schwerin von Krosigk could no longer even count on his memoranda reaching Hitler's desk. Consequently, he worked through Dr. Heinrich Lammers, chief of the Reich Chancellery, whom Martin Bormann was not able to block.

To his mealtime companions, Hitler advocated state monopolies in the iron, oil, coal, and power industries. At the same time he wanted to retain private industry, since he felt there would other- wise be a terrible bureaucratization which would bring the whole system to a grinding halt. Individual initiative should not be smothered, he said repeatedly. This applied, however, only to those private enterprises that were managed by the owners, or whose owners were in any case readily identifiable. Monopolies by private companies were to be eliminated completely. Hitler thought of stocks as abominable objects of speculation which channeled the profits of labor to nonworkers. He was, accordingly, very much against public corporations owned by stockholders, as opposed to privately owned ones, and considered the nationalization of the former a long-range goal. The financing could be covered with national bonds to be offered at a uniform interest rate.

The first reaction to these naive economic conceptions may be to associate them with Gottfried Feder, the founder of a militant anti-capitalist league and propagandist against "shrinking money," who once had advised Hitler on financial matters. But in fact the origin of these ideas can be found in the years during which Hitler saw how Mayor Lueger mobilized the Viennese lower middle classes

against "big business." It may well have been that at this time Hitler began to equate in his mind financial speculation, "criminal profits," exploitation of the workers by the idle rich, and "filthy Jewish parasitism."

Hitler believed that paying off the debt Germany incurred during the war would be a very simple matter. The value of the conquests would be many times greater than the cost of the war, and some twenty million foreign workers would be incorporated into the economy. Since the wages paid to these workers would only be half those paid to German workers, profits here alone would far exceed the national debt. "Finally," Hitler declared, brushing aside any objections before they could arise, "history teaches that no nation in the world has ever collapsed because of its debts." Two days after saying this, he added that if the war were not ended successfully, everything would be lost anyhow, so that for the sake of winning the war no accumulation of debt could be too great. Considering this kind of financial logic, it is all too easy to understand why Hitler evaded a conference with his finance minister.

Hitler's thoughts about administration corresponded to his thoughts about the economy. The administration simply had to function and to be ready for whatever demands the government placed on it, because the war effort required it. Among his table companions, Hitler repeatedly spoke with understanding about the dangers of too much centralization. No attempt should be made to force everything into an arbitrary pattern of conformity. The different German states should retain their individual customs and laws. Hitler also desired a multitude of smaller, middle-sized, and larger cities that would retain their character as centers of cultural life. Decentralization in these respects would make it easier for the central administration to find good men, since the more decentralized an administration was, the more opportunity men would have to work their way up through the regional organizations. By the same token, responsibility would have to be delegated from the top down.⁸

⁸These ideas of Hitler concerning decentralization by no means represented a departure from German tradition, but they differed sharply from National Socialist policy. All the German states but one were put under control of the central government when Hitler came to power; the exception, Prussia, did

Hitler could well afford to maintain states because he had already begun to depend upon the new links of centralized any possible danger to the a tremendous difference that there was only one military establishment,

The war led the central government to control the country more than ever, even though it exerted a degree of control upon the provinces. In addition, there was the increasing danger of anyone even suspected of being involved in the formation of centers of opposition. Whatever his inclination after dinner conversation, all of the identity of the individual German states from the central government to the exigencies of war.

Apart from Hitler's practice of centralization, the process of establishing new administrative jurisdictions, with a resulting administrative jungle, Hitler's workings of government must be seen as a single day of his life employed in the government and had had contact with the military bureaucracy during the building of the National Socialist state. improvisation, division, consolidation, and continual precaution that no one might be permitted to build a base of power as party leader.

not need to be taken over by the Nazis in a coup by Franz von Papen when

The tradition of particularism in the twentieth century. Hitler had served under the Weimar Republic, Germany, Prussia, Bavaria, and so forth, acquire a general German citizenship they were accorded German nation

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Hitler could well afford to make such concessions to the German states because he had already broken their backs in 1933. He could depend upon the new links of control he had forged, which eliminated any possible danger to the unity of the Reich. "It will make a tremendous difference that throughout the entire Reich there is only *one* military establishment, *one* SS, and *one* administration."⁹

The war led the central government to tighten its hold on the country more than ever, even though before 1939 it had already exerted a degree of control unprecedented in German history. In addition, there was the increasingly severe reign of terror against anyone even suspected of being hostile to the Third Reich, so that the formation of centers of opposition was made as difficult as possible. Whatever his inclinations in the relaxed atmosphere of after-dinner conversation, all of Hitler's ideas about preserving the identity of the individual German states and delegating authority from the central government to the regional administrations succumbed to the exigencies of waging the war.

Apart from Hitler's practice of intervening in the administrative process and of establishing new institutions of overlapping and conflicting jurisdictions, with a result that one can only describe as an administrative jungle, Hitler's complete unfamiliarity with the daily workings of government must be emphasized. He had never spent a single day of his life employed in an administrative office of government and had had contact only with the very lowest echelon of the military bureaucracy during the First World War. His experience in building the National Socialist party had been characterized by improvisation, division, consolidation, reorganization, and the continual precaution that no one under any circumstances be permitted to build a base of power which might rival his own position as party leader.

not need to be taken over by the Nazis because it had already been taken over in a coup by Franz von Papen when he was Reich Chancellor in 1932.—ED.

⁹The tradition of particularism in Germany remained strong well into the twentieth century. Hitler had served as a soldier in the Bavarian Army. Even under the Weimar Republic, Germans carried passports issued by the states of Hesse, Prussia, Bavaria, and so forth. Only under the Third Reich did they acquire a general German citizenship, unless they were Jewish, in which case they were accorded German nationality but not German citizenship.—ED.

ground to understand, tion. Although he be- of his own experience, ple, since it had been conditions obtained. well-established fact.

had also endowed him with genius—the sort of genius which would have enabled him to become a great artist had fate not put him instead in a position to go down in history as a great statesman and military leader, one whose impact as a great builder exceeded that of any king who ever lived.

The concept of genius had also played a central role with Nietzsche, whose case revealed the close relationship between genius and insanity. Our own century has become increasingly fascinated by the question of genius as new aspects of it have been opened up by psychoanalysis. The concrete question which confronts us here is whether Hitler really had any talent at all as an architect or whether it was simply a matter of self-deception, of sheer illusion.

Hitler did have an extraordinarily clear conception of space. Two examples can be cited. After the annexation of Austria, the Nuremberg chief of police told Hitler he had attended the theater in Graz. Asked what his impression of the building had been, he was able to talk only in very general terms. Thereupon Hitler mentioned that the transition from the stage to the auditorium had been poorly executed. The point of the story is that Hitler, at this time, had never been in Graz and knew the design of the theater only from sketches and illustrations. Then there is the incident of Hitler's visit to the Paris Opera in 1940, where he asked to see the oval room. He was told that there was no such room. Then Hitler pointed to a door, behind which he said it lay. It turned out that the large oval room had been subdivided into a number of smaller chambers so long ago that no one had remembered the original form, even though it could be deduced from the design of the ceiling. The Frenchmen present were rather disconcerted, the Germans greatly impressed.

As a painter Hitler never got beyond dabbling, and as an architect he never had a chance to prove himself at all. But he did have enough buildings erected to give some idea of what he might have done had he become an architect.

The Reich Chancellery in Berlin was so contrived for monumental effect that it was without any sense of proportion. The relationship between man and building, which has always been the basic problem of architecture, was clearly forgotten. Inside, the

be architecture. Next g. During his Vienna had tried his hand at in the world to have in May 1942. But the r direction. Nonethe- ural talent very high, ecome one of the first a pipe-dream, surely, n and vision but also cal skill which Hitler also the discipline, to l one, and dreams are s reason most people being doubted or even be concerned about. ch had emerged at the the nineteenth led to a eat painters, sculptors, e of honor in society. n. His associates mar- names he remembered p in the *Table Conver-* Hitler saw a relation- atesman of genius. In him that Providence

design and furnishings represented the superlative of the slightly modernized castle style of interior decoration affected by certain hotels. The Reich Chancellery was more imposing than the Palazzo Venezia, where Mussolini had his giant workroom. For sheer monumentality it also overshadowed anything in America. All things considered, it was a building of boundless pretentiousness, proclaiming to visitors from all the world: "Note well that you are now entering the place where the Führer of the Greater German Reich resides!"

Characteristic of Hitler as a private person was his own south German retreat, the *Berghof* overlooking Berchtesgaden. It was situated on a mountain slope and blessed with one of the most magnificent vistas in Germany. When Hitler acquired it, it had been a modest enough place, thoroughly in keeping with the style of the region. As he added on to it, he retained the old core intact as a side building. From the outside, consequently, the resulting complex was not architecturally significant.

After passing through the hallway, which led onto a spacious balcony, one entered the main room, where Hitler received distinguished guests and held conferences. It was a large room with a huge picture window, comfortably furnished with carpets, furniture, and flowers, much in the manner of the summer home of a cultivated industrialist. There was nothing to offend good taste, but neither was there anything which rose above bourgeois conventionality, and certainly nothing that was the slightest bit modern or that might have suggested any individuality on the part of the owner.

Hitler loved beautiful carpets, and on the walls he had a number of pictures he liked, which he changed every few months. There was a large drawing by Albrecht Dürer in the *Berghof*, a magnificent portrait of a man, which has probably been lost. But he also owned other, much less distinguished pictures, such as a painting by the Viennese artist Alt. A multi-volume encyclopedia was placed in a convenient spot.

Hitler preferred old furniture, but was willing to accept new furniture that was not too modern and had pleasant lines; he disliked clumsy club chairs. The revolution in furniture introduced by the

"Dessauer Bauhaus"—character materials—had to be sharply cognizance of it, since it co

Hitler appreciated nature of natural stone. He did not balconies and the practice the like. In this, as in other quite common in the period

Hitler loved flowers. Lar the banquets he gave in pealiked giving away flowers. particular favorite flower a regarded a bouquet rather a Viennese Makart style, accordried, or artificial flowers h decoration.

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"Dessauer Bauhaus"—characterized by functional design and new materials—had to be sharply rejected by him insofar as he even took cognizance of it, since it contradicted his sense of beauty.

Hitler appreciated natural materials and was particularly fond of natural stone. He did not like stucco. He criticized the addition of balconies and the practice of framing windows with columns and the like. In this, as in other things, he had a point of view which was quite common in the period before the First World War.

Hitler loved flowers. Large bouquets adorned his rooms, and at the banquets he gave in peacetime they were used lavishly. He also liked giving away flowers. He cherished orchids, but he had no particular favorite flower and no appreciation for gardening. He regarded a bouquet rather as a beautiful still-life in the spirit of the Viennese Makart style, according to which arrangements of natural, dried, or artificial flowers had been an essential aspect of interior decoration.

Hitler was anything but revolutionary in the physical environment he created for himself. He adhered to tastes which were already being abandoned, even before the First World War, by those who set the style. They had been interested in the impressionists and even the expressionists, had been fascinated by Chinese lacquer work and the colorful prints of the Japanese (particularly because of the striking facial expressions), and had begun to decorate their homes with strange and expressive works from Africa and the South Seas. But there was no trace of any of this with Hitler, who was not even ready to recognize the art of all Europe.

One might expect that Hitler would have had a weakness for Germanic art, since so many Nazis outdid themselves in their enthusiasm for anything associated with the Germanic peoples. Indeed, ever since the publication of the much reprinted cultural call to arms by Gustaf Kossinna, *Die deutsche Vorgeschichte, eine hervorragend nationale Wissenschaft* (*German Prehistory: A National Science Par Excellence*), the serious academic study of German prehistory had become a part of German nationalism. It proved increasingly attractive to dilettantish dreamers, and as the party functionaries generally lacked the background to distinguish between solid re-

searchers and charlatans, party-subsidized studies of early Germanic history account for one of the most dismal chapters in the history of German scholarship.

Hitler ignored all this. In fact, he dismissed it with the observation that while the Teutons were making their pots, the Greeks had already built the Parthenon. On another occasion he spoke of the "beautiful clarity of the ancient world." He considered the Pantheon, which he saw during his visit to Rome in 1938, one of the most perfect buildings of all time, and while viewing it he sent his retinue outside so he could concentrate on it undisturbed. He also wanted to be left alone in the Colosseum, and the grandiose dimensions of the Baths of Caracalla impressed him as well.

The Romanesque style of architecture had a certain similarity with that propagated by Hitler; although he was not fond of any particular building in this style, he did approve of its clear proportions, practicality, and force. The Gothic, on the other hand, he rejected altogether, judging it senseless in its exaggerations and in the excess of its ornamentation. Its upward thrust made him uncomfortable. He was willing to accept only the Strasbourg Cathedral, because its nave, in his opinion, was not so narrow as in other Gothic buildings. He was enthusiastic about the cathedral's famous angels' columns, presumably because the horizontal subdivision stood out and the figures were worked out of the stone in almost full relief. Hitler was, as is known, thinking of making this cathedral, after the final victory, into a monument for the Unknown Soldier of World War II. It is a frightful thought for those of us who survived the war that he might just have been able to do this.

Hitler regarded the pictures by the old German painters as important historical documents, but he ridiculed Göring for collecting them, contending that he did so because his father had bought a castle in Austria. Hitler explicitly rejected the early sixteenth-century German artist Matthias Grünewald because his paintings were "ugly."

For Hitler, the Italian Renaissance represented, as it had for Gobineau,¹ "the dawn of a new day, the self-discovery of Aryan

¹The French diplomat and Orientalist Joseph Arthur de Gobineau's *Essay*

man." As he had put it in *Jesuitism*. Who knows from the building style and architecture of the Colosseum about recognizing respect he was quite witty of the Palazzo Pitti in foundation walls and it by the court of the royal Colleoni. In general.

Italy was a great example. But he looked at it since Heinrich Wölfflin appeared in 1888, then been opened to the world. But Hitler, on the whole, large and colorful designs he had been indirectly Ludwig II, had erected in Vienna, the Hitler could bring him then, the French baroque Austrian.

Hitler appreciated historical figures than is no evidence that he

As a neoclassicist critic he was unable to understand criticized the lack of ambivalent feelings a Biedermeier style. He to look at pictures by the painter of heroic and Feuerbach. Adol

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* This reminded him of Eva's private life, she was a touch too Gothic for his taste.

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man." As he had put it earlier, "Basically we should be grateful to Jesuitism. Who knows whether without it we would have moved from the building style of the Gothic to the light, open, and bright architecture of the Counter-Reformation?" Hitler had no reservations about recognizing the greatness of Italian architecture; in this respect he was quite without nationalism. He praised the proportions of the Palazzo Pitti in Florence, with the great hewn stones of its foundation walls and its broad windows. In Naples he was impressed by the court of the royal palace, and in Venice by the monument of the Colleoni. In general he liked the height of the rooms.

Italy was a great experience for Hitler, as it was for many Germans. But he looked at it through the eyes of the nineteenth century. Since Heinrich Wölfflin's famous book *Renaissance and Baroque* appeared in 1888, the eyes of the educated traveling public had been opened to the Italian baroque as well as the Renaissance. But Hitler, on the whole, was not drawn to it, though he liked the large and colorful designs, and he approved of Versailles, to which he had been indirectly exposed by the copy that the Bavarian king, Ludwig II, had erected on the island Herrenchiemsee. Of the Belvedere in Vienna, the baroque palace of Prince Eugene of Savoy, Hitler could bring himself to appreciate only a few details—but then, the French baroque was so much more "classical" than the Austrian.

Hitler appreciated Rembrandt and Rubens, but more as great historical figures than as artists. He also accepted Poussin, but there is no evidence that he was really moved by these masters.

As a neoclassicist chiefly interested in clarity and grandeur, Hitler was unable to make anything of the art of the rococo, and he criticized the lack of powerful lines in the Empire style. He had ambivalent feelings about the painting of Romanticism and the Biedermeier style. He appreciated Blechen and Waldmüller, liked to look at pictures by Caspar David Friedrich, venerated Rottmann, the painter of heroically interpreted landscapes, and liked Schwind and Feuerbach. Adolf von Menzel he considered a God-inspired

on the *Inequality of Human Races* (1853-1855) propounded the theory that the white races, particularly the Aryans, had created civilization.—ED.

artist, for the content of his work as well as the diligence and precision of its representation.

While still in Vienna, Hitler acquired an interest in the *Jugendstil*² which he never entirely lost. Characteristically, he retained a preference for painters who had been esteemed during his youth, such as Makart and Alt in Vienna and Lenbach and Stuck in Munich—artists whose importance was already dubious before the First World War, and whose reputations have declined ever since.

The main purpose of the art gallery Hitler planned for Linz was to present a worthy display of nineteenth-century painting. He was proud that he had already acquired so many paintings by Defregger and his students that he would be able to fill a large display hall with its side galleries. He envisioned limiting the National Gallery in Berlin to Germanic and German painters and displaying its other holdings elsewhere. The consequence would have been a sort of compromise whereby the art of the Mediterranean world would by and large have been able to claim its due, but "Nordic" (and particularly its core, German) art would have received the place of honor it deserved in Hitler's eyes.

Hitler's appreciation of art ended with the nineteenth century. He was unable to make any sense out of impressionism and held Liebermann to be a dabbler. Although he found Corinth's youthful pictures excellent, he had many objections to his later work. In the plastic arts Hitler accepted sculptures that had a classic touch, for example, Adolf von Hildebrand's Munich fountain with its bulls; and he was enthusiastic about Kolbe's "Dancer" (1912), though he rejected his later work. Klimsch, on the other hand, became in Hitler's judgment "ever greater and more significant"—although today the very opposite is thought to be the case.

During the war Hitler took the time to go through back issues of the art magazine *Die Kunst*, which had once been quite authorita-

²More commonly known outside Germany as *Art Nouveau*, the *Jugendstil* emerged shortly before the turn of the century, achieving considerable prominence at the Leipzig Art Exposition of 1897. Self-consciously modern, the decorative "youth-style" theoretically advocated simplicity of design, but soon developed an egregious ornateness which contributed to its early oblivion.—ED.

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Hitler's support of artists
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As Hitler openly said, he v

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extent Hitler, Khrushchev, and Ulbricht, however different they may otherwise be, constitute a reactionary clique attempting to arrest the development of art, and if possible set it back.

9. Music, Dance, and Literature

Like art, music played an important role in Hitler's life, though he never mastered any instrument. He had found, as a choir boy, that he sang badly, and he never tried it again. During his Vienna years, however, he became familiar with both opera and operetta, the *Fledermaus* and Lehar's *Merry Widow* being his favorites. There were many names from the musical world of the time that he never forgot.

Chamber music meant nothing at all to Hitler. He never acquired a taste for Bach and Beethoven, or for the music of the previous centuries which was finding a growing audience during his formative years. Hitler's real love in music was the opera, Mozart seems to have meant little to him, but he appreciated Weber's *Freischütz*, Puccini's *Bohème* and *Madame Butterfly*, Verdi's *Aida*, d'Albert's *Tiefland*, and several of Richard Strauss's operas. The music of such nineteenth-century composers as Schumann, Brahms, and Reger meant nothing to him, but he occasionally showed interest in the work of Bruckner. It was Richard Wagner who held his highest admiration, not only for his music but for his philosophical outlook and his subject matter. "When I listen to Wagner," Hitler declared to his circle, "it is like the rhythms of the primeval world!" This was the bygone golden age, which in Hitler's musings had acquired an extraordinary splendor and glory.

The *Berghof* was provided with a large collection of phonograph records and excellent phonographic equipment, but Hitler made little use of it. During the war his interest in music waned almost entirely.

Hitler saw in the art of the dance, as in music, one of the most fundamental expressions of the culture of a nation. He admired dancers of stature who remained true to their art as he understood it, refraining from what he considered mere acrobatics. He was

never able to understand or appreciate toward which traditional ballet was. His impression of a dress rehearsal was a group of philosophers dancing of intellect. Goebbels tried to interformances and thought it had nothing been celebrated since the twenties rather more like so much hopping leaps into the air. His nineteenth century mained the beautiful picture of a lessy across the stage with no other

We should note at this point that the statesman were related, the conductor and the leader of the march on one occasion in 1926 he power of suggestion. in bringing Weimar around to the very opposite. That had taught him "how clever a very great artist one has to move. Le Bon's works on social psychology mass suggestion than the Pied Piper the gifts he had been born with, the conductor, and above all a fugrew from year to year.

Although there is much to say and music, he had remarkably little contact with the German classics become familiar to him during his ing how few references to literature. According to Dr. von Hasselbach poems, particularly lyric poetry. Not of time. This man who read so much from one of the most essential and Through the novel he might have intellectual problems of the previous do so.

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never able to understand or appreciate the art of modern dance,
toward which traditional ballet was moving in a number of respects.
His impression of a dress rehearsal of the Berlin Opera was that it
was a group of philosophers dancing under the direction of a woman
of intellect. Goebbels tried to interest him in Gret Palucca, who had
been celebrated since the twenties; Hitler attended one of her per-
formances and thought it had nothing to do with dancing, but looked
rather more like so much hopping around punctuated with strenuous
leaps into the air. His nineteenth-century ideal of the dancer re-
mained the beautiful picture of a gracious creature gliding weight-
lessly across the stage with no other purpose than to delight the eye

We should note at this point that just as, for Hitler, the architect
and the statesman were related, so also were the orchestra con-
ductor and the leader of the masses. Occasionally he would tell
how on one occasion in 1926 he had gradually succeeded, by the
power of suggestion, in bringing a group of listeners gathered in
Weimar around to the very opposite of what they had expected.
That had taught him "how cleverly, how slowly, and how much as
a very great artist one has to move forward." Hitler had no need of
Le Bon's works on social psychology to become a greater master of
mass suggestion than the Pied Piper of Hamelin. He needed only
the gifts he had been born with, the guiding concept of himself as
the conductor, and above all a fund of practical experience which
grew from year to year.

Although there is much to say about Hitler's appreciation of art
and music, he had remarkably little interest in literature. His only
contact with the German classics was with whatever might have
become familiar to him during his youth or at the theater. It is strik-
ing how few references to literature appear in Hitler's speeches.
According to Dr. von Hasselbach, Hitler had no appreciation for
poems, particularly lyric poetry. Novels seemed to him to be a waste
of time. This man who read so much thus chose to cut himself off
from one of the most essential areas of German intellectual life.
Through the novel he might have familiarized himself with the basic
intellectual problems of the previous half-century, but he did not
do so.

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10. Memory and Knowledge

We now move from Hitler as he took in the world with his eyes and ears to the manner in which he thought and formed his convictions. We shall concern ourselves with his relationship to history and the natural sciences, as well as with the faith he developed for himself. We should consider, in general terms, Hitler's native intelligence, the knowledge he acquired in his youth, how he later extended it, and how he went about assimilating whatever he learned.

One of Hitler's capacities which impressed everyone, including those who did not like him, was his stupendous memory. It enabled him to retain inessentials exactly and to store away everything he ever saw: his teachers and classmates; the figures in the Wild West stories of Karl May; the authors of books he had once read; even the brand name of the bicycle he had used as a courier in 1915. He also remembered the exact dates of events in his political career, the inns where he had stayed, and the streets on which he had been driven. This was a capacity he took for granted, and he was not particularly impressed by it.

But with such a highly developed memory, Hitler was able to recall precisely all reports made to him, including specific numbers, so that officers had to be meticulously careful that what they said agreed completely with whatever they had told him earlier. If Hitler perceived any contradiction whatever, his suspicion that an attempt was being made to deceive him, never far beneath the surface, was instantly aroused.*

His remarkable memory, together with iron diligence and a strong power of concentration, had enabled Hitler in the course of the years to acquire knowledge of a scope and detail that again and

*A characteristic example was the case of the navy captain who gave Hitler situation briefings on the war at sea. He told me once that by mistake he gave the number of submarines in the Mediterranean as one too many. Having checked it out with the Navy High Command, he would have to casually slip in a correction during the briefing the next day. Otherwise, if one or two U-boats were sunk in the next couple of weeks, Hitler might ask about the rest. There would be the very devil to pay if the figures did not add up correctly—since Hitler would be sure to have all the numbers in his head.

again amazed persons talking admiration. For this reason the dominant role in mealtime had something to say about a any issue did remain in quest encyclopedia was consulted, th

In order to clarify his mind and forth alone in a room—"I But then he still needed to ta "clean copy," so to speak. Th (aside from relaxation) the n When someone who knew wha a key word he was able to lau mal lecture. In order to organ first place," "secondly," and li off on a tangent, as other tho reason, his formal speeches oft they cannot be reconstructed sight of the goal he had set hi He would therefore finally arri to reach, the acceptance of wh to be self-evident.

Hitler never achieved the ty the Catholic Church inculcates in its officers. This is shown, Palace speech in May 1942 to macht, which displays all the t thinking. According to what C rapher, Hitler apparently dictat Presented with the emphaticall Hitler displayed on such occasi voice that fascinated many, thi impact on the officer candidates. respond to a commander-in-chi three years, had won victories But as effective as the speech i

30 per cent. But Hitler declared that the not surprise him at all; it merely confirmed resurrectionists which he had developed in

to accept a report that coincided with his Catholic Church, whereby Franco had accepted the full military honors of a field marshal, and the "Whites" in Segovia. A call to a literature and culture would easily have emerged never was a saint in Segovia with that. In any case, immediately following this members of Hitler's circle produced a similar study of the uncritical acceptance of what manner in which his followers echoed

to History

g to Dr. von Hasselbach, that Hitler was conversations he would repeatedly make reflections and projections."

of history is like a person without hearing live that way," remarked Hitler in July life is that?" This sounds a bit like an c that anyone unable to account for four and his lifetime as a fool. But the similarity Hitler had no intellectual affinity with

himself and his lifework in the stream of meone who gleaned examples and warn what he had done and was undertaking. much about Hitler's vision of himself nents, we can reconstruct his picture of

neval times appears to have been slight, the nineteenth century a plausible pic-

ture of the stages of development and a reasonably precise chronology of the prehistoric period had been formulated. He questioned whether it might not be necessary to conclude from the myths of the Greeks and the Germanic peoples that there had once been a natural catastrophe that destroyed an earlier erect form of mankind. To the objection that this was not archaeologically demonstrable, he replied with the contrived thesis that metal, as opposed to stone, is transitory, so that any traces of such an extremely early bronze- or iron-age civilization would in effect have rusted away. In any case, this culture could have flourished in areas which today lie beneath the sea. These and similar thoughts of a "Golden Age," including the myth of the lost continent of Atlantis, are, of course, not unique to Hitler.

As a neoclassicist, Hitler had serious reservations about the glorification of the early period of the Germanic peoples—unlike many of his followers. For all the Germanic prejudice of many Nazis, Hitler recognized the greatness of the culture of antiquity and the statesmanship of the Romans: "The real centers of culture, not only during the last millennia before Christ but also in the first thousand years after his birth, were the lands of the Mediterranean." The decline of classical civilization preoccupied him as an example of what he felt he had to prevent in his own time. "I often reflect on what caused the fall of the ancient world," he said in conversation in January 1942, and he then proceeded to give as reasons for that decline the degeneration of the ruling class, which produced fewer and fewer children, and the growth in the number of slaves. At another time he explained that it was not the Huns and Germans who had destroyed the Roman Empire, but rather Christianity, to which he attributed a corrupting influence similar to that of Bolshevism—a variation of a hypothesis propagated in the eighteenth century by Edward Gibbon and thereafter advocated in a number of different forms.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, according to Hitler, Europe had been continually threatened from the East. This had happened during the time of the Huns and the Mongols, and the danger would have been renewed by the Bolsheviks if action had not been taken against them. Hitler had only the most naive conception of the Slavs.

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who were so important in this connection. He derived the Bulgarians from the Turkomans; the Czechs, he decided on the basis of appearance, were descended from Mongolian tribes. Historically speaking, this was sheer nonsense. But no one contradicted him—in this case probably not even out of cowardice, but rather out of ignorance.

During the Middle Ages the threat from the East was successfully averted by the "German emperors," as he called them, ignoring the fact that the Holy Roman emperors were not primarily concerned with Germany at all. At their head, so far as Hitler was concerned, stood Charlemagne. The defamation of the great Frankish leader for slaughtering the Saxons, which had been carried on by Himmler and other prominent Nazis in league with amateur historians, had already drawn Hitler's criticism before the war in a speech in Erfurt. In the *Table Conversations* the name of Charlemagne comes up repeatedly, and always with an expression of veneration.⁷

Hitler also admired Charlemagne's successors, who in his eyes had enjoyed the uncontested mastery of the world for five hundred years: "Aside from ancient Rome, the history of the medieval emperors is the mightiest epic the world has ever seen." The personal stature of the emperors was "undoubtedly something quite different than that of the petty farmer Henry the Lion." Here again he repudiated his party comrades, who held up the Guelph Duke Henry, together with Henry I and Lothair III, against the emperors with their fateful Italian policy, and regarded Henry the Lion as a pioneer in national settlement of the East. Considering the structure of Europe at that time, Hitler found it understandable that the emperors moved south rather than eastward.⁸

⁷Charlemagne, known in German as *Karl der Grosse* (Charles the Great), is regarded by many Germans as no less French than German. This position is historically valid, insofar as a division between France and Germany occurred only after his reign, while no separate German state even began to emerge until more than a century after his death.—ED.

⁸Henry the Lion, duke both of Saxony and Bavaria and a twelfth-century contemporary and challenger of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, was the leader in Germany of the anti-imperial Guelph (or Welf) Dynasty. Frederick established the power of the Hohenzollern Dynasty (known in Italy as the Ghibellines), suppressed Henry the Lion, and vigorously sought to assert

The fact that the medieval hereditary was regarded by Hitler as an advantage. He felt that he to degeneracy. In this respect to be more like a republic, though an early form of the "Führerprinzip."

On occasion Hitler acknowledged organization. Naturally, however, no less from his extreme German clericalism. Consequently, he to the seventeenth century as brought about by the spiritual Church in its quest for power.

It was in this context that though he stood further from official Hitler recognized the German the same time criticized him for however, there were only folk.

From Hitler's biological perspective of history generally to since they were a necessary peoples. According to him, they were the "combined product of Christianity."

Hitler praised Rudolf of from southwest Germany acquired an eastern frontier, as a base of power of Bohemia, and restored his firm leadership during the reign of Emperor Frederick II in 1250.

imperial power in Italy rather than in Germany. Long before the Nationalism of German national interests for had been excoriated by German Lothair III, together with Duke of the kind of leadership which might characterize the Middle Ages as a strong and fragmented federal empire.—ED.

connection. He derived the Bulgarians, as he decided on the basis of appearance, from Mongolian tribes. Historically speaking, no one contradicted him—in this regard, but rather out of ignorance. The threat from the East was successful emperors,” as he called them, ignoring that emperors were not primarily concerned with their head, so far as Hitler was. The defamation of the great Frank-Saxons, which had been carried on by the present Nazis in league with amateur Hitler’s criticism before the war in a *Conversations* the name of Charles and always with an expression of

France’s successors, who in his eyes were the mastery of the world for five hundred years, the history of the medieval world has never seen.” The perception was “undoubtedly something quite different from Henry the Lion.” Here again, the Duke, who held up the Guelph Duke and Lothair III, against the emperors, and regarded Henry the Lion as the master of the East. Considering the structure, Hitler found it understandable that it was rather than eastward.⁸

as *Karl der Grosse* (Charles the Great), no less French than German. This position of a division between France and Germany, the no separate German state even began to exist after his death.—ED.

⁸ Saxony and Bavaria and a twelfth-century Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, was the Imperial Guelph (or Welf) Dynasty. Frederick, the Hohenstaufen Dynasty (known in Italy as the Hohenstaufen), and vigorously sought to assert

The fact that the medieval empire was electoral rather than hereditary was regarded by Hitler, contrary to general opinion, as an advantage. He felt that hereditary monarchy automatically led to degeneracy. In this respect the medieval empire seemed to him to be more like a republic, though of course a Germanic one (perhaps an early form of the “Führer-state”).

On occasion Hitler acknowledged that the papacy was a grandiose organization. Naturally, however, he was opposed to medieval Rome no less from his extreme German nationalism than from his anticlericalism. Consequently, he regarded the period from the third to the seventeenth century as an epoch of cultural impoverishment, brought about by the spiritual narrow-mindedness cultivated by the Church in its quest for power.

It was in this context that Hitler came to praise Luther, even though he stood further from the Protestant Church than the Catholic. Hitler recognized the German reformer as a great man, but at the same time criticized him for not having gone further. After him, however, there were only followers and imitators in his Church.

From Hitler’s biological perspective, the various civil wars in the course of history generally turned out not to be regrettable at all, since they were a necessary phase in the growth and maturity of peoples. According to him, the German people, seen as a nation, were the “combined product of violence, ideas from antiquity, and Christianity.”

Hitler praised Rudolf of Habsburg because this petty prince from southwest Germany acquired Austria, then on Europe’s eastern frontier, as a base of power for his dynasty, defeated Ottokar of Bohemia, and restored unity to the empire which had lacked firm leadership during the generation following the death of Emperor Frederick II in 1250. Hitler also had kind words for the

imperial power in Italy rather than to develop a strongly centralistic kingdom in Germany. Long before the National Socialists came along, this “sacrificing” of German national interests for the sake of an international imperial ideal had been excoriated by German patriots who singled out Henry I and Lothair III, together with Duke Henry the Lion, as lonely examples of the kind of leadership which might conceivably have brought Germany out of the Middle Ages as a strong and united nation-state rather than a weak and fragmented federal empire.—ED.

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empire under Rudolf's successors, who brought it to a number of "truly high points." The Habsburg Monarchy must be given full credit "for having upheld the German idea even in a period when the medieval Reich had disintegrated into individual states and was literally being torn to shreds by dynastic interests."

The fact that he had been born in Austria and that his first strong impressions were from the imperial city of Vienna meant something to Hitler throughout his entire life. But he consciously tore himself free from such fond sentiments and acknowledged that Prussia, after all, had won the Austro-Prussian War in 1866 and renewed the Reich. It is understandable that among the Hohenzollern kings of Prussia, Hitler favored Frederick William I, that "bull of absolutism," because of his strict training methods. Hitler identified himself more and more with Frederick the Great, who despite all his defeats held out until he got what he wanted, for Hitler's own position seemed to become more and more similar to that of Frederick before the surprising change for the better. There is no need to elaborate here upon how false the analogy was.

Naturally it was Bismarck whom Hitler regarded as the most important historical figure of the nineteenth century, but there is no evidence that he made any attempt to study the speeches and writings of the chancellor, though they might have profited him. What had a lasting effect on Hitler from his own experience was the memory of how England, France, and Russia had joined together in 1904-1907 in a policy of "encirclement." He must have read many articles about this during those years, since the patriotic nationalist press was full of alarm. Almost certainly Hitler knew the book of the retired General Friedrich von Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*, which appeared in 1912, and in which the author suggested that, in view of the threat, Germany should smash the ring by a preventive war before it finally closed. The thought that he—once risen to the position of "Führer of the Greater German Reich"—would have to act decisively in time to prevent a new encirclement became one of the basic principles of Hitler's policy.

In this respect he "learned" directly from history. But as in the case of Frederick the Great, the analogy which he sensed was false. As a matter of fact, by his very advances beyond the borders of the

German Empire as established the ring that finally choked him, he was unable to learn from their history and thus misunderstood it.

Again and again one sees how this lack of understanding of history was based on individual details and facts. It was an undisciplined knowledge of a less attempt to determine where the historical understanding.

In the year 1841 Thomas Carle, *Hero-Worship, and the Heroic*, which Hitler probably read at some time in his youth, dedicated the temple in which the busts of all great German rulers, by idealistically oriented Germany of the twentieth century. Emphasis on public approval, set up the ' in the Berlin Tiergarten, char benefactors and heroes.

Nevertheless, the fact that it was questionable by 1900 was shown by the surrounding Karl Lamprecht's criticism, no means limited to specialist circles throughout the decade before the new insights of psychological and cultural history which left the question in question. It was the First World War, the final verdict on the role of the exception of Lenin, neither among the many single individual achievements nor was it possible for anyone to speak. From this point on, whenever one speaks biographically, primary attention must be paid to the circumstances in which they had not

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German Empire as established by Bismarck, Hitler himself forged
the ring that finally choked him. It is a terrible enough fate for peo-
ple not to learn from their history, but more frightful still when they
misunderstand it.

Again and again one sees how fortuitous and unbalanced Hitler's
understanding of history was, despite his mastery of so many
individual details and facts. But though we are dealing with the
undisciplined knowledge of a self-educated mind, we can nonethe-
less attempt to determine where Hitler stood in the development of
historical understanding.

In the year 1841 Thomas Carlyle's book of lectures *On Heroes,
Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* appeared, a book that
Hitler probably read at some time or other. In 1842, King Ludwig I
of Bavaria dedicated the temple-like "Walhalla" near Regensburg,
in which the busts of all great Germans were to be displayed. The
basic conception that it is men who make history was adhered to
by idealistically oriented German historiography until the beginning
of the twentieth century. Emperor William II, with widespread
public approval, set up the "Siegesallee" ("Victory Boulevard")
in the Berlin *Tiergarten*, characterizing all the Hohenzollerns as
benefactors and heroes.

Nevertheless, the fact that this approach to history was already
questionable by 1900 was shown by the considerable agitation sur-
rounding Karl Lamprecht's conception of history, which was by
no means limited to specialists in the field, and which continued
throughout the decade before World War I. Taking into account
the new insights of psychology, Lamprecht advocated a form of
cultural history which left the previous foundations of the hero cult
in question. It was the First World War, however, that delivered the
final verdict on the role of the hero in history. With the possible
exception of Lenin, neither among the victors nor the vanquished did
any single individual achieve the kind of stature that would make
it possible for anyone to speak of him as a "maker of history."
From this point on, whenever historical figures were presented
biographically, primary attention was apt to be given—witness the
case of Bismarck—to the imperfections in their life work, the in-
stances in which they had not reached their goals, and the extent to

which they were limited by the perspectives of their own times.

Systematic research in social and economic history had already begun in the nineteenth century in response to such thinkers as Karl Marx, while since the turn of the century the protagonists of intellectual history had been directing attention to the influence of ideas. In 1908, the German historian Friedrich Meinecke published *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*, an epoch-making study of cosmopolitanism and nationalism. William II's "Victory Boulevard" was therefore a relic of the past not only in artistic terms but for the entire conception of history which it represented. In sum, by 1900 it was no longer possible to plot the course of history in terms of a series of history-making figures.

But Hitler appears to have remained oblivious to everything scholarship contributed since the beginning of the twentieth century to broadening the scope of historical understanding. He clung instead to the ideas of another era—to King Ludwig and his "Walhall." Though the relationship between Hitler's conception of history and his *Führerprinzip*, the basic principle of leadership with which he sought to overcome democracy, is very clear, it would be a mistake to conclude that his study of history led him to this conclusion. It is more correct to say that because he advocated it he discovered its advantages in history.⁹

In Hitler's understanding of history, the great events brought about by great men stood in the foreground. Yet he regarded the course of history as being predetermined in two respects. In the first place, he thought that international power politics was inexorably influenced by geopolitics, as spelled out by Rudolf Kjellén, in his book *Die Grossmächte der Gegenwart* (*The Great Powers of the Present*), which had first appeared in 1914 and had found such a responsive audience that by 1930 it was in its twenty-third printing. Second came his understanding of the pseudo-Darwinian idea

⁹The *Führerprinzip* or "leadership principle" was a rigid, hierarchical conception prescribing absolute obedience to those above, demanding absolute obedience from those beneath. Thus it reversed both the democratic flow of authority from below and the corollary idea of the consent of the governed, and instead dictated the absolute rule of the Leader over everyone below him.—ED.

that in the struggle between equals, might makes right.

The presence of Germanic blood in the greatness of other nations, the ruling class came from Lowlanders who had led England to man origin. The United States had blood, and American technology were almost exclusively of German origin. As far as Italy was concerned, still see the German influence helped the tsars of Russia and the father of modern Turkey, who had absolutely nothing to do with the German. Hitler would have liked to claim him also.

To Hitler these facts were not new. People were capable of establishing a state. "All of these organizing activities [trade, industry, colonialism] were the unconscious desire to expand."

Insofar as Hitler was not a historian, none of the historical facts in *Table Conversations* can be taken as evidence. They were not always entirely false. The edge was well founded or not. Judging his personality, they even acquired so much as to show that he should have a clear impression of the certainty with which Hitler was patient and indeed admiring. Then can one appreciate the past. Fortuitous and unheroic worship and glorification to history was a major influence. He transformed the history of the explosive of terrible power.

the perspectives of their own times. Social and economic history had already

in response to such thinkers as Karl of the century the protagonists of intellectual attention to the influence of ideas. Friedrich Meinecke published *Welt* an epoch-making study of cosmopolitanism. William II's "Victory Boulevard" was not only in artistic terms but for the which it represented. In sum, by 1900 it out the course of history in terms of a res.

ve remained oblivious to everything the beginning of the twentieth century historical understanding. He clung in- era—to King Ludwig and his "Wal-ship between Hitler's conception of his- the basic principle of leadership with democracy, is very clear, it would be study of history led him to this con- say that because he advocated it he history.⁹

of history, the great events brought ve the foreground. Yet he regarded the redetermined in two respects. In the d, international power politics was inexor- s, as spelled out by Rudolf Kjellén, in *Guiden Gegenwart (The Great Powers of* appeared in 1914 and had found such y 1930 it was in its twenty-third print- tanding of the pseudo-Darwinian idea ou-ship principle" was a rigid, hierarchical cience to those above, demanding absolute or hus it reversed both the democratic flow of t rollary idea of the consent of the governed, vhe rule of the Leader over everyone below

explosive of terrible power.

In his *Table Conversations*, Hitler once explained on the basis of his biological theory of life why compassion was not necessary: "A person can be horrified at the way one creature devours another in the realm of nature. The fly is killed by the dragonfly, which in turn is killed by the bird, which then falls victim to a larger bird. . . . One thing is certain: nothing can be done about it." But this is only a retrospective intellectual rationalization for a psychological phenomenon which must have been very deeply rooted in Hitler's mind.

Whatever can be cited about Hitler's life, such as his lack of firm roots in a real family or social group, fails to explain adequately how—without so much as batting an eye—he could order millions killed and millions more to fight on after it had become utterly senseless to continue the war. Though there may be no adequate psychological explanation, there is an historical parallel. Robespierre and Hitler, great as the differences were between them, and great as the difference in the sheer magnitude of their crimes, do belong together as *terribles simplificateurs*, terrible simplifiers who sought to reduce the complexity of life to the dogmas they had worked out. Determined to lead mankind to felicity, both brought about the most hideous terror.

For Robespierre, the student of Rousseau, as for Hitler, conventional morality had to be subordinated to another. Traditional standards of goodness could not save the condemned who were not "Friends of the Justice of the People." The principles of Humanism, on which the Revolution was based, were perverted to the uses of Terror. With no more pity than Hitler, the "Incorruptible" had ordered the wagons driven to the guillotine till he himself became its victim. Hitler, however, was more successful in evading his enemies—by suicide.

In his public speeches, Hitler could not dare to reveal his own conception of morality, but to his mealtime companions he could and did speak more openly about such questions. At the height of his power he did not mince words about the fact that he felt more than ever fully justified in taking the most drastic measures with absolute ruthlessness whenever it seemed necessary. If he found a group of saboteurs in a plant, he would have them hanged in the factory courtyard where no one could miss seeing the ex-

ample. Anyone who turned against him ruthlessly. If he was cornered, which occurred at the end of figures identified with opposing those of political Catholicism: as all the inmates of the concentration camps then "collapse for the lack of leaders." Hitler felt that his moral victory in this case he was thinking it derived from the fact that at either be at the front or in the rear for the victory of Germany.

It would be an oversimplification to say that Hitler was a hyper-Machiavellian no longer bound by legality came from what he saw as the events. He recognized and codified with these "eternal" laws. He was not violating the law whenever it suited him to say, when it did not yet correspond to his needs. He has probably have been unable to grasp the irony of tomorrow, conceived according to his own standards, not stand to hear anything further.

The nation's existence was to be maintained only if these judges should be guided by the purpose of the law is not to protect the law but to provide that Germany everyone had to come to terms with his usefulness or danger to Germany.

²Although millions died in concentration camps, a greater number by far were killed at Auschwitz. Only at the end of the other concentration camps. Hitler's statement in April 1942 about the Jews, considering that at that time many were being killed by the German authorities sooner

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Leader

once explained on the basis of compassion was not necessary: one creature devours another led by the dragonfly, which in falls victim to a larger bird. . . . alone about it." But this is only a tion for a psychological phenomenon deeply rooted in Hitler's mind. Hitler's life, such as his lack of group, fails to explain adequately an eye—he could order millions on after it had become utterly ough there may be no adequate an historical parallel. Robes- nences were between them, and magnitude of their crimes, do cateurs, terrible simplifiers who of life to the dogmas they had ankind to felicity, both brought

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ample. Anyone who turned against the social order would be shot down ruthlessly. If he was confronted with a mutiny such as that which occurred at the end of 1918, he would have "all leading figures identified with opposition tendencies, and definitely including those of political Catholicism," executed immediately, as well as all the inmates of the concentration camps.⁵ The mutiny would then "collapse for the lack of mutinying elements and fellow travelers." Hitler felt that his moral right to order such executions—in this case he was thinking in terms of hundreds of thousands—derived from the fact that at the time all German patriots would either be at the front or in the munitions factories giving everything for the victory of Germany.

It would be an oversimplification to characterize Hitler as a hyper-Machiavellian no longer inhibited by law. His concept of legality came from what he saw as "the eternal laws of natural events." He recognized codified law only to the extent that it agreed with these "eternal" laws. He felt entirely justified in overthrowing or violating the law whenever in his eyes it was retrogressive, that is to say, when it did not yet correspond to the "eternal" law. He would have been unable to grasp the reproach of amorality, and would probably have raged that he, Hitler, was the champion of the morality of tomorrow, conceived according to nature, and that he would not stand to hear anything further of the obsolete ethics of yesterday.

The nation's existence was prior to all individual rights, and these could exist only if they remained compatible with that interest. Judges should be guided by the conviction "that the primary purpose of the law is not to protect the individual from the state but rather to provide that Germany not be destroyed." Consequently, everyone had to come to terms with the fact that, depending upon his usefulness or danger to Germany, he might at any time be up-

⁵Although millions died in concentration camps throughout Europe, the greater number by far were killed in the specialized extermination camps, particularly Auschwitz. Only at the end of the war were the inmates of many of the other concentration camps murdered in cold blood. Consequently, Hitler's statement in April 1942 about killing the inmates was a real threat, considering that at that time many could still reasonably hope to be released by the German authorities sooner or later.—ED.

rooted or transplanted, circumscribed in important matters, humbled or commanded, and possibly even subjugated or exterminated.

According to Hitler's conviction, a people had the right to exist only if it were racially valuable. If it were, then it also had the right to expand at the expense of weaker peoples. That this amounted to subjugation did not even occur to Hitler; in his view, "subjugation" did not exist in the realm of nature. The lion does not "subjugate" the gazelle, but only makes use of the right he enjoys by virtue of his superiority.

So far as Hitler was concerned, mankind differed from the animal kingdom only to the extent that men are able to think and consequently to provide for the survival of the species in the struggle for existence. The lion ages, may become sick, is threatened by the hunter, and possibly may procreate degenerate descendants. Similar dangers—the most serious among them being "racial death"—also threaten mankind. Those responsible for leadership therefore have the duty—in this context Hitler might have spoken of "sacred duty"—to avert these dangers with every means at hand. In this situation no misgivings of any sort are valid and compassion is inappropriate. The significance of personal suffering or individual agony pales when the survival of the race is at stake.

Thus Hitler arrived at his own ice-cold, ruthless categorical imperative, which completely reversed Kant's. The guiding principle for National Socialist legislation was not to be the standard of moral relationships between men, but rather what was seen as the laws of nature. Whoever objected that they were ruthless missed the point; whoever regarded the new standards of morality for human behavior, derived from "eternal" laws, as brutal, failed to realize that all living beings are subject to the harsh laws of nature. The first commandment of Hitlerian morality was therefore the preservation of the collective vital force of the German people; the misgivings of an older culture were simply brushed aside.

In the *Table Conversations*, Hitler the Leader continually reverts to the theme of the ideal follower. The expression "fellow citizen" was almost spontaneously replaced by the revealing slogan "comrade in arms." This comrade had to be brave, tough, ruthless, personally above reproach, of iron perseverance, prepared to as-

sume the responsibilities of comradship, and characterized by tenacity, selflessness, and optimistic catalog of ideal National Socialist the necessity of being "fanatical" which together with "absolute" : Hitler's usage during the war.

The morality Hitler worked out consistent within its own frame of conclusions to the bitter end, taking munists, against the clergy of b masons, and against the Liberal extermination of the mentally l above all to the annihilation of th because Hitler was a terrible am precisely because his logic, which mined by instinct, functioned with the systematic application of th could have taken upon his cons cruelty of Genghiz Khan or Tar with what was carried out on H worthwhile comparison.

Yet the most hideous aspect correctly and conclusively derived arrived at by his reading and h forth in his room alone. Given not have been different. The onl what stage he would carry out whether it would be done openly erations, but not matters of prin and for all.

15. Visions of the Future: The of Theory into Practice

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sume the responsibilities of command but at the same time capable
of comradeship, and characterized by the virtues of preparedness,
tenacity, selflessness, and optimism in all circumstances. To this
catalog of ideal National Socialist virtues one would have to add
the necessity of being "fanatical" in pursuit of one's goal—a term
which together with "absolute" acquired ever-increasing weight in
Hitler's usage during the war.

The morality Hitler worked out for himself was well grounded and
consistent within its own frame of reference. Hitler pursued its con-
clusions to the bitter end, taking up the struggle against the Com-
munists, against the clergy of both confessions, against the Free-
masons, and against the Liberals. Such logic led inevitably to the
extermination of the mentally handicapped and the gypsies, and
above all to the annihilation of the Jews. These things happened not
because Hitler was a terrible amoralist, unafraid of the Furies, but
precisely because his logic, which was otherwise so frequently under-
mined by instinct, functioned with a virtually infernal consistency in
the systematic application of this "morality." Who before Hitler
could have taken upon his conscience the murder of millions? The
cruelty of Genghiz Khan or Tamerlane looks small in comparison
with what was carried out on Hitler's orders. Only Stalin yields a
worthwhile comparison.

Yet the most hideous aspect of Hitler's morality is that it was di-
rectly and conclusively derived from the philosophy of life he had
arrived at by his reading and his thinking as he walked back and
forth in his room alone. Given Hitler's premises, his ethics could
not have been different. The only question he had to decide was at
what stage he would carry out what his morality prescribed, and
whether it would be done openly or secretly—mere tactical consid-
erations, but not matters of principle, since those were settled once
and for all.

15. Visions of the Future: The Translation of Theory into Practice

In his description of a typical day at Hitler's headquarters, Dr.
Henry Picker, who transcribed the *Table Conversations*, speaks of

ented to a high degree. Moreover, d no inhibiting influence in tech- is difficult to find an adequate ex- ility in this direction.

Hitler's technological understanding r inclination for the exact sciences. re simple technology could go no y, and the like. In his statement on itunes: "He had little interest in ularly in the area of physics, such atomic physics and the like, even : attention. Consequently he came warfare only when enemy progress a decisive influence in the sea and

is, Hitler was his own worst enemy mly convinced that he knew more ield Marshal von Manstein, Hitler's technological questions had fateful ce he prevented the steady develop- time. In the development of rocket he undoubtedly had an inhibiting sions in matters of technology were time as having been mistaken, and : false. Such was his decision about or use both at the front and against effect of vitiating a great opportu- in the area of military technology, a good deal, his prejudice against all who did not agree with him, mind once he had made it up, com- talent.

: and a good understanding of the placed Hitler on solid ground in his d General Staff officers. These were hem, and indeed often superior; and Hitler's uncommonly clear concep-

tion of spatial relationships, which enabled him to visualize buildings that he had never before entered and which was not irrelevant to the task of directing operations on several fronts at the same time.

None of this, however, explains how it was possible for Hitler—as a corporal who in World War I had not so much as led a company and consequently, in matters of military strategy even more than in military technology, was self-educated—to assume the role of a military dictator. Field Marshal von Manstein does concede to Hitler "a certain eye for operational possibilities," which is frequently found among laymen, though he qualifies this by adding that it was an eye dimmed by a tendency to overestimate the technological means at hand and by an inadequate sense of proportion regarding possible results. General Jodl spelled out more precisely the successful operations in which Hitler played a decisive role, such as the extension of the attack in the North up to the Norwegian port of Narvik beyond the Arctic Circle, and the attack in the West against the center of the enemy front rather than against the right wing, both in the spring of 1940.

It is not to be denied, therefore, that Hitler—contrary to the expectations of the professionals and presumably even to his own surprise—developed certain talents in military leadership. To dismiss Hitler as "the corporal from the First World War"—as was done at first after the catastrophe in 1945—or to think of him merely as someone who seized control and made one mistake after another, contributes nothing to the evaluation of him as an historical phenomenon. Hitler is difficult enough to understand at best, and in the military area perhaps most difficult of all.

However, there can be no question but that Hitler did make military decisions that were disastrous mistakes. In the second half of the war he followed a strategy based on fundamental principles against which the gravest objections must be raised. The final reckoning must be made no differently than when any military leader is defeated or gives orders which end in disaster.

In terms of our concern in this essay with Hitler's personality, the important thing is to point out the difference between his way of thinking and that of the General Staff. This is well brought out in a study on the Ardennes Offensive, also known as the Battle of the

Bulge, which the author prepared in 1945 while in postwar captivity, and which General Jodl reviewed in his Nuremberg cell, adding his own marginal notes. The tried and proven manner in which the General Staff made its objective calculations and then developed its operational planning in the light of the cold facts was contrasted in this study (further excerpts from which are reprinted as Appendix I) to Hitler's radically different approach, not only to planning but even to his initial evaluation of the situation:

"As a former corporal he had very real sympathy for the common man, the 'poor worm,' and with his vivid imagination was able to see clearly before him the difficulties of the battle actions, even though they had been so greatly transformed since the time of his own deployment at the front. On the basis of his personal experience in the First World War, he held fast above all to the basic principle that the troops should never be given occasion for uncertainty by offering them the option to retreat. This was the reason for his resistance whenever he was advised to approve a request for orders to evacuate a position or fall back to a new line of defense. He was convinced that, if only enough willpower had been brought to bear in the first place, most such requests would not even have been necessary."

"Willpower was to Hitler the dominating factor everywhere. This reflected the experience he had gained during his revolutionary rise to power. He thought that if he had ever learned to think in the terms of a General Staff officer, at every single step he would have had to stop and calculate the impossibility of reaching the next. Consequently, he concluded, he would never even have tried to come to power, since on the basis of objective calculations he had no prospect of success in the first place. Once in power, he remained a revolutionary no less in his way of acting than in his way of thinking. He regarded it as self-evident that his initial successes had created the prospect of further triumphs, insofar as they encouraged his followers and intimidated his adversaries. The Führer regarded it as proper in his military leadership, as he had in his political activity, to establish goals which were so far-reaching that the objective professionals would declare them impossible. But he did this deliberately, convinced that the actual course of events would leave those more modest calculations far behind. As soon as the first break-

through was achieved, the unlearned and the paralysis of the possible to achieve the improbable meant when he so often spoke of the Wehrmacht. A during the first part of the war the predictions of the General Staff justified in counting on this in decisive consideration. Had the it would certainly have been the mountains which would have been

"Perhaps the most decisive of German leadership in the war was successes, could say that he and basis of its calculations had not been the true realist. He had clearly, precisely because he had But then the situation changed. Staff was correct in its calculation

A striking demonstration of the private diary which Major Hitler's army adjutant, kept during the winter of 1942-1943, which the Battle of Stalingrad.

On November 7, 1942, Hitler experience that the General Staff connection, Poland and France had immediately proved wrong. On began against which General Ze the thinking of the General Staff to Hitler's. But by now Hitler was over these "experts" and did not victim by reverses—no matter how

In contrast with other historic operations permits clear judgment and failures, victories and defeats tally for Hitler would show both a total would be negative.

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d in 1945 while in postwar captivity reviewed in his Nuremberg cell. The tried and proven manner in his objective calculations and then in the light of the cold facts was excerpts from which are reprinted. A very different approach, not only to the valuation of the situation: a very real sympathy for the common man, his vivid imagination was able to transform the culties of the battle actions, even the basis of his personal experience fast above all to the basic principle: given occasion for uncertainty by the fact. This was the reason for his refusal to approve a request for orders to switch to a new line of defense. He was willpower had been brought to bear requests would not even have been

the dominating factor everywhere. This was gained during his revolutionary rise he had ever learned to think in the future, at every single step he would have the impossibility of reaching the next step. He would never even have tried to come out of objective calculations he had no place. Once in power, he remained a man of action rather than in his way of thinking. It was that his initial successes had created a false sense of security, insofar as they encouraged his adversaries. The Führer regarded it as a triumph, as he had in his political activity, so far-reaching that the objective problem was impossible. But he did this deliberately. The course of events would leave those far behind. As soon as the first break-

through was achieved, the unleashed energy of the victorious Germans and the paralysis on the side of the enemy would make it possible to achieve the improbable in the end. This was what Hitler meant when he so often spoke of fanaticism and repeatedly demanded it of the Wehrmacht. A good many of the military successes during the first part of the war had, after all, been achieved despite the predictions of the General Staff. Consequently, Hitler felt fully justified in counting on this incalculable factor of fanaticism as the decisive consideration. Had the Bible meant anything to him, then it would certainly have been the verse about the faith that can move mountains which would have been closest to his heart.

"Perhaps the most decisive of all the problems of the supreme German leadership in the war was that Hitler, because of his initial successes, could say that he and not the General Staff, which on the basis of its calculations had not established such far-reaching goals, was the true realist. He had foreseen actual developments more clearly, precisely because he had taken the incalculable into account. But then the situation changed again, and in the end the General Staff was correct in its calculations."

A striking demonstration of these observations is to be found in the private diary which Major (later General) Gerhard Engel, Hitler's army adjutant, kept during the period of the grave crisis of the winter of 1942-1943, which was to reach its climax in the disastrous Battle of Stalingrad.

On November 7, 1942, Hitler declared that "it was his repeated experience that the General Staff overestimated the enemy. In this connection, Poland and France had been one long fiasco." He was immediately proved wrong. On November 19, the Soviet offensive began against which General Zeitzler had warned; from then on, the thinking of the General Staff proved to be increasingly superior to Hitler's. But by now Hitler was firmly convinced of his superiority over these "experts" and did not let himself be shaken in this conviction by reverses—no matter how grave they were.

In contrast with other historical events, the course of military operations permits clear judgments in retrospect, since successes and failures, victories and defeats can be clearly differentiated. The tally for Hitler would show both plus and minus points, but the final total would be negative.

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Nazism and Catholicism, between the structure of the National Socialist party and the Roman Catholic Church, may do so. But this is no more than a game of ideas and cannot lead to any true insight.

A question which must be weighed much more carefully is whether Hitler had typically German characteristics. This cannot be answered without first asking what is typically German. In the first place, great differences among the German people had their origins in the widely varying characteristics of the Germanic tribes. Pro-
found religious divisions were hardened in a long and bitter series of wars. Even today, class differences of surprising tenacity still exist just below the surface of an outwardly democratized and demilitarized society. Consequently, there is no single definition of the typical German. But even if it were possible to agree upon typically German characteristics, they would explain only a small sector of Hitler's being.

To summarize: Hitler can be explained neither in terms of his social origins nor his school or early environment, and not on the basis of the fact that he originated among a particular people. At best, only aspects of the problem can be understood with reference to these factors. The Hitler problem simply cannot be forced into that frame of reference. Seen as a whole, Hitler was not petty bourgeois at all, nor was he Catholic, or even German. His most essential characteristics, as we have seen, were singular and unique, shaped by his own capacities and talents, by certain fateful events in his life, by certain decisions for and against him, and by certain strokes of good fortune which made possible an extraordinary rise to power (for no matter how gifted and ruthless he was, he might well have been stopped—and more than once he almost was). Only through all of these circumstances taken together, which converged only on this one man alone, can Hitler be understood. One should, therefore, never try to "derive" him.

A genuine historical problem which we can approach without methodological difficulties is posed by Hitler's role as a new Pied Piper. How was it possible for him to win over millions of followers and keep them under his strange influence for so long? Whoever seeks an answer to this question must feel his way simultaneously in three different directions:

1. He must deal with Hitler himself, analyzing the methods of his

propaganda and what he said as well as what he was silent about.

2. He must examine the particular circumstances following Germany's defeat in the First World War, including inflation, the crisis of 1929-1932, and increasing unemployment, which made Hitler's rise possible and which he then cunningly continued to exploit after he came to power.

3. Finally, he must study the question whether—as a result of the tangled course of German history, which had never known a genuine democracy—it was easier for a man like Hitler to come to power than it would have been in a country with a more stable democratic tradition.

From the extraordinarily complicated total Hitler problem we have excluded whatever would distract us from the uniquely valuable source on which we have focused—the *Table Conversations*. Our purpose in this essay has been to use the record of that year-long exercise in self-revelation as a window permitting us to look in and see Hitler's way of perceiving and thinking, so that we may gain a better understanding of his actions.

HITLER—A MAN OF THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

Insofar as this self-educated man can be placed at all, Hitler was a man of the turn of the century, which accounts for his reactionary approach to education and culture. We have seen that he tirelessly devoured books, with the ability to store whatever he read in his extraordinarily efficient memory. As a result, he had active command of an amazingly large number of individual facts. Yet he had so little intellectual contact with any single thinker, scholar, or school that he could not be typed in any way. Attempts to trace Hitler's intellectual history from one or another source are foredoomed by this fact. Hitler's thought is rather to be understood as a huge miscellaneous collection of the most diverse origins, upon which he sought to impose his own order and logic.

Here we can note one last time the names of Haeckel and Bölsche, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Fridtjof Nansen, and Sven Hedin, again making it clear how heterogeneous were those authors whom Hitler studied in his early years, and for whom he showed something like admiration or a sense of intellectual affinity. When

we examine these relationships all lay before 1914. This correlation was unaware of everything of history from 1914 on, or if not examined. He regarded the and in which he had become absolutely unassailable.

It should also be remembered that the intellectual world at its best was a more popularized version of the world formed to introduce him to it naturally, and to help him over his background and formal education was entirely dependent upon encyclopedias, which in most cases were by accident. Consequently, to oversimplified, popularized science then already yesteryear, which raised crucial problems. He reacted to serious science but which merged as Hanns Hörbiger's "World Ice" scientific theories by which Hitler was of critical training.

Whoever, then, wishes to understand Hitler's history must descend to the depths of trivial—science and his analogies there. But they would be overshadowed by thought. On the one hand he the other he arbitrarily forced So it was even during the two stances would have made it very informed men and draw upon he preferred to continue his self without intellectual counsel. / than ever to this approach, but access to virtually all information

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t names of Haeckel and Bö- Fridtjof Nansen, and Sven ogeneous were those authors s, and for whom he showed of intellectual affinity. When

we examine these relationships chronologically, we find that they all lay before 1914. This corresponds to the observation that Hitler was unaware of everything of importance in German intellectual history from 1914 on, or if not oblivious to it, simply rejected it un- examined. He regarded the basic position he had once assumed, and in which he had become more and more firmly incrustated as absolutely unassailable.

It should also be remembered, of course, that the pre-1914 in- tellectual world at its best was never accessible to Hitler, but only a more popularized version of it. He had no one well enough in- formed to introduce him to it, to orient him intellectually and cul- turally, and to help him overcome the limitations of his personal background and formal education. Since he was on his own, he was entirely dependent upon newspapers, books, magazines, and encyclopedias, which in most cases he probably only happened upon by accident. Consequently, to cite just one example, he knew only oversimplified, popularized science, that is, the science of what was then already yesteryear, which dramatized the obvious and trivial- ized crucial problems. He read works which had nothing to do with serious science but which merely hawked half-baked notions, such as Hanns Hörbiger's "World Ice Theory," the last of several pseudo- scientific theories by which Hitler was taken in because of his lack of critical training.

Whoever, then, wishes to locate Hitler in terms of intellectual history must descend to the level of popular—indeed, even to the depths of trivial—science and pseudo-scholarship, and seek to draw his analogies there. But they would not lead him far, for the result would be overshadowed by the stark individuality of Hitler's thought. On the one hand he grossly oversimplified things, but on the other he arbitrarily forced them into grotesque combinations. So it was even during the twenties and early thirties, when circum- stances would have made it very easy for Hitler to question well- informed men and draw upon the definitive works in any field. But he preferred to continue his self-education in his own way, remaining without intellectual counsel. After 1933 he was more committed than ever to this approach, because even though he had immediate access to virtually all information concerning the intellectual world,

any form of counsel or direction was incompatible with his sense of mission. He felt he had been completely vindicated by his coming to power and the consolidation of his dictatorship over the Third Reich.

Thus Hitler was unique in intellectual history, formed by talents and capacities that might have led him to an entirely different life had his formative years been different. Instead his abilities were utilized in an unparalleled career which led from an isolated, almost asocial existence, through the discipline of the army, and through his "mercenary captaincy" as a struggling party leader, to a position as unchallenged dictator. Insofar as intellectual proximity may be ascertained (and, to repeat, there can be no question of real intellectual dependence), our observations again lead us back to the turn of the century. This period accounts for Hitler's conception of history, his biologism, and particularly his pseudo-Darwinism. It also helps to explain his ersatz religion of monism, which was in vogue around 1900, and his anti-clerical, vulgar liberalism which made bugbears of the Catholic as well as the Protestant Churches, declaring opposition to them the sacred cause of all "free" spirits. Hitler thought himself worlds removed from Karl Marx, but his assertion that religion is the opiate of the people was precisely what Hitler felt about the churches.

In the arts, Hitler's likes and dislikes followed precisely the same pattern. He venerated Wagner and was enthusiastic about the nineteenth-century ballet—lovely to behold and unencumbered by ideological content. In architecture and sculpture, he supported neo-classicism. When it came to painting, he liked the phase that preceded impressionism—it was the only possible point of departure for his protégés.

Because of his reactionary ideas and tastes in the arts and sciences, from year to year Hitler came more and more to oppose those who responded with open minds to the changes and, in some cases, transformations occurring in historiography, natural science, music and the dance, architecture, and painting. By 1930, and certainly by 1940, there was absolutely no one of intellectual and artistic stature who identified himself with the world in which Hitler was rooted and which he sought to renew after he came to

power. Hitler's objective means were ever more unprecedented in Germany.

William II had also stood and had ranked Ernst von Adolf von Menzel above approval of the impression age, so to speak, but it is of course. Despite his impulse to accept the skepticism—if and artistic circles regard "grumblers" to concentrate.

So Hitler was a man who he remained—learning at the very end of his life the power he wielded, in the bygone world and to win

THE HITLER PROBLEM

Though Hitler described what the world would look like in the future, he well knew how to keep it from going over to the concealed feeling behind his conversations. There he still new Europe freed from the German Reich would flourish. He would presume to say that in the months after this commencing end, after which the Red took his own life. On March 12, 1933, he opened the way to the Union—thus effecting what he regarded as his greatest success.

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power. Hitler's objectives in the arts and sciences, toward which
 his means were ever more draconic, represented a cultural reaction
 unprecedented in German history.

William II had also stood in opposition to the trends of his time,
 and had ranked Ernst von Wildenbruch above Gerhart Hauptmann,
 Adolf von Menzel above Max Liebermann, and voiced his disap-
 proval of the impressionists. He had "missed the boat" to his own
 age, so to speak, but it had not been in his power to stop it in its
 course. Despite his imperial glory, he had had no alternative but to
 accept the skepticism—if not open criticism—with which intellectual
 and artistic circles regarded his attitude. But Hitler could banish the
 "grumblers" to concentration camps and carry out his intentions.

So Hitler was a man of the turn of the century, and that is what
 he remained—learning a great deal but never relearning a thing—
 to the very end of his life. The terrible thing was that by virtue of
 the power he wielded, he was temporarily able to reawaken this
 bygone world and to win for it so great a following.

THE HITLER PROBLEM—NOW IT IS UP TO MEDICAL SCIENCE

Though Hitler described to his mealtime companions how the
 world would look in the future, he sensed, as did General Jodl (who
 well knew how to keep his counsel), that "the god of war had
 . . . gone over to the other camp." The dissimulating dictator
 concealed this feeling behind his mask, even during his *Table Con-
 versations*. There he still represented himself as the builder of a
 new Europe freed from the danger of Bolshevism, where his Greater
 German Reich would flourish for a thousand years. Thus he could
 presume to say that in time his greatest service would be judged
 as having "stopped the Asiatic invasion of Europe." About six
 months after this comment, the struggle for Stalingrad came to an
 end, after which the Red Army inexorably pressed westward. More
 than two years then passed before Hitler, realizing that all was lost,
 took his own life. On May 9, 1945, Germany's unconditional sur-
 render opened the way to the very heart of Europe for the Soviet
 Union—thus effecting precisely the opposite of what Hitler had
 regarded as his greatest service.

Hitler had not only failed; he had also ruined Germany. What

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 es, and gravely endangered
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 the inevitable and, by the
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he showed in public; the one who posed as a good comrade in the
 circle of his table companions, even while he held back a great
 deal of what actually concerned him at the moment; the one who
 talked about current problems with those who were sworn to ab-
 solute silence; the one who paced back and forth alone in his room,
 for kilometers on end, and—scorning any counsel whatsoever—
 turned over and over in his mind his next decision; and, finally, the
 Hitler "whose restless spirit"—as Alfred Jodl put it—"would first
 cast its spotlight into the dark future long before the eyes of his
 military staff were able to perceive anything tangible or threatening
 in that darkness." It was this last uncanny and sinister Hitler who
 indeed sensed the problems of the future but ultimately failed to
 think them through, especially as his restless spirit grew ever more
 clearly aware of the abyss into which one day he would be plunged
 by hubris.

Against this "ultimate" Hitler, the next to last struggled with all
 his might, stalking back and forth in his room, refusing to recognize
 the truth, resisting inexorable fate with all the morbid rigidity which
 his willpower had taken on. This Hitler clung to the very end to the
 delusion that the course of history is determined by those with the
 stronger character. This Hitler continually had to reassure the faint-
 hearted of Germany's ultimate victory. That he was successful until
 the end is something we can no longer understand today. One
 shudders to think of it, and it seems almost impossible considering
 especially the extent of his physiological deterioration.

Adolf Hitler could become the most disastrously fateful figure in
 German history precisely because there were so many levels to the
 being behind his opaque mask. Everyone who concerns himself with
 Hitler must remind himself again and again that even Alfred Jodl,
 who was with Hitler for hours every day for several years, and who
 was one of a very few who ever had the opportunity really to dis-
 cuss things with him, in the end, after careful consideration, con-
 cluded that this man remained for him a book sealed with seven
 seals.¹ Guided by this insight, we have limited ourselves in this

¹That Jodl really did have long and open discussions with Hitler was
 clearly brought out by Schramm in his 1945 memorandum on Hitler's
 relationship to the General Staff: "General Jodl not only had the chance

study to compiling a sort of inventory of Hitler's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions about the world he lived in as he understood it.

In order to probe more deeply into the structure of Hitler's character, the historian would need the help of experienced psychologists and psychiatrists, and they in turn would have to call in skilled medical diagnosticians, since the overall picture of that character cannot be clarified without an understanding of the changes in Hitler's health. It would be very desirable to set up a committee to discuss in detail the entire complex of questions raised, taking into consideration all available information, including statements that might still be procured from living witnesses. However convincing such a group's tentative findings might be, of course, these would be subject to future elaboration or revision. New developments in medical science might well lead to new conclusions on the basis of critical re-evaluation of the data.

Meanwhile, we have stayed on this side of the psychological Rubicon in our analysis of Hitler's way of thinking. In other words, we have stayed where the historian still has firm ground under his feet. We know that we have not exhausted the theme, but we can legitimately claim that we have not advanced any suppositions which are without serious documentation.

Even when the problematical has been explained, the fact of Hitler's historical existence will remain a disconcerting, extreme case of human individuality. Generations to come will reflect on the grim history of that frightful man who for twelve years determined the fate of Germany, and for five brought the earth to tremble. This unique event cannot be comprehended in terms of traditional conceptions and moral categories.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, early in the twentieth book of his largely autobiographical *Dichtung und Wahrheit* (*Fantasy and Truth*), suggests a direction for our thoughts. Where Goethe deals with the essence of the demonic, he writes: "The most fearful mani-

to express his own thoughts and misgivings—and made continual use of it—but Adolf Hitler needed such a counterpoint, for his way of going about things was not to make important military decisions abruptly but rather to clarify them through long and often overly protracted discussions in a dialogue which might last for days."—ED.

festation of the demonic, individual human being. In to observe several, some They are not always the fi-
talent, nor do they come they emanate a monstrous all creatures, and indeed c
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At the end of the war paragraph for him word f
general content. As he stu-
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festation of the demonic, however, is seen when it dominates an individual human being. In the course of my life, I have been able to observe several, some more closely, others from the distance. They are not always the finest persons, in terms of either mind or talent, nor do they commend themselves by goodness of heart, but they emanate a monstrous force and exercise incredible power over all creatures, and indeed even over the elements, and who can say how far such influence may extend? All moral powers combined are impotent against them. In vain do the more enlightened among men attempt to discredit them as deluded or deceptive—the masses will be drawn to them. Seldom or never will contemporaries find their equal, and they can be overcome only by the universe itself, against which they have taken up arms. And it may have been in view of this that the strange but striking proverb originated, "Nemo contra deum nisi deus ipse" ("No one can do something against God who is not God himself")."

At the end of the war, the author had his wife write out this paragraph for him word for word, because he remembered only its general content. As he studied it, sentence by sentence, he found that in one way it applied to Hitler, but in another it did not. And he reacts to it the same way now, many years later. Looking back over the centuries, Goethe spoke of the demonic, but he lacked the experience which would have enabled him to comprehend how frightful, how satanic, how infernal it could be. We know; but there is no word in our language adequate to suggest the dimension of the demonic which took form in Adolf Hitler.

y Leader

of Hitler's thoughts, feelings, lived in as he understood it. the structure of Hitler's char- of experienced psychologists ld have to call in skilled medi- ture of that character cannot g of the changes in Hitler's et up a committee to discuss ons raised, taking into con- cluding statements that might However convincing such a course, these would be sub- few developments in medical sions on the basis of critical

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nd made continual use of it— for his way of going about eisions abruptly but rather to protracted discussions in a

erations Staff of the OKW and the which of them he adopted only in d of Hitler's supreme command permits us to reconstruct the basic pare them with those of the Gen-

"all-front" (rather than merely tion of operations in the different to be taken or opportunities ig- that might be at stake in another. forced Germany to fight a "poor to Hitler's headquarters to make before, quite aside from Hitler's t would have forced a centraliza-

whether Hitler, as Supreme Com- ed further than was appropriate ational leadership of the individ- se, in my opinion, is to be found es Offensive, also known as the on December 16, 1944. Hitler aterattack when, on July 31, the ranches in southern Normandy. of stopping them, and further o modify his initial plans for a ne possible, despite fears to the : line in the West, it developed e mounted as a frontal assault ve a chance of success only if it ment and if every possible e planned attack at the cost of

osals of the field commanders ns aside because he considered o-American forces at the seam Antwerp—to be realistic. The ventually had no choice except

to comply. Early in the war, it had still been possible for a general who could not accept an order in good conscience to request relief from command; but before long Hitler had categorically blocked such action as a matter of principle.²

The Commander-in-Chief West, the Commander-in-Chief of Army Group B, and the Commanding Generals of the three attacking armies merely carried out the offensive under orders from the Führer Headquarters. Their capacity—to quote Field Marshal Baron Wolfram von Richthofen—was that of "highly paid non-commissioned officers."

Hitler thus violated the tried and proven principle that subordinate commanders must be allowed a certain limited freedom because they are in a better position to evaluate the prevailing circumstances in their sector of the front and might be able, through swift action, to deal with a sudden crisis. Hitler had already made himself dictator of state and society during peacetime. The war consolidated his dictatorship over the military. He became a military dictator not only in the sense of ruling by military force, but also in that he succeeded in developing such complete control over the once relatively independent armed forces that they were as thoroughly subordinated to his will as were the other institutions of the state.³

²Asked about this question at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial as a witness for the defense, Schramm explained that every commander had the right to report his misgivings, but once that had been done, it was his responsibility to carry out standing orders unconditionally, even though in his opinion they might be wrong. Hitler had made this point vehemently clear and had added that a commander could no more escape this responsibility by submitting his resignation than a noncommissioned officer in the trenches could inform his company leader that he was resigning because he did not like his orders.—ED.

³The process had, of course, begun well before the war, as Professor Gordon A. Craig and Sir John W. Wheeler-Bennett both point out. The former writes of the reorganization of the High Command in 1938: "The time had come at last when the army, like every other institution in the country, had to submit to the process of *Gleichschaltung*. And that meant an end to the old conception of the army as a state within the state" (*The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945*, New York, 1964, p. 496). Concerning the same reorganization (whereby Hitler had replaced Fritsch with Brauchitsch as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and personally assumed the functions of Minister of War and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht while setting

of the similar proposal of (then) at that point he ordered the Army to finally,

Front in the winter of 1941- in the front, or even the pocket line, thereby mastering the Wehrmacht under his leadership. The experts have conceded that the disastrous rout that even a general could become under such frightful conditions in the end could well have been a less order to hold fast, no

ve, to quote Jodl's statement, "But these are all events from which half confronted him with an

er had over the years accumulated military and technical matters. On conferences that survived strong evidence that he knew it is striking that Hitler, who during the Second World War, made consultations to imagination. Because of his ability of individual weapons and them, he considered himself details of tactical leadership. The end of a war is not determined alone, but that there are come. And because of this

No. 62," recorded among the he number PS-3694 (Ko-19808), 1942, spent at a headquarters. Hitler was continually plagued by as a consequence of which his

partial blindness, reinforced by his sense of mission and his inflated estimate of his own talent, he tended more and more to hold fast and rigidly to whatever standpoint he had first taken, no matter what objections or alternatives might be urged upon him. He showed an ever stronger tendency to dismiss reports that did not fit into his picture; and when he could no longer ignore them, he attributed unacceptable facts to the inadequacy of those carrying out his orders, whether local field commanders, officers at the theater-command level, or members of the General Staff, whose basic attitude he increasingly distrusted.

Confronted by events he was unprepared to accept. Hitler's reaction was to ask what was wrong with his subordinates, how it was that they failed to transform his wishes into reality. This way of looking at things leads us to the question of the peculiar moral values that increasingly determined Hitler's thought and action during the latter half of the war.

The qualities of character that he considered most important for mastering a crisis were tenacity and perseverance. As he explained to General Wolfgang Thomale at the end of December 1944, these were the soldierly, humanly eternal qualities that had brought Frederick the Great to final victory. Hitler was not above pointing out, in this connection, that the men of the Red Army, even though they were reported to him to be miserable soldiers, did persevere. In the final phase of the war, during which, according to Hitler, it was "potential" that counted, he valued these characteristics of determination and will even more than strategic inspiration. As he said to General Thomale:

"Genius is a will-o'-the-wisp if it lacks a solid foundation of perseverance and fanatical tenacity. That is the most important thing in all of human life. People who only have ideas and thoughts and so forth, but possess neither firmness of character nor tenacity and perseverance, will nevertheless not amount to anything. They are mere soldiers of fortune. . . . One can only make world history if one can back up an acute faculty of reason, an active conscience, and eternal vigilance with the fanatical perseverance that makes a man a fighter to the core."

Whoever reads these observations out of historical context might

be misled into conceding Hitler a touch of greatness because he would not allow himself to be broken by disaster. But this exaggerated morality, when applied to his way of waging war, is basically false, for perseverance to the very last is admissible only within the context of the attainable.

This is precisely where the contrast between Hitler and Frederick the Great, whom he wrongly cites as his example, becomes so very clear. Frederick had waged a cabinet war, to which the participating states committed only a portion of their populations and resources. In Frederick's time it was still possible to think in terms of the imponderable fortuna belli, the fortune of war. Since the coalition of Prussia's enemies split and the Hohenzollern King was able to win new victories, he emerged from the Seven Years' War—having overcome the temporary crisis with great perseverance—as a victor. But although Hitler, by comparison, was confronted with a coalition which he might indeed hope would someday collapse, on the basis of observable facts he could be sure it would hold together until his defeat. Furthermore, Hitler stood at the head of a state whose "human reservoir"—Menschenreservoir as it is called in German military jargon—was completely exhausted, and whose economic potential could not be augmented. In the twentieth century, it is impossible to build one's hopes on the fortunes of war, which, stripped of its capriciousness, has become no less rational than the new age in which we live.⁹

Hitler therefore had the right to commit himself and his commanders to perseverance only so long as there remained some sort of political or military chance. The conversation with General Thomale took place at a time when it was already clear that the hopes which Hitler had pinned on the Ardennes Offensive (the Battle of the Bulge) would not be fulfilled. That attempt, as a matter of fact, was the final proof of the long obvious fact that the German Army was in no position to mount a sustained counter-offensive.

⁹The logical predictability of the Second World War's outcome was suggested by the German physicist and Nobel Prize laureate Werner Heisenberg when he observed that "for Germany the war was like an end game in chess in which she possessed one castle less than her adversary. The loss of the war was as certain as the loss of an end game under these conditions."—ED.

Thus Hitler was justified. Frederick the Great nor sacrifice, and damning. It was Hitler himself who crushed by the weight of

A crucial problem of strategy and foreign policy the countries allied again World War. On the German never have arisen, since I own foreign minister, who gave the title, merely as

This consolidation of policy excluded the otherwise inevitable strategy—as it emerged, between Bismarck and Mol within Hitler himself. His policy was affected by considerations refused to allow the Seven Crimea while there was still because of his concern the pressure on the Black Sea, with the Allies.²

¹Early in the Franco-Prussian German Unification under the President (and later German Chancellor) of Prussian General Suffered a disastrous defeat at the army under Marshal MacMahon captured. Moltke thereupon argued all of France and win the total victory on a more moderate policy which French government willing and prevailed, not least of all because, calm genius did not desire personal

²By November 1943, the Seven Rumanian units) in the Crimea where the Russians had forced the Axis their defense perimeter, did Hitler troops were captured.—ED.

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Thus Hitler was justified neither in appealing to the example of
Frederick the Great nor in affecting a moralistic pose, demanding
sacrifice, and damning the military for cowardly recalcitrance.
It was Hitler himself who had built up the delusions now being
crushed by the weight of reality.

A crucial problem of wartime leadership is the coordination of
strategy and foreign policy. This was certainly the experience of
the countries allied against the Third Reich during the Second
World War. On the German side, however, such a tension need
never have arisen, since for all practical purposes Hitler was his
own foreign minister, using Joachim von Ribbentrop, whom he
gave the title, merely as an executive agent.

This consolidation of power in Hitler's hands could have pre-
cluded the otherwise inevitable antagonism between politics and
strategy—as it emerged, for instance, in 1870–1871 in the dispute
between Bismarck and Moltke.¹ But the same conflict again arose
within Hitler himself. His military leadership was continually in-
fluenced by considerations of foreign policy, while his foreign
policy was affected by strategic arguments. To cite one example: he
refused to allow the Seventeenth Army to fight its way out of the
Crimea while there was still a reasonable prospect of succeeding,
because of his concern that Turkey, in view of increased Soviet
pressure on the Black Sea, would abandon its neutrality and side
with the Allies.²

¹Early in the Franco-Prussian War, the third and last of the three Wars of
German Unification under the political leadership of Prussian Minister-
President (and later German Chancellor) Otto von Bismarck and the military
leadership of Prussian General Staff Chief Helmuth von Moltke, the French
suffered a disastrous defeat at the Battle of Sedan in which the major French
army under Marshal MacMahon together with Emperor Napoleon III was
captured. Moltke thereupon argued that Prussia should fight on to conquer
all of France and win the total victory that seemed feasible; Bismarck insisted
on a more moderate policy which would facilitate the formation of a new
French government willing and able to conclude a viable peace. Bismarck
prevailed, not least of all because, as the late Hajo Holborn wrote, "Moltke's
calm genius did not desire personal power."—ED.

²By November 1943, the Seventeenth Army (together with a number of
Rumanian units) in the Crimea was cut off. Only early in May 1944, when
the Russians had forced the Axis troops back to Sevastopol and breached
their defense perimeter, did Hitler order the evacuation by sea. Some 130,000
troops were captured.—ED.

Had the conduct of foreign policy and the waging of war been handled separately, the conflicting arguments would have been rationally weighed and the military advantages of a given undertaking balanced against the political disadvantages, as was the question of the bombardment of Paris in 1870-1871.³ After discussion of the case on its merits, the final decision would have been up to the Chief of State. In the Third Reich, however, Hitler not only held this position, but also united in himself the functions of Chancellor, Foreign Minister, Nazi Führer, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Consequently, the weighing of the contradictory arguments as well as the final decisions all took place in his mind alone. Here the carefully developed arguments of his military, diplomatic, and political advisers clashed with his irrational impulses—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that rational arguments and irrational impulses clustered in a hopelessly entangled ball, in which, in retrospect, one can at best recognize some individual strands.

This form of strategic-political leadership had devastating implications, because as a born propagandist Hitler laid too much stress on the impact of retreats on world public opinion. For this reason alone, he was unable to bring himself to make militarily necessary decisions, such as the evacuation of untenable outposts or the withdrawal from the Crimea. As has already been observed earlier in another context, such "prestige" strategy is the worst type of all. In the long run it is impossible to bluff in military affairs. Whoever tries it will not only find that the battle reveals the true balance of forces, but also that the next reverse, which might have been prevented, is made unavoidable.

In itself this explanation is nevertheless insufficient to explain why Hitler ever more senselessly commanded that untenable positions should be held, while forbidding timely reconnaissance and

³Bismarck favored bombardment of the city in the vain hope of shortening the siege and the war, but most of the generals were rightly very skeptical about the efficiency of a cannonade. Toward the end of December 1870, the bombardment was finally commenced, but it only hardened resistance, which continued over a month longer, until starvation forced the Parisians to surrender.—ED.

the fortification of suitable relief. *Diary* proves beyond doubt that this, but that Hitler was at best only after valuable time had been too late.

The basis for this principle is traced in part to Hitler's experience at the Western Front during the First World War. In 1917, the curved front between by withdrawing to the Siegfried

"How very strongly Hitler continues to be shown by the protocols of his example was an evening conference."

"The Führer: 'At no place did we have the (First) World War. That I know during the great battle in France, we were from the battle area. During the War pitiful situation [as now, following American air supremacy]. Even in the Battle of Arras, the Richthofen Sq English squadrons . . . were absolutely remainder of ten planes were brought had complete freedom [from air attack when the first large-scale air battles, but where as a matter of fact seventy to fifty side—that was a murderous struggle, the enemy controlled the sky or flew already getting kind of fresh, and in 'Jodl: 'Then came the first flight hundred.'"

Another example is a reference to a successful German attempt to break beachhead by heavy counterattacks. In the face of enemy artillery fire, he instructed out according to the principles of the

In the protocol of his conference with Hitler said, on having been informed divisions:

"Something just occurred to me but getting reinforcements too late. For that out marching on the evening of the 24th a forest and on the morning of the 27th. The afternoon of the day before, we great offensive at Chemins des Dames.

of perspective. Nevertheless, even
ing for having served Hitler, Jodl
om he could not bring himself to

would hardly have stood by that
he would have detached himself
between duty, revulsion, and re-
ave come to see more clearly—as
mous, how utterly unheroical was
s wrapped in a blanket and car-
Reich Chancellery; next gasoline,
is, was poured over the body and
wretched pyre was guarded by
eir exposure to the risk of being
ee that absolutely nothing—if pos-
of the Führer, Reich Chancellor,
e Wehrmacht. Having seen how
and how he led the Wehrmacht,
ath brought his life to its appro-

very much conditioned by the
e point still deserves our close
s death, Jodl regarded him with
t expressed in Field Marshal von
ing Hitler's "genius." In personal
d, these two senior officers had
Much about him they found re-
e in the Army General Staff had
aking that was diametrically op-
submitted to him not simply out
mmander and Chief of State but
er, despite his flaws and inade-

der's ability to assert himself as
armacht, but it also demonstrates
ically with the historical problem
ally relevant. Anyone who speaks

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6

of him as satanic or infernal is, in effect, making a theological state-
ment. Whoever calls him a "demon" is ultimately reserving judg-
ment about the nature of his acts. The difficulty is that language
offers no negative equivalents to "hero" and "genius." Whoever is
concerned that we may possibly be giving Hitler more than his
due by seeking adequate terms for him misses the point, for only in
this way can we hope to comprehend the seductive malevolence
of the most devious and baleful man in German history.

Through suicide Hitler was able to elude formal judgment by his
enemies, but not the judgment of history. There are many reasons
to condemn him. They need not be recapitulated here. One of them,
however, which has never before been given adequate consideration,
is now irrefutably documented by the *War Diary of the High Com-
mand of the Wehrmacht*:

Hitler, who earlier than any other person in the world first sensed
and then knew that the war was lost; who in 1944 actually stated
before witnesses that it could no longer be won if the enemy suc-
ceeded in landing in the West, but then continued the war despite
the successful landing; and who in view of the inexorably approach-
ing defeat sought to exonerate himself of responsibility with
pseudo-rational explanations of the outcome—this once-celebrated
"Führer" who in 1934 had nominally become Supreme Commander
of the German Armed Forces and after the reorganization of Feb-
ruary 1938 had in fact assumed effective leadership, and had then
gone on, step by step, to make himself military dictator, brought
ineradicable guilt upon himself by prolonging the war.

The objection that the Chief of the Operations Staff and his officers had merely been Hitler's puppets, blindly carrying out his will, and that consequently the conflict between Führer Headquarters and Field Command was indeed only a disagreement between professionals and a self-educated dilettante, simply does not bear close examination. General Jodl not only had the chance to express his own thoughts and misgivings—and made continual use of it—but Adolf Hitler needed such a counterpoint, for his way of going about things was not to make important military decisions abruptly but rather to clarify them through long and often overly protracted discussions in a dialogue which might last for days.

It would be more accurate to think of the conflict as having arisen because of the High Command's distance from the front. Every staff runs this risk; it begins at the division level. The problem can be counteracted by regularly exchanging staff officers with front-line officers, . . . as well as by allowing the staff frequent trips to the front and conferences with officers and men who have had extensive combat experience.

How?
All these methods were employed by the German High Command. But the concentration of all power in the hands of the Führer meant that for him to leave his headquarters for even two or three days might lead to the most serious difficulties. The same leadership problem applied to General Jodl. The expedient resorted to was that from time to time, particularly during major crises, General Staff officers from the OKW Operations Staff were sent to the front, and immediately on their return would submit oral and written reports of their experiences and impressions. The Führer also utilized award ceremonies and similar occasions as an opportunity to hear directly from officers and men about their experiences. Though many of them had relatively little to say or else tended, in view of their elation at the high recognition accorded them, to paint too rosy a picture, there were some who spoke, with utmost candor, of the difficulties and the cares of the front. . . .

Yet despite these and other efforts to counter the danger of alienation of the High Command from the front, the basic facts of the matter were unaltered. There remained an unbridgeable gap between those who experienced the reality of the war under fire and those whose knowledge was derived from hearsay and from reports

and statistics. An aerial situation only deteriorated, headquarters often persisted.

But this has no pose that Adolf I gotten away for : Western Front di able to see, as c markable morale cases where they on the Western wounded, were n to win great vict clear that despit record, there still where, with end ments, and that r so hopelessly bac the night or durin to break down a been perfectly cle have been any d dennes Offensive. than the "big" on the essential com views of the Führ conceptual terms revolutionary.²

In the case of tl style of military j it cannot be succ term "art of war" the work of the pr

²In this context o for it represents a ship everywhere (an

ose with unbending will what he
ed to comprehend: that one had
ry step backwards was an evil in
r he thereby hastened or delayed
ly is certain: he could no longer
erhaps there was no longer one to

of the opponents would consider
nditional surrender as their war-
tler to do? He could only fight to
ughout his whole life he had been
rse. Heroism or insanity, opinion
differ on it. Could he not, in order
ffering, have come to an earlier
thought did concern Hitler during
informed me on April 22 [1945]
again but to die there, he added:
: decision, the most important in
should never have left the head-

y one often hears it said—should
im earlier that the war was lost.
in any other person in the world,
ar was lost. But can one give up
are lost? A man like Hitler could
battle rather than taking flight in
d he would have done so if he had
e did not choose the easier death,
ted as all heroes in history have

ains of his Reich and his hopes.
him for it do so—I cannot.

[Signed:] ALFRED JODL

plemented by the following pas-

ment which Jodl dictated to his defense
agraphs were dictated to his own wife
death, as explained in the introductory

sage in a letter Jodl sent to his wife. When she had written to him,
after the interrogation at the Nuremberg Trial of Field Marshal
Erhard Milch on March 8 and 11, 1946, concerning her own esti-
mation of Hitler, he answered her that in many respects he agreed,
although on one or another point he saw things somewhat differently,
though for a number of reasons he did not care to go into it. He
then went on as follows:]

When I read how Frank Thiess, breaking with historical tradition
after fifteen hundred years, tries to reach a true picture of Justinian,⁷
then I must think more than ever of the present and am reminded
of how the history of that man who brought the whole world into flux
was falsified during the course of his life, in part even by himself.
And so I find myself thinking again and again whether it might not
be my responsibility to set the historical record straight without the
slightest regard to my personal defense. And I would do this except
for two considerations. In the first place, that is not the primary
purpose of the court, which can bring an end to any such attempt by
application of the legal concept of "irrelevance." In the final analysis,
the attempt would be futile, because the archives of the other side
remain closed. In the second place, I ask myself: Do I then know
this person at all, at whose side I led for so many years so thorny
and self-abnegating an existence? Did he not play with my idealism,
too, and only use it for purposes that he concealed in his innermost
being? Who will boast of knowing another when that person has
not opened to him the most hidden corners of his heart? Thus I do
not even know today what *he* thought, knew, and wanted to do, but
rather only what *I* thought and suspected about it. And if today a
picture is unveiled in which one had once hoped to see a work of
art, but one is confronted only with a diabolical distortion, then it
is up to the historians of the future to rack their brains over the ques-
tion of whether it was that way from the very beginning, or whether
this picture had gradually transformed itself with the course of
events. At times I often make the mistake of blaming [Hitler's]
origins, only to remember how many peasants' sons have been given
the name "the Great" by history. The ethical foundation is what
counts.

⁷The reference is to novelist Frank Thiess's *Das Reich der Dämonen* (*The Empire of Demons*, 1941), with its very free treatment of Byzantine history.

D.T. Of course, when there is only
half an ethical foundation,
only a mother or a father, then the
child is often ready for us.

Hitler's
Boyhood



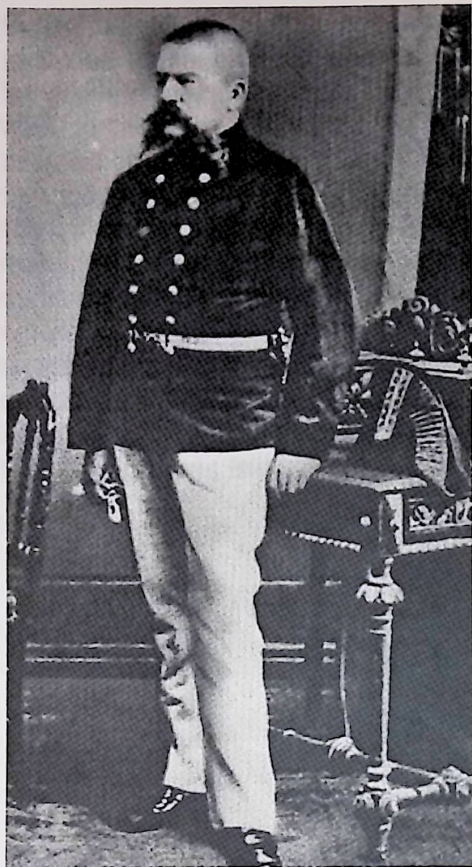
Hitler's father, Alois

"I thought that once my father saw what little progress I was making at the [technical school] he would let me devote myself to the happiness I dreamed of." - Hitler explained in Mein Kampf.

There were frequent arguments at home between young Hitler and his father over his career choice. To the traditional minded, authoritarian father, the idea of his son becoming an artist seemed utterly ridiculous.

But in the grand scheme of things, as young Adolf saw it, the idea of a career spent sitting in an office all day long doing the boring paperwork of a civil servant was utterly horrible. The dream of becoming an artist seemed to be the answer to all his present day problems.

But his stubborn father refused to listen. And so a bitter struggle began between father and son.



Evidently the profession of waiter did not intrigue him, for in 1900 he received a five-months' sentence for [Page 103] thievery and in 1902 he was sentenced to eight months in jail for the same reason. He then went to London where he obtained a position as a waiter and, in 1909, married Bridget Dowling, an Irish girl. In 1911 William Patrick Hitler was born and in 1915 his father deserted the family and returned to Germany. The family was not a happy one and broke up several times in the course of these four years. It is alleged that the father drinks quite frequently and would then come home and create tremendous scenes during which he frequently beat his wife and tried to beat the small infant. During these four years when his mother and father had separated for a time, his father did go to Vienna. This would agree with Hanfstangl's conviction that Alois, Jr. was in Vienna at the same time that Adolph was there.

Hitler's Boyhood

In 1895, at age six, two important events happened in the life of young Adolf Hitler. First, the unrestrained, carefree days he had enjoyed up to now came to an end as he entered primary school. Secondly, his father retired on a pension from the Austrian civil service. This meant a double dose of supervision, discipline and regimentation under the watchful eyes of teachers at school and his strict father at home. His father, now 58, had spent most of his life working his way up through the civil service ranks. He was used to giving orders and having them obeyed and also expected this from his children. The Hitler family lived on a small farm outside of Linz, Austria. The children had farm chores to perform along with their school work.

Hitler's mother was now preoccupied with caring for her new son, Edmund. In 1896 she gave birth to a girl, Paula. The Hitler household now consisted of Adolf, little brother Edmund, little sister Paula, older half brother Alois Jr., older half sister Angela and two parents who were home all the time. It was a crowded, noisy little farm house that seems to have gotten on the nerves on Hitler's father who found retirement after 40 years of work to be difficult.



The oldest boy, Alois Jr., 13, bore the brunt of his father's discontent, including harsh words and occasional beatings. A year later, at age 14, young Alois had enough of this treatment and ran away from home, never to see his father again. This put young Adolf, age 7, next in line for the same treatment.

Also at this time, the family moved off the farm to the town of Lambach, Austria, halfway between Linz and Salzburg. This was the first of several moves the family would make in the restless retirement of Hitler's father. For young Adolf, the move to Lambach meant an end to farm chores and more time to play. There was an old Catholic Benedictine monastery in the town. The ancient monastery was decorated with carved stones and woodwork that included several swastikas. Adolf attended school there and saw them every day. They had been put there in the 1800's by the ruling Abbot as a pun or play on words. His name essentially sounded like the German word for swastika, *Hakenkreuz*.

Young Hitler did well in the monastery school and also took part in the boys'

choir. He was said to have had a fine singing voice. Years later Hitler would say the solemn pageantry of the high mass and other Catholic ceremonies was quite intoxicating and left a very deep impression. As a young boy he idolized the priests and for two years seriously considered becoming a priest himself. He especially admired the Abbot in charge, who ruled his black-robed monks with supreme authority. At home Hitler sometimes played priest and even included long sermons. At age nine, he got into schoolboy mischief. He was caught smoking a cigarette by one of the priests, but was forgiven and not punished. His favorite game to play outside was cowboys and Indians. Tales of the American West were very popular among boys in Austria and Germany. Books by James Fenimore Cooper and especially German writer Karl May were eagerly read and re-enacted. May, who had never been to America, invented a hero named Old Shatterhand, a white man who always won his battles with Native Americans, defeating his enemies through sheer will power and bravery. Young Hitler read and reread every one of May's books about Old Shatterhand, totaling more than 70 novels. He continued to read them even as Führer. During the German attack on the Soviet Union he sometimes referred to the Russians as Redskins and ordered his officers to carry May's books about fighting Indians.

In describing his boyhood, Hitler later said of himself that he was an argumentative little ring leader who liked to stay outside and hang around with 'husky' boys. His half brother Alois later described him as quick to anger and spoiled by his indulgent mother.

In 1898, the Hitler family moved once again, to the village of Leonding, close to Linz. They settled into a small house with a garden next to a cemetery. This meant another change of schools for Adolf. He found school easy and got good grades with little effort. He also discovered he had considerable talent for drawing, especially sketching buildings. He had the ability to look at a building, memorize the architectural details, and accurately reproduce it on paper, entirely from memory.

One day, young Hitler went rummaging through his father's book collection and came across several of a military nature, including a picture book on the War of 1870-1871 between the Germans and the French. By Hitler's own account, this book became an obsession. He read it over and over, becoming convinced it had been a glorious event.

"It was not long before the great historic struggle had become my greatest spiritual experience. From then on, I became more and more enthusiastic about everything that was in any way connected with war or, for that matter, with soldiering." - Hitler stated in his book *Mein Kampf*.

Cowboys and Indians gave way to battle re-enactments, especially after the Boer War broke out in Africa. Hitler, now eleven years old, took the side of the Boers against the English and never tired of playing war. Sometimes, he even wore out the boys he was playing with and then simply went and found other boys to continue. But now at home, tragedy struck. Adolf's little brother Edmund, age 6, died of measles. Adolf, the boy who loved warplay and its 'pretend' death now had to confront genuine death for the first time. It seems to have shaken him badly.

To make matters worse, the little boy was buried in the cemetery next to their house. From his bedroom window, Adolf could see the cemetery. Years later, neighbors recalled that young Adolf was sometimes seen at night sitting on the wall of the cemetery gazing up at the stars.

And there were now more problems for Adolf. His grade school years were coming to an end and he had to choose which type of secondary school to attend, classical or technical. By now, young Hitler had dreams of one day becoming an artist. He wanted to go to the classical school. But his father wanted him to follow in his footsteps and become a civil servant and sent him to the technical high school in the city of Linz, in September, 1900. Hitler, the country boy, was lost in the city and its big school. City kids also looked down on country kids who went to the school. He was very lonely and extremely unhappy. He did quite poorly his first year, getting kept back.

He would later claim he wanted to show his father he was unsuited for technical education with its emphasis on mathematics and science and thus should have been allowed to become an artist.

"I thought that once my father saw what little progress I was making at the (technical school) he would let me devote myself to the happiness I dreamed of."

-- Hitler explained in *Mein Kampf*.

There were frequent arguments at home between young Hitler and his father

over his career choice. To the traditional minded, authoritarian father, the idea of his son becoming an artist seemed utterly ridiculous. But in the grand scheme of things, as young Adolf saw it, the idea of a career spent sitting in an office all day long doing the boring paper work of a civil servant was utterly horrible. The dream of becoming an artist seemed to be the answer to all his present day problems.

But his stubborn father refused to listen. And so a bitter struggle began between father and son. Hitler began his second year at the high school as the oldest boy in his class since he had been kept back. This gave him the advantage over the other boys. Once again he became a little ringleader and even led the boys in afterschool games of cowboys and Indians, becoming Old Shatterhand. He managed to get better grades in his second year, but still failed mathematics.

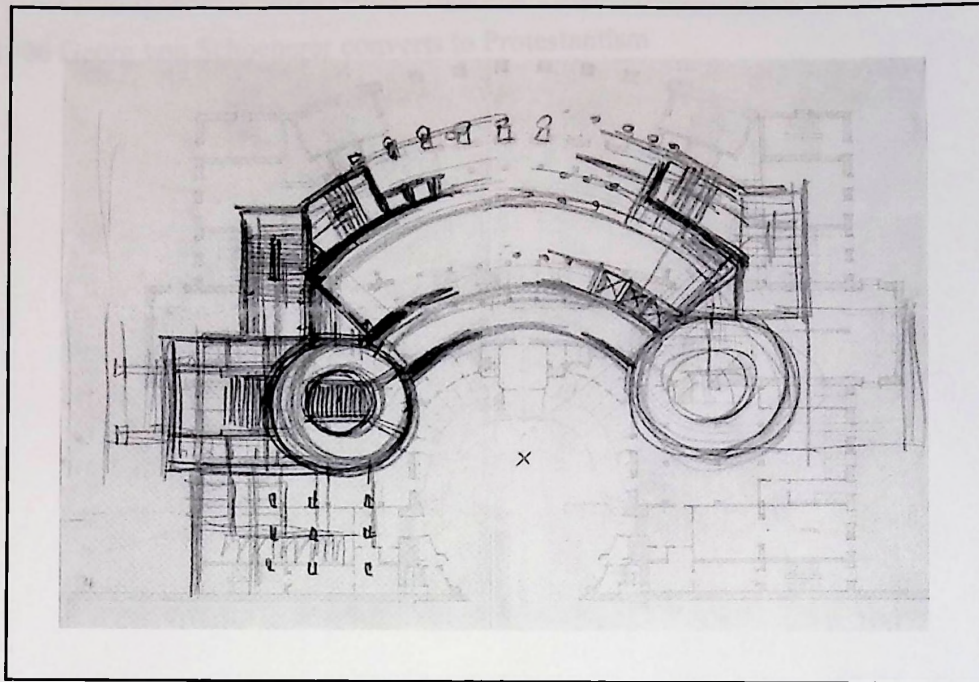
Another interest of great importance surfaced at this time, German nationalism. The area of Austria where Hitler grew up is close to the German border. Many Austrians along the border considered themselves to be German-Austrians. Although they were subjects of the Austrian Hapsburg Monarchy and its multicultural empire, they expressed loyalty to the German Imperial House of Hohenzollern and its Kaiser. In defiance of the Austrian Monarchy, Adolf Hitler and his young friends liked to use the German greeting, "Heil," and sing the German anthem "Deutschland Uber Alles," instead of the Austrian Imperial anthem.

Hitler's father had worked as an Austrian Imperial customs agent and continually expressed loyalty to the Hapsburg Monarchy, perhaps unknowingly encouraging his rebellious young son to give his loyalty to the German Kaiser. There was also a history teacher at school, Dr. Leopold Pötsch who touched Hitler's imagination with exciting tales of the glory of German figures such as Bismark and Frederick The Great. For young Hitler, German Nationalism quickly became an obsession.

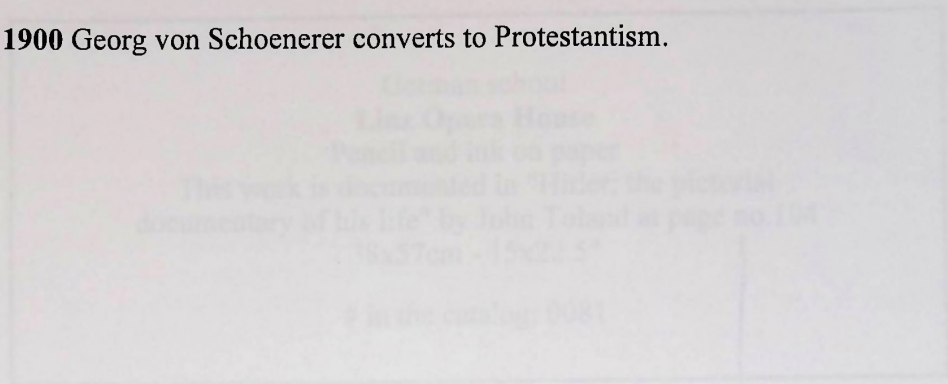
Adding to all this, was another new interest, the operas of German composer Richard Wagner. Hitler saw his first opera at age twelve and was immediately captivated by its Germanic music, pagan myths, tales of ancient Kings and Knights and their glorious struggles against hated enemies. But now, for young Hitler, the struggle with his father was about to come to a sudden end. In January, 1903, Hitler's father died suddenly of a lung hemorrhage, leaving

his thirteen year old son as head of the Hitler household.





1900 Georg von Schoenerer converts to Protestantism.



Canis
order that
from
Amazon

back at the
next page

German school
Linz Opera House

Pencil and ink on paper

This work is documented in "Hitler; the pictorial
documentary of his life" by John Toland at page no.104

38x57cm - 15x22.5"

in the catalog: 0081

Can we
order this
from
Amazon?

Look at the
next page

During this Vienna period (1907-13), Hitler read a great deal of many of the anti-Semitic, anti-liberal and anti-democratic ideas in Austria, spread by, amongst others, the defrocked monk, theory of "Theozoology" divided humanity into two groups - A subhumans), and the Austrian Pan-German leader, Georg von Schönerer and other sources, the young Hitler began to construct a vision of Jews (by race, rather than by religion) became the symbol of corruption, and destruction in culture, politics and the economy. Prostitution, syphilis, capitalism, Marxism, democracy and all means exploited by 'the Jew' in his conspiracy to undermine the nation and the purity of the creative Aryan race.

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too much
is being
lost on
this margin
margin.

Alois, Jr.



At the age of fourteen, Alois became the man of the household. The authoritarian family environment was gone. Whenever someone asked him what he was going to be, Hitler responded, "A great artist." In 1905, he graduated from a Realschule at the age of sixteen.

The following year, Hitler's mother permitted him to visit Vienna, Europe's cultural center. Hitler was captivated by the city. He moved to Vienna in 1912, with the hope of joining the Academy of Fine Arts.

It is important to note one vitally important fact about Adolf Hitler's upbringing: *The authoritarian family structure under which Adolf Hitler was raised in Austria was not an exception, but rather the rule.* Millions of German children were raised under the same creed: Obey; do as you are told; do not talk back; and do not challenge the family system. Moreover, this was the family structure under which their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents had been raised. The authoritarian patterns stretched back for centuries and had been passed on from generation to generation.

Adolf Hitler's father died on January 3, 1903. His obituary notice in the Linz *Tagespost* said:

At all times an energetic champion of law and order and universally well informed, he was able to pronounce authoritatively on any matter that came to his notice.

At the age of fourteen, Adolf became the man of the household. The authoritarian family environment was gone. Whenever someone asked him what he was going to be, Hitler responded, "A great artist." In 1905, he graduated from a *Realschule* at the age of sixteen.

The following year, Hitler's mother permitted him to visit Vienna, Europe's cultural center. Hitler was captivated by the city. He moved to Vienna in 1907, with the hope of entering the Academy of Fine Arts.

Alois, Jr

Alois Hitler, Jr. was born January 13, 1882, the illegitimate son of the father's second wife born during the lifetime of the first wife. He is the father of William Patrick Hitler, one of our informants. He seems to have taken very much after his father in some respects. He left the parental home before the death of his father because, according to his son, he could tolerate it no longer. His step-mother, according to the story, made life very difficult for him and continually antagonized her husband against him. It seems that Alois, Jr. had considerable talent for mechanical pursuits and his father had planned on sending him to a technical school for training as an engineer. Until his third marriage the father was very fond of his oldest boy and all his ambitions were wrapped up in him. But the step-mother systematically undermined this relationship and finally persuaded the father that Alois, Jr. was unworthy and that he should save his money for the education of her son, Adolph. She was finally successful and Alois, Jr. was sent away from home as an apprentice waiter.

Evidently the profession of waiter did not intrigue him, for in 1900 he received a five-months' sentence for [Page 103] theft and in 1902 he was sentenced to eight months in jail for the same reason. He then went to London where he obtained a position as a waiter and, in 1909, married Bridget Dowling, an Irish girl. In 1911 William Patrick Hitler was born and in 1915 his father deserted the family and returned to Germany. The family was not a happy one and broke up several times in the course of these four years. It is alleged that the father drinks quite frequently and would then come home and create tremendous scenes during which he frequently beat his wife and tried to beat the small infant. During these four years when his mother and father had separated for a time, his father did go to Vienna. This would agree with Hanfstangl's conviction that Alois, Jr. was in Vienna at the same time that Adolph was there.

In 1924 Alois, Jr. was brought before the court of Hamburg charged with bigamy. He was sentenced to six months in prison but since his first wife did not prosecute the sentence was suspended. He has an illegitimate child by the second wife who lives in Germany. During all

these years he has never sent any money for the support of his first wife or child. Up until the time of the inflation it is alleged that he had a very successful business in Germany. The business failed and he has had various jobs up until 1934 when he opened a restaurant in Berlin which became a popular meeting-place for S.A. men.

According to the son, Alois, Jr. heartily disliked Adolph as a boy. He always felt that Adolph was spoiled by [Page 104] his mother and that he was forced to do many of the chores that Adolph should have done. Furthermore, it seems that Adolph occasionally got into mischief which his mother would blame on Alois and Alois would have to take the punishment from his father. He used to say as a boy he would have liked to have wrung Adolph's neck on more than one occasion and considering the circumstances this is probably not far from the truth. Since Hitler came to power, the two brothers have practically no contact with each other. They have come together a few times but the meeting is usually unpleasant, with Adolph taking a very high-handed attitude and laying down the law to the rest of the family. Alois, Jr. is not mentioned in MEIN KAMPF and only a few people in Germany know of his relationship to Hitler.

Meanwhile his family was still growing. On 21 January 1896 Paula Hitler was born (she was Klara and Alois' last child). With no workplace to escape to Alois was often home with his family. He had five children ranging in age from infancy to 14 and being involved with their daily life annoyed him. Smith suggests he yelled at the children almost continually and made long visits to the local tavern where he began to drink more than he used to.

Alois and his oldest son Alois Jr had a climactic and violent argument. Alois Jr. left home for good and the elder Alois swore he would never give the boy a penny of inheritance beyond what the law required.

Edmund, the youngest of the boys, had died of measles on 2 February 1900. If there was to be a family legacy, Adolf would have to carry it. Alois wanted the boy to follow in his footsteps and seek a career in the civil service. Adolf was so alienated from his father that he was repulsed by whatever Alois wanted. His father glorified the role of the civil servant while Adolf sneered at the thought of a lifetime spent enforcing petty rules. Alois tried to browbeat his son into obedience while Adolf did his best to be the opposite of whatever his father valued. Alois wanted him to be a practical, non-religious, non-political, sensible, realistic, stable and industrious civil servant. Adolf became lazy, romantic, idealistic and fantasy-oriented while dreaming first of being a priest, then an artist.

Death

On the morning of 3 January 1903 Alois went to the Gasthaus Stiefler as usual to drink his morning glass of wine. He had just been offered the newspaper when he collapsed. He was taken to an adjoining room and a doctor was summoned but Alois Hitler died at the inn, probably from a pleural hemorrhage, aged 65.

Quote

Even one of his closest friends admitted that Alois was "awfully rough" with his wife (Klara) and "hardly ever spoke a word to her at home" - Robert G. L. Waite

On a cold foggy evening in late February 1908, August Kubizek arrived in Vienna. As he stood amidst the confusion of the railroad station (Westbahnhof), he saw his friend approaching through the crowd. Hitler was wearing his dark, good quality overcoat and broad-brimmed hat. Already at ease in his new environment, he wore kid gloves and carried a walking stick with an ivory handle. The slim Adolf, Kubizek thought, "appeared almost elegant."*

After a warm greeting, they kissed on the cheek in the Austrian manner, they made their way to Hitler's apartment. After a short walk Hitler stopped in front of an imposing and distinguished building on Stumper Gasse.

Hitler's 1st Vienna Apartment



With Kubizek on his heels, Hitler entered the arched entrance off to one side, passed through the more elaborate section of the building, crossed a small courtyard and entered the humbler rear section of the building. They went up the polished stone staircase to the "second floor" (3rd in America) and entered a small room.

This was the same building Hitler had stayed during his attempt to enter the Art Academy a few months before. The monthly rent was ten kronen and although respectable, it was a no frills establishment in a lower middle class neighborhood. Hitler's monthly pension of 25 kronen only covered the cost of a meager diet, so he had to be frugal with what was left of his inheritance. Like most tenement houses it was infested with bugs and the whole floor, six small apartments, had only one lavatory. After Hitler cleared away the numerous sketches that lay around his room, he and Kubizek had something to eat. Although Hitler was still suffering and bitter over his mother's death, he insisted on taking Kubizek on a tour of the city.

They made their way to the Ringstrasse, the great boulevard (where once stood the city battlements) which circles the inner city. Hitler's blue eyes blazed excitedly as he pointed out many of the cities historical landmarks. Just off the Ring was the Art Academy which he still hoped to enter, and not far away was the Music Conservatory which Kubizek hoped to attend. Like any young man who grows and matures in a small town, Kubizek, like Hitler was overwhelmed by the vast and thriving city. Kubizek particularly wanted to see the immense soaring spire of St. Stephen's Cathedral but it was shrouded in

the fog.

In one of his letters, Hitler had offered Kubizek the advantage of staying with him for awhile. Hitler, however, was still the independent type and knowing that he and Kubizek had their differences, he had added: "Later we shall see."* Hitler's small room was not large enough to hold a piano that Kubizek would need to practice on so they spent the next morning looking for a room for Kubizek. It proved difficult.

Vienna was the most overcrowded capital city in Europe. Almost half the population lived in one or two rooms, and in the working districts 4 to 5 persons shared these "flats."* The few rooms they found available were either sleazy, did not allow piano playing, or were too small to hold a grand piano. After a fruitless search in the immediate vicinity, they finally came to a house with a sign: "Room to Let."

They were admitted into the house by a maid and introduced to an elegant looking middle aged woman wearing a silk dressing gown, fur-lined slippers and little else. As she showed them around the house, including the available bedroom, she appeared to take a shine to Hitler. She suggested that Hitler rent the available room and turn his room on Stumper Gasse over to Kubizek. At that moment the belt of her dressing gown became loose and her gown opened momentarily. "Oh, excuse me, gentlemen," she calmly said as she redid the belt.* Too fainthearted and too unworldly to take advantage of such an opportune moment, Hitler and Kubizek beat a hasty retreat.

They returned to their apartment and Hitler persuaded the landlady to give up her larger room next door for theirs. By the end of the day they had settled into the larger room, #17, for an additional 10 kronen a month. Because of the housing shortage, the normal rent for a one or two room flat ran from twenty-two to twenty-eight kronen per month in the laboring districts. Their room was a real bargain. Kubizek was again amazed by Hitler's gift of persuasion.

Within a few days of his arrival, Kubizek took his test and was admitted to the Music Conservatory. Kubizek's easy accomplishment magnified Hitler's failure to enter the Art Academy, and he appeared envious for a time. While Kubizek began attending morning classes, Hitler spent his time in one pursuit after another.

Some days Hitler relentlessly worked on his drawings, on another day, he would sit for hours reading on architecture, another, working tirelessly on an idea he had for a short story, the next, practicing on the piano Kubizek had rented.* Kubizek would state that Hitler was never idle, but always "filled with a tireless urge to be active."*

Interestingly, Hitler never made use of the letter of recommendation he had received which introduced him to one of Vienna's best known stage designers, Alfred Roller. Years later he would comment: "One got absolutely nothing in Austria without letters of introduction. When I arrived in Vienna, I had one to Roller, but I didn't use it. If I'd presented myself to him with this introduction, he'd have engaged me at once. No doubt it's better that things went otherwise. It's not a bad thing for me that I had to have a rough time of it."*

Having to live on a minimum budget, they spent their leisure time visiting the Vienna Woods, taking boat trips on the Danube and even once took a train trip to the Alps and climbed a mountain. They also visited the numerous coffee houses in the area. "The Viennese cuisine was delightful," Hitler would later recall, "at breakfast nothing was eaten, at mid day ... [people] lunched off a cup of coffee and two croissants, and the coffee in the little coffee-shops was as good as that in the famous restaurants. For lunch, even in the fashionable places, only soup, a main dish and dessert were served--there was never an entree."* One of Hitler's favorite coffee-shops (which served a particular nut-cake he enjoyed) was a favorite of Jewish college students.*

To an inquiring mind, Vienna offered much for no cost. Hitler and Kubizek spent much of their free time touring the city. They strolled the avenues and visited the countless museums, churches, historical sites, parks and plazas. Hitler was particularly fond of the Schwarzenberg Platz, especially at night when the fanciful illuminated fountains produced incredible lighting effects. Most of Hitler's praises, however, were bestowed upon Vienna's huge and ornate buildings. He was very impressed by Schonbrunn Castle, the elegant 1200 room, royal summer residence of the Hapsburgs which had once been home to Napoleon himself. After viewing such luxury, Hitler often grumbled about the sparse room they had to return to.

On Sundays, Hitler enjoyed listening to musical groups or soloists performing at the city chapel. He was particularly found of the Vienna Boys Choir.* There were also the countless parades, pageantry and social events which

accompanied the Hapsburg dynasty. These events were normally stern, formal and dignified affairs that showed off the ruling dynasty as lofty and untouchable. In an age and in an empire that also believed in armed might, military holidays were celebrated with all the trappings of a society prepared for war.*

Two or three evenings each week they went to a theater, opera, or concert because as a student, Kubizek could often get free tickets. At concerts, Hitler was very fond of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. He enjoyed some of the music of the masters, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and also the Romanticists, Weber, Schubert, Mendelssohn and especially Bruckner who had been an organist at the old Linz Cathedral for twelve years. Like most Viennese, Hitler also enjoyed the music of Johann Strauss and the Hungarian Liszt.

On one of their visits to a concert, Hitler and Kubizek struck up a conversation with a well-dressed, prosperous-looking man who invited them to a local hotel for something to eat. The man paid for everything and after a conversation in which he praised chamber music and demeaned women as gold diggers, he handed them a calling card as they departed. To Kubizek's surprise Hitler stated in a calm voice that the man was a homosexual. Hitler believed that homosexuality was an unnatural act and that "he wished to see it fought against relentlessly." They burned the calling card.*

When attending the theater Hitler preferred the more serious works, and Vienna's theaters offered masterpieces by some of Europe's best playwrights. Vienna was also a famed joyful and carefree city, and its less dignified theaters offered worldly, lighthearted and often risqué performances. Although Hitler never admitted to attending anything too risqué, he enjoyed Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow* and often whistled Lehar's happy tunes.

At the theater one evening a group of young men were causing a disturbance. Hitler and Kubizek attempted to silence them. The leader of the group refused to keep his mouth shut and Hitler punched him in the side. When Hitler and Kubizek left the theater they found that the noisemaker had summoned a policeman who attempted to arrest Hitler. Hitler explained the situation and persuaded the policeman to let him go. Hitler then caught up with the troublemaker and gave him, to quote Kubizek, "a sound box on the ears."*

Just as in Linz, the opera was still Hitler's first choice in entertainment, but

opera seats in Vienna were extremely expensive. Although Hitler preferred a seat in the upper balcony, to save money, he and Kubizek usually took the cheapest standing room. Like most people who go to movies today, Hitler did not care for foreign works. He was only interested in German customs, German feeling, and German thought. Except for Verdi's opera, *Aida*--the love story of an Ethiopian slave girl and an Egyptian warrior--he didn't care for most Italian operas because of the many plots involving "daggers." He also wasn't particularly fond of French operas and considered Gounod's *Faust* (there are two rapes within the opera) vulgar. Not even the Russian Tchaikovsky met with his approval. On the other hand he appreciated many of the works of the Germans Beethoven and Weber and was especially delighted with Mozart's antiestablishment comedy of infidelity, *Figaro*. His favorite works were by the highly acclaimed Richard Wagner who wrote about figures of medieval history, saga, and myth--similar to the "super hero" movies of today.

Most of Wagner's heroes were purely human and were torn between desire and morality--Wagner believed in the first. During Hitler's years in Vienna, 15 different productions of Wagner's operas were performed in over 420 performances at the State Opera House alone.

Hitler attended every new offering and saw some of the performances over and over again. "I was so poor, during the Viennese period of my life," Hitler would later recall, "that I had to restrict myself to seeing only the finest spectacles. Thus I heard [Wagner's] *Tristan* thirty or forty times, and always from the best companies."*

Every young man has his idol and Wagner was Hitler's. "For me, Wagner is something Godly and his music is my religion," Hitler would later tell an American reporter. Kubizek also noted Hitler's devotion to Wagner. When Hitler attended a Wagner opera the music had a profound, exhilarating influence on him.* When talking to friends or other opera buffs, Hitler always praised Wagner with passionate devotion.*

Wagner not only wrote the music but the librettos (words) for his operas. He refused allegiance to any set forms. Besides composing, writing and producing his operas he occasionally took on the role of stage manager, director, and conductor. He referred to his mission as the "art work of the future," and to his operas as "music dramas." Wagner saw the orchestra as just

adding to the action on the stage (much like background music in movies today), but he ruffled the egos of many persons of quality by concealing the conductor and orchestra so they would not distract from the performance.

Many of the themes of Wagner's music dramas were grounded on lofty German myths and legends which revealed human emotions that influence nearly all issues and relations. Like Wagner, Hitler was enthralled by the past and believed that great significance lay in German mythology. One of Hitler's favorites was *Lohengrin*. He could amaze opera buffs by reciting the entire libretto by heart. While living with Kubizek, he saw *Lohengrin* ten times.

Lohengrin's pomp, pageantry, and dramatic interest is compelling. It is considered by many to be the finest of all romantic grand operas. The plot is set in the tenth century and involves a beautiful blonde maiden who is falsely accused of murder. To her rescue comes the gallant Lohengrin, the "Knight of the Swan," who will champion the accused and later marry her. The love duet is exquisite ("one of the sweetest and tenderest passages of which the Lyric stage can boast")* and there is also the haunting *Bridal Chorus*. Besides the compelling music and German nationalism, Hitler no doubt associated with the silver-armored hero with his pure soul and wondrous flashing eyes. In the end, Lohengrin, called *Fuhrer* (leader) by his followers, is forced to reveal that he is a "Knight of the Holy Grail" and must give up love for a higher calling.

Another of Hitler's favorites was *Die Meistersingers* which is told in terms of a simple love story. The plot involves a young songwriter who comes up against traditional rules and methods. In the end he overcomes the rank prejudices of *The Master Singers* and while preserving what is best in art tradition, succeeds and wins the heroin for his bride. As with *Lohengrin*, Hitler knew the *Meistersingers* by heart.*

If an indication of the ideals and beliefs of a young man can be judged on the entertainment he enjoys, the young Hitler appears very normal for his time. *Aida*, and *Figaro*, are two of the most popular operas ever performed in their time.* The *Meistersingers* and *Lohengrin* have, almost since their conceptions been German favorites. Hitler's enjoying *The Mastersingers* is comparable to young people in every generation enjoying stories whose plots rebel against tradition and the old folks. The story was written by Wagner to scorn the establishment that once rejected him. The love story, however, is the

backbone of the action and everything else is centered around it. The same thing can be said for *Lohengrin* and especially *Tristan* which is about love and (did they love the *night*) little else. That Hitler repeatedly enjoyed these operas places him in the majority of young men of his day who had high ideals concerning love and women. On the other hand, he could still laugh about the inconsistencies of love found in an opera like *Figaro*. But, the young Hitler was not the old Faust and could not understand a man giving up everything for youth and desire.

During their trips to the opera, concert or theater, Kubizek noticed that women would flirt with Hitler despite his usually modest clothing and reserved manner. On one occasion, a young lady handed Hitler a note informing him where she would be stopping after the performance. Although acknowledging that Hitler was not a handsome man in the standard sense, Kubizek believed that women were attracted to him because of his aloof but distinguished manners, or brilliant eyes, or some mysterious quality that can't be



described.* Because he was shy, Hitler never responded to these opportunities in Kubizek's presence, but not for a lack of interest in women. Like many eighteen year olds, Hitler had his favorite actress, Lucie Weidt (a gifted soprano ten years older than Hitler), who reminded him of Stefanie and "roused his enthusiasm in the part of Elsa in *Lohengrin*."*

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, noted during this period that people seldom, if ever discussed their sex drive. Hitler never talked about his desires or his sex life. When discussing the subject in an impersonal way, Hitler, according to Kubizek, found the loose morals in Vienna shocking. His belief was influenced by the terribly high rate of syphilis that existed in Europe at that time, and the incurable and horrible consequences of contracting it. A cure would not be readily available for a few years and complications of the heart, blood vessels, bones, skin, and finally paralysis and insanity were common. Hitler, like many others of his time had a fear of catching the disease* and would later condemn the government for its "complete capitulation" when an all out "fight" was needed to bring the "plague" under control to insure the "health" of the nation.*

Vienna, nonetheless, thrived with centers of prostitution and cafes where the sexes mixed liberally. A survey of doctors, carried out while Hitler lived in Vienna, revealed that only 4% of the doctors had their first sexual experience

with middle class young women who might qualify as potential wives, 17% had their first experience with lower class waitresses or the like, while 75% had their first romp with prostitutes.*

Spittelberg Gasse



Hitler, like the doctors, was also familiar with the more worldly areas of Vienna including Spittelberg Gasse, just off the Ring and eleven blocks from his apartment, where girls and women sat in windows between customers. Hitler once escorted the reluctant Kubizek through the area and it was obvious Hitler had been there before. After "running the gauntlet," then doing an about face and retracing their steps, Hitler gave Kubizek a dissertation about "commercial love." He pointed out that the men were there only to satisfy their sexual urges while the women were only concerned with their "earnings"* --very perceptive for an 18 year old, or more likely, first hand knowledge.

Legalized prostitution in Austria dated from the Liberal ascendancy three decades before. When Hitler arrived in Vienna, any girl sixteen or older could register or apply for a license. She was then free to practice the profession as long as she could prove mental competence and meet simple health rules. Even with such liberal regulations, there was still a thriving free lance business throughout Vienna, and it was estimated that over 10,000 girls went unregistered.

On their evening excursions on the town, there were occasions when Kubizek, and Hitler were approached by lone streetwalkers. According to Kubizek, in every instance the "ladies" ignored him and asked Hitler if he wanted to go with them. Kubizek thought that these girls of the "unholy city" were attracted to Hitler because they may have seen him as a man of moral restraint from the religious countryside. Hitler always refused in Kubizek's presence.

That Hitler would show indifference to prostitutes, or keep any encounters with loose women from Kubizek is quite possible. The class consciousness of the time made most men from the middle classes secretive about the lower class women they associated with. In addition, Kubizek had made clear his attitude toward the loose morals he encountered in Vienna: "this sink of iniquity, where even prostitution was made the object of the artist's glorification."* Hitler on the other hand, though also condemning prostitution, saw nothing wrong with young men "chasing the girls."* When

still a young man he scorned the prejudices, old habits, previous ideas, general opinions and "prudishness in certain circles,"* and would later state: "Contrary to popular belief, it is wrong to suppose that virginity is a particularly desirable quality; one cannot help suspecting that those who have been spared have nothing particular to offer!"* He would also add: "In my time in Vienna, I knew many beautiful women"*

Kubizek had to get up early in the morning for classes and usually retired early while Hitler was often awake and out till late at night. There were times Hitler would go out and not return till the following day. On one occasion he disappeared for three days, and when he returned, "dead tired," Kubizek asked where he had been. Hitler gave him some feeble story about exploring the city and never brought up the subject again.* Hitler then spent the next two days designing apartments for the working poor with separate bedrooms for grownups and children; and, at the time, the luxury of a private bath."*

Nevertheless, Hitler, as earlier in Linz, also had suggestions for Vienna's planning and layout. He believed in wider streets, pollution control, and less crowding. He advocated the destruction of old tenement housing and the building of lower income housing where workers could live cheaply. He believed that there should be more areas set aside for parks and green areas. He thought it unthinkable that railroads should run through a city, tying up people and traffic. Railroads, he believed, should be rerouted to the outskirts and what trains that had to enter the city should be placed underground. These revolutionary ideas were already starting to have their effects in some of the larger cities throughout the world and Hitler no doubt read about them. That an eighteen year old could grasped their long range significance and advocated such a policy is noteworthy. As he had in Linz, he spent quite a bit of time working on drawings and the details of such planning.

Kubizek, in the meantime, continued with his classes and it was becoming apparent that he was one of the star pupils in the music school. He was constantly sought after to tutor other classmates and to perform in small musical groups in the homes of some of the wealthy and cultivated of Vienna. Occasionally Hitler went along and "enjoyed himself very much" though he normally chose to play the part of the silent listener. As he was in no financial position to buy new clothes, it was only his inadequate dress, Kubizek observed, that made him feel uneasy.

Hitler was proud of his friend's achievements but witnessing what appeared to be Kubizek's easy accomplishment, he began searching for a road to instant success. Although he continued drawing, he did little painting that summer.



The Hofburg, containing among other things, one of the most extensive (and beautiful) libraries in the world, was only a mile away from their room and Hitler visited there regularly. He continued to read on architecture and art, but also mythology, religion, history and biography. In his reading on architecture he acquired an extensive amount of history on many of Linz's buildings and appears to have attempted to write a handbook or manual on the subject.* He then worked tirelessly on a short story he titled *The Next Morning*. He talked about becoming a playwright and after weeks of research at the library began a script centered on the time Christianity was introduced in Germany. He then switched to a play about the Spanish painter, Bartolome Murillo, who's art work Hitler knew well.* Murillo had also been a "poor orphan" and became famous for his charming paintings of religious subjects and sweet street urchins. After a vigorous start, Hitler put the idea aside.



When Hitler felt dejected he would walk to Schonbrunn Castle and spend his time in the huge adjoining park where miles of shaded walks wended their ways among clumps of trees, arbors, vast formal flower beds and elaborate fountains. Along with other attractions the park also contained a zoo and the Gloriette, an elaborate stone pavilion surmounted by a huge imperial eagle.



Hitler's favorite spot was a stone bench not far from the Gloriette where he enjoyed feeding the birds and squirrels. (The stone bench, along with the descendants of those birds and squirrels, are still there at this writing.) He never went to the park on Sundays since he did not like crowds, and the noisy and carefree spirit of most of the young people annoyed him.

Sooner or later however, he would conceive another idea and wholeheartedly throw himself into it. After numerous day trips to the Hof-Library and night after night of continuous writing, he abandoned one idea after another. After countless false starts as a playwright or writer, he suddenly decided to become a composer.

Hitler spent months working on a Wagnerian type opera which would have been understood by ancient Germans. The work was to be performed with rattles, drums, reeds, crude brass wind instruments, primitive harps, and bone and wood flutes. He searched excitedly through volumes of the Hof-Library studying ancient music and looking for the types of musical instruments used by ancient Germans.

That he had no formal musical training, other than four months of piano lessons, daunted him not. To make up for his lack of knowledge he read the scores and librettos of a large number of operas and acquired an amazing knowledge of stagecraft.* He worked on his opera night after night plotting the story, producing drawings for the sets, sketching the main characters in charcoal and composing the music with Kubizek's help. Kubizek acknowledged that the prelude turned out very presentable (after he had convinced Hitler to add a few modern instruments) but Hitler was not satisfied. "It reduced him to utter despair," Kubizek wrote, "that he had an ideal in his head, a musical idea which he considered bold and important, without being able to pin it down."* Hitler finally realized that success as a composer was as hard to come by as that of a painter or writer and finally gave up. Dejected, he would return to the park and feed the pigeons and squirrels until another idea dawned.

Hitler came up with an idea for a traveling symphony. He felt it was unfair that only the lucky few in the major cities were privileged to hear first rate performances. His mobile orchestra was to travel to small towns where less fortunate people could hear other than second rate performances. He spent quite a deal of time working out the intricate little details, including the composition of the group, their feeding, dress, direction, and rehearsal time. He decided that only German composers would be played and he even timed the length of each piece while at concerts. The orchestra was not only to perform classic and romantic works (the oldies so to speak), but also the works of modern, young and unknown composers. As with traveling "concerts" today the ideal was plausible, but the lack of adequate public halls in small towns made him abandon the idea. He then returned to the park.

Like all idealistic young men on a minimum budget, Hitler became disillusioned and he soon developed a strong social conscious. He would visit the Parliament when it was in session, and on a few occasions even dragged Kubizek along. Hitler was amazed at the lack of action. He had expected to

see stately men in control, debating and pondering over the problems of their day. What he saw was dissension, filibustering, confusion, rants, threats, procedure, formality and wordy nonsense. He came away disillusioned and was appalled by politicians and their, as he called it, "ridiculous institution."*

The Viennese are noted for their criticism ("a grumble a day keeps bad temper away," is one of their mottoes) and Hitler fit in well. "Isn't this a dog's life,"** became one of his favorite sayings and he began to blame government for his situation. He became impatient and developed a deep contempt for most politicians. He began raging openly against, as he called them: "the well-born and all powerful people." He felt that the government should provide grants to students with ability and that poor working young women should receive trousseaus to encourage marriage so as to cut down on fatherless children and sex-related diseases. He believed the government should do something to decrease the amount of alcoholic beverages consumed by promoting non-alcoholic drinks. And, he still felt that more should be done to house the working class.

Hitler actually worked out a plan for housing those with low incomes. Using his interior plan as a starting point, the standard building was to be a two storied, four family residence. Under no condition was any building to contain more than 16 families and all should be surrounded by gardens, trees, and play grounds. He thought professional landlords unfair and believed that housing should be owned and built by the government and the rent set to cover the cost and maintenance of the building. He devoted much of his thinking to moving people out of "distress and poverty."*

The longer Hitler lived in the giant city, the more he saw of the inequalities. While the upper classes practiced an almost complete indifference, those of the younger and poorer generation began to openly criticize their leaders. Hitler became one of them for he could not understand the apathy and resignation of politicians and leading intellectuals. Their stance that "nothing can be done about it," earned them his undying hatred. "He who resigned," Hitler stated, "lost his right to live."* He saw these men of education with their professional training as a group of "idiots." No doubt remembering that his more-than-qualified father had been held in the same position for seventeen years because of his background, Hitler felt that men who actually showed ability should be chosen to manage affairs as opposed to those with formal qualifications, class and connections.

With what was left of his inheritance running low and knowing that his pension would only support a meager living, disillusionment soon vented itself in anger. For no apparent reason, there were days when he would go into a rage about the unfairness of life. Any disagreement or rebuke on Kubizek's part only heightened his anger. A while later he would be calm, cooperative and charming. But, Kubizek noted, it was contrary to his nature to ignore important issues, and there were days he would read or see something that would set him off all over again. Hitler was often abrupt, moody, and brash, but Kubizek stated that he could never be angry with Hitler because he regarded him as a "visionary."

"For a long time, I had it rough in Vienna," Hitler would later recall. "For months I never even had a hot meal. I lived on milk and dry bread but spent thirteen kreuzers day after day on cigarettes. I smoked twenty-five to forty a day. One day the thought came to me: 'Instead of spending thirteen kreuzers on cigarettes, buy butter for your bread. That would be five kreuzers a day and I'd have money left over.' Soon after that thought, I threw my cigarettes in the Danube and have never touched another"* There is nothing worse than a reformed--whatever--and Hitler soon began ranting about the government's involvement in the tobacco industry. He argued that the State was ruining the health of its own people for monetary gains. He felt all tobacco factories should be closed and the importation of tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes be forbidden.* (Later, when Hitler became Fuhrer and his European conquests seemed unstoppable, he made the statement: "Before going into retirement, I shall order that all the cigarette packets on sale in my Europe should have on the label, in letters of fire, the slogan: 'Danger, tobacco smoke kills; danger: Cancer.'")

Reflecting on Hitler's meager fare, Kubizek concluded that much of Hitler's anger stemmed from his financial situation. Kubizek suggested that Hitler go to the "soup kitchen" and get a decent free meal. Hitler angrily retorted that going to a soup kitchen was demeaning and that such "contemptible institutions...only symbolized the segregation of the social classes."*

Many of Vienna's population lived in similar circumstances and Hitler "unhesitatingly" associated with the "simple, decent but underprivileged people."* He thought something should be done for the "'little man,' the 'poor betrayed masses.'"* He ranted about the "tight fisted" ways of the upper classes. As Kubizek would later state: "Everywhere we noticed a deep chasm

between the social classes.... We saw the splendid mansions of the nobility with garishly attired servants in front, and the sumptuous hotels in which Vienna's rich society--the old nobility, the captains of industry, landowners and magnates--held their lavish parties. Poverty, need, hunger on the one side, and reckless enjoyment of life, sensuality and prodigal luxury on the other." The obvious social injustice embittered Hitler and the presumptuous and arrogant demeanor of the upper classes "roused in him a demoniacal hatred."* He continuously railed "against the privileged position of certain classes."*

Although Kubizek always portrayed Hitler as a serious and stern young man, there was another side of him. Kubizek took a short trip home for the Easter holiday and wrote Hitler that he had contracted an eye infection and that when he returned he might be wearing glasses. Kubizek knew his constant practicing on the piano distracted or annoyed Hitler at times so he also mentioned that he was also going to bring a viola, testing what Hitler's reaction would be. On April 20, 1908, the day of his 19th birthday, Hitler wrote back (after making a joke about the bad weather in Vienna): "I am deeply sorry to hear that you are going blind. It means you will play more wrong notes and keys. The blinder you become, the deafer I will become. Oh dear." He also added that he was going out to buy "cotton" for his ears. He then signed the letter: "Your friend, Adolf Hitler."*

Kubizek returned shortly after and, in June, completed his first period at the Conservatory with excellent grades. He was privileged to conduct the end-of-term concert where three of his songs were sung and part of his sextet for strings was performed. At a gathering in the "artists' room," Kubizek was showered with praises by his teachers and classmates as Hitler sat quietly by himself watching. It appeared that for Kubizek, success was just around the corner.

Kubizek went home in July to work in the family business for the summer. Since he was nearly a year older than Hitler he was now of military age and was required to report for a physical. Found to be fit, he was to undergo eight weeks of training for the Army Reserve and would not return till November. Hitler's landlady also took a trip to visit her brother and Hitler looked after the building for her until she returned. Hitler kept in touch with Kubizek and on one occasion, referring to one of his ideas for a book, wrote: "Since your departure I have been working very hard often again until 2 or 3 in the morning."* Knowing Hitler was running short of money Kubizek and his

mother sent him some food packages. A few days later the proud Hitler would write on a postcard dated July 19, 1908:

Dear friend!

My best thanks for your kindness. You don't need to send me butter and cheese

now. But I thank you most gratefully for the kind thought. Tonight I am going

to see Lohengrin. Kindest regards to you and your esteemed parents.

Adolf Hitler.*

A few days later Hitler would write again mentioning that he was not feeling well. It was not until August 17 that Kubizek heard from him again. This time he mentioned that he had got over a "sharp attack of bronchial catarrh," but was "writing quite a lot lately."*

Late that August, Hitler took a trip to the Wooded Quarter for a family gathering on the Spital farm. Besides his two aunts and their families, his step-sister Angela and her family were also present. Hitler still disliked Angela's husband and had considered putting off the trip, but was no doubt shown the new addition to Angela's family--a two month old daughter called "Geli." He also saw his twelve year old sister, Paula, who was now a pretty, quiet and reserved girl. Hitler had previously given Paula the book *Don Quixote* (possibly after reading it) as a birthday gift and got into an argument with her because she disapproved of a list of books he obviously had read and suggested for her education. Since they were never very close, her rejection of his advice separated them further. Although "fond" of one another, as Paula would later state, they remained fairly distant all their lives. Before returning to Vienna, Hitler sent Gustl a postcard wishing him the "best" on his Name-day. It would be the last contact Kubizek would have with Hitler for thirty years. (After a promising beginning Kubizek's artistic dreams would be shattered by W.W.I. He became a "clerk.")

In Sept 1908 the nineteen year old Hitler applied for entrance to Vienna's Art Academy again. The drawings he submitted on this occasion were not considered adequate. He was notified, that this time he would not even be permitted to take the test. The 1908 entry in the Academy's list read:

The following gentlemen #24 Adolf Hitler ... April 20, 1889, German, Catholic Not admitted to test.*

Again he was crushed. This time he asked for a reason and was told that his abilities lay in architecture and it was recommended that he study that field. This judgment is borne out by his surviving drawings and paintings which show a flare for architectural renderings. To enter the Architectural branch of the Academy, however, a diploma was necessary. "What I had defiantly neglected in the high school " Hitler stated, "now took its bitter revenge."* Since he lacked a diploma he would have to show that he was "exceptionally gifted" to enter the architecture field. Hitler was realistic enough to know that he did not possess such abilities and never attempted to register.

As Hitler would show many times in his life, he could not face people when things were going bad. Although Kubizek had previously offered Hitler financial help, Hitler, as with the food packages, was too proud to accept and decided to end their relationship. Because of his failure to gain admittance to the Academy for the second time, he no doubt felt ashamed to face Kubizek, or anyone else. Around the same time, Hitler also quit writing Hagemüller, the boy who used to have his lunch at the Hitler house in Linz, and they also "lost touch."*

2nd Vienna Apartment



On Nov. 18, 1908, with Kubizek expected back in a few days, the dejected Hitler gave notice to his landlady. Without leaving a forwarding address he moved to a building across from the railway yards. As required by law, he registered the change of address with the local police station. This time, he registered as a "student" instead of "artist" as he had done at his former address. He continued reading and looking for that special mission he was sure would come. Like most 19 year olds he no doubt carried the false assumption that all he had to do was plod along and rewards or success would automatically come.

Continue:

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Footnotes:

Hitler @

The Mens home

Potiphar

1908
H. C. W. S.

Meaning: dedicated to Ra; i.e., to the sun-god

the Egyptian to whom the Ishmaelites sold Joseph (Gen. 39:1)

He was "captain of the guard", i.e., chief, probably, of the state police, who, while they formed part of the Egyptian army, were also largely employed in civil duties (37:36; marg., "chief of the executioners").

Joseph, though a foreigner, gradually gained his confidence, and became overseer over all his possessions. Believing the false accusation which his profligate wife brought against Joseph, Potiphar cast him into prison, where he remained for some years. (See JOSEPH.)

Put into 1908

Potiphar

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(pŏt'ifer) , In the Bible, chief official of Pharaoh who bought Joseph and gave him a high position in his house. Later when his wife falsely accused Joseph, Potiphar put Joseph into prison.

After the young Joseph's jealous brothers sold him into slavery, Potiphar, captain of the Pharaoh's guard, purchased him as a household slave. Realizing his abilities, Potiphar soon made Joseph overseer of the household.

Potiphar's wife also recognized the young man's talents and tried to seduce him. Shown here, she clutches at Joseph's robes and begs him to make love to her. Joseph refuses, raises his left hand as if to shield himself from her, and turns to flee. The two figures are caught in a struggle: Joseph pulls back while the seductress reaches out to grasp his cloak. Flowing, shimmering draperies and the figure's gestures express Joseph's entrapment, both by Potiphar's wife and by the cloak. In his haste, he will leave his cloak behind in her hands; humiliated, she will accuse Joseph of attempted rape, using the cloak as evidence.

I Was Hitler's Buddy

Put into 1909
folder.

Important

Reinhold Hanisch

I Was Hitler's Buddy

In: *The New Republic* (New York)

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The New Republic presents herewith the first installment of a document that we believe has exceptional interest. It is the story of Adolf Hitler's days of desperate poverty in a municipal lodging-house in Vienna, told by his closest associate at that time, Reinhold Hanisch. Hanisch and Hitler worked together making and peddling picture postcards. In his memoir, Hanisch has given a vivid picture of Hitler as he knew him, and of the circumstances that had a share in the formation of Hitler's character.

Hanisch himself was a German-Bohemian, though of Austrian citizenship, and not a Jew. He was arrested in Vienna in 1936, after it had become known that he had written this memoir and that he was attempting to find a publisher. The charge, from Berlin, was that Hanisch had tampered with and falsified some watercolors done by Hitler at the time described here. Hanisch had discovered them in an art-dealer's files and they had been sold at a high price to a Berlin dealer.

Some time later the public was informed, as might be expected, that Hanisch had died in prison after a sudden illness. He had died of pleurisy, in three days, the official report said. — THE EDITORS

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1909, after extensive wanderings through Germany and Austria, I arrived as a traveling artisan in Vienna. On the highway I had already heard about a lodging-house and I decided to go there, for I had very little money.

I soon found the Asylum for the Homeless, a large modern building behind the South Railway Station. The town's poor stood there in a long row waiting for admittance.

Finally the gates were thrown open and our line livened up. Everyone was given a ticket that entitled him to five nights' lodging, and it was punched by the supervisor. Inside, long rows of benches stood on both sides of the hall to accommodate the people. They went in couples to the showerbath. Those who were full of vermin had their clothing tied up in bundles and disinfected. This „burning-out“ of the clothes often damaged them severely. After that the people returned to the hall, the upper part of which was set with rows of tables. Bread was brought in, soup was served, and afterward everyone retired to the dormitories. Cots with wire springs stood along the walls, each covered with two brownish-colored sheets.

Here everyone made himself comfortable in his own way. A pillow was made from clothes. Even if the seat of a man's trousers was patched and soiled they were carefully folded so that they would have a crease the next day. Shoes were

shined and put under the bedstead so that no mistake could occur. Often there was a shoemaker or a tailor about who offered his services for a few pennies, or for cigarettes or the like. Trading boomed in the dormitory; clothing was bartered or sold, and rolled cigarettes, and tickets of admission to the Asylum. Those who had been in the Asylum for a long time and feared that their cards would not be renewed were glad to buy new ones.

Crowds formed around a cot if a man had an interesting story to tell. I soon found my pals. At that time I spoke the Berlin dialect and all of them took me for a Prussian, so I was soon surrounded by many Saxons, Bavarians and Rhinelanders. There are no mopers among tramps. Wit and humor are the privilege of youth. Common worry bound us together; new traveling plans were forged; new companions found.

The neighbor on my right looked sad, and so we asked him questions. For several days he had been living on benches in the parks where his sleep was often disturbed by policemen. He had landed here dead tired, hungry, with sore feet. His blue-checked suit had turned lilac, and the rain and the „burning“ in the asylum bleached it.

We gave him our bread because he had nothing to eat. An old beggar standing near by advised him to go to the convent in the Gumpendorferstrasse; there every morning between nine and ten soup

was given to the poor. We said this was „calling on Kathie“, probably because the name of the Mother Superior was Katherine.

My neighbor's name was Adolf Hitler.

He was awkward. The Asylum meant to him an entirely new world where he could not find his way, but we all advised him as best we could, and our good humor raised his spirits a little. I was also „calling on Kathie“ daily, and we became close friends. He told us that he was a painter, an artist, and had read quite a lot, that his father was a small customs official in Braunau-on-Inn and that he had attended the Realschule in Linz. Now he had come to Vienna in the hope of earning a living here, since he had already devoted much time to painting in Linz, but had been bitterly disappointed in his hopes. His landlady had dispossessed him and he had found himself on the street without shelter.

After he was forced out of his room he had spent several evenings in a cheap coffeehouse in the Kaisertrasse, but now he was entirely without money. For days he hadn't eaten anything. One night in his great distress he begged a drunk gentleman for a few pennies, but the drunk man raised his cane and insulted him. Hitler was very bitter about this, but I made fun of him, saying, „Look here, don't you know you should never approach a drunk“. So I tried to console him.

He always wanted me to tell him stories about Germany, because he was quite enthusiastic about the Reich. We met every night, and kept up our spirits in spite of our troubles. We sang „Die Wacht am Rhein“, and what a sparkle came into Hitler's eyes when we sang the Bismarck song, with the refrain:

*Wir Deutschen fürchten Gott da droben
Sonst aber nichts auf dieser Welt.*

(We Germans fear God above
But nothing else on this earth.)

Hitler had never heard this song before.

During the day we tried to earn a little money at odd jobs, and in the evenings we had our gatherings. When the winter cold set in, conditions for the poor like ourselves were much harder. Hitler went daily „calling on Kathie“ to get his soup and afterward trolled to the Western Railway Station, where sometimes there was an opportunity to carry a passenger's bag for a few pennies. But often he got nothing at all, and we had to share our bread with him.

When the shelters were opened Hitler used to go with others to the one in Erdberg. This shelter had been endowed by the Jewish Baron Koenig-

swarter, and the Asylum where we lived was also a Jewish foundation. From Erdberg we went to Favoriten and then to Meidling, a two-and-a-half-hour walk, for soup and bread. Hitler had no winter overcoat; in his thin jacket he shivered with cold and was blue and frostbitten.

Hitler thought of all sorts of jobs, but he was much too weak for hard physical work. I never have seen him do any hard work, nor did I hear from him the story that he did a worker's job in the building industry. Builders employ only strong and husky men; a man as frail as Hitler would never be hired by the foreman. One day some ditchdiggers were needed, and Hitler asked me if he should apply for the work. I said, „Don't take up that work! If you begin such hard work it is very difficult to climb up.“ But I knew Hitler couldn't have done such work for an hour.

The early snow several times helped us to make money. We had to get up early and hurry in darkness and cold to the place of work, in order to be first. As Hitler was very weak and had sore feet he was usually late, but we made sure the supervisor gave him some work, too. So he shoveled snow a few times, but not often.

At this time he and I were already close friends. We knew everything about each other. Being a Bohemian German (Sudeten), I had strong German national convictions, and that was the reason Hitler attached himself to me. Also as a schoolboy I liked painting and my only desire was to become a painter. But life took a different course.

He told me a lot about his family. Hitler's father had distinguished himself a number of times by his work as a customs official. An example was the case of a certain man in Vienna who received parcels of cigars from Germany. Hitler's father was struck by the inferior quality of these cigars, and at the examination of one of the packages a cigar broke. A diamond fell out, and so a smuggler was discovered.

After his father's death Hitler's family received a pension of fifty kronen monthly, but his sister, who had just been married, received this pension and Hitler got nothing. He was not earning enough with his package-carrying for food, and in the evening in the Home we used to give him some horse-sausage or the like. It was a miserable life, and I once asked him what he was really waiting for. He answered, „I don't know myself“. I have never seen such helpless letting-down in distress.

When he told me of the fifty-kronen pension his sister was getting I asked him why he didn't

approach her. He said he could hardly do that, as his sister was just married and needed the money, but I advised him to do it, because he was worse off every day. He had a cough, and I was afraid he was going to be very ill. Finally Hitler said that he would like to write but he had no writing materials. So a salesman from Austrian Silesia and I took him to the Café Arthaber, opposite the Meidling Southern Station. In the coffee house he wrote a letter to his sister, asking, on our advice, for some money to be sent Poste Restante.

A Few days before Christmas Eve, 1909, the money arrived. That evening Hitler came again to the Asylum and, standing in the line, pulled out of his pocket a fifty-kronen note. I told him not to show it so, because if anyone saw it he might be robbed or someone might ask for a loan.

Now a transformation took place in Hitler. I advised him to buy a second-hand winter overcoat in the Jewish quarter, but he was afraid he would be cheated there. So we went together to the Dorotheum, the pawnshop operated by the government. There he purchased a dark winter overcoat for twelve kronen.

Then he moved from the Asylum into the Maennerheim (men's home) in the Meldemannstrasse in the XXth district. I suggested that he do some work like painting postcards. He said first he wanted to rest for a week. But I asked him if now that he had a little money he wanted to spend it at once. He answered that he couldn't spend it all in a week anyway.

I had already suggested painting postcards before he wrote his sister. He thought he wouldn't be able to sell them because he wasn't well enough dressed, and also he was afraid that without a license we both might get into trouble with the police. In the Asylum Hitler offered some of his postcards to the salesman from Silesia, so that he might sell them, but he refused. Soon after Christmas I also moved to the Men's Home and began to peddle Hitler's postcards. He was a very slow worker, and I often told him not to dawdle around with his cards so much, to daub on anything. I sold the cards in the taverns.

Then Hitler copied postcards, most of them of Viennese views in watercolors. He took them to art dealers, furniture stores and upholsterers, for in those days divans were made with pictures inserted in their backs. I had good luck, was incessantly on my feet and brought in orders. Hitler was busy. Misery was at an end. We were doing better and new hopes sprang up.

But unfortunately Hitler was never an ardent worker. I often was driven to despair by bringing in orders that he simply wouldn't carry out. At Easter, 1910, we earned forty kronen on a big order, and we divided it equally. The next morning, when I came downstairs and asked for Hitler, I was told that he had already left with Neumann, a Jew, also living at the Maennerheim. After that I couldn't find him for a week. He was sightseeing Vienna with Neumann and spent much of the time in the Museum. When I asked him what the matter was and whether we were going to keep on working, he answered that he must recuperate now, that he must have some leisure, that he was not a coolie. When the week was over he had no longer any money. What had he done with it? He could eat four or five pieces of pastry with whipped cream in a cheap coffeehouse, but he drank no wine and did not smoke.

I recollect that we went one day to the City Hall to see the stained-glass windows, and I felt faint on the stairway. Hitler scolded me, saying that it served me right and that it was because of my continual smoking. „One must have some self-control“, he said.

But unfortunately he never had enough self-control to force himself to work. Often I didn't know what to do with the orders because it was impossible to make Hitler work. In the morning he sat in the hall of the Home, and was supposed to be making drawings while I was busy canvassing the frame manufacturers and upholsterers. But then political discussion would start and generally Hitler would become the ringleader. When I came back in the evening I often had to take the T-square out of his hands, because he would be swinging it over his head, making a speech.

Like us, many of the inmates of the Home made a living by homework. One old man copied from the newspapers the addresses of betrothed couples and sold them to furniture stores and other firms. Another wrote musical excerpts. A Hungarian cut postcards out of cardboard, with emblems and initials, which he sold on Sundays in Prater taverns. A group of people made little signboards and pricebills from cardboard, and for these Neumann was the salesman. Once he brought Hitler an order for a drugstore poster, to advertise powder to prevent perspiration. *AA order*

The man who painted the signboards, Greiner, had previously been a lamp-lighter in the cabaret Hoelle in the Theater an der Wien. He had a vivid imagination, was a great talker and soon became a bad influence on Hitler. Greiner built all sorts of

castles in the air, and Hitler took his schemes very seriously. There was eager competition between them in devising plans, and Hitler would say sometimes that Greiner was a genius like Edison with unheard-of ideas, but that he was too fickle and needed someone to carry out his ideas.

Hitler wanted to unite all these people into an organization following such ideas in cooperative work. Some of them should make drawings, design advertising, paint signboards, while the others should sell these products. But he had other projects as well. At that time there was a picture in all the newspapers of a woman named Anna Csillag, with long hair that reached the floor, and below her picture was an advertisement, starting with the words, „I, Anna Csillag...“ recommending an infallible hair-growing remedy. Hitler thought something of the kind ought to be invented. He admitted that the story of Anna Csillag was an obvious bluff, but he said one could earn plenty of money with it. He proposed to fill old tin cans with paste and sell them to shopkeepers, the paste to be smeared on window-panes to keep them from freezing in winter. It should be sold, he said, in the summer, when it couldn't be tried out. I told him it wouldn't work, because the merchants could just say, come back in the winter; we don't need it now. To this Hitler answered that one must possess a talent for oratory. But I thought oratory alone would be useless.

At another time he had quite an original idea about protecting banknotes from being worn out, by having them made smaller and kept in a case of celluloid.

So we were busy with high-flown plans, but we lived very simply. In the Home both Hitler and I did our cooking, one day corn pudding with margarine, the next day margarine with corn pudding. One day Hitler was showing off his culinary art; he was going to make a milk soup, but it turned into pot-cheese because it curdled. The next day I made some, and, though he said he didn't want to eat it, served it to him nevertheless. He asked me how I had made it and I told him that I had just done it the opposite of his way, and so it had turned out all right.

We also did our laundry, in the showerbath. Hitler had only one shirt, and there was a little Saxonian who used to say there would be fine weather the next day, because Hitler had washed his shirt.

At that time there was a great political agitation in Vienna. The mayor, Dr. Lueger [1844-1910],

leader of the Christian-Socialist Party, had just died. The Arbeiterzeitung, the Social-Democratic paper, printed long articles strongly denouncing the successor of Dr. Lueger. Hitler told us a lot about Dr. Lueger, who had been forced to fight hard for his position as mayor. Only after he had been elected the third time had the Emperor confirmed the election. Hitler said Dr. Lueger should be taken for an example and a new party created. The Christian Socialists had been destroyed and the Social Democrats were not a real workers' party. The new party should have a name that sounded well, and should take over the best slogans from other parties to win followers; it was also important that the whole thing be well organized. The aim justifies the means, was Hitler's saying.

Dr. Lueger had also founded a very interesting institution, the Knabenhort (boys' hostels). The boys were children of Christian Socialists, and they wore uniforms, formed bands and made musical outings. Hitler was very much interested in these and talked a great deal about them and about it being good for youth to be politically trained. For some time he was absorbed night and day with the idea of forming a new party. At Easter we did well and had a little more money to spend, so Hitler went to the movies. I preferred to drink some wine, which Hitler despised. The next day I knew at once that he was planning a new project. He had seen „The Tunnel“, a picture made from a novel by Bernhard Kellermann, and he told me the story. An orator makes a speech in a tunnel and becomes a great popular tribune. Hitler was aflame with the idea that this was the way to found a new party. I laughed at him and didn't take him seriously.

I was sometimes annoyed with this chattering of Hitler's, for he went on talking politics instead of working for our customers. One day I told him to stop talking, he really didn't look the promoter of a political party, and he must do some serious work. He had more success with other people, however, for they were always ready for fun, and Hitler was a sort of amusement for them. There was continual debating; often the Home looked as if an election campaign were in progress.

Hitler wore a long coat that Neumann had given him because he couldn't dispose of it in the Jewish quarter, and he wore an incredibly greasy derby hat on the back of his head. His hair was long and tangled and he grew a beard on his chin such as we Christians seldom have, though one is not uncommon in Leopoldstadt or the Jewish

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Ghetto. I used to address Hitler often as „Paul Kruger“ because the President of the Boers had just such a beard. Hitler had already at that time the lock on his forehead.

A joker would often tie Hitler's coat to the bench and then someone else would discuss politics with him. All of them then used to contradict him, a thing he could never stand. He'd leap to his feet, drag the bench after him with a great rumble, and then the supervisor would send his servant up

to this turmoil and order everyone to be quiet. These debates took place over almost anything, and meanwhile Hitler couldn't restrain himself. He screamed, and fidgeted with his hands. But when he was quiet it was quite different; he seemed then to have a fair amount of self-control and acted in quite a dignified manner. When speaking he was rigid, and showed his teeth.

(To be continued)

I Was Hitler's Buddy: II

I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK of Hitler's youth, for the impressions of youth are the lasting ones. Government officials, especially those posted at the border, always saw the paradise beyond the border. So Hitler heard from his father only praise of Germany and all the faults of Austria. And so he was to some degree brought up to anti-Austrian feelings. Hitler was an enemy of the Hapsburgs[*sic!*]. He accused them of entertaining a hostile policy toward Germanism and frequently said that with the accession of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand the downfall of Germanism in Austria was to be expected. He also used to say that history is the teacher of the nations.

Still history teaches us that we in Austria always had to rely on our own strength when German civilization was in danger. Where were the North Germans when the Turks menaced Vienna? A Pole, King John Sobieski, came to Vienna's rescue. The jealousy between Germany's rulers brought about the partition of Germany under Napoleon. Frederick the Great was base enough to appeal to Germany's arch-enemy France against fellow Germans and Bismarck did not hesitate to seek an alliance with Italy in his fratricidal war. The instances of treason and guile which were committed against the German people in Austria are innumerable. In the World War our troops were always compelled to hold positions until the Germans got a breathing spell. Germans requisitioned all the food available in the occupied areas, whereas we were forced into starvation. In our country, in German Bohemia, the misery had its climax. We could obtain nothing from the Czech districts, and many housewives were shot dead when they went to Germany to hunt for food. We would hardly have been able to get the Prussians out of our country if we had won the World War. If Austria were to be governed by the National

Socialists, as the Prussians wish, our country would become a Prussian colony. Prussians would be appointed to all the offices. We would have nothing to say in our own country. I don't wish to mention the events of the last few years. The sins against us committed by the great German nation, related to us by blood ties, will remain forever a blot on its honor.

But one can't condemn the great German nation for the actions of its leaders, nor is it possible to lay the whole responsibility on Hitler. He calls himself the leader, but I think he is the one being led. He employed for the service of his party unscrupulous elements, but even he is now unable to check them. The reputation of the German nation is destroyed. Hitler can't get rid of the evil spirits he invoked.

We talked also about the policies adopted against the minorities in different countries. At the same time the forcible denationalization of the German minority in Hungary was mentioned. I took exception to the Prussian policy against the Poles and condemned the attempt of the Prussians to turn the Poles into Germans by violence. Hitler said this was unavoidable; a state must try to create a uniform nationality within its borders. I was very angry that Hitler always took the government's part. Whether the ruthless policy of Magyarization was discussed, or the policy in Posen, or Upper Silesia, Hitler invariably approved of all such violent methods as necessary for the state's sake. In such debates I always sided with his opponents, but opposition was useless because of his shouting.

He talked often about his youth. He said with pride that the people of the Innviertel (the district in which he was born) had the reputation of brawlers, and he told about watching their fights as a lad, and even enjoying them. It was a holiday for

him when a friend took him and his father to the district court in Ried to see the deadly weapons exhibited there that had been collected during peasant fights. What others abhorred appealed to him. I don't know whether such instincts disappear in later life. I simply am telling my personal experiences with Hitler, without comment or adornments.

Hitler also told me that when he got into fights as a boy his father wouldn't let him complain but made him fend for himself.

He had read considerably about the Revolution of 1848 and lectured about it a great deal. Richard Wagner was then his favorite subject, first Wagner as a revolutionist in 1848 and afterward his struggles, until he found a patron in King Ludwig. We often went to the scenic railway in the Prater, where we could hear the organ play „Tannhäuser“ [sic!]. Hitler listened quietly and explained the action to us. Once he grabbed my hand excitedly and said, „That's the passage! Do you hear? That's the passage!“

On our way home he tried to explain the opera to us and sang some passages. In his excited way he could only hum a few tones and fidget with his arms. But he could describe the scenes very well, and what the music meant. I don't think that it was a real understanding of music, though; he had more of a sense for what was going on on the stage and what had to be performed. For Wagner he had a great enthusiasm, and said sometimes that opera is really the best divine service. Everything about him was somewhat exaggerated.

In the scenic railway there was always a great deal of Mozart played, first of all from „The Magic Flute“. Hitler would try to hurry us and get us to leave. Once I remarked that Mozart was greater than Wagner, but Hitler denied it vehemently. He said Mozart fitted the old sentimental times more, but that today he had been outlived. But Wagner was a fighter, there was more greatness and power in Wagner. Besides there were more people kept busy, especially the orchestra.

He also liked to talk about Gottfried Semper, the architect of the Hofburg, the Museums and the Burgtheater. And one day we spoke of Karl May, for there were rumors that he had been jailed for serious offenses. Hitler said it was mean to bring up his past against such a man, that they who did it were hyenas and scoundrels, and that he himself had read Karl May, who was really a great writer.

Ideas and novelties were his hobby. He thought men of the future would nourish themselves more and more with substitutes, a pill perhaps sufficing

as a whole day's ration. I told him I'd stick to my cakes and wine, and leave the pill-food to others. Another time Hitler explained the force of gravity to us, and assumed that the next great scientific advance would be the elimination of gravity from objects, so that iron blocks could be moved from place to place without difficulty.

We talked of the necessity of religion, as there had been published in the Arbeiterzeitung an article mocking a Corpus Domini procession. Hitler condemned it strongly on the ground that the religion of the common people was being destroyed without a substitute being offered to them. He often said religion was necessary, and that if there were none it should be created. He spoke of Voltaire's having gone to church, because he had been robbed by peasants. The peasants said that if there were no God, as Voltaire claimed, then there was no sin either, so Voltaire went to church to prove to them that he believed in God.

Hitler often received benefits from convents. I have already spoken of his having been fed with convent soup, but also for medical advice he went to the Merciful Brothers (Barmherzige Brüder). But he charged Catholicism with Germanophobia, because the Popes were mostly Italians. He said the Catholic Church had reached her present power and greatness by good organization, and pointed to the past when the Church won her way with fire and sword. He also said the Catholic Church had spilt more blood than any other religion. He believed that the Western nations gained a great deal from the oriental civilizations during the crusades, and so our art rose to new heights.

an argument
If the Germans had remained faithful to their old mythology, they would today be a united nation, and would have reached a higher standard of civilization. He meant that the Germanic faith, if retained, would have become more ideal with the changing times, and in this connection pointed to the Greeks, in whose faith he said ideals were revered as gods. He was a particular admirer of the structure of the Greek state, where scholars and philosophers exerted a strong influence, a thing we should have emulated. That had been the epoch of philosophy, but in our technical age philosophy was badly neglected. He asserted that it would be easier to combat misery if there were more philosophy. And moreover, he said, there should be more business men in the government, that is should not be, as it was, full of jurists and bureaucrats.

Once Hitler remarked that the Protestant Church was Germany's true religion. I asked him why his father had not been converted to Protestantism. Hitler retorted that since his father was a government official it would have made difficulties. Hitler admired Luther as the greatest German genius. *He changed it all*

Now I want to make some remarks about Hitler's opinion of the Jew. In those days Hitler was by no means a Jew hater. He became one afterward. He used to say even then that the end sanctions the means, and so he incorporated anti-Semitism into his program as a powerful slogan.

In the Home, Hitler had helpful advisers who were Jews. There was a one-eyed locksmith called Robinsohn who often assisted him, since he was a beneficiary of an accident-insurance annuity and was able to spare a few pennies. And in the Maennerheim Hitler often found Jews who listened to his political debates. The salesman Neumann became a real friend. Neumann was a business man by profession and didn't shrink from any work. At first he was with two signboard painters, one a very industrious man and the other the former lamplighter, Greiner. Later on Neumann worked with another Jew who was buying old clothes and peddling them in the streets; at this time he often gave Hitler old clothes. He was a good-hearted man who liked Hitler very much and whom Hitler of course highly esteemed. Hitler told me once that Neumann was a very decent man, because if any of us had small debts Neumann paid them, though he himself was very much in want.

At that time Theodor Herzl and the Zionist question were very much discussed. Hitler and Neumann had long debates about Zionism. Neumann said that if the Jews should leave Austria it would be a great misfortune for the country, for they would carry with them all the Austrian capital. Hitler said no, that the money would obviously be confiscated, as it was not Jewish but Austrian. Then Neumann always made a joke; it would nevertheless be a misfortune for Austria, because when the Jews crossed the Red Sea all the coffee-houses in Leopoldstadt were deserted.

Neumann went to Germany in 1910. He tried to persuade Hitler to join him, speaking with great enthusiasm of Germany, but Hitler wasn't able to make up his mind. Since then I have never heard of Neumann.

Hitler was able to sell his watercolors almost solely to Jewish dealers. He sold to Jacob Alten-

berg of the Wiednar Hauptstrasse, who also had a branch in the Favoritenstrasse. There was another Jewish shop in the Favoritenstrasse, owned by Landsberger, who also bought from Hitler, and there was Morgenstern in the Liechtensteinstrasse, who often bought from him and sometimes recommended him to the private customers.

The Christian dealers, like the frame manufacturer Schiefer in the Schönbrunnerstrasse, didn't pay any better than the Jews. Besides, they only bought again when they had disposed of the first lot, while the Jewish dealers continued to buy whether they had sold anything or not. Hitler often said that it was only with the Jews that one could do business, because only they were willing to take chances. They are really the most efficient business men. He also appreciated the charitable spirit of the Jews, and mentioned the statesman Sonnenfels during Maria Theresa's reign. He went even further. For instance, when the people in the Home expressed resentment at Queen Elisabeth's erecting a monument to Heine on her estate at Corfu, Hitler argued that it was sad that Heine's fatherland did not similarly recognize his merit. Hitler himself didn't agree with Heine's views but his poetry deserved respect. When it was argued that there were few artists among the Jews, Hitler replied that there might be few, but there were some, and he mentioned Mendelssohn and Offenbach.

But he admired the Jews most for their resistance to all persecutions. He remarked of Rothschild that he might have had the right of admission to court but refused it because it would have meant changing his religion. Hitler thought that was decent, and that all Jews should behave likewise. During our evening walk we discussed Moses and the Ten Commandments. Hitler thought it possible that Moses had taken over the commandments from other nations, but if they were the Jews' own they had produced as a nation one of the most marvelous things in history, since our whole civilization was based on the Ten Commandments. About Christ he said that he must surely have been in India, as he adopted points of Buddhism, and after all he was the son of a Greek who served as a Roman army captain. During these walks a Bavarian foreman from a dairy often accompanied us. He wondered why Jews always had remained strangers in the nation, and Hitler answered that it was because they were a different race. Also, he said that the Jews had a different smell.

Nevertheless Hitler at that time looked very Jewish, so that I often joked with him that he must

be of Jewish blood, since such a large beard rarely grows on a Christian's chin. Also he had big feet, as a desert wanderer must have. Hitler himself often remarked that descendants of Jews are very radical and have terrorist inclinations. He said that for a Jew to take advantage, to a certain extent, of a non-Jew, was not punishable according to the Talmud. On the other hand he often dismissed the charge of ritual murder with the remark that it was absolute nonsense, a groundless slander. He used to quote from „Nathan der Weise“ by Lessing and could well recite the parable of the three rings. He believed every religion to be good, and expressed the opinion that the Jews were the first civilized nation because they were the first to abandon polytheism for the belief in one God. The fact that they made no images indicated, he said, that they worshipped God more as Nature itself. So he didn't care much about anti-Semitism.

Hitler often even denied that Jewish capitalists practice usury, and pointed out that most capital is in the hands of Christians. He accused the nobility of practicing usury, using Jews as agents. However, he called the nobility a sort of noble race that would forever remain preëminent. But Emperor Wilhelm II he called a conceited chatterer who posed for monuments.

Perhaps many people will doubt the truth of these statements, and point to the German Reich today. But I have often noticed myself that anti-Semitism took cruder forms in Germany than in our country. This is due to the character of the Germans, especially the Prussians. I am convinced that Hitler himself doesn't agree with many of these insanities, but he is the prisoner of his circle.

(To be concluded)

I Was Hitler's Buddy: III

This is the last installment of a memoir by Reinhold Hanisch, an Austrian painter who knew Hitler when both men were living on charity in Vienna. — THE EDITORS

HITLER WAS CONSCIOUS OF being a government official's son. He repeatedly said of the workers that they were an indolent mass that cared about nothing but eating, drinking and women. He thought a revolution could only be the work of a student class, as in 1848. I answered that he should get acquainted with workers when they came home from work, tinkering, making odd inventions and improving their education. I said that he didn't know the real workers at all, but merely the bachelors. Actually he was unable to form an opinion of workers because he had no opportunity to meet them. All this time he lived in the Home, and such a place has great disadvantages. The mass of people there are largely an assembly of rabble and a real workingman doesn't stay there long. He looks for board in a private house to enjoy family life. Only loafers, drunkards and the like stay for a long time in such a home. And workers paid little attention to Hitler because they found his debates quite foolish. Besides, the reading room there was seldom used by workers. I wanted to prove to Hitler that workers were not so indolent, and pointed to Halske and Krupp, who rose from the bottom. Hitler said that they were exceptions, and that there were surely superior and inferior people. But I said that was not so. The

workingman doesn't rise easily even if he has great abilities; there are highly gifted workers who have never been successful in life. Again Hitler mentioned the nobility, maintaining that they were the superior race, so I became angry and said that there were also idiots among the noblemen.

Hitler was even then an enemy of the Social Democrats. On May 1, 1910, a worker from the Kremenzky factory came into the reading room with a red carnation in his buttonhole, and told about the parade in the Prater he had been in. Hitler leaped to his feet, waving his hands wildly, and screamed in his regular way, „You should be thrown out; you should get a lesson!“

Everyone laughed at his excitement. If I had told him at that time that he himself would celebrate the First of May he would probably have killed me. Yes, but the end sanctions the means. Moreover, Hitler was then an enemy of any kind of terror. He condemned any kind of compulsion, and also strikes. He was also opposed to the contributions collected by the Social Democrats for their party organization, because he said these contributions enabled a lot of parasites to live comfortably at the expense of the masses of the people. He declared that the state probably had no means to stop this, but that this unjustified greed

Adel!

for profit on the part of some people represented a great danger for the state. He also considered stock companies an evil, and thought that if an industry was getting too large it should be turned over to the state and the state should get the profits.

That he often talked nonsense is shown by a little episode. He was talking about Schopenhauer, and the old gentleman we called the professor asked Hitler if he had ever read Schopenhauer. Hitler turned crimson, and said that he had read some. The old gentleman said that he should speak about things that he understood. After that Hitler was careful not to talk where he would suffer a fresh rebuke.

I was often asked about Hitler's attitude toward women, and there were, even then, suspicions about it. But these were absolutely without foundation. Hitler had very little respect for the female sex, but very austere ideas about relations between men and women. He often said that, if men only wanted to, they could adopt a strictly moral way of living.

While he was still going to the technical high school in Linz he used often to call on a close friend, the son of a government official. And this friend's sister was Hitler's first love. She never knew it, because he never told her; he was the son of a minor official and she the daughter of a much higher one. Hitler was even astonished that the son of such a high official would be his friend. It was, incidentally, under this friend's influence that he became an admirer of Wagner.

But Hitler's high opinion of love and marriage, and his strong condemnation of men's disloyalty, didn't prevent him from having very small regard for women. He used to lecture us about this, saying every woman can be had. All you have to do, he said, is to wear your hat on the back of your head, so your face will be as visible as possible. And he himself did wear his derby on the back of his head. He often said that it was the woman's fault if a man went astray. A decent man can never improve a bad woman, but a woman can improve a man. The he used to relate an experience he had had when he was very young, to prove his self-control. During one of his vacations from high school, in the country, he met a milkmaid who appealed to him, and who liked him, too. Once, as she was milking the cow and he was alone with her, she behaved rather foolishly. But Hitler suddenly thought of the eventual consequences and ran away, like the chaste Joseph, knocking over a big pot of fresh milk.

All during this time, of course, Hitler was living in the deepest misery in Vienna. He was so poor and so ill fed that he was hardly conscious of his needs, and his poverty prevented him from having anything to do with women. Besides, his queer idealism about love would have kept him from any frivolous adventures. If there is any gossip about this, it is just slander. Hitler certainly wasn't the kind of man at that time for any girl to fall in love with. His poor clothes, the tangled hair falling down over his dirty collar, these are the reasons that he probably never knew any more than a yearning.

During this time Hitler was more engaged in debate than in painting. He was often ridiculed, and when I returned from peddling his cards all day I used to have to listen to his complaints. Of course I always advised him to do more work and less debating; I wanted to rent a small private room, in the hope that his will to work would improve if he got out of the Asylum. Too, Hitler's work, done under these conditions, was of very poor quality and made selling very difficult. I could never sell a picture in the better shops. In the suburbs I was paid three to five kronen a picture, and even so I was glad to find a buyer.

Hitler often promised to become more diligent, but as soon as I went out in the morning he went back to his old practices. In the morning he wouldn't begin work until he'd read several newspapers, and if anyone should come in with another newspaper he'd read that too. Meanwhile the orders I brought in weren't carried out. But if I reproached him he only said that an artist needed inspiration. Once I told him, to his great dismay, that he was no artist. The sort of work he did wasn't the work of artists but of daubers.

He could never stand any criticism of his paintings. Once he painted a picture of sea surf, with some rocks, and handed it to me telling me to take it to Ebedeser on the Opemring. Mr. Ebedeser only said, "That's nothing, absolutely nothing". Then I often went with him to the City Hall Museum and showed him watercolors that he might use as models. He picked out those of lesser quality and remarked that they were no better than his.

So I told him that he must not take the worst examples, but look at something by Richard Moser, or two interiors by Rudolf von Alt, the home of the painter Amerling and an altar painting, that hang there together. I pointed out the easy manner of this painting and compared the heavy way his turned out. He wouldn't listen to that, so later I told him that I had just been trying to help

him progress and make money, and at last he realized this.

The Viennese views that Hitler painted in the Asylum were mostly patterned after postcards, using just a few patterns and always the same motifs. Once I had an order for him to paint the Church in the Gumpendorferstrasse, and, since a postcard wasn't to be found, I urged him to draw it from nature. We went down early one morning, but Hitler couldn't make the drawing. He used all sorts of excuses: it was too cold, his fingers were too stiff. Today, knowing that he had had no academic background, I can explain his clumsiness. It is also characteristic of his watercolors that there are few figures in them.

On my rounds one day I went to a small manufacturer of frames in the Grosse Schiffgasse, a little street in the Jewish Ghetto. There I met a dealer in antiques called Siegfried Tausky, who showed me a silhouette on gilt glass and asked if I could do work like that. When I said I could he gave me a piece of the glass and I worked out a silhouette of a lady on it. Thereupon Tausky gave me a larger piece of glass and asked me to make a „Schubert evening concert“ with a number of figures. As I didn't know at that time who Schubert was I turned this over to Hitler. He produced a postcard when I asked him how he was going to draw Schubert, and accepted the job. The next day I met Tausky again and he gave me another plate to work on. I worked on it all that day and the next day and finally finished it, and then went to get the other plate from Hitler. He hadn't finished, so I watched him work all the next day until it was done. When at last he gave it to me I asked him how much to charge for it, and he said a hundred kronen. I made him realize how impossible it was to get such an enormous sum; finally he told me to get as much as I could.

I reached an agreement with Tausky about the price, and he paid me, but I was amazed to find out that he liked my work better than Hitler's. He gave me steady work and offered me a fixed price. Though I was very glad that he was satisfied with the work, this whole episode upset me very much. Hitler fell very much in my esteem, since I had had so much confidence in his artistic abilities. I still lacked self-confidence and kept wondering if I could continue to do work good enough to satisfy Tausky, and I knew that I lacked the academic training Hitler said he had had. But in spite of all my doubts I had great hopes of freeing myself from these miserable surroundings and from the

burden of a lazy man. For days I walked the streets restlessly.

Afterward I worked for years with Tausky.

Hitler wanted to know Tausky's address, because while working on the Schubert plate he had another new idea. He thought that by etching on gilded glass a new method might be found for the prevention of counterfeiting banknotes. In this case I think Hitler was right.

He noticed, no doubt, that there was something wrong with me, and asked me to give him a list of all my customers. But I refused, making excuses and putting him off on the pretext that I had urgent errands to run. Just then he had finished a watercolor of the Parliament in Vienna on which he had worked more attentively than usual, and hoped to sell in a better shop. As I was better dressed I was supposed to call on the shops; this time he went with me. But again all attempts were unsuccessful; I wasn't even asked the price. People shrugged their shoulders when I offered it to them, and one said that it was just too poor a piece of work. Hitler had expected a lot of it, so of course he was disconsolate, yet I couldn't find the words to console him.

And so he told me to go and sell the picture by myself. For days I walked around, getting very small offers, but still thinking I could get more for the picture. I felt sorry for Hitler; he had daubed for more than eight days at this. Finally he had no more money left and he urged me to sell it, so I got twelve kronen from the frame-maker Reiner. He gave me six kronen at once, and this I gave to Hitler, taking the six to come later as my share.

The next day I wanted to deliver something that had been ordered a fortnight before, a birthplace in Bohemia drawn from a photograph. The woman who was buying it was going to take it home as a gift and I had promised faithfully to deliver it on time, since Hitler has assured me that he would have it ready. When I asked him about it he told me a story about a political debate. Again he had not finished the work. This put me in the position of facing the woman as a liar, so I was very excited. At such laziness I was very angry and resentful.

Hitler said he needed to be in the mood for artistic work. I called him a hunger artist, and he called me a house servant, because I had once told him that I worked as a servant in Berlin. I replied that I was not ashamed of any kind of work; I had tried many different kinds and never shirked anything. After these quarrels I moved from the

Asylum, looked for a private lodging and decided to work independently.

When I went to Reiner to collect the six kronen owing to me I found a gentleman in the shop asking Reiner who I was. Reiner told him that I had painted the parliament, and the gentleman asked me to call on him at his home in Doebbling. He was a bank director, and gave me a large order. Within a few days I delivered to him three watercolors that he approved, and he gave me an order for seventy watercolors of Austrian folk costumes. On my way home I was very happy, figuring out that the income of this work would mean quite a bit of money. I was in my best humor.

It was in the late afternoon, and everything seemed to me brighter and more beautiful. I was looking joyfully into the future. Then, on the Favoritenplatz, I met a postcard salesman named Loeffler, a Jew who also stayed in the Asylum and was one of Hitler's circle of acquaintances. I asked him what news there was from the Asylum, and he reproached me for having misappropriated a picture by Hitler. In astonishment I asked which picture he meant. Hitler, he told me, had said I defrauded him of the watercolor of the Parliament. When I denied it he doubted my word and we had a violent argument. In the middle of it a policeman walked up and Loeffler told the policeman what the argument was about, so he had us come with him to the Commissariat of Police. Since I had no identification papers I was held.

As I have said, Hitler had noticed that I was trying to get rid of him, because of his laziness, and had asked for the list of customers. I knew that Hitler was an irascible person, and I had been afraid that he would find me anywhere I went. If he lost his shelter in the Night Asylum because of his laziness I was afraid he would descend on me and be a burden to me. So for these reasons I had been living for several weeks under an assumed name. But at the police station, of course, they immediately discovered this, to my disaster. For at that time living under a false name in Vienna was a criminal offense.

But I still hoped that Hitler would clear up this error and that then the whole affair would turn out satisfactorily. I was taken to the Brigittenau Police Commissariat and confronted with Hitler. How great was my disappointment! Hitler, of whom I had thought so highly, whom I had helped so often, whose errands I had done, declared that I had misappropriated a watercolor of his worth fifty kronen. When I objected that I had given him his

share of the twelve kronen paid for it he denied this. He denied, too, that he had told me to sell the picture as best I could. I testified that I had sold the picture to a dealer in the IXth district, but I didn't tell the dealer's name because I thought that if the bank director found out that it had not been I who had painted the Parliament he might withdraw the order he had given me.

At the trial two days later I had regained better spirits. I was asked again where I had sold the picture, and I withheld the name of the dealer as before. My prison mates had already told me that I would certainly be sentenced for living under a false name, so I didn't take much pains with my defense. Perhaps I could have pointed out that Hitler couldn't possibly paint a picture worth fifty kronen. I don't know whether this would have shattered Hitler's testimony immediately. The only desire I had was to get out of it as soon as possible, and I hadn't much confidence in the justice of my case. After all, I was a poor devil and I had lived under a false name. Appearances were against me. I was sure I'd be sentenced, so it all made no difference to me. Hitler persisted in his false accusation, and as the payment and the other things had had all been arranged orally, I couldn't furnish any proof of my denials. I was sentenced to a short term. After the sentence had been passed I called to Hitler, "When and where will we see each other again to make a settlement?"

But I was reprimanded by the judge for this, and threatened with further punishment.

A few days later I was at liberty, so of course my first errand was to the picture-maker Reiner. The bank director had already been inquiring for the watercolors. So then I worked from early morning until late at night, with neither Sundays nor holidays.

One day I was in a coffeehouse in the Wallensteinstrasse and met an Italian who also lived in the Asylum. He recognized me as soon as he saw me and told me that Hitler was very much blamed on my account in the Asylum. He was in great need and was probably longing for another partner to help him. Here and there he was getting a little money. This, I thought, must be from the government pension I have already mentioned.

The Italian asked me why I hadn't called him as a witness. He had been sitting beside us, he said, and had heard Hitler urge me to sell the watercolor so that he could pay the rent. And he had met me the next day and been present when I gave Hitler the six kronen. He insisted that I must denounce Hitler for giving false witness. But I

didn't follow his advice. Several years passed since then, and I have discarded this dishonesty of Hitler from my mind. I have been ashamed to let the people I know now learn about this affair. Desire for revenge didn't dissipate my fear of gossip.

The painting of Parliament still exists and is one of Hitler's better works. Most of them are shoddy trash, done with very little love for work. I could prove today what I was paid at that time, for the widow of the bank director could still tell about how much her husband would have paid for that picture.

The last time I met Hitler was in August, 1913, on the Wiedner Hauptstrasse. He had just sold some things to the art shop of Jacob Altenberg. Soon afterwards I left to go to Gablonz, in Bohemia, where I had some relatives, and I didn't come back to Vienna until 1918. But I often used to talk with my friends and acquaintances about the painter I had known called Hitler. It was a name like any other; no one recognized it.

One day I read in a newspaper that an Adolf Hitler was founding a political party in Munich. I went to see Mr. Altenberg, the dealer to whom he had sold things, and later I recognized Hitler's picture in the papers. But as I wasn't interested in politics it made no impression on me at all to discover that this was the same Adolf Hitler I had known.

There are a great many rumors about Hitler's past, stories that he was a paperhanger, stories that he was an architect. They are all untrue. This is the true story of Hitler's youth and the true story of the experiences he and I had together. I should emphasize that there are living people who can confirm everything I say.

Hitler discovered his love for the workers when he needed the votes of the masses. Whether this is a genuine love, or a deep love, I cannot say. It hasn't been the purpose of this story to attempt criticism of that kind.

REINHOLD HANISCH

REINHOLD HANISCH

1889 April 20 Adolfus Hitler (Adolf Hitler) is born at Braunau am Inn, Austria. According to his birth certificate, he was born at 6:17 PM and baptized two days later by Father Ignaz Probst at the local Catholic church. (Payne)

Note: Hitler's father, Alois, was a 51-year-old Austrian customs official of questionable birth. His mother, Klara, was his father's niece and former servant -- twenty-three years his junior. Married in 1885, their first three children, two boys and a girl, all died before Adolfus was born.

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The Mannerheim, located on Meldemann Strasse, was the fourth project sponsored by the Habsburg's to tackle the miserable living conditions of the less well-paid Viennese. The first three projects stressed homes for families while the Mannerheim catered to men going through a hard time. The establishment covered almost a whole block and had room for over 500 men. Opened in 1905 it was the most sought-after refuge in Vienna for both blue and white-collar workers with meager or uncertain incomes. This was a time of little social security and no unemployment payments and even members of the middle classes roomed there during bad periods. A number of wealthy businessmen (who had pushed their luck too far), a baron and a count had also roomed there. The place was exceptionally clean and the cost, when Hitler first moved in, was a little over two kronen for a week's stay.

The Men's Home was considered the most "luxurious" halfway house in Austria (today it can be compared with many of the older YMCA's in many of the larger US and Canadian cities). Each occupant had his own small private room. In each room a single, metal framed bed nearly filled the space on one side of the entrance door while a chair, small table and storage facilities nearly filled the other side of the room. A large window, which let in an abundance of light during the day, nearly filled the wall directly opposite the door.



There were large and more than adequate lavatories a short distance down the hall and there were also waiting, game, and reading rooms. The main reading room on the top floor contained a small library along with the day's papers and popular magazines. Besides a shoemaker and tailor

shop, where items could be repaired or new ones made, the basement contained a barbershop, laundry and storage lockers. If one cared for a prepared meal, it could be purchased for a nominal cost and consumed on the ground floor in a large dining room at the rear of the building which seated over 300 men.



The place also had a large public kitchen (still in use today) where the economizing Hitler cooked his own meals. The Mannerheim was constantly under attack by conservatives who saw it as pampering the lazy and unworthy. They sarcastically referred to it as the "Men's Hotel."

The place was run by Johann Kanya, a retired officer, who had fixed ideas about behavior. There were many rules and regulations regarding conduct. Kanya insisted that all residents live a quiet and orderly life and woe to the resident who disobeyed. Loud talk, standing on a bed, or unkempt appearances were grounds for expulsion. To shower a resident had to pay a few extra cents which entitled him to a piece of soap, a towel and a "bathing-apron" since total nudity was forbidden. Chess, checkers, and dominoes were the only approved games and even then an argument over a move could get a resident in trouble. For the slightest disregard of the rules a resident would find himself out in the street. In this disciplined world, Hitler had little trouble fitting in.

At the Mannerheim, Hitler had the room and the privacy to paint. Shortly after moving in, Hitler sent Dr Bloch, who tried so desperately to save his mother, a carefully painted postcard of a hooded monk hoisting a glass of bubbling champagne, with the caption: "A toast to the New Year." On the reverse side were cordial New Year's greetings and it was signed: "In everlasting thankfulness, Adolf Hitler."*

The ever conniving Hanisch followed Hitler to the Mannerheim in about a week. He knew that Hitler's type of paintings were the kind that tourists and the average person found pleasing and

admitted he hoped to benefit for himself. Hanisch convinced Hitler that he would need an agent to sell his paintings and would handle it for half the proceeds. Hitler appeared reluctant and offered the excuse that Hanisch lacked a peddler's license which might get them into trouble with the police. Hanisch assured him that he would take care of it. Hitler finally agreed.

Hitler continued painting small postcard-sized paintings of landscapes or architectural renditions of churches and the more noble buildings of Vienna. Hitler attempted to do his best but Hanisch complained: "He was a very slow worker, and I often told him not to dawdle around with his cards so much, to daub on anything."* Hitler finally relented and began to dash most of them off in a hurry.

By the beginning of February Hitler settled into a fairly stable routine and began turning out two or three postcard-sized paintings everyday. He did many paintings of the Gloriette and the "Roman Ruins" in Schonbrunn Park. To give some of the pictures an old fashion quality he would hold them near a fire, yellowing them, until he produced the effect he wanted. A few of his better paintings sold for five kronen. His usual



place of work was at a large oak table near the windows in the reading room where would-be entrepreneurs gathered to work on various projects. He could be seen there almost everyday with his box of paints. Hitler hated anyone looking over his shoulder and did not like anyone to see his work until it was complete. Hanisch took care of the selling end of their business, splitting the money equally with Hitler. "Hitler was busy. Misery was at an end. We were doing better and new hopes sprang up," Hanisch would later recount. "At Easter, 1910, we earned forty kronen on a big order [eight paintings] and we divided it equally."*

With his paintings subsidizing his pension, Hitler was soon making more than enough to pay the rent and eat decently. Hanisch stated that Hitler, using part of his Easter windfall, even splurged and went to the movies. With real *want* diminishing,

Hitler began spending less of his time painting.

Many people in Vienna, as in other parts of Europe, use politics to warm-up to a conversation the way Americans use the weather. In a place like the Mannerheim, where most of the down-and-out blame government for their situation., politics was always a major topic. The reading room where Hitler did his painting, was also the room where men gathered almost every day to discuss politics. On March 10, 1910 Karl Lueger, one of the most civic-minded yet controversial men in Austrian politics died. The Mannerheim buzzed with opposing views and before they subsided, Hitler would find another idol "who more than any other became [his] political mentor, though the two never met."*

When Hitler arrived in Vienna he had been a staunch opponent of Lueger and a supporter of Schonerer. "Yet," Hitler would later state, "in the course of my stay in Vienna I couldn't help acquiring a feeling of great respect for Lueger personally. It was at the City Hall that I first heard him speak. I had to wage a battle with myself on that occasion, for I was filled with the resolve to detest Lueger, Yet I couldn't refrain from admiring him. He was an extraordinary orator I never saw him in the streets of Vienna without everybody's stopping to greet him. His popularity was immense What in other cities was the responsibility of private firms, he converted in Vienna into public service."*

To Karl Lueger

Though controversial, Lueger miraculously remained in the mayor's office for ten years despite the forces and the wealth aligned against him. He withstood all obstacles, slurs and ostracizing and finally withdrew in 1907 only after an illness exhausted his energies. Most people, including Hitler, who witnessed his impressive funeral cortege in 1910, knew that a man of great stature had left them. "At his funeral," Hitler would later recall, "two hundred thousand Viennese followed him to the cemetery. The procession lasted a whole day."* The

common people of Lower Austria truly mourned for Lueger. There were many among the privileged however, who had never forgiven Lueger for his "frightening" hold over the crowd and rejoiced over his passing.

The impact of Lueger's death changed Hitler from a person who just skims the surface of political issues, to one who really begins to look deeply into the politics of his day. Politics become Hitler's passion. "Hitler," Hanisch would later write, "told us a lot about Dr. Lueger, who had been forced to fight hard for his position as mayor."* Fourteen years later, persons of quality and their historians in residence were still degrading everything Lueger stood for (Konrad Heiden, for example, considered Lueger a "despot."*) Hitler, however, would refer to Lueger as "the greatest German mayor of all times"* and a greater "statesman" than any other politician who lived at that time.*

Although Hitler did not join the party Lueger left behind, it is possible he handed out the party's literature on street corners for a while.* There now began to sprout in Hitler's mind, more from instinct than by reason, "a political shrewdness which enabled him to see with amazing clarity the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary political movements."* Lueger had shown Hitler at first hand that class interests could be bridged between the lower ranks of the middle class and the working classes. If Lueger had lived his Municipal Socialism might have evolved into National Socialism.

In April, 1910, Hitler turned twenty-one years old. He still had his beard, without a mustache, and his hair was long. His complexion was pale, and his lanky body gave him an ungainly appearance. As always, his prominent blue eyes were his most distinguishing and memorable feature. Although he kept himself and his clothes clean, he developed the habit of cutting expenses by wearing old used clothes. Jacob Altenberg, an art dealer, remembered that Hitler's clothes, although old, were neat and his pants well-pressed. Hitler washed his only good shirt almost everyday as he took his shower. He pressed his pants by folding

them carefully and placing them under his mattress.

To keep his expenses at a minimum, Hitler also kept his diet simple. His normal meals consisted of corn pudding or potatoes with margarine and bread. On a profitable day he sometimes went to a cheap coffee shop where he ordered one of his favorite foods, cream cakes. Like many Viennese he was developing a sweet tooth.

With the tourist season approaching, Hitler doubled the size of his paintings and produced a completed one in about a day. These larger paintings, done in oil or water color, normally measured 12 by 18 inches, but he occasionally did some twice as large. These more elaborate, time consuming and fairly good works normally brought in five to ten kronen each. Hanisch, nonetheless, complained that Hitler never worked enough and when he scolded him about it, Hitler retorted that he was "not a coolie."*

Their mildly successful little enterprise brought Hitler and Hanisch together daily. Although politics was always at the top of their conversation, they occasionally discussed other matters. Hitler was interested in science and "thought men of the future would nourish themselves more and more with substitutes."* Hitler also assured his friend that the day would come when men would learn to overcome gravity, and to prove his point explained how gravity functioned. Hitler, Hanisch stated, read a great deal and besides reading the science journals and newspapers at the Men's Home, also read history (including the history of past German revolutions), philosophy, poetry, mythology and religion.

Although Hitler was born and raised a Catholic, he favored Protestantism and had great respect for Luther whom he considered a genius. He nevertheless believed that if the Germans had remained faithful to their old Germanic faith, instead of adopting Catholicism in the south and Protestantism in the north, they would not have been a divided people. On the other hand Hitler understood the advancements that come from

outside sources and "believed that the Western nations gained a great deal from the oriental civilizations during the crusades," especially in the field of art.* He questioned the Nationalist's glorification of Teutonic (old German) civilization when compared to the Greek and the Roman.*

As the weather improved, Hitler, Hanisch and other friends often went over to the Prater, an immense park, which was dotted with cafes and recreational attractions. On weekends and holidays, musical groups often performed there for the public. Much of the music tended to be classical and many of the performances consisted of pieces from operas. Since most of Hitler's new acquaintances knew little or nothing about opera, Hitler would quietly explain what action would be taking place in each piece. On the way home he would try to explain the opera to his friends and often sang or hummed some of the tunes to get his point across. Hanisch stated that although Hitler was a bad singer, "he could describe the scenes, very well, and what the music meant."*

During this period, Hitler also became interested in the power of advertising and observed how easily people were swayed by it. He believed that with the right "propaganda," which is what he considered advertising to be, one could be induced to believe or buy anything. He told Hanisch that to be a successful salesman, all one needed was "a talent for oratory."*

On one occasion, Hanisch even got Hitler to talk about women. During one of Hitler's summer vacations to Spital as a teenager, Hitler admitted to an encounter with a girl in a neighbor's barn. When it appeared that the girl, who had been milking a cow, was willing to go further than Hitler expected, he beat a retreat, knocking over a pail of milk in his haste.* Although Hitler used the story as an example of how he had "thought of the eventual consequences," and controlled his passion, Hanisch, like Kubizek, believed that Hitler in reality was shy and timid around women and no doubt lost his nerve.

Like many young men, Hitler was still groping toward those

though he refused to reveal or call the buyer as a witness, claimed that he received only 12 kronen for Hitler's oil painting of the Parliament building. Hitler's testimony during the investigation was recorded as follows.

Royal and Imperial District Police Commissariat

Brigittenau [District]

August

5, 1910

Adolf Hitler, artist-painter, born in Braunau, 20 April, 1889, domicile [address for legal purposes] Linz, catholic, single, present address Vienna, XX [District], 27 Meldemann Strasse, declares:

It is not correct that I advised Hanisch to use the name of Walter Fritz. I have never known him by any other name but Walter Fritz. Since he was destitute, I gave him the pictures I painted to sell. He regularly received 50% of the proceeds realized. For about two weeks Hanisch had not returned to the Home for Men, and stole from me the picture "Parliament House," valued at 50 kronen, and a watercolor valued at nine kronen.

The only document of his that I ever saw was the employment booklet in question in the name of Fritz, Walter. I first met Hanisch in the lodging-house in Meidling.

At the trial that followed on August 11, Löffner and Hitler testified against Hanisch who was sentenced to an additional week in jail. The eight-month business venture between Hitler and Hanisch was over. With the tourist season ending, Hitler found it harder to make a decent living but continued on his own.

Hitler normally left his room at exactly 9 a.m. since the rules of the Mannerheim did not permit residents to stay in bed past that time. He would go down stairs for a light breakfast and then to the reading room for the morning papers. Around ten o'clock he would begin work on a new painting by sketching out the picture. After lunch he spent much of the afternoon completing the detailed work and coloring. On days when he had available a sufficient number of paintings he would leave the Mannerheim late in the morning and tramp the streets selling his works. He would later return to the reading room where he painted by the window. He seldom retired early and was normally seen, late into the night, debating, reading, writing or painting. A few of the early risers condemned him for his "late" habits. Hitler, however, would continue to practice the same basic routine the entire time he resided at the Mannerheim.

There were Jews at the Mannerheim with whom Hitler often discussed politics, and he "often found Jews who listened to his political debates."* Many of his favorite actors and musicians were Jews. He spoke enthusiastically about Gustav Mahler and the work of Felix Mendelssohn. Although he didn't agree with the politics of the late author and poet Heinrich (Harry) Heine, Hitler thought that his poetry deserved respect and argued that it was sad Germany did not "recognize his merit."*

The Brigittenau district where the Mannerheim was located sat next to the Leopoldstadt district which had been "set aside" for the Jews in 1623. The two districts were flanked by the Danube on one side and separated from the main city by the Danube Canal on the other. As the Jewish population increased, it had a tendency to push into the Brigittenau district swelling the Jewish population to 17%. Shortly after moving into the Mannerheim, Hitler stated, he observed an Eastern or orthodox Jew. The man had lengthy black hair-locks and was wearing a long black caftan. Hitler claimed that he was instantly repulsed by him. Nevertheless, he still saw Jews who looked and spoke German as Germans. The rampant anti-Semitism that existed in Europe failed to influence Hitler. One of his closest friends during this period was a

Jew named Josef Neumann.*

Neumann was a part time used clothes and art dealer who was instrumental in moving Hitler up the social ladder. He had previously given Hitler some respectable used clothes and then put him in touch with a few Jewish art dealers who purchased the best of Hitler's paintings. The dealers resold the paintings, for the most part, to Jewish businessmen, doctors and lawyers. Hitler, consequently, increased the number of his paintings and his business improved.

Hitler's and Neumann's relationship turned into such a close friendship that on certain days they would spend all their time roaming the huge city, visiting museums or lost in conversation. Hitler and Neumann had long discussions about Zionism. In one conversation Neumann stated that if all the Jews left Austria the country would be in trouble for the Jews would carry away much of Austria's money. Hitler, who appears to have understood nothing about international banking affairs at the time, disagreed. He believed that the money would be confiscated since it was not Jewish but Austrian. In another discussion about the Jews, Hitler thought it possible that God had not personally given Moses the Ten Commandments but that Moses had collected them from various other cultures. But, if the Ten Commandments were the work of the Jews, Hitler believed, "they had produced as a nation one of the most marvelous things in history, since our whole civilization was based on the Ten Commandments."* Hitler would carry that thought with him for the rest of his life and would state thirty-one years later: "The Ten Commandments are moral values which are undeniably praiseworthy."*

Neumann was disenchanted with Vienna and dreamed of saving enough money and moving to Germany. The idea strongly appealed to Hitler and on one occasion they actually made plans to leave together. Their plans fell through and Neumann would depart by himself before the end of 1910 and may have been the one who planted the seeds in Hitler's mind of moving to Germany.

Hitler felt a strong sense of obligation and openly praised Neumann long after he was gone. Hitler also had nothing but praise for the Jewish art dealers, including Altenberg, another named Landsberger, and a picture framer, Morgenstern, who bought most of his works. He thought highly of nearly all Westernized Jews, especially since they were "willing to take chances" by

buying his art.*

The most serious remark Hitler made against the Jews during this period (when Europe was awash in anti-Semitism) was that he felt that one Jew who ran a pawn shop, "cheated" him on the price he received for the coat he had previously sold. Instead of going to a Jewish shop to buy a new one, as a friend suggested, he refused and went to a government pawn shop. That Hitler would make such a statement at the time was not uncommon.

The Jews as a group in Vienna were law-abiding citizens and had a conviction rate in most crimes that was lower than non-Jews. During Hitler's stay at the Mannerheim, however, they accounted for more than their share of crimes involving fraud, exacting excessive interest and illegal bankruptcy procedures.* Since many of these crimes were committed against fellow Jews, or left others holding a useless IOU, many Viennese found humor in their illegal acts. On the other hand, their activities did nothing to still the fervor of anti-Semitic newspapers. Hitler, who read newspapers everyday, was aware of these acts, yet reliable sources who knew him during this period make no mention of any anti-Jewish statements on his part. Hitler even went so far as to accuse members of the nobility of committing illegal acts while "using the Jews as agents," and also pointed out that "most capital is in the hands of Christians."*

In the large reading room at the Mannerheim, Hitler began to join in on the discussions with the more educated "middle class" residents. Since "workers" were looked down on and seldom used the reading room, opinions like Hitler's were seldom heard. The normal discussion was politics and what "anti" remarks Hitler made against groups at this time were normally reserved for the rich and privileged no matter what their religion or race. He railed against stock companies, large industries, greedy people* and all their "unearned wealth."* The memory of Lueger and his fight against the upper strata was still fresh in Hitler's mind. He saw Lueger's dictatorial system of government as the most efficient. By admiring strong leadership, Hitler was soon at odds with most of the other debaters who favored the "give and take" leadership as found in liberal representative government.

Because of the belief and feeling of the time, Hitler, without realizing it, as he would later write, had also been "inoculated with a certain admiration" of representative government and took it for granted.* By the time of Lueger's

death, he had completely turned against the idea. Hitler saw that "representative government" always fell into the hands of the those with the wealth and he believed the rich took control of government only for their own self-interest. Hitler still saw royalty as the rightful heirs* and felt that "unjustified greed for profit on the part of some people represented a great danger for the state."* Since it was the wealthy liberal middle class who more than any other group advocated representative government, he saw it as a "swindle."

Hitler, who continued to visit Vienna's House of Representatives, observed at first hand what was so "elegantly reported," as he put it, in the liberal papers. As he sat above in the visitor's gallery one day and watched one session, consisting of a few hundred representatives, he would remember and later write:

A comedy unfolded beneath my eyes A wild gesticulating mass, screaming all at once in every different key, was presided over by a pathetic old man sweating profusely as he tried to revive the dignity of the House by violently ringing a bell and alternating between friendly appeals and grave warnings.

I could not help laughing.

A few weeks later I paid another visit. The picture had changed beyond recognition. The hall was practically empty. Down below most representatives were asleep. A few were in their places, yawning in each other's faces as one was speaking. The presiding vice-president was in his chair, looking out into the hall with obvious boredom.*

In front of the Representatives sat the shorthand writers who busily recorded the goings-on and Hitler would tell an accompanying friend that they were "the only people who do any work in this house." But he felt that it was unfortunate that "these hard-working men are of no importance whatsoever."*

After observing the "representative process" in person, Hitler would write that he was saved from becoming a convert to a political theory which at first seems so alluring though the "ridiculous institution"* is a symptom of "human decadence." Hitler was particularly bothered by the lack of any individual

responsibility by a representative body. Politicians as a group, he argued, can make decisions or refuse to act on matters "which may have the most devastating consequences, yet nobody bears the responsibility for it."*

Hitler felt that representative government was a hindrance to efficiency and was incapable of solving problems as they arose. The upper classes have the security, standing, and money to weather hard times, but Hitler, like most people of the lower stratum, had little interest in long-range policies and had a desire for timely action. Unlike the educated and privileged, the young Hitler had a tendency to view politics in black-and-white terms and had an impatience with all the talk and discussion. His beliefs were influenced by the conditions that prevailed throughout the German speaking world and much of Europe.

The previous century had seen an upheaval in the social structure of Europe and none of the present systems of government seemed able to deal with it.* Whether the wealthy were in complete control or aligned with royalty, the plight of the common man failed to improve and in many cases was made worse. Although countries like Britain and France had weathered the initial impact of the enormous changes brought on by industrialization, the remainder of Europe had just begun to feel the full effects. New production methods had forced many of the small craftsmen and artisans out of work. Technological innovations in agriculture forced many of the small farmers off the land. Changing business methods had forced many small shop owners and merchants out of business. Millions of common people gave up the struggle and headed for America where conditions were little better. Millions more were forced into the bulging cities of Europe to compete with the underpaid workers already there. Between 1895 and 1907, for example, the German machine-building labor force increased almost 300%, the mining and metal industry almost doubled, and employment in chemicals increased by 60%.* Housing for workers was cramped, their health care inadequate, and even though the largest percentage of German workers spent over 50% of their income on food, their diet was meager. For the fortunate ones who were able to achieve a better living, they accomplished it only by working long hours at jobs in which the majority found no pleasure.

The new German workers who came to the cities were filled with expectations but found little hope for themselves or their loved ones. The privileged either ignored or overlooked the fact that these workers were not rustic clodhoppers,

but a fairly educated lot. The number of new workers whose fathers had been artisans (trained blue-collar workers) or members of the higher professions was double or triple the number of sons of peasants.* Although a significant number maintained traditional views, another group had picked up liberal middle class values, especially with regard to individualism and aspirations of mobility. But another large group stood between these two; a group that found traditional and liberal goals inappropriate and was groping toward new values.*

Because of the mix of people residing at the Mannerheim, political conversations tended to cover a wide spectrum of views. Hitler, who was able to grasp different points of view because of his passion for reading diverse newspapers, was always in the midst of the discussions. He was one of the large group groping for new values and became strongly impressed with the views advocated in many of the Socialists newspapers--the views grounded on the beliefs of Karl Marx, the father of modern communism.

To Karl Marx

Because of its coarseness, Marx's gospel lost its momentum within his lifetime. In 1889, however, the year Hitler was born, and six years after Marx's death, a Second International movement was formed which hoped to spread the Marxian Gospel across the world with a toned down version. Afterward, "Communists" began to refer to themselves as "Socialists" even though the year before, Engels had stated in his preface to the English version of the "Communists Manifesto":

Socialism was ... a middle-class movement, Communism a working-class movement. Socialism was..."respectable"; Communism was the very opposite. And as our notion from the very beginning, was that "the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself," there can be no doubt as to which of the two names we must take. Moreover, we have ever since, been far from repudiating it.*

Most of the Communists, nonetheless, took to calling themselves Socialists. The growing strength of their movement, under the name of the Social Democrats, marched steadily onward. Failing to notice that the Social Democrats never clearly repudiated any of the Marxian Communists' goals,

much of their leadership was drawn from the "progressive" and "liberal" ranks. Other "economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organizers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole and corner reformers of every imaginable kind,"* and other "revolution-makers," as Marx contemptuously called them, were also drawn to the Socialists out of "principles sake." The respectability that Marx and Engels never wanted was theirs.

Although there were some liberals who were organizing parties that represented not only the rights of the middle classes but those of small businessmen, artisans, and factory workers, it was too little to late. While crammed into the large cities, millions of common men, especially the industrialized working classes, looked about for anyone to help them. The Social Democrats seemed to be the only party who offered them anything. Out of desperation, for the most part, they flocked to its banner. As Hitler would later state: "The poverty into which they would fall sooner or later drove them finally into the camp of Social Democracy."* By the time Hitler entered the Mannerheim the Social Democrats were one of the most powerful parties in Central and Eastern Europe. A left-wing radical movement, that was more closely attuned to the teachings of Marx, was rapidly growing within their ranks.

Hitler admitted that when he first came to Vienna he was attracted to the socialism of the Social Democrats. The relentless materialist approach of Marxism overshadowed its other liberal objectives and no doubt appealed to the young and financially insecure Hitler. Nearly all people of the lower classes cannot help but push for the redistribution of wealth--the one Marxist ideal with great appeal. But, as Hitler would later write, after living in Vienna for two years he came to see the "new" Marxist party as a "whore covered with a mask of social virtue and brotherly love."

Hitler, who indisputably read the *Communists Manifesto* and other works of Marx, saw that when the economic ideals of Marx are removed, nearly everything remaining clashes with most people's thinking. He turned against the Social Democrats and began to hate everything their organization or their leaders stood for. As he would later write:

These men degraded everything. The nation and country, because

[they believed] it was an invention of the "capitalist" (how often I heard this word) class for the exploitation of the working class; the authority of law, because it was a means of oppressing the common man; school, was an institution for bringing up slaves or slave drivers; religion, was a means of doping the people so as to exploit them later; morality, was a badge of stupid and sleepish docility. There was nothing they did not drag through the depths of the mud.*

In time, not believing that Germans came to hate their nation, religion, law, and the concept of morality on their own, Hitler "discovered," as he put it, from reading newspapers from cover to cover, that the Social Democrats and other liberals were poisoning the minds of the common man through their newspapers. He was amazed that men read newspapers and took everything as fact without any consideration as to who owned or edited the paper.

Unlike most men who read only one paper, Hitler was slowly acquiring an understanding of how different news groups distort the same story to conform to their viewpoints or enhance the standing of their sacred cows. Hitler, like Schonerer, realized that the news media cast a strong opinion on the thoughts of others. His passion for reading had not abated and he would consume three or four newspapers at a morning sitting. He became so obsessed with reading different points of view of the same story that, if he had read all the papers in the reading room at the Mannerheim, and someone came in with another, he would wait to read it also.

Like millions of others throughout Europe, Hitler saw voting as a joke. He believed that the Marxists, borrowing and building on democratic and constitutional convictions laid down by the middle classes, were working under the Socialist banner to achieve Marx's goal. He believed that the Socialists used their press to glorify representative government so as to win "the favor of the crowd" which, considering their numbers, would lead to the ultimate triumph of Socialism and the destruction of the nations with their traditional, historical and moral values.

"Representative government" or "western democracy," as Hitler called it, "is the forerunner of Marxism [and] is the breeding-ground in which the Marxist plague can grow and spread." He saw the Social Democrats as "the deadliest enemy of our nationality,"* which, "spurred me on to a greater love for my country than ever before."*

Hitler blamed the growth of the Socialists on the *stupid* and *immoral* actions of the wealthy and their representatives who refused to give in to "*humanly justified*" social demands because they couldn't obtain "*any advantages for themselves*." (The italics are Hitler's).* He thought that it was only a matter of time till the Marxists won over the crowd because of the lack of action by the "political *bourgeoisie*," as he called them, who refused to carry out tasks of "vital importance."

Along with Hitler, most traditional Germans saw the new "Socialism" as a front for the old Marxism. They saw the Marxists as enemies of nationality, Christianity, tradition, family, law, order, and decency. It was these people, especially outside the large cities, all over Western and Central Europe whose vote did much to curtail the liberal Communist vision.

Like many young men of the lower classes, Hitler held on to the traditional German dream of a strong leader who stood above politics and could immediately right the wrongs that existed. Hitler believed that, during bad times, representative and constitutional government was an obstacle to efficient social and economic leadership because of its built-in checks and counterchecks of command. Hitler also believed that in complicated affairs, like economics or foreign policy, "five hundred elected ... incompetent ... narrow-minded, vainglorious, and arrogant amateurs," who "lack all qualifications for the task," are supposed to decide issues "of the gravest importance for the future." Yet he states, not one of them would have the courage to admit that he, or his fellow representatives, knew anything about a subject under consideration because the other representatives would never "permit the game to be spoiled by such an honest ass." As to the objection that the representatives had "experts" and "special committees" to advise them, Hitler asked: "Why are five hundred elected ... ?"*

Like Voltaire (the 18th century philosopher, who favored a type of enlightened despotism where rational laws guaranteed "natural rights"), Hitler also had his model in Frederick the Great of Prussia. Frederick was the greatest of the enlightened "despots" and because of his reign, unlimited power vested in a single ruler of benevolent disposition was seen as the best foundation of a state by many of the Enlightenment intellectuals.

Hitler could also look to Germany where Otto von Bismarck, the creator of the Second Reich, had also been in complete control of domestic policy.

Under his administration, limitations of the work week were instituted along with provisions to ensure safe and sanitary conditions in the work place. Free medical and hospital services, accident insurance, and old age and invalids insurance were also instituted, even before Hitler was born. The leaders of the democratic nations scorned these pioneering social laws as nothing but sops to ensure the status of royalty. The workers of the "free world," however, would not see such social progress for decades. (In the United States, for example, comparable legislation would not be introduced for another fifty years.)* For all Bismarck did for German workers, however, Hitler was wise enough to know that Bismarck, because of his personality, methods and visions, would never have appealed to voters of any class. As Hitler would later write: "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a great man to be 'discovered' by an election."* Since he felt that the wealthy middle classes were only concerned with themselves and that the majority of workers were tools of the Marxists, he was firmly against voting as a means of choosing the leadership of the nation. He believed that both "western democracy" and "Marxism" repudiated the "aristocratic principle."

At this time, Hitler considered the nobility as a group "superior"* and saw them as "a sort of noble race that would forever remain preeminent."* He believed they could handle matters better than a bunch of bickering representatives and felt they should lead, or appoint a leader like Bismarck to run the state. Such a leader (a *Fuhrer*) would stand above politics and have almost unlimited power to appoint whom he wanted to help run the state. He would not be answerable to a representative body, but, like a Wagnerian hero, would be "obliged to accept full responsibility for his actions and for those decisions he pledges all he has in the world and even his life."* Hitler felt that if the nation found itself with an unworthy or "cowardly" leader, the nobility would replace him. (Hitler continued to support a monarchy for years to come. As he would remark in 1942: "I must, however, quite frankly confess that in 1920, if the monarchy had been restored...we [National Socialists] should have supported it. It was only later that we gradually realized that a monarchy had outlived its times."* When Hitler published *Mein Kampf* (after his failed *putsch*) in 1925, he discarded the monarchy, and using a combination of ancient German history, myth, and nationalistic ideals of a mystical strong man to lead the German *Volk*, gave into the idea of a "free election"* since he knew it was his only way to power.)* Later he would come to despise the nobility as much as he despised the bourgeoisie.

Those at the Mannerheim who didn't share Hitler's opinions thought he was "strange" or "odd." He was aware of those who considered him "eccentric," but he was also aware of those who found substance in his views. As one resident would later remark: "I believe that Hitler was the only one among us who had a clear vision of his future way."*

Because rent had to be paid and food purchased, Hitler would sooner or later put his political visions aside and return to his painting. He admitted that he worked only enough to "avoid starvation," and one of his favorite remarks was: "Oh, to hell with the money!" As time passed, nevertheless, his funds improved and his life style appeared very respectable. He was still thin and frail, but he began to eat and dress better. Because of his artistic ability he was soon living as good as anyone in the Mannerheim. He was now making over 70 Kronen a month from his painting and also had his pension. He was very close to exceeding the 1,400 Kronen annual income limit set by the Mannerheim.

In December of 1910, Hitler's aunt Johanna, Klara's sister, knowing her time was short withdrew her savings from the bank and gave Hitler a large share of it. She, like most of Hitler's other relatives, had opposed his idea of becoming an artist. She nevertheless had corresponded with him on occasion and apparently had a change of heart. She gave him the money for the purpose of pursuing his career as an artist.* Five months after receiving this "windfall," and a month after Johanna's death, Angela, Hitler's step-sister, inquired at the Linz court as to whether Hitler was still entitled to his share of the orphan's pension since he now appeared self-supporting. Angela's husband had died the previous August, and with a daughter and son of her own, she now wanted Hitler's share of the pension to revert to the 15 year old Paula whom she was still raising. In May, 1911, at age 22 Hitler made the trip to Linz and according to Paula, "voluntarily" gave up the right to his share of the pension. According to court records Hitler stated he was "able to maintain himself and...[agrees] that the full amount of the orphan's pension should be put to the use of his sister."* Mayor Mayrhofer, Hitler's guardian, believed that Hitler had again acted "decently" and heard no complaints about Hitler's actions.* (In later years when reporters and historians began making inquiries, Mayrhofer, who knew the young Hitler as well as anyone, never found anything bad to say about him.)

Exactly how much Hitler received from his aunt is a mystery, other than to

report that it had been a "considerable sum." What Hitler did with the money is even a bigger mystery. Since there was little change in his life style, some feel he lost the money in some financial scheme. Since he never reported his windfall to the management, others feel he shrewdly doled it back to himself in small amounts as he had done with his inheritance when his mother died. Other's believe he may have squandered it away or (most unlikely) took a trip to Munich.** Actually, he may have taken a trip to the countryside that *May* before he returned to Vienna. As Hitler would later recount:

Like chamois [small antelopes], girls are rare in the mountains. I must say I admire those lads who tramp for hours through the night, carrying a heavy ladder and running the risk of being bitten by the watch-dog--or having a bucket of cold water thrown over them for their pains! I have much more sympathy for them than for the type who wander round the big cities, rattling his five or ten marks in his pocket! On the other hand, there are times when the countryside has its advantages, though none but the brave deserve the fair. The nights of May, the month of the festival of the Holy Virgin, are wonderful in the country--and afford wonderful opportunities for a tender rendezvous to say nothing of the various pilgrimages, which offer a good excuse to spend the night anywhere. In Austria it is in Carinthia that these happy practices are most prevalent, and it is there one finds the loveliest maids.**

Nonetheless, after Hitler returned to Vienna he resumed his painting. He produced landscapes and portraits in ink, watercolor and oils. With the warmer weather, and his Jewish contacts, he was able to sell everything he painted.

Hitler knew and admitted to friends that his work was not masterful because he did not have the proper training. Although many of his later pictures are pleasant to look at and are the type the average person appreciates, they are not what the avant-garde or experts consider "art" (not enough "depth," they say).

Technically, however, much of his work was "quite professional"* and pleasing. Though he, like many artists, never completely mastered perspective, Hitler knew that his real talent lay in architectural renderings. Although many of his works were dashed off quickly for profit, he often did

detailed sketches of certain scenes and buildings before painting them. He had "an undeniable eye for structure;"* most of his street scenes are often "technically excellent;"* and many of his buildings were executed with "genuine dexterity."* Like many untrained artist, he could not draw figures within the context of his paintings and they were usually out of proportion or stood unnatural when he did.** Understanding his own shortcomings, Hitler normally painted architectural structures and left people out.**

The large number of street artists in Vienna made it impossible for Hitler to dredge out more than a meager living in the winter months. When sales dropped off he occasionally switched from street paintings to painting posters and rough advertisements for local businesses. His ad depicting Santa Claus holding "colored candies," or the one depicting the spire of St Stephen's rising out of a mountain of "soap-suds" have provided countless historians with fuel for condemnation. For advertising purposes, however, these ads had "depth" for their time. They also kept a roof over his head since he didn't have the financial support of wealthy relatives that most highborn "struggling" artists enjoy.

Like many artists, Hitler thought of switching to the less glamorous end of the artistic endeavor and working for businesses where the income is steady. He "undertook technically difficult work for reproductions in print (usually engravings), mainly for posters or illustrations for advertisements of cosmetics, face powder, footwear, shoe polish and ladies' underwear."* For a while he renewed his dream of becoming an architect and secured, from a construction company, assignments producing elementary architectural designs.*

Hitler was always looking for that "special mission" he thought he was to achieve. Almost everyone who met him was impressed by his ambition and energy at times. Between bouts of painting and reading, he would get an idea and throw himself into it for weeks or months at a time. After experimenting with model airplanes he attempted to design a full size airplane. After reading the science journals in the reading room about underwater exploration, his imagination was fired and he attempted to design water-diving equipment. He noted that paper money wore out too quickly and felt bills should be made smaller. He then attempted to come up with an idea for enclosing them in celluloid. He occasionally resumed his idea of writing a book and in many cases told people he was a writer.

What he was attempting to write at this time is not known. If anyone in the Mannerheim tried to look over his shoulder, he would hunch over and shield his writing with his arm. But, he read a number of books on philosophy, Eastern and Western religions, astrology, occultism, and ancient Greece and Rome which abounded with Gods. He was remarkably knowledgeable about the history of German antiquity and the numerous gods and heroes of its mythology. He also knew his Bible, being particularly well versed in the Old Testament.* He had also read Dante's *Divine Comedy** which is religious in content (though its goals were ethical) and showed great sympathy for pre-Christians who had contributed philosophical ideals. Hitler's design may have been to write a book on religion, or a theme concerning Christianity again, which, as with his earlier "opera," had always appealed to him from a worldly point of view.

Just as quickly his interest would wane and he would abandon one idea after another. Friends would then marvel over his complete lack of activity. In a short time he would recover and return to his painting until another big idea dawned.

By such twists and turns however, he began to acquired information in many fields unknown to most men. His reading was far from the narrow confines accepted by most intellectuals. "With the indiscriminateness of the self-educated,"* his readings opened up a whole world of ideas. Unlike most intellectuals, academics and professionals (who spent a large part of their lives acquiring an expertise in one particular subject, and who are, consequently, surprisingly ignorant of nearly everything else outside their expertise) Hitler had a scope of interconnecting knowledge that was widening. He also had a "extraordinarily efficient memory" which retained what he read.* Although he was not an authority in anything, he was acquiring a vast general knowledge which was "nothing short of amazing."*

In addition, men of education usually keep within their own circles or class and are oblivious to other classes desires and beliefs. Hitler's changing life styles and locations since a youngster had exposed him to a wide range of social classes which laid the seeds of insight into the driving motivations of different classes. Mythology can also "open a window to a people's soul"* and Hitler's reading and knowledge of German Mythology had also given him special insights that few people understand. His habit of reading different newspapers with different perspectives also gave him a more realistic and

discerning view of events. He knew when to "retain the essential and discard the non-essential [propaganda]." Unlike those trained in the academic tradition, he was not easily swayed by the opinions of others. He came to understand that the "educated classes" are just as blinded by their interests and in protecting their way of life and, consequently, are as predisposed, prejudiced, narrow-minded and unenlightened as any other class.

As even Marx noted, the place a person assumes in the economic order deeply influences his sense of identity. Hitler did not identify with the "have or satisfied" classes, but he did not identify with the lower strata of the industrialized working classes either. In the political discussions that continued in the reading room, which at times had twenty debaters, Hitler, over the course of a year, became the leading speaker for the people caught in between the two. Besides denouncing those of the upper classes, Hitler continued to rail against the Marxists and their trade union organizations which preached the brotherhood of man. As he would later state:

The eternal mouthings about the communal sprit which brings men together of their own free will, makes me smile. In my own little homeland, when the lads of the village met in the local tavern, their social instincts rapidly degenerated, under the influence of alcohol, into brawling, and not infrequently, finished up in a real fight with knives. It was only the arrival of the local policeman which recalled them to the realization that they were all fellow-members of a human community.*

In a place like the Mannerheim, where the lowest to the higher strata of individuals resided, Hitler was exposed to all. He had learned that great differences exists between men, and he had nothing but contempt for those who blindly followed the Socialist creed--which in Austria was the most Marxist and leftist of all the Social Democratic parties of Europe. At times, the political discussions could get very heated and the conversation would be taken to the street or the green space behind the building to avoid the wrath of the Mannerheim administration. Although Hitler could debate in a logical and dignified manner, still somewhat disillusioned and angry, he could be very antagonizing. He was not beneath using vulgar and obscene language, and was particularly fond of the word, "shithead." There were those who found him crude or offensive. He reportedly once suffered a beating from two Social Democrat transport workers for calling them "idiots." For days, it was said, he

nursed body bruises, a swollen face and a large lump on the head.*

Hitler remembered his father as a much respected official to whom people raised their hats and whose word carried weight. His father however, had earned this respect. In the big city, Hitler was nobody and unknown. He soon realized that to turn men's minds he needed a sound opposing argument to win them to his point of view. In time, as he would later state, "I learned to talk less and listen more to those whose opinions and objections were boundlessly primitive." At times he could still become belligerent, but he knew when he had gone too far. With a wave of his hand, he would abruptly cut short his remarks and return to his painting. At other times he would realize that he didn't know enough about the topic, break off the conversation and then spend the next day or two reading about it. He was learning that it was persuasion and tact that were needed to win men's minds to his views, not a temper which would draw their hostility. He would then return another day to resume the battle.

Mentally (as more than one philosopher has noted), most people are authentically who they are by the time they reach their early twenties. From then on they look only for confirmation of their views. Hitler was no different. His reading tended to be only from the perspective of finding confirmation of those principles and ideas he already had. After reading something that corresponded to his beliefs, he would often read it aloud to others and state: "You see, the man who wrote this is of exactly the same opinion."*

In time Hitler became one of the best debaters and most respected people in the Mannerheim reading room. Gone was the beard of the rebel. He learned to listen. He did not try to antagonize people. According to observers he was usually "polite," "friendly," "helpful," "goodhearted," "charming," and "wasn't proud or arrogant". He took an interest in his companions and would always stop to help or advise a friend. He contributed and even organized collections for men who had run out of money and needed a quick helping hand to stay another day. On the other hand, he still never became overly friendly and, unlike most men, seldom talked about himself. No one thought of taking his favorite chair near the window and most placed the distinctive "Herr" (referring to a gentleman) before his name. As one resident noted: "He seemed to understand everyone." In time, even the director of the Mannerheim would occasionally stop to talk with him--"an honor seldom granted a resident."*

Hitler however, was not satisfied. "A feeling of discontent seized me," he stated in *Mein Kampf*. Like many young people who find substance in posters and slogans that praise other places, over his bed hung one that glorified Germany. Germany was a land that had been beckoning to him for years. Although all of Europe was alive with counter-political beliefs, Vienna with its international flavor of warring parties and nationalities, did not play well against Hitler's ideas of a strong German nation. Hitler also believed the Habsburgs, in attempting to quell the unrest in Austria, were practicing an anti-German policy by unfairly giving in to the other nationalities and minorities which sooner or later would bring about the collapse of the empire. The lure of Germany finally won out. With some obscure ideal of hopefully finding a position "as a designer" for a large architectural firm,* he decided to return to the state of Bavaria where as a boy he had developed his dialect.

He had been at the Mannerheim for nearly three and a half years. In the end he had not only won the respect of most of the men there, but also their friendship. There were those who were sorry to see him go. On May 24, 1913, shortly after his 24th birthday, Hitler stuffed his few belongings into a single suitcase and headed for the railroad station (Westbahnhof). He purchased a one-way ticket to Munich, Germany.



(Interestingly, shortly before Hitler left Vienna, Joseph Stalin (at age 33 just an up and coming Bolshevik) was sent to Vienna in January 1913 to study the "Austrian situation." He rented a room just off the NE corner of Schonbrunn Park for a month and while there, working with the German socialists, wrote a Marxist tract. Hitler continued to visit Schonbrunn Park at that time. Perhaps the two, who were to become adversaries exactly twenty years later, crossed paths.)

Continue:

From Hitlers Vienna

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1912, 1929

HITLER'S VIENNA

the future," supported patriotism and war readiness as much as possible. War flags were embroidered, collections for the Navy Club were made, the soldier's profession was glorified, and enemies were berated. Hardly anyone dared pledge allegiance to the "furries of peace." Against this, in a speech in Munich in 1929 Hitler remarked that wars have at all times taken place to relieve the tension of a situation. *This whole idea about global disarmament, however, is not an idea of peace but of preparation for war. In the old days wars were prepared by armament, and today, by getting one of the enemies to disarm.*¹⁷ In connection with the Pan-Europe movement of Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, who was also close to the peace movement, Hitler said: *It is the rootless spirit of the former residential capital of Vienna, that city mixing Orient and Occident, which is speaking to us.*¹⁸

Of all the parties, only the Social Democrats tried to fight the growing war craze. In October 1912, shortly after the outbreak of the first Balkan War, the International Socialist Bureau in Brussels followed Viktor Adler's suggestion and published a manifesto against the war, calling on the workers of all countries to "oppose" the war plans "with all their might."¹⁹ On November 10 the Social Democrats organized a rally in Vienna against spreading the Balkan conflict. Wilhelm Ellenbogen pointed out: "We are not in the least interested in who shall rule in Sandshak, in Kosovo, in Albania, or in Macedonia. Austria's concerns in the Balkan don't require armed interference in that chaos, but only good trade treaties with the Balkan nations."²⁰ Adler also appeared next to French pacifist Jean Jaurès during the extraordinary Socialist Congress in Basel. He argued that even a victorious war would bring vast misery and mean "the beginning of the end of Austria as a state": "Austria has nothing left to conquer in the world without being shattered—a danger that is already alarmingly close."²¹

However, like the pacifists, the Social Democrats were charged with being mercenaries of the Jews, of ruining nations through their resistance to war, and thus of playing into the hands of the "global Jewish conspiracy." Along with inflation and social misery, armament grew dramatically. Between 1899 and 1909 the annual Austro-Hungarian military budget increased from 1.5 to 2.3 billion kronen. The annexation of Bosnia swallowed up 167 million, and reparations to Turkey 54 million. In 1909 battleships cost approximately 235 million kronen, and to this was added a large amount for cruisers and a fleet of torpedo boats.²² In April 1910, the government had to take out a loan of 220 million kronen.²³

1909
1910-11 aviation
BEFORE THE GREAT WAR

The Airplane as a New Weapon

1942

After 1900 all of Europe, including Vienna, became fascinated with the new "flying machines." Newspapers started new columns to report new developments and events in aviation. From a postcard depicting a blimp, which he sent to August Kubizek in the summer of 1908, we know that Hitler too was interested in aeronautics.²⁴ On July 1, 1908, aviation pioneer Ferdinand Count von Zeppelin went on his famous twelve-hour flight over Switzerland. The newspapers in Europe celebrated him as a hero.

Only a few weeks later, on August 4, an explosion destroyed another blimp on the ground. The cause of the sensational accident was widely discussed in Vienna, and the dailies argued about the pros and cons of blimp construction. When Hitler talked about Zeppelin's lack of success in 1942, this was probably a result of these discussions: "He said that the principle of only that being good which was in accordance with a natural process, also applied to aeronautics. Therefore the blimp was a completely insane construction. Its design was based on the principle of 'lighter than air'; the fact alone, he said, that nature had equipped not a single bird with a bladder, as we are well familiar with from fishes, proved that this principle was false." Therefore, Hitler said, he refused to ever fly in a blimp, whereas he was not afraid of airplanes even when the weather was bad.²⁵ Indeed, Hitler was the first politician to take advantage of airplanes, particularly during election campaigns. He liked to give the impression of being omnipresent when he appeared at several distant locations on the same day.

Hitler's interest in aeronautics is well documented. In March 1909, Viennese poured into an "airplane exhibit" on the Ring. In October, 300,000 spectators, among them the emperor, witnessed French aviation pioneer Louis Blériot's exhibition flight on the outskirts of Vienna. In March 1910 the airship *Erich-Taube* set out on a flight from Vienna to Vienna Neustadt. The biggest sensation in aviation was the competition flight of eleven airplanes from Berlin to Vienna in June 1912. Some of the participants lost their way; others were forced to make emergency landings, were caught in thunderstorms, or crashed. The winner took five hours and thirty-nine minutes.

A third dimension of warfare was developed in the military in addition to army and navy: the air force. Dropping bombs was practiced with sandbags at the new military airport in Vienna. The pacifists' urgent pleas to place the new weapon under the control of the court in The

Hague turned out to be futile. All European countries worked more or less clandestinely on the military development and testing of airships. During the 1911 war in Tripoli bombs were for the first time dropped from the air. Pointing out that the enemy already had a secret air force, and claiming it was planning an attack, the military requested and received ever increasing amounts for its air force.

Writers painted horror pictures of what modern aeronautics meant, especially in regard to warfare. For example, in 1908 *Pall Mall Magazine* published an article containing "war fantasies" about a German attack on the defenseless American fleet.²⁶ In 1912 the *Neues Wiener Journal* published an article that depicted a German air raid on Paris: "The moment war is declared, all these airplanes will take off at a signal and, supported by the favorable wind they have waited for, set course for Paris at a speed of 100 mph. It will only take them a few hours to reach the Eiffel Tower, and in half an hour at most they will have dropped 10,000 kilograms of explosive materials on our capital. Each device carries forty kilograms of these explosive materials."²⁷ Articles like this almost always concluded with an urgent plea to expand the national "army of the air" as quickly as possible in the face of this threat.

Chaos in the Balkans

'Unimpressed by warnings, the world kept playing with fire: after Austro-Hungary had annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, Italy too took part of the crumbling Turkish empire by force, attacking the Turkish province of Libya without discussing this with its partners in the Triple Alliance.

The war in Tripoli lasted more than a year and tickled the Balkan princes' greed. Montenegro, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece formed the Balkan League. Adopting the motto "The Balkans for the Balkan people," they declared war on Turkey on October 8, 1912, with the aim of dividing the country's European part among themselves. Thus the First Balkan War started. The major powers involved in the Balkans, Austro-Hungary and Russia, were on the alert. Only three days after the war started, the Austro-Hungarian army requested an additional eighty-two million kronen in armament loans, which were granted against Social Democratic opposition.

Turkey was quickly defeated. However, the victors soon began to quibble about dividing up the loot, particularly the areas to be allocated to the newly founded state of Albania. Prince Nikita of Montenegro requested Skutari, which had been given to Albania, and occupied it. He

1927

would not be deterred even when an international fleet under British command turned up at the coast of Montenegro some time later. The headline of a Viennese newspaper read, "The Unbelievable Has Happened! Montenegro has audacity to throw gauntlet to all of Europe."²⁸

Yet this Balkan prince was extremely deft at protecting himself; he married off his two daughters to the thrones of Russia and Italy. As late as 1943, Hitler would entertain his audience with Viennese stories about Nikita, the "ram thief": *To be sure, he said, in civilian life it would certainly be very difficult to marry a daughter if Dad has stolen rams and been in jail countless times; in courtly life, however, that's not a disgrace but an honor: there princes are hot on the princesses. To think that good old Nikita had been nothing indeed but a scoundrel who had fled Austria, who had committed nothing but one blackmail after another, and who always played the two against each other, Italy and Austria.*²⁹

The prince revealed the superpowers' impotence and helplessness. Calls for "keepers of orders" and a forceful intervention in the Balkans by Austro-Hungary became louder and louder. The Dual Monarchy had shown enough patience, the argument ran, particularly with Serbia, and should not longer let itself be made a fool of.

Franz Ferdinand, the successor to the throne, a fierce opponent of Serbia, Hungary, and Italy, worked on plans to politically "clean up" the Balkans for Austro-Hungary's sake. He aimed toward restructuring the monarchy's dualism into a trialism, with a relatively independent Southern Slavic empire under the sovereignty of the Hapsburgs. This empire was supposed to attract all Southern Slavs in the Balkans, thus counteracting the Kingdom of Serbia's attempts to unite all Southern Slavs under its own scepter. The heavily mixed countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina were the main bone of contention between Austro-Hungary and Serbia.

At home, this plan met with the opposition not only of the Hungarians, who were not willing to accept such a loss of power, but also of many other nationalities in the multiethnic empire. Since 1867 there had clearly been discrimination against the Czechs, who had for centuries been the Dual Monarchy's third-strongest power. Now they had reason to demand independence. The Poles demanded a similar status for themselves. The Italians would have liked to take the chance to pledge their allegiance to Italy. And so forth. Once again it turned out that the slightest change in the Dual Monarchy's jeopardized the overall, complex structure.

What Hitler said in *Mein Kampf* expressed general public opinion: Austria was then like an old mosaic; the cement, binding the various little stones

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together, had grown old and begun to crumble; as long as the work of art is not touched, it can continue to give a show of existence, but as soon as it receives a blow, it breaks into a thousand fragments.³⁰

Plans for a Preventive War

Ever since the annexation crisis of 1908, rumors had been bandied about in Vienna about the Dual Monarchy's alleged need to wage a preventive war, particularly against Serbia. Austro-Hungarian general chief of staff Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf worked diligently on such plans and gained more and more supporters, even outside the army. His argument was that Russia was rearming fast. The sooner and more surprisingly Austro-Hungary attacked, he said, the more the danger of a "big" war would be decreased. Among the many civilian supporters of a preventive strike were many who hoped to calm things down domestically, particularly the various national battles. The major part of the army—certainly its German-speaking part—was on Conrad's side anyway. The government went ahead with armament at great speed and expense. "Serbia has to die" became a ubiquitous slogan in Vienna.

In 1909 a prominent Viennese military newspaper published its lead article under the headline: "Before the War": "The hour has come. War is unavoidable. Never was a war more just. And never before has our belief in a victorious outcome been grounded more firmly. We are being forced into the war: Russia is forcing us. Italy is forcing us. Serbia and Montenegro are forcing us, and Turkey is forcing us." And: "The army is waiting for the tasks ahead, full of joyful anticipation. . . . We are entering the battle knowing that the Empire's future depends on us. . . . Our blood is boiling, we can hardly restrain ourselves. *Call us, Emperor!*"³¹ Yet the old emperor was reluctant. In 1909 he was still able to preserve peace.

Conrad, who thought Austro-Hungary surrounded by enemies, also advocated an allegedly necessary preventive war against the monarchy's unpopular ally, Italy—in 1907, then again in 1909, and particularly during the Tripoli war. Popular opinion in Vienna held that Rome was only waiting for the monarchy to fall apart so that it could annex Trieste, Terentino, and South Tyrol. Many considered the Triple Alliance somewhat of a handicap; as Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*: *That anyone even for a moment should have dared to believe in the possibility of . . . the miracle that Italy would fight side by side with Austria . . . could be nothing but incomprehensible to anyone who was not stricken with diplomatic blindness.*³² The old emperor opposed all preventive war plans. Indeed, treacherously attacking an ally to whom he officially always pledged loyalty, fundamentally vio-

lated Franz Josef's sense of legal ethics. He fired Conrad in 1911. At Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand's request, however, Conrad resumed his office in 1912, without having changed his opinion on Serbia, Italy, and the preventive war.

Later on Hitler, who as a politician was interested in good relations with Italy, dealt extensively with the heavily burdened relations between Austro-Hungary and Italy and exhibited sympathy for Italy's lack of love for the Hapsburg Empire: *Sooner would Italy have turned into a volcano than a government to send even a single Italian to the battlefield for the fanatically hated Habsburg state, except as an enemy. More than once in Vienna I saw outbursts of the passionate contempt and bottomless hatred with which the Italian was "devoted" to the Austrian state. The sins of the House of Habsburg against Italian freedom and independence in the course of the centuries was too great to be forgotten, even if the will to forget them had been present. And it was not present; neither in the people nor in the Italian government. At that time Italy had had only two possibilities: either alliance or war. By choosing the first, the Italians were able to prepare, undisturbed, for the second.³³ In other words, Hitler too presumed that Italy was only waiting for the right moment to break the alliance and start a war against Austro-Hungary—exactly as Conrad had surmised.*

Many personal letters and diary entries of the time document that all social groups were increasingly prepared to go to war. Even the emperor's forty-year-old daughter, Archduchess Marie Valerie, entered in her diary: "Continuing rumors about war. . . . Would it be wrong to think that a great upheaval such a war would entail would also have its positive aspects . . . that it would build up character, such as is lacking today?"³⁴

The Pan-Germans, too, were hoping that war would break out soon, albeit for different reasons. They expected a war to lead quickly to the collapse of the multiethnic monarchy, and therefore, to German-Austria's annexation to the German Reich. The Pan-Germans considered the Double Alliance between Germany and Austro-Hungary a mistake: clueless about what was really going on in the Hapsburg Monarchy, Berlin was being pushed toward the abyss. The *Alldeutsches Tagblatt* constantly appealed to Berlin to leave the Hapsburg empire to its unavoidable decline and not to watch calmly "as directly by its national borders ten million Germans are being destroyed as a nation, which is creating a powerful state inimical to Germans."³⁵

Hitler took the same view throughout his life, with identical arguments: Berlin, he said, *had no idea about what was going on inside their ally's country*,³⁶ and in his opinion should have withdrawn its allegiance to Austro-Hungary: *I solemnly confess that if Germany had been a National*

Socialist state at the time, as a statesman I would have dropped Austria. I would not have led millions into battle in order to save a political cadaver.³⁷ He believed that the war should have taken place much sooner: But this was the curse of German as well as Austrian diplomacy, that it had always striven to postpone the inevitable reckoning, until it was forced to strike at the most unfavorable hour.³⁸

What with all his criticism of the Hapsburg monarchy, Hitler always made one exception, a general for whom he expressed his respect: Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf—clearly in part because of the latter's plans for a preventive war and the termination of Austro-Hungary's allegiance in the Triple Alliance in favor of strict power policies. In 1941 Hitler said in a monologue about commanding the army in World War I: *The most sophisticated military leader in the World War was perhaps Conrad von Hötzendorf. He clearly recognized what was politically and militarily necessary, all he was lacking was the proper instrument.³⁹* The "instrument" Hitler was referring to was the Austro-Hungarian army.

On March 12, 1939, Hero Memorial Day, the Führer of the Greater German Empire put down three wreaths as a sign of his admiration: at Hindenburg's grave in Tannenberg, at Ludendorff's grave in Tutzing, and at Conrad von Hötzendorf's grave in Hietzing Cemetery in Vienna.⁴⁰

In view of his thorough knowledge of military history, we may believe Hitler when he wrote in a letter in 1921, *Since my twenty-second year I most eagerly devoured writings on military history, and through all those years never failed to study very intensively general world history.⁴¹*

His knowledge distinctly reveals Pan-German writings. It was mainly in the field of German and German-Austrian history, as Professor Poetsch had taught it in his Linz high school, but also in what was dealt with in Pan-German history groups in Vienna: battles and strategies, from the Cherusci to the Liberation Wars, from 1848 to the culmination of German-national military history, the German army's victory over France in 1870-71, the necessary basis for the foundation of the "Second" German Empire.

According to Anonymous from Brünn, Hitler owned only a single book in 1912: the two-volume *History of the Franco-German War of 1870-1871*, presumably a "faithfully guarded treasure" mainly because as his father's favorite book it was a memento and a symbol of father and son's joint admiration for the German national Reich as created by Bismarck.

Anonymous writes: "Hitler very much liked to talk about that war's people and issues, and exhibited extensive knowledge. He had the same

1912

admiration and knowledge for the war of 1866.* He knew all the commanders of the war and admired Moltke and, above all, Bismarck the most. The latter was his greatest idol." According to Anonymous, young Hitler only excluded one Hohenzollern from those he admired, quite in accordance with the Schönerians—Wilhelm II: *That political baby dared fire Bismarck! Yet all his power was the work of Bismarck.* As Hanisch reports, Hitler dismissed Wilhelm as a conceited babler who poses for monuments.

Later on Hitler liked to use his great factual knowledge to buttress what he wanted to prove with fitting historical examples. In a conversation with Hungary's governor Miklós Horthy during the disastrous situation after Stalingrad he recalled the battle of Königgrätz: In war, he said, one always knew how bad off oneself was, but never how difficult the enemy's situation was. . . . If the loser had known how troubled the other side was, it would have persevered and been victorious. He illustrated this by saying that in Königgrätz Prussia had been in an extremely critical situation around 4:00 P.M. But the Austrians had noticed nothing about it, and so ultimately the Prussians' stronger nerves had prevailed. Around six P.M. Moltke could light his famous cigar, since the crisis was over. These observations, Hitler said, were also pertinent now.⁴²

Scam

Yet as we can see from long passages in *Mein Kampf* and *Das zweite Buch*, Hitler was thoroughly familiar not only with the course of battles but also with the content and problems of the treaties of the Double and Triple Alliance. To him, a preventive war against an ally was never a moral issue, but always merely a matter of strategy and power politics.

Attempt to Dodge the Draft

In order to increase the strength of the Austro-Hungarian army in the face of the constant danger of war, the government prevailed in establishing new draft laws in 1912. This law eased the draftees' obligations by shortening the period of active duty to two years, with ten years of reserve duty. However, the number of draftees was drastically increased. Until then, 103,100 men had been drafted, but in 1912, the figure was 136,000 men; in 1913, 154,000; and in 1914, 159,000, the majority of them from the empire's western half.⁴³ The law had been preceded by months of debates—in the men's hostel as well, as Anonymous reports.

*The war between the Prussian-Italian alliance against Austria that led to the end of the German Confederation. The battle of Königgrätz marked Austria's decisive victory. (Translator's note)

1909

According to an old tradition, the Germans were clearly in a privileged position in the Austro-Hungarian army. Of 17,552 active officers in Cisleithnia in 1900, 14,581—83.1 percent—were German; in the ranks, only 36.7 percent were German. Even in the war year 1915, 761 of 1,000 officers were German, 568 of 1,000 reserve officers, but in the ranks, only 248 of 1,000.⁴⁴ The Pan-Germans called these privileges an excessive "blood tax" imposed by the multiethnic empire. The Pan-German newspapers constantly published reports about grievances in the Austro-Hungarian army and about the German recruits' sufferings in the multinational "Moloch the Military." Every father was bound to be "filled with fear and horror when his son has the misfortune of paying the blood tax."⁴⁵ The country was facing a war "which has to be waged not only with the Austrian Germans' money, but also with their blood, for one wouldn't dare use the Czech regiments, and the Polish ones stay at home, they have to be treated gently."⁴⁶ The Pan-Germans called on their followers to refuse the "un-German" state this "blood tax," "this acrid, utterly burdensome tax of constantly sacrificing to the Army the strongest and most beautiful years of every single fellow German."⁴⁷

Hitler mentions the German soldier's role in the Austro-Hungarian Army in *Mein Kampf*: Military service alone cast him far beyond the narrow boundaries of his homeland. The German-Austrian recruit might join a German regiment, but the regiment itself might be in Herzegovina, Vienna, or Galicia.⁴⁸ Obviously, Hitler did not want to serve in Galicia, Bosnia, or any other non-German crown province.

In any case, he tried as hard as he could to avoid military service. In the fall of 1909 all men born the same year as he, 1889, were called in newspapers and on posters to register for the draft in the spring of 1910. The draft list was kept in the young men's native towns—in Hitler's case, Linz. Yet there we find the same entry three times before 1913: "Unexcused absence, as he couldn't be located."⁴⁹

Later Hitler would justify himself by claiming that he had done his duty at the conscription office in Vienna's city hall not in the fall of 1909, but in February 1910. Yet the city hall official had sent him to the district where he lived at the time, Brigittenau. There I requested that I be allowed to report for military service in Vienna, had to sign a deposition or application and pay one krone, and never again heard a word about the matter.⁵⁰

We cannot check this statement, for such a document never surfaced—and Hitler was never summoned in Vienna. In any case, he was careful not to try this a second time, during the obligatory post-callups in 1911 and 1912. However, we do have to note that during all that time,

Engela has a nose for this
via Leo Reubal.

and for a while even lived in the same house and on the same floor.⁶⁸ He continued to sell Hitler's paintings and got by doing odd jobs.

(3 1/2 months after moving to Munich)
The assassination of Hapsburg's successor to the throne at the end of June 1914 in Sarajevo did nothing to revive Hitler's patriotism for Austria. On the contrary, he felt satisfied, later saying that it was the hand of the goddess of eternal justice and inexorable retribution which caused Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the most mortal enemy of Austrian-Germanism, to fall by the bullets which he himself had helped to mold. For had he not been the patron of Austria's Slavization from above?⁶⁹ Hanisch reports that like the Schönererians, young Hitler hated this Hapsburg prince, whose succession to the throne would cause the Germans' decline in Austria.⁷⁰

Hitler hoped for a major war and Austro-Hungary's downfall as the beginning of the redemption of the German nation.⁷¹ And: My own position on the conflict was . . . not that Austria was fighting for some Serbian satisfaction, but that Germany was fighting for her existence, the German nation for life or death, freedom and future.⁷²

On August 3, 1914, he enlisted as a volunteer in the German Army. He explained this step in *Mein Kampf*: I had left Austria primarily for political reasons; what was more natural than that, now the struggle had begun, I should really begin to take account of this conviction. I did not want to fight for the Habsburg state, but was ready at any time to die for my people and for the Reich which embodied it.⁷³ Häusler, however, returned to Vienna on August 3 to enlist in the Austro-Hungarian Army. This broke off the contact between the two men.

Because Hitler was fighting in the army of allied Germany, he did not have to comply with the draft into the Austrian *landsturm* a short while later. In 1932 Austria's War Archive and other federal authorities examined this matter thoroughly. The result of the examination was that Hitler could indeed not be called a draft dodger, inasmuch as he had no pertinent prior record.⁷⁴

When the issue of his citizenship was discussed in 1924, Hitler had a public declaration printed, dated Landsberg, October 16, 1924: The loss of my Austrian citizenship is not painful to me, as I never felt as an Austrian citizen but always as a German only. . . . It was this mentality that made me draw the ultimate conclusion and do military service in the German Army.⁷⁵

On April 7, 1925, Hitler, not quite thirty-six years old, applied for release from his Austrian citizenship, which was granted on April 30, 1925, for a fee of 75 shillings.⁷⁶ He was now a stateless person. Hitler did not become a German citizen until 1932, one year before he "took power." He carefully held on to his legal residence certificate, issued in Linz on February 21, 1906, as well as his old Austrian passport.⁷⁷

1919 on

A Political Career Considered Impossible

Häusler and Hanisch, Dr. Bloch, Kubizek and Samuel Morgenstern, his former fellow residents in the men's hostel, and his schoolmates in Linz were astonished by Hitler's political career in Germany, which began in 1919. Not one of them would have considered anything like that possible. His former colleagues understood even less why the same person who had once gotten along with Jews especially well was now all of a sudden supposed to be a leading German anti-Semite.

As they knew, Adolf Hitler was not particularly conspicuous in the gray army of casual laborers and the unemployed; he had no special talent, no tendency toward crime or the demonic. Young Hitler was a physically weak eccentric who avoided regular work, became engrossed in strange theories about the creation of the world, and idolized the "German people." He was a "quarrelsome fellow" with a hot temper who always had to be right and during discussions talked until the others were finished off.

What was most conspicuous about him were his mental rigidity, his inflexibility and inhibition, his fear of women, and his inability to be merry and have a good time with others. His admirer Kubizek said: "Being carefree and letting himself go . . . no, he could never do that." And: "He hated the typical Viennese from the bottom of his heart. He couldn't even stand their mellifluous, really very melodious way of speaking. Above all, however, he hated the Viennese way of always yielding and their dull indifference, their way of forever blundering along and living from one day to the next without a care in the world. Personally he was entirely the opposite in that respect."⁷⁸

If one applies the criteria of the artistic and intellectual Vienna of the turn of the century, a man like Hitler was uninteresting. There was nothing ingenious about him. He was square and had the same common taste as the "little people," boasting that his father had been a civil servant. He had no original ideas, was not creative, not witty, and when he talked, he used phrases he had read elsewhere. Karl Kraus's much-quoted remark that when thinking of Hitler nothing occurred to him illustrates the general complete puzzlement about the career of this Austrian, of all people, in Germany. There were worlds between the Viennese fin-de-siècle and the "artist" Adolf Hitler.

Neither did anyone notice the "compelling force" of Hitler's blue eyes, which later became proverbial, or any other power of suggestion in him. It seems likely that Hitler, who had had oratory training with an actor, who practiced his gestures in front of a mirror and had them pho-

1945

HITLER'S VIENNA

1936

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1926?

tographed so he could improve them, also practiced the supposedly irresistible suggestive power of his eyes. He wanted his interlocutor to interpret a look into his eyes as a transfer of power and used this quite deliberately as a weapon. It is difficult to decide whether it was pure irony or whether he was also partly serious when he said on January 27, 1945, before a meeting with the Norwegian head of government, *I still have some unpleasant work to do today. I have to "hypnotize" Quisling today.*⁷⁹

To these deliberately developed skills must have been added a considerable degree of autosuggestion, a fanatical belief in himself—plus a perfect, painstakingly practiced way of staging himself within a theatrical set with all the theater magic available, light effects and music, flags and torches, and all of this underscored by and enveloped in a mood of religious solemnity. This must have added up to the impression of Hitler as a man of suggestive power—the German people's savior.

In any case, Hitler's career cannot be derived, let alone understood, from his situation in Vienna. This Austrian had a career only in the Weimar Republic. He returned to Austria in March 1938 as German Reich chancellor.

The "Führer" liked to emphasize with ardor how difficult it had been to set out as a lonesome wanderer on the path from nothing to the top of the German nation—as he put it on September 12, 1936, at a Hitler Youth celebration. The following day, before a combat formation of the NSDAP, he said: *That is the miracle of our time, that you have found me among so many millions! And that I have found you, that is Germany's good fortune!*⁸⁰

Later on Hitler would glorify what he had got out of Vienna and taken with him into his new life: *Yet Vienna was and remained for me the hardest, though most thorough, school of my life. . . . In it I obtained the foundations for a philosophy in general and a political view in particular which later I only needed to supplement in detail, but which never left me.*

Hitler wrote this much-quoted sentence in connection with his sufferings in Vienna: *Only he who has felt in his own skin what it means to be a German, deprived of the right to belong to his cherished fatherland, can measure the deep longing which burns at all times in the hearts of children separated from their mother country.*⁸¹

In addition to his exaggerated, boundless love of "Germandom" and his dismissal of non-German peoples, Hitler also took along his contempt for parliamentarianism, democracy, equality before the law, and international organizations, for none of these could be brought into agreement with Germany's superior rank. He took along all sorts of theories he had

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BEFORE THE GREAT WAR

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read, which hardly anyone took as seriously and literally as he did: for example, the theory of the disastrous mixing of races and the purity of blood that had to be regained as a prerequisite for Germanic world rule, that could only be achieved by fighting the Jews, who were aspiring to the identical goal.

He had his decisive political experiences in Vienna: Dr. Karl Lueger taught him the tactics of a people's tribune who moves the masses to emotional outbursts, who sacrifices himself for his followers, the "little people," and increases their sense of self-worth by isolating a minority and relinquishing them to scorn. In his personal life the people's tribune is modest, lives simply, and has no family. Like a priest, he devoted himself entirely to his people.

Georg Schönerer taught Hitler the national goal of a pan-Germany that was finally also to comprise the Austrian Germans, in other words, that aspired to the annexation of the German parts of Austria, including the Sudetenland.

Franz Stein gave him the opportunity to study the aggressiveness of extraparlimentary opposition and the political goal of snatching the German workers away from the "international" Social Democrats and of returning them into the "community of the German people."

Karl Hermann Wolf taught him the tireless fight for Germanism. This is also where he must have realized how helplessly a huge machinery of power can be in the hands of a fanatical, terroristic minority. The warning example of the Hapsburg monarchy's warring German-national parties, however, also made Hitler recognize the necessity to overcome social as well as political boundaries within the "noble people" if he wanted to have any chance of success.

Hitler took along a great deal of detailed knowledge, facts and figures, whether it was the length and width of the Danube, the Ring Boulevard architects' years of birth and death, detailed designs of historical buildings with their exact measurements, the works of Wagner, tricky details of stagecraft, the battle plans of Königgrätz, or Germanic heroic legends—but also the Schönerians' "Heil" greeting, the List disciples' swastika, the Germanic cult, the idea of breeding, as well as Karl Iro's proposal to control the Gypsies by tattooing numbers on their lower arms, and many other things.

Yet it was fragments of his readings with which he left Vienna in 1913, a grab-bag that was preserved inside an excellent memory. It was only in Germany that all these pieces fell into place, as in a magnetic field, to form a weltanschauung on the basis of ethnic anti-Semitism.

Hitler the politician appeared in public expressly not with a party

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MK | program but as the leader of a movement, as a herald of his weltanschauung. He wanted to arouse in the hearts of his supporters the holy conviction that with his movement political life was to be given, not to a new election slogan, but to a new philosophy of fundamental significance.⁸²

He thus made National Socialism an aggressive community of faith with the goal of Germanic world rule by a strong Aryan race whose basis was to be formed by selective breeding and to be purified through the elimination of "non-German elements." Thirty years after Vienna's fin-de-siècle, the confused ideas of German-folkish sectarians combined with one political power in a Germany that was shaken by crises. It was a combination that turned into dangerous ammunition which wreaked havoc on the world.

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Addresses of Houses

Meanwhile, my father had set up on his own and had opened an upholsterer's business at No. 9 Klammsstrasse. The old Baernreiterhaus, heavy and ungainly, which still stands there unaltered, became the home of my childhood and youth. The narrow, sombre Klammsstrasse looked rather poor in comparison with its continuation, the broad and airy promenade, with its lawns and trees.

Our unhealthy housing conditions had certainly contributed to the early death of my sisters. In the Baernreiterhaus things were different. On the ground floor there was the workshop and, on the first floor our apartment, which consisted of two rooms and a kitchen. But now my father was never free from money troubles. Business was bad. More than once he contemplated closing down the business and again taking a job with the furniture makers. Yet each time, he managed to overcome his difficulties at the last moment.

I started school, a very unpleasant experience. My mother wept over the bad reports I brought home. Her sorrow was the only thing that could persuade me to work harder. Whereas for my father there was no question but that I should in due course take over his business — why else did he slave from morning till night? — it was my mother's desire that I should study in spite of my bad reports; first I should have four years at the Grammar School, then perhaps go to the Teachers' Training College. But I would not hear of it. I was glad when my father put his foot down and, when I was ten, sent me to the Council School. In this way, my father thought, my future was finally decided.

For a long time, however, there had been another influence in my life for which I would have sold my soul: music. This love was given full expression when, at nine years of age, I was given a violin as a Christmas present. I remember distinctly every single detail of that Christmas, and when today in my old age I think back, my conscious life seems to have started with that event. The eldest son of our neigh-

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A young pupil-teacher learned fast and well. In my first violin teacher, I found the lower grade of the school. There were very much more than the other. I had private lessons at the Amberg-Hungary. He made clear to me the element of the music. Sometimes, when I was in the manner, he could progress. I should go into the army, in his honor. I gave up my studies. I went to the intermediate class of the School of Professor Heinrich D. The teacher. At the same time, I learned musical theory, and I was already playing with it. I worked when hard reality. In the Council School when I was an apprentice. Formerly, I had had to lend a hand. I was familiar with the work. It was a repulsive job to re-upholstering and remaking the studs of dust in which the people lay on that tatty old mattresses with all the illnesses that had been overcome — left their mark. But that upholsterers do not live the more pleasant aspects of my

nd, at a sign from the conductor, had sung his part only to rove to the audience in the stalls, nay to an attentive world, at in reality he was not that pale, lanky fellow from the pholsterer's shop in the Klammsstrasse, but that his place as really on the stage in the theatre!

Ever since that moment I have remained under the spell the theatre. Washing down the walls in a customer's house, tpping on the paste, affixing the undercoat of newspaper id then pasting on the wallpaper, I was all the time dream- g of roaring applause in the theatre, seeing myself as con- ctor in front of an orchestra. Such dreaming did not really lp my work, and at times it would happen that the pieces wallpaper were sadly out of position. But once back in : workshop, my sick father soon made me realise what possibilities faced me.

Thus I swayed between dream and reality. At home noly had any inkling of my state of mind; for rather than er a word about my secret ambitions, I would have bitten my tongue. Even from my mother I hid my hopes and as, but she perhaps guessed what was occupying my ughts. But should I have added to her many worries? as there was no one to whom I could unburden myself. It terribly lonely, like an outcast, as lonely as only a ng man can be to whom is revealed, for the first time, s beauty and its danger.

he theatre gave me new courage. I didn't miss a single a performance. However tired I was after my work, ing could keep me from the theatre. Naturally, with mall wages that my father paid me, I could only afford et for standing room. Therefore I used to go regularly the so-called Promenade, from which one had the best : and moreover, I found, no other place had better itics. Just above the promenade was the Royal box sup- d by two wooden columns. These columns were very lar with the habitués of the Promenade as they were nly places where one could prop oneself up with an un-

disturbed view of the stage. For if you leaned against the walls, these very columns were always in your field of vision. I was happy to be able to rest my weary back against the smooth pillars, after having spent a hard day on the top of the stepladder! Of course, you had to be there early to be sure to get that place.

Often it is the trivial things which make a lasting impres- sion on one's memory. I can still see myself rushing into the theatre, undecided whether to choose the left- or the right- hand pillar. Often, however, one of the two columns, the right-hand one, was already taken; somebody was even more enthusiastic than I was.

Half annoyed, half surprised, I glanced at my rival. He was a remarkably pale, skinny youth, about my own age, who was following the performance with glistening eyes. I sur- mised that he came from a better-class home, for he was al- ways dressed with meticulous care and was very reserved.

We took note of each other without exchanging a word. During the interval of a performance some time later we started talking, as apparently neither of us approved of the casting of one of the parts. We discussed it together and re- joiced in our common adverse criticism. I marvelled at the quick, sure grasp of the other. In this he was undoubtedly my superior. On the other hand, when it came to talking of purely musical matters, I felt my own superiority. I cannot give the exact date of this first meeting; but I am sure it was around All Saints' Day in 1904.

This went on for some time — he revealing nothing of his own affairs, nor did I think it necessary to talk about myself. But all the more intensely did we occupy ourselves with what- ever performance there happened to be and sensed that we both had the same enthusiasm for the theatre.

Once, after the performance, I accompanied him home to No. 31 Humboldtstrasse. When we took leave of each other he gave me his name: Adolf Hitler.

this apparent contradiction. He needed the town, the variety and abundance of its impressions, experiences and events; he felt there that he had his share in everything; that there was nothing in which his interest was not engaged. He needed people with their contrasting interests, their ambitions, intentions, plans and desires. Only in this problem-laden atmosphere did he feel at home. From this point of view the village was altogether too simple, too insignificant, too unimportant, and did not provide enough scope for his limitless need to take an interest in everything. Besides, for him, a town was interesting in itself as an agglomeration of houses and buildings. It was understandable that he should want to live only in a town.

On the other hand, he needed an effective counterweight to the town, which always troubled and excited him and made constant demands on his interests and his talents. He found this in nature, which even he could not try to change and improve because its eternal laws are beyond the reach of the human will. Here he could once more find his own self, since here he was not obliged, as he was in town, eternally to be taking sides.

My friend had a special way of making nature serve him. He used to seek out a lonely spot outside the town, which he would visit again and again. Every bush and every tree was familiar to him. There was nothing to disturb his contemplative mood. Nature surrounded him like the walls of a quiet, friendly room in which he could cultivate undisturbed his passionate plans and ideas.

For some time, on fine days, he used to frequent a bench on the Turmleitenweg where he established a kind of open-air study. There he would read his books, sketch and paint in water colours. Here were born his first poems. Another spot, which later became a favourite, was even more lonely and secluded. We would sit on a high, overhanging rock looking down on the Danube. The sight of the gently flow-

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mother's eightieth birthday, he sent her a food parcel, and I never discovered how he came to know about it.

Adolf was particularly fond of the Mühlviertel. From the Pöstlingberg we would walk across the Holzpoldl and the Elendsimmerl to Gramastetten or wander through the woods round the Lichtenhag Ruins. Adolf measured the walls, though not much of them remained, and entered the measurements in his sketchbook, which he always carried with him. Then with a few strokes he sketched the original castle, drew in the moat and the drawbridge and adorned the walls with fanciful pinnacles and turrets. He exclaimed there once to my surprise, "This is the ideal setting for my sonnet!" But when I wanted to know more about it he said, "I must first see what I make of it." And on our way home he confessed that he was going to try to extend the material into a play.

We would go to St. Georgen on the Gusen to find out what relics of that famous battle in the Peasants' War still remained. When we were unsuccessful Adolf had a strange idea. He was convinced that the people who lived there would have some faint memory of that great battle. The following day he went again alone, after a vain attempt to get my father to give me the day off. He spent two days and two nights there, but I don't remember with what result.

For the sole reason that Adolf wanted, for a change, to see his beloved Linz from the east, I had to make with him the unattractive climb up the Pfennigberg, in which the Linzers, as he complained, didn't show enough interest. I also liked the view of the city, but least of all from this side. Nevertheless, Adolf remained for hours in this uninviting spot, sketching.

On the other hand, St. Florian became for me, too, a place of pilgrimage, for here, where Anton Bruckner had worked and hallowed the surroundings by his memory, we imagined that we actually met "God's musician" and heard his in-

spired improvisations on the church. Then we would stand on a stone ledge and look down into the floor beneath. The master had been buried ten years in the monastery had aroused my friend. He had stood in front of the church for more — at any rate much to do — did he admire the splendour of the impression was made on him by the overdecorated apartments of the simple room. When he saw the strengthened in his belief that always goes hand in hand with

Such visits were revealing to me, very reserved. There was always a personality into which he would not go. He had his inscrutable secrets remained a riddle to me. But the door to much that would have been enthusiasm for beauty. All the time when we stood in front of such a view of the Monastery of St. Florian. Adolf would lower all his defence and joy of our friendship.

I have often been asked, and I have often invited me to visit him in Linz. He had any sense of humour, and people of his entourage said, and should have had his share of humour. Certainly one's interest after a short and superficial acquaintance deeply serious man. This man overshadowed everything else. I was young. He approached the subject concerned with a deadly earnest

CHAPTER IV

Portrait of His Mother

WHEN I FIRST met her, Klara Hitler was already forty-five years old and a widow of two years' standing. Whenever I saw her I had — I don't know why — a feeling of sympathy for her, and felt that I wanted to do something for her. She was glad that Adolf had found a friend whom he liked and trusted, and for this reason Frau Hitler liked me, too. How often did she unburden to me the worries which Adolf caused her. And how fervently did she hope to enlist my help in persuading her son to follow his father's wishes in the choice of a career! I had to disappoint her, yet she did not blame me, for she must have felt that the reasons for Adolf's behaviour were much too deep, far beyond the reach of my influence.

Just as Adolf often enjoyed the hospitality of my parents' home, I went often to see his mother and on taking leave was unfailingly asked by Frau Hitler to come again. I considered myself as part of the family — there was hardly anybody else who visited them.

No. 31 Humboldtstrasse is a three-storied, not unpleasant

From Adolf's description, but also from some hints of his other's, I gathered that Raubal was a drunkard. Adolf hated him. He saw in him a personification of everything despised in a man. He spent his time in the pub, drank and smoked, gambled his money away, and on top of that — was a civil servant. And as though that were not enough, Raubal thought it was his duty to support his father-in-law's ways by urging Adolf to become a civil servant himself. This was enough to antagonise Adolf completely. When Raubal talked of Raubal his face assumed a truly threatening expression. Perhaps it was Adolf's pronounced hatred of his father's husband that kept Raubal away from the Humboldts. At the time of Raubal's death, only a few years after his marriage to Angela, the break between him and Adolf was already complete. Angela remarried later, an architect, and died in Munich in 1949.

I learned from Adolf that from his father's second marriage there was also a son, Alois, who spent his childhood in the Hitler family but left them while they were living in Munich. This half brother of Adolf's — born on December 13, 1882, in Braunau — was seven years older than Adolf. While his father was alive he still came to Leonding from time to time, but as far as I know he never appeared in the Humboldtstrasse. He never played any important part in Adolf's life, nor did he take any interest in Adolf's political career. He turned up once in Paris, then in Vienna, then in Berlin, and today, seventy years old, lives in Hamburg. His first marriage was to a Dutchwoman and they had a son, William Patrick Hitler, who in August 1939 published a book, *My Uncle Adolf*; a son by his second wife, Heinz Hitler, fell as an officer on the Eastern Front.

Hitler did not like to talk about herself and her family, yet she found relief in telling me of her doubts about her life. Naturally she didn't get much satisfaction from the fact that, for her, meaningless utterances of Adolf about his life as an artist. The preoccupation with the well-

being of her only surviving son depressed her increasingly. "Our poor father cannot rest in his grave," she used to say to Adolf, "because you will flout his wishes. Obedience is what distinguishes a good son, but you don't know the meaning of the word. That's why you did so badly at school and why you're not getting anywhere now."

Gradually I learned to understand the suffering this woman endured. She never complained, but she told me about the hard time she had had in her youth.

So I came to know, partly by experience, partly by what I was told, the circumstances of the Hitler family. Occasionally mention was made of some relations in the Waldviertel, but it was difficult for me to understand whether these were his father's relations or his mother's. In any case, the Hitler family had relations only in the Waldviertel, quite unlike other Austrian civil servants, who had relatives scattered all over the country. Only later did I come to realise that Hitler's paternal and maternal lineage already merged in the second generation, so that from the grandfather upwards Adolf had only one set of forebears. I remember that Adolf did visit some relatives in the Waldviertel. Once he sent me a picture postcard from Weitra, which is in the part of the Waldviertel nearest to Bohemia. I do not know what had taken him there. He never spoke very willingly about his relations in that part of the country, but preferred to describe the landscape; poor, barren country, a striking contrast to the rich and fertile Danube valley of the Wachau. This raw, hard peasant country was the homeland of both his maternal and paternal ancestors.

Frau Klara Hitler, née Pölzl, was born on August 12, 1860, in Spital, a poor village in the Waldviertel. Her father, Johann Baptist Pölzl, was a simple peasant. Her mother's maiden name was Johanna Hüttler. The name Hitler is spelt differently in the various documents. There is the spelling Hiedler and Hüttler, while Hitler is used for the first time by Adolf's father.

This Johanna Hüttler, Adolf's maternal grandmother was, according to the documents, a daughter of Johann Nepomuk Hiedler. Thus Klara Pölzl was directly related to the Hüttler-Hiedler family, for Johann Nepomuk Hiedler was the brother of that Johann Georg Hiedler who appears in the baptismal register of Döllersheim as Adolf's father's father. Klara Pölzl was, therefore, a second cousin of her husband. Alois Hitler always referred to her before their marriage simply as his niece.

Klara Pölzl had a miserable childhood in the poor and wretched home where there were so many children. In 1875, when she was fifteen years old, her relative, the customs official Alois Schicklgruber at Braunau, invited her to come and help his wife in the house. Alois Schicklgruber, who only in the following year assumed the name Hiedler, which he changed into Hitler, was then married to Anna Glasl-Hörer. This first marriage of Alois Hitler with a woman fourteen years older than himself remained without issue and they finally separated. When his wife died in 1883, Alois Hitler married Franziska Matzelsberger, who was twenty-four years his junior. The children of this marriage were Adolf's half brother Alois and half sister Angela. Klara, who had continued living in the house during the time he was separated from his first wife, left on the second marriage and went to Vienna. As Franziska, the second wife, fell gravely ill after the birth of her second child, Alois Hitler called his niece back to Braunau. Franziska died on August 10, 1884, barely two years after her marriage. (Alois, the first child of this union, had been born out of wedlock and adopted by his father.) On January 7, 1885, six months after the death of his second wife, Alois Hitler married his "niece" Klara, who was already expecting a child by him, the first son, Gustav, who was born on May 17, 1885, that is to say five months after the marriage, and who died on December 9, 1887.

Although Klara Pölzl was only a second cousin, the couple

PORTRAIT OF HIS MOTHER

needed an ecclesiastical dispensation for this, in the clerical archives of the Episcopate in Vienna, 6911/II/2 1884. The document

Application of Alois Hitler for permission to marry.

Most Reverend Episcopate!

Those, in humblest devotion to marry. According to the exhortation prevented by the canonical impediment in the third degree touching the marriage, I humbly request the Reverend Episcopate to grant them dispensation on the basis of the enclosed death certificate of the widower since 10th August of two infant children, a boy of two and one year and two months (Angelina) woman-help as he, being a custodian home the whole day and also hardly able to supervise the education of the children. The bride has lost since the death of the mother and so that it may be justifiably as would be successful and the mother, the bride is without means that she will ever have another marriage.

For these reasons the underwritten petition for the gracious procurement of the impediment of affinity.

Braunau, 27th October, 1884

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of his father with great respect. I never heard of his father's opposition to his career. In fact he respected him more as a man than as a father. Adolf did not take it amiss that his father had already decided on his son's future career; for this was his right, even his duty. It was quite a different matter with Raubal, his step-sister's husband, this un-
pleasant man, who was himself only a little revenue officer. He was determined to himself this right. Adolf would certainly not have dared to interfere in his personal affairs. But the father's attitude still remained, even after his death, the same. The struggle with which Adolf developed his independence was his father's attitude had provoked him first to open rebellion. There were violent scenes, led in the father giving him a good hiding. He defended himself. But Adolf matched this violence with stubborn obstinacy, and the antagonism between them grew sharper.

Official Alois Hitler showed a marked sense of his life. Consequently we have good pictures at various stages of his life. Not so much of which were always under an unlucky star, but promotions in his career, did he have his. The pictures show him, with his dignified face, in gala uniform of white trousers and which the double row of highly polished buttons. The man's face is impressive. A broad, most notable feature being the side whiskers of his supreme master, the Emperor. The eyes are penetrating and incorruptible, and, as a customs official, is obliged to view with suspicion. But in most pictures dignity and "acquisitiveness" of the gaze. Even the picture when Alois Hitler had already retired was, in spirit, still on duty. Although

he was past sixty he didn't show any of the typical signs of age. One of the pictures, probably the last one, which can also be seen on his grave in Leonding, shows Alois Hitler as a man whose life consisted of service and duty. To be sure there is also an earlier photograph, dating from his Leonding days, which, emphasising his private life, depicts him as a comfortable, well-to-do citizen, fond of good living.

Alois Hitler's rise from being the illegitimate son of a poor servant girl to the position of a respected civil servant is the path from insignificance and inferior status to the highest rank open to him in the service of the State.

His colleagues in the Customs Service describe him as a precise, dutiful official who was very strict and had his "weak spots." As a superior Alois Hitler was not very popular. Out of office he was considered a liberal-minded man who did not conceal his convictions. He was very proud of his rank. Every day he would pay his morning visit to the inn with an official's punctuality. His regular drinking companions found him good company but he could flare up over trifles and become rude, displaying both his inborn violence and the sternness that he had acquired in his job.

His illegitimate birth is conclusively proved by the Church register of the Parish of Strones. According to this, the forty-two-year-old servant maid Anna Maria Schicklgruber gave birth to a son on July 7, 1837, who was christened Alois. The godfather was her employer, the peasant Johann Trummschlager, in Strones. As far as is known the child was the first and the only one. The identity of the father was not revealed by the mother.

Anna Maria Schicklgruber married the mill worker Johann Georg Hiedler in 1842 when the illegitimate child was already five years old. The Church Register of Döllersheim contains the following entry:

The undersigned hereby confirm that Johann Georg

Streptococcus

is well known to the undersigned witnesses, has declared the paternity of the child Alois of Anna Maria and requests that his name be entered in the register.

signed by the Parish priest and four witnesses. Georg Hiedler again acknowledged his paternity document concerning some inheritance in 1876 in Weitra. He was then eighty-four years old. His mother had been dead for over thirty years. His father had been a customs official in any years.

was not officially adopted after his mother's death. He remained Schicklgruber. He would have throughout his life had not Johann Nepomuk, Georg's younger brother, made a will and named him the illegitimate son of his brother. But in addition that Alois should assume the name of his father. On June 4, 1876, the name Alois Schicklgruber was entered in the Register of the Parish of Döllersheim as Hiedler; the local government authority in Weitra signed this alteration on January 6, 1877. From that time Schicklgruber called himself Alois Hitler, a name as little as the other, but which secured

when they were talking about his relatives Adolf told him of his father's change of names. Nothing pleased him as much as this; for Schicklgruber was to him so uncouth, so boorish, apart from being so old and impractical. He found "Hiedler" too old and "Hitler" sounded nice and was easy to

say to his father that instead of accepting the name he did the rest of his relations, he invented the name "Hitler." It was in keeping with his mania. His superiors had nothing to do with

this; for in all his forty years of service he was transferred only four times. The towns to which he was posted, Saalfeld, Braunau, Passau and Linz, are so favourably situated that they form the ideal setting for a customs official's career. But hardly had he settled down in one of these places, when he began to move house. During his period of service in Braunau there are recorded twelve changes of address; probably there were more. During the two years in Passau he moved twice. Soon after his retirement he moved from Linz to Hafeld, from there to Lambach — first in the Leingartner Inn, then to a mill, that is to say, two changes in one year — then to Leonding. When I met Adolf he remembered seven removals and had been to five different schools. It would not be true to say that these constant changes were due to bad housing conditions. Surely the Pommer Inn — Alois Hitler was very fond of living in inns — (where Adolf was born) was one of the finest and most presentable buildings in the whole of Braunau. Nevertheless, the father left there soon after Adolf's birth. Actually he often moved from a decent dwelling into a poorer one. The house was not the important thing; rather the moving. How can one explain this strange mania?

Perhaps Alois Hitler simply hated to remain in one spot; and as his service forced on him a certain stability, he at least wanted some change in his own sphere. As soon as he had got used to certain surroundings, he grew weary of them. To live meant to change one's conditions, a trait which I experienced in Adolf too.

Three times Alois remodelled his family. It is perhaps true that this was due to outside circumstances. But if so, certainly fate played strangely into his hands. We know that his first wife, Anna, suffered very much from his restlessness, which eventually led to their separation and was partly responsible for her unexpected death. For while his first wife was still alive, Alois Hitler already had a child by the woman who became his second wife. And again when the second

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Adolf never told me how his father re-
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d Huemer, who besides German, also
ly foreign language taught in the lower
school and also, to my knowledge, the
which Adolf Hitler ever studied, or
tudy. But in the meantime he had

His second year in the first form was
e was promoted to the second form.
re passed only by the skin of his teeth.
acknowledge a report which showed
thematics. Obviously this judgment
on the part of the teachers. Hitler
use it was too dry and required hard,
en talked about it. Later in Vienna
ould need mathematics if he wanted
But this made no difference to his

orm again with two "Unsatisfactory"
atics and in addition in German,
ier was one of the teachers whom,
pected. This was the year of his

father's death. Professor Huemer explained to his mother
that promotion to the fourth form was only possible if he
went to another school. It is, therefore, not correct to say
that Adolf Hitler was thrown out of the Linz technical
school. He was only moved "to the country."

If up till now it was by his father's order that he stayed
at school, so now it was mother's love which urged him to
continue his studies. He did not like his transfer to Steyr.
After reading Dante's *Divine Comedy* he talked to me of
the school as "Purgatory."

In Steyr Hitler lodged with a court official by the name of
Edler von Cichini at No. 19 Grünmarkt, but whenever he
had a moment's spare time he would come to Linz. As could
be foreseen, the result was bad and remained so when he
repeated his examination between September 1 and 15, 1905.
As well as the usual "Unsatisfactory" for mathematics, there
appeared another "Unsatisfactory" for practical geometry.

When Professor Huemer, who had been Hitler's form
master for three years, gave evidence as to his pupil's char-
acter at the Treason Trial after the unsuccessful Putsch of
November 1923 he said: "Hitler was certainly gifted, al-
though only for particular subjects, but he lacked self-con-
trol and, to say the least, he was considered argumentative,
autocratic, self-opinionated and bad-tempered, and unable
to submit to school discipline. Nor was he industrious;
otherwise he would have achieved much better results, gifted
as he was."

Having passed this rather negative judgment Professor
Huemer, in a more sentimental mood, added: "Yet, as expe-
rience shows, what happens at school has not much bearing
on life, and while model pupils sink from view without
leaving a trace, the difficult boys develop only when they
have the elbow room they need. My former pupil Hitler
seems to belong to this latter species and I hope from the
bottom of my heart that he will recover from his recent

that Adolf had ever quoted his father for any one of his political opinions.

Still less was there any sign of it in the quiet home in the Humboldtstrasse. Adolf's mother was a simple, devout woman, far removed from politics. When the father was still alive she might have heard him grumble occasionally about the political situation, but it had not sunk in and certainly she had not passed it on to the children. After his death, they never had visitors who might have introduced politics and I cannot remember ever hearing any political discussion in Frau Hitler's house. Even when some political event was agitating the whole town, nothing of it would penetrate into this quiet household, for even Adolf would not mention such things at home. Their life flowed quietly on. The only change I ever saw in the family was that Frau Klara towards the end of 1906 moved from the Humboldtstrasse to Urfahr. This was by no means an after-effect of the father's restlessness, it was rather the result of purely practical considerations. In those days Urfahr, which is now a part of Linz, was still a separate parish of mainly rural character, a favourite residence for retired people. As no excise duties were levied there, many things, for instance meat, were cheaper than in town. Frau Klara hoped to be able to manage better with her modest pension of 140 crowns (90 for herself and 25 each for Adolf and Paula). And she was glad to be living among meadows and fields again. The quiet house at No. 9 Blütengasse still stands as it was, and sometimes when I pass by, I think I can see Frau Klara standing on the little balcony. For Adolf it was a special source of satisfaction to live "on the same bank" as Stefanie. Our nightly journey home was made longer because of the move to Urfahr. But this suited us well, for the problems which we tackled had become more profound and numerous. The way across the bridge was sometimes too short for us, so that if we were particularly concerned with a problem we had to walk to and

fro across the Danube exact, Adolf needing.

In studying the man as Adolf Hitler, national influences and believe that the latter national events. After same teachers as A students, rejoicing or very same people technicians or manufacture.

The spirit of national School. The class institutions, such as processions. Adolf sphere which to him

Money was collected sentiments were a black-red-gold colour "Deutschland über Hymn. All this in

The struggle for the Austro-Hungarian era in those days population stood alone Italian nations of remote from the But there was always Prague one street Even in Linz much

CHAPTER VII

Stefanie

truth, it is not very agreeable for me to be-
ess — apart from Stefanie herself — who can
id's youthful love, which lasted four years from
of his sixteenth year. I fear that by giving a pic-
ual facts, I shall disappoint those who are ex-
onal disclosures. Adolf's relations with this
uch respected family were confined to those
he prevailing code of morals and were abso-
unless today's conception of sexual morality
own that one considers it abnormal if two
ave an affair and — to put it briefly — "noth-

be excused from mentioning this girl's sur-
her later married name. Occasionally I have
reasons engaged in research on Hitler's youth,
l me as to their good faith. Stefanie, who was
two years older than Adolf, later married a
cer and now lives, a widow, in Vienna. The
fore understand my discretion.

STEFANIE

57

One evening in the spring of 1905, as we were taking our
usual stroll, Adolf gripped my arm and asked me excitedly
what I thought of that slim blond girl walking along the
Landstrasse arm-in-arm with her mother. "You must know,
I'm in love with her," he added resolutely.

Stefanie was a distinguished-looking girl, tall and slim.
She had thick fair hair, which she mostly wore swept back in
a bun. Her eyes were very beautiful — bright and expres-
sive. She was exceptionally well dressed and even her bear-
ing indicated that she came from a good, well-to-do family.

The photograph by Hans Zivny, taken in Urfahr, on her
leaving school was somewhat earlier than this meeting and
Stefanie could only have been then seventeen, or, at the
most, eighteen years old. It shows a young girl with pretty,
regular features. The expression of the face is completely
natural and open. The abundant hair, still worn in the
Gretel fashion, serves to strengthen this impression. A fresh-
ness and lack of affectation show in the girl's healthy counte-
nance.

The evening stroll along the Landstrasse was, in those
years, a favourite habit with the Linzers. The ladies looked
at the shopwindows and made little purchases. Friends met
— and the younger generation amused themselves in inno-
cent ways. There was a lot of flirting and the young army
officers were particularly good at it. It seemed to us that
Stefanie must live in Urfahr, for she always came from the
bridge up the main square, and strolled down the Land-
strasse arm-in-arm with her mother. At five o'clock, almost
precisely, mother and daughter appeared — we stood waiting
at the Schmiedtoreck. It would have been improper to
salute Stefanie, as neither of us had been introduced to the
young lady. A glance had to take the place of a greeting.
From then on, Adolf did not take his eyes off Stefanie. In
that moment he was changed, no longer his own self.

I found out that Stefanie's mother was a widow and did,
indeed, live in Urfahr, and that a young man who occasion-

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JMM:ORDCRAFT

PAGE 01

THE YOUNG HITLER I KNEW

I moreover my friend had given me strict in-
wait until Stefanie, herself, asked me. Surely,
re realised that he had gone for good, she would
t opportunity of running over the bridge alone
re impetuously to tell her what had become of
Perhaps he had had an accident, or he was ill
was that time two years ago, or perhaps even
nkable! Anyhow, though that conversation had
place, I had enough material to fill four pages
but what on earth had happened to Adolf? Not
him. Frau Klara opened the door to me and
warmly, and I could see that she had been long-
come. "Have you heard from Adolf?" she asked
he door. So he hadn't written to his mother
is made me feel anxious. Something out of the
t have happened. Perhaps things hadn't gone
plan in Vienna.

offered me a chair. I saw how much good it
able to unburden herself. Ah, the old lament,
ome to know by heart! But I listened patiently.
ad studied properly at the technical school he
be ready to matriculate. But he won't listen
And she added, "He's as pigheaded as his
his crazy journey to Vienna? Instead of holding
e legacy, it's just being frittered away. And
thing will come of his painting. And story-
t earn anything either. And I can't help him
little one to look after. You know yourself
child she is, but just the same she must get
raining. Adolf doesn't give it a thought, he
ust as if he were alone in the world. I shall
him making an independent position for him-

seemed more careworn than ever. Her face
d. Her eyes were lifeless, her voice sounded

ADOLF LEAVES FOR VIENNA

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tired and resigned. I had the impression that, now that
Adolf was no longer there, she had let herself go, and looked
older and more ailing than ever. She certainly had con-
cealed her condition from her son to make the parting easier
for him. Or perhaps it was Adolf's impulsive nature that had
kept up her vitality. Now, on her own, she seemed to me
an old, sick woman.

I forget, unfortunately, what happened during the course
of the following weeks. Adolf had briefly informed me of
his address. He was living in the 6th District, at No. 29
Stumporgasse, Staircase II, second floor, door No. 17, in the
flat of a woman with the curious name of Zakrevs. That was
all he wrote. But I guessed that there was more behind this
obstinate silence, for I knew that Adolf's silences usually
meant that he was too proud to talk.

I quote, therefore, from his own description in *Mein*
Kampf of his second sojourn in Vienna, which by general
consent is entirely truthful:

*... I had gone to Vienna with the intention of taking the
entrance examination for the Academy. I had set out, armed
with a thick wad of drawings, convinced that it would be
child's play to pass. At the technical school I had been by
far the best in my class at drawing, and since then my ability
had developed quite extraordinarily; so I was quite satisfied
with myself and this made me proudly and happily hope for
the best...*

*So here I was for the second time in the beautiful city,
waiting impatiently, but hopefully, for the result of the
entrance examination. I was so sure of success that the news
of my rejection hit me like a bolt from the blue. Yet, that
was what happened. When I went to see the Rector and
asked to know the reasons why I had not been admitted to
the general painting school of the Academy, I was told by
this gentleman that the drawings I had submitted showed*

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THIRDMONROE
JMWDRDRAFT

PAGE 04

ho, with his limited revenue official's horizon, was of understanding Adolf's thoughts. That was rub-
id; it was high time that Adolf learned something
2. Although Raubal, after some violent alterca-
Adolf, in which he always came off worst, avoided
r argument with him, he tried all the harder to
Frau Klara. Adolf found out most of this from
as he used to call his eleven-year-old sister. When
him that Raubal had been to see his mother,
ld fall into a rage. "This Pharisee is ruining my
me," he once remarked to me furiously. Appar-
al had also got in touch with Adolf's guardian,
the worthy peasant Mayrhofer, who would have
to make a baker out of Adolf and had already
pprenticeship for him, came from Leonding to
lara. Adolf was afraid that his guardian might in-
hold back the legacy. This would have put a
moving to Vienna. But the plan did not get so
for some time the decision was very much in
the end of this tough struggle, everybody was
lf — even, as happens in tenement buildings, the
ts. Frau Klara listened to this more or less well-
ter and became completely confused by it all.
Adolf had his fits of depression and was wan-
ugh the woods, I used to sit with her in her little
ening sympathetically to her laments, trying hard
he wretched woman without being unfair to my
at the same time helping him where I could. I
put myself in Adolf's shoes. It would have been
gh for him, with his great energy, just to pack
consideration for his mother had not prevented
come to hate the Philistine world in which he
He could hardly bear to return to that narrow
lonely hours spent in the open. He was always
t of rage, hard and intractable. I had a lot to

*time I had convinced
e was Jesus Christ
mar for the coming time*

put up with in those weeks. But the secret of Stefanie, which we shared, bound us inseparably together. The sweet magic which she, the unattainable, radiated calmed the stormy waves. So, as his mother was so easily influenced, the matter remained undecided, although Adolf had long since made up his mind.

On the other hand, Vienna was calling. That city had a thousand possibilities for an eager young man like Adolf, opportunities which might lead to the most sublime heights or to the most sombre depths. A city magnificent and at the same time cruel, promising everything and denying everything — that was Vienna. She demanded the highest stake from everyone who pledged himself to her. And that is what Adolf wanted.

No doubt Adolf had his father's example before him. What would he have become if he hadn't gone to Vienna? A poor, haggard cobbler somewhere in the poverty-stricken Waldviertel. And see what Vienna made of this poor, orphaned cobbler's boy!

Ever since his first visit in the spring of 1906, these rather vague ideas had assumed concrete form in Adolf's mind. He who had dedicated his life to art could develop his talents only in Vienna, for in that city were concentrated its most perfect achievements in every field. During his first short stay there he had already been to the Hof Opera House and seen *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tristan*, and *Lohengrin*. By these standards, the performance in the Linz Theatre appeared provincial and inadequate. In Vienna, the Burg Theatre, with its classic productions, awaited the young man. There was also the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra which, with justification, was then considered the best in the world. Then the museums, with their immeasurable treasures, the picture galleries, the Hof Library, provided unending possibilities for study and self-improvement.

Linz had little more to offer Adolf. What rebuilding had

cent exhibition of modern architecture. I often had company him on his strolls along the Ring. Then he describe to me at some length this or that building, point out certain details, or he would explain to me its

He would literally spend hours in front of it, for not only the time but all that went on around him. He did not understand the reason for these long drawn out complicated inspections; after all, he had seen everything and already knew more about it than most of the citizens of the city. When I occasionally became impatient, I shouted at me rudely, asking whether I was his real friend; if I was, I should share his interests. Then he continued with his dissertation. At home he would draw ground plans and sectional plans, or enlarge upon interesting detail. He borrowed books on the origin of buildings, the Hof Opera, the House of Parliament, the Burg Theatre, the Karlskirche, the Hof Museum, the Town Hall; he brought home more and more among them a general handbook of architecture. He knew the various architectural styles, and particularly pointed out to me that some of the details on the buildings along Ringstrasse demonstrated the excellent workmanship of the craftsmen.

When he wished to study a certain building, the external view alone did not satisfy him. I was always astonished how well informed he was about side doors, staircases, back doors and little-known means of access. He knew a building from all sides; he hated nothing more so than a stupid and ostentatious façade intended to conceal the truth in the layout. Beautiful façades were always suspect, he thought, was an inferior material that he should not use. He was never deceived, and often was I told me that some construction which aimed at a special effect was just bluff. Thus, the Ringstrasse became an object by which he could measure his architectural knowledge and demonstrate his opinions.

At that time also, his first schemes for the replanning of large squares emerged. I distinctly remember his exposures: for instance, he regarded the Heidenplatz between Hofburg and Volksgarten, as an almost ideal spot for mass meetings, not only because the semicircle of the adjacent buildings lent itself in a unique way to holding the assembled multitude, but also because every individual in the crowd would receive a great monumental impression whichever way he looked. I thought these observations were the idle play of an overheated imagination, but nevertheless I always had to take part in such experiments. The Schwarzenbergplatz was also very much beloved by Adolf. We sometimes went there during an interval at the Hof Opera in order to admire in the darkness the fantastically illuminated fountains. That was a spectacle after our own hearts. Incessantly the foaming water rose, coloured red, yellow and blue in turn by the various spotlights. Colour and movement combined to produce an incredible abundance of light effects, casting an unreal and unearthly spell over the whole square.

To be sure, Adolf, influenced by the Ringstrasse architecture, was also interested in great projects during his time in Vienna: concert halls, theatres, museums, palaces, exhibitions. But gradually his style of planning changed. In the first place, these monumental buildings were in a certain sense so perfect that even he, with his unbridled will to build, could find no room for change or improvement. Linz had been quite different in this respect. With the exception of the massive pile of the old Castle, he had been completely dissatisfied with every building he had seen in Linz. Small wonder, therefore, that he planned a new and more dignified successor to the old town hall of Linz which was rather narrow and, squeezed in among the houses of the main square, was not very imposing; and that in the end, during our strolls through the town, he rebuilt the whole city. Vienna was different, not only because it was difficult for him to

rich were in such contrast to our insignificant
ut despite that, the words stayed in my memory.
ste clings to one's sleeve with a hundred barbs,
hrase cling. I could not get rid of it. Then, if I
f in a situation which had only the remotest
vith this theme — I would meet a girl as I went
riahilferstrasse, let us say, alone in the evening;
ig lady she seemed to me, a little flighty perhaps,
ed round very openly to look at me. At least,
as sure it was I in whom she was interested! As
ict, she must have been very flighty, because she
e invitingly! But then, suddenly, the words
ife" would appear before me — one single,
our and this holy flame is extinguished forever!
though I was annoyed by these moralisings,
in such moments, they worked. One phrase
another. It began with the "Storm of the Revo-
went on through countless political and social
e "Holy Reich of all the Germans." Perhaps
i certain number of these phrases in books, but
r he coined himself.

these single statements evolved into one com-
As everything that happened was of interest to
ew phenomenon of the times was examined to
uld fit into his political philosophy.

my memory indulges in strange juxtapositions;
diately following the holy, unapproachable
would come the Sink of Iniquity, although in
orld of ideas this expression represented the

Of course, in the Ideal State there was no
nk of Iniquity. With these words Adolf de-
stitution which was then rife in Vienna. As
omenon of those years of general moral deca-
ld come across it in the most varied forms, both
streets of the centre, and in the slums of the
his filled Adolf with boundless rage. But for

this spreading prostitution he blamed not only those ac-
tually practising it, but those responsible for the prevailing
social and economic conditions. A "Monument to the Shame
of our Times." he called this prostitution. Ever and again
he tackled the problem and searched for a solution whereby
in the future any kind of "commercial love" would be ren-
dered impossible.

There was one evening that I have never forgotten. We
had been to a performance of Wedekind's *Frühlingserwachen*
and, as an exception, had stayed for the last act. Then we
made our way across the Ring homewards and turned down
into the Siebensterngasse. Then Adolf took my arm and
said, unexpectedly, "Come, Gustl. We must see the Sink of
Iniquity once." I do not know what had given him the idea,
but he had already turned into the small, ill-lit Spittelberggasse
gasse.

So there we were. We walked along past the low, one-
story houses. The windows, which were on street level, were
lighted so that we could see directly into the rooms. The
girls sat there, some behind the windowpane, some at the
open window; a few of them were still remarkably young,
others prematurely aged and faded. In their scanty and
slovenly attire they sat there, making up their faces or comb-
ing their hair or looking at themselves in the mirror, with-
out, however, for one moment losing sight of the men stroll-
ing by. Here and there a man would stop, lean towards the
window to look at the girl of his choice; a hasty, whispered
interchange would take place. Then, as a sign that the deal
was concluded, the light would be turned out. I still remem-
ber how this custom in particular struck me, as one could
tell by the darkening of the windows how trade was going.
Among the men, it was the accepted convention not to stand
before the unlighted windows.

We, for our part, did not even stand in front of the lighted
windows, but made our way along to the Burggasse at the
other end of the street. Arrived there, however, Adolf made

of the Conservatory or through my parents. He would certainly adopt one of these ways if he wanted to see me again. That I could have found him through the Central Registration Office at Police Headquarters naturally did not occur to me. But days went by, a week, another week — Adolf still did not come. What had happened to him? Had something come between us which made him leave me?

In my thoughts I went over again the last weeks we had spent together. Of course there had been differences of opinion and rows, but with Adolf this was quite normal. It had always been the same with him. However much I pondered, I could not discover the slightest reason for his silence. After all, he himself had said many times that when I came back to Vienna in the autumn, we should live together again. He had never so much as hinted at our parting, even in moments of anger. In these four years, our friendship had become so close that it was taken for granted, and so was our resolve to stay together in the future.

When I thought back over the last weeks we had spent together I could only establish, on the contrary, that our relationship had been better than ever before, closer and more full of meaning. Yes, those last few weeks in Vienna, when we had so many marvellous experiences at the Opera, at the Burg Theatre, and on the adventurous trip to the Rax, had indeed been the climax of our friendship.

What could have made Adolf leave me without a word or a sign?

The more I racked my brain about it, the more I realised how much Adolf had meant to me. I felt deserted and alone, and with the constant memory of our friendship in my mind, I just could not decide to turn elsewhere for companionship. Although I appreciated that my studies would gain by it, yet my whole life now seemed to me so ordinary, almost boring. It certainly was some consolation to hear beautiful performances at concerts and at the Opera. But it was

depressing to have no one to share them with. At every concert and every opera I went to, I hoped to see Adolf. Perhaps he would be standing at the exit at the end of the performance, waiting for me, and I should hear again his familiar, impatient voice saying, "Oh, come on, Gustl!"

But all my hopes of seeing Adolf again proved vain, and meanwhile something became clear: he did not want to come back to me. It was not by chance that he had left, neither was it the outcome of a passing mood or a series of mishaps. Had he wanted to find me, he certainly could have done so.

It distressed me that he should want to break off this friendship, that had meant so much to me, without a sign of thanks, a token of future meetings. So, the next time I was in Linz, I went to see Frau Raubal in the Bürgergasse, to get his address from her.

She was alone, and received me with perceptible coolness. I asked her where Adolf was now living in Vienna. She did not know, she answered crossly, Adolf had never written to her again. So here, once more, I met with failure. And when Frau Raubal began to reproach me, saying that it was partly through my artistic ambitions that Adolf, now twenty years of age, still had no profession and no position, I told her plainly what I thought and defended Adolf vigorously, for, after all, Angela was only repeating her husband's opinion. And my opinion of the latter was no better than Adolf's. As the conversation was growing more and more unpleasant, I rose and took my leave abruptly.

The year came to an end, without my having heard or seen anything of Adolf. It was from a Linz archivist's research into Adolf Hitler's life that I was to learn, forty years later, that my friend had moved out of the Stumpergasse because the rent was too much for him and had found much cheaper accommodations at a so-called Men's Hostel in the Meldemannstrasse. Adolf had disappeared into the shad-

"Rectangle pages"

from Kubizek

"The Hitler I Knew"

my doubts as to whether she was at all interested in me, he became furious and shouted at me: "You don't understand, because you can't understand the nature of extraordinary love." In order to quiet him I told him if he could transmit to Stefanie the knowledge of complicated problems simply by gazing at her. He replied, "It's possible! These things cannot be explained, that is in me, is in Stefanie too." Of course, I am not to push these delicate matters too far. I was pleased that Adolf trusted me so much, for to me, not even to his mother, had he talked about

Stefanie to reciprocate his love for her to the same extent as all others. For a long time he put up with the look in other young men, especially the officers, regarded it as a sort of deliberate diversion to win tumultuous feelings for him. But this attentive way to fits of raging jealousy; then Adolf's desperate when Stefanie ignored the pale youth gazing for her, and concentrated her attention in young lieutenant escorting her. Why, indeed, could a young girl have been satisfied with the attentions of a secret admirer, while others expressed indignation so much more gracefully? But I, of course, have dared to express such a thought in Adolf's

presence. I asked me, "What shall I do?" Never before had I asked for my advice and I was extremely proud that, for a change, I could feel superior to him. "I will, please," I explained. "You approach the two young men, introduce yourself to the mother, give her your name, and ask her permission to address the young man to escort them."

He looked at me doubtfully and pondered my suggestion for a while. In the end, however, he rejected it.

"What am I to say if the mother wants to know my profession? After all, I have to mention my profession straightway; it would be best to add it to my name — 'Adolf Hitler, academic painter,' or something similar. But I am not yet an academic painter, and I can't introduce myself till I am. For the mama, the profession is even more important than the name."

I thought for a long time that Adolf was simply too shy to approach Stefanie. And yet it was not shyness that held him back. His conception of the relationship between the sexes was already then so high that the usual way of making the acquaintance of a girl seemed to him undignified. As he was opposed to flirting in any form, he was convinced that Stefanie had no other desire but to wait until he should come to ask her to marry him. I did not share this conviction at all; but Adolf, as was his habit with all problems that agitated him, had already made an elaborate plan. And this girl, who was a stranger to him and had never exchanged a word with him, succeeded where his father, the school and even his mother had failed: he drew up an exact program for his future which would enable him, after four years, to ask for Stefanie's hand.

We discussed this difficult problem for hours, with the result that Adolf commissioned me to collect further information about Stefanie.

In the Music Society there was a cellist whom I had occasionally seen talking to Stefanie's brother. Through him I learned that Stefanie's father, a higher government official, had died some years earlier. The mother had a comfortable home and was in receipt of a widow's pension, which she used to give her two children the best possible education. Stefanie had attended the Girl's High School and had already matriculated. She had a great number of admirers — small wonder, beautiful as she was. She was fond of dancing and, the previous winter, had gone with her mother to all the

the previous winter, had a wonder, beautiful as she was. Stefanie had attended the used to give her two little home and was in receipt had died some years earlier learned that Stefanie's first stonally seem talking to Sh

In the Music Society the madon about Stefan

We discussed this diff

ask for Stefanie's hand

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Stefanie had had no objec

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For the man, the profe

academic painter, and I

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"What am I to say if th

STEFANIE

of the town. As far as he knew, the celli

it engaged.

ly satisfied with the result of my investiga

was not engaged he had, anyhow, taken for

as only one point in my report that dis

Stefanie danced, and, according to the

she danced well, and enjoyed it.

at all into Adolf's own image of Stefanie.

altized round the ballroom in the arms of

of a lieutenant, was for him too terrible

Never before

d.

origin of this strange, almost ascetic trait in

im reject all the pleasures of youth? Adolf

had been a man who enjoyed life and who

ustom's official, had certainly turned many

Why? I was Adolf so different? After all, he was

a young man, well built, slender, and his

and exaggeratedly serious features were

extraordinary eyes, whose peculiar brilliance

the sickly pallor of his face. And yet —

strary to his nature as smoking or drink-

These things simply did not exist for

body, not even his mother, encouraged him

on his butt for so long, at last I had a

is leg. I proclaimed, with a straight face,

dancing lessons, Adolf." Dancing imme

of his problems. I well remember that

ulations were no longer punctuated by

"the Theatre" or "Reconstruction of the

but were dominated by one subject —

ing that he couldn't tackle at once, he im

ations. "Visualise a crowded ballroom."

"and imagine that you were deaf. You

to which these people are moving, and

at all interested

the dance down from

The audience of the

at all interested

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important dances of the town. As far as he knew, the cellist added, she was not engaged.

Adolf was highly satisfied with the result of my investigations — that she was not engaged he had, anyhow, taken for granted. There was only one point in my report that disturbed him greatly: Stefanie danced, and, according to the cellist's assurance, she danced well, and enjoyed it.

This did not fit at all into Adolf's own image of Stefanie, a Valkyrie who waltzed round the ballroom in the arms of some "blockhead" of a lieutenant, was for him too terrible to be contemplated.

What was the origin of this strange, almost ascetic trait in him which made him reject all the pleasures of youth? Adolf's father, after all, had been a man who enjoyed life and who, as a good-looking custom's official, had certainly turned many a girl's head. Why was Adolf so different? After all, he was a most presentable young man, well built, slender, and his somewhat severe and exaggeratedly serious features were enlivened by his extraordinary eyes, whose peculiar brilliance made one forget the sickly pallor of his face. And yet — dancing was as contrary to his nature as smoking or drinking beer at a pub. These things simply did not exist for him, although nobody, not even his mother, encouraged him in this attitude.

After having been his butt for so long, at last I had a chance of pulling his leg. I proclaimed, with a straight face, "You must take dancing lessons, Adolf." Dancing immediately became one of his problems. I well remember that our lonely perambulations were no longer punctuated by discussions on "The Theatre" or "Reconstruction of the Danube Bridge," but were dominated by one subject — dancing.

As with everything that he couldn't tackle at once, he indulged in generalisations. "Visualise a crowded ballroom," he said once to me, "and imagine that you were deaf. You can't hear the music to which these people are moving, and

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to express my doubts as to whether she was at all interested in such things, he became furious and shouted at me: "You simply don't understand, because you can't understand the true meaning of extraordinary love." In order to quiet him down, I asked him if he could transmit to Stefanie the knowledge of such complicated problems simply by gazing at her. He only replied, "It's possible! These things cannot be explained. What is in me, is in Stefanie too." Of course, I took great care not to push these delicate matters too far. But I was pleased that Adolf trusted me so much, for to nobody else, not even to his mother, had he talked about Stefanie.

He expected Stefanie to reciprocate his love for her to the exclusion of all others. For a long time he put up with the interest she took in other young men, especially the officers, because he regarded it as a sort of deliberate diversion to conceal her own tempestuous feelings for him. But this attitude often gave way to fits of raging jealousy; then Adolf would be desperate when Stefanie ignored the pale youth who was waiting for her, and concentrated her attention instead on the young lieutenant escorting her. Why, indeed, should a lively young girl have been satisfied with the anxious glances of a secret admirer, while others expressed their admiration so much more gracefully? But I, of course, would never have dared to express such a thought in Adolf's presence.

One day he asked me, "What shall I do?" Never before had he asked for my advice and I was extremely proud that he did; at last, for a change, I could feel superior to him. "It's quite simple," I explained. "You approach the two ladies and, raising your hat, introduce yourself to the mother by giving your name, and ask her permission to address the daughter and to escort them."

Adolf looked at me doubtfully and pondered my suggestion for quite a while. In the end, however, he rejected it.

STEFANIE

"What am I to say if the motion? After all, I have to men it would be best to add it to 'democratic painter,' or something academic painter, and I can For the mama, the profession the name."

I thought for a long time to approach Stefanie. And yet I back. His conception of the was already then so high the acquaintance of a girl seem was opposed to flirting in ar Stefanie had no other desire come to ask her to marry him at all; but Adolf, as was agitated him, had already married a girl, who was a stranger to him word with him, succeeded where even his mother had failed: for his future which would I ask for Stefanie's hand.

We discussed this difficult result that Adolf commissioned information about Stefanie.

In the Music Society there occasionally seen talking to Stefanie. I learned that Stefanie's father had died some years earlier. He had been in receipt of a pension used to give her two children. Stefanie had attended the Gymnasium. She had a great wonder, beautiful as she was the previous winter, had gone

In the end, I had to go to the cinema to see the film 'The Last Days of Pompeii'.

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Weidt roused his enthusiasm in the part of Elsa in *Lohen-grin*, the highest praise he could give her was that she reminded him of Stefanie. In appearance, Stefanie was ideally suited for the part of Elsa, and other female rôles of Wagner's operas, and we spent much time wondering whether she had the necessary voice and musical talent. Adolf was inclined to take it for granted. Just her Valkyrie-like appearance never failed to attract him and to fire him with unbounded enthusiasm. He wrote countless love poems to Stefanie. "Hymn to the Beloved" was the title of one of them, which he read to me from his little black notebook. Stefanie, a high-born damsel, in a dark blue, flowing velvet gown, rode on a white steed over the flowering meadows, her loose hair fell in golden waves on her shoulders. A clear spring sky was above. Everything was pure, radiant joy. I can still see Adolf's face glowing with fervent ecstasy and hear his voice reciting these verses. Stefanie filled his thoughts so completely that everything he said, or did, or planned for the future, was centred around her. With his growing estrangement from his home, Stefanie gained more and more influence over my friend, although he never spoke a word to her.

My ideas about these things were much more prosaic, and I remember very well our repeated arguments on the subject — and my recollections of Adolf's relationship to Stefanie are particularly distinct. He used to insist that, once he met Stefanie, everything would become clear without as much as a word being exchanged. For such exceptional human beings as himself and Stefanie, he said, there was no need for the usual communication by word of mouth; extraordinary human beings would understand each other by intuition. Whatever the subject we might discuss at any time, Adolf was always sure that Stefanie not only knew his ideas exactly, but that she shared them enthusiastically. If I dared to comment that he hadn't spoken to Stefanie about them, and

ally accompanied them, to Adolf's great irritation, was her brother, a law student in Vienna. This information eased Adolf's mind considerably. But from time to time the two ladies were to be seen in the company of young officers. Poor, pallid youngsters like Adolf naturally could not hope to compete with these young lieutenants in their smart uniforms. Adolf felt this intensely and gave vent to his feelings with eloquence. His anger, in the end, led him into uncompromising enmity towards the officer class as a whole, and everything military in general. "Conceited blockheads," he used to call them. It annoyed him immensely that Stefanie mixed with such idlers who, he insisted, wore corsets and used scent.

To be sure, Stefanie had no idea how deeply Adolf was in love with her; she regarded him as a somewhat shy but, nevertheless, remarkably tenacious and faithful admirer. When she responded with a smile to his inquiring glance, he was happy, and his mood became unlike anything I had ever observed in him; everything in the world was good and beautiful and well ordered, and he was content. When Stefanie, as happened just as often, coldly ignored his gaze, he was crushed and ready to destroy himself and the whole world.

Certainly such phenomena are typical of every first great love, and one might perhaps be tempted to dismiss Adolf's feelings for Stefanie as calf love. This may have been true as far as Stefanie's own conception of them was concerned, but for Adolf himself, his relation to Stefanie was more than calf love. The mere fact that it lasted more than four years, and even cast its splendour over the subsequent years of misery in Vienna, shows that Adolf's feelings were deep and true, and real love. Proof of the depth of his feelings is that for Adolf, throughout these years, no other woman but Stefanie existed — how unlike the usual boy's love, which is always changing its object. I cannot remember that Adolf ever gave any thought to another girl. Later, in Vienna, when Lucie

STEFANIE

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My ideas about these I remember very well out — and my recollections are particularly distinct. Stefanie, everything would a word being exchanged ings as himself and Stefanie the usual communication human beings would use. Whatever the subject was was always sure that Stefanie but that she shared the comment that he hadn't

this apparent contradiction. He needed the town, the variety and abundance of its impressions, experiences and events; he felt there that he had his share in everything; that there was nothing in which his interest was not engaged. He needed people with their contrasting interests, their ambitions, intentions, plans and desires. Only in this problem-laden atmosphere did he feel at home. From this point of view the village was altogether too simple, too insignificant, too unimportant, and did not provide enough scope for his limitless need to take an interest in everything. Besides, for him, a town was interesting in itself as an agglomeration of houses and buildings. It was understandable that he should want to live only in a town.

On the other hand, he needed an effective counterweight to the town, which always troubled and excited him and made constant demands on his interests and his talents. He found this in nature, which even he could not try to change and improve because its eternal laws are beyond the reach of the human will. Here he could once more find his own self, since here he was not obliged, as he was in town, eternally to be taking sides.

My friend had a special way of making nature serve him. He used to seek out a lonely spot outside the town, which he would visit again and again. Every bush and every tree was familiar to him. There was nothing to disturb his contemplative mood. Nature surrounded him like the walls of a quiet, friendly room in which he could cultivate undisturbed his passionate plans and ideas.

For some time, on fine days, he used to frequent a bench on the Turnleitenweg where he established a kind of open-air study. There he would read his books, sketch and paint in water colours. Here were born his first poems. Another spot, which later became a favourite, was even more lonely and secluded. We would sit on a high, overhanging rock looking down on the Danube. The sight of the gently flow-

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nd, at a sign from the conductor, had sung his part only to rove to the audience in the stalls, nay to an attentive world, hat in reality he was not that pale, lanky fellow from the pholsterer's shop in the Klammsstrasse, but that his place as really on the stage in the theatre!

Ever since that moment I have remained under the spell the theatre. Washing down the walls in a customer's house, apping on the paste, affixing the undercoat of newspaper id then pasting on the wallpaper, I was all the time dream- of roaring applause in the theatre, seeing myself as con- ductor in front of an orchestra. Such dreaming did not really lp my work, and at times it would happen that the pieces wallpaper were sadly out of position. But once back in : workshop, my sick father soon made me realise what possibilities faced me.

Thus I swayed between dream and reality. At home no- ly had any inkling of my state of mind; for rather than tr a word about my secret ambitions, I would have bitten my tongue. Even from my mother I hid my hopes and is, but she perhaps guessed what was occupying my ights. But should I have added to her many worries? is there was no one to whom I could unburden myself. It terribly lonely, like an outcast, as lonely as only a g man can be to whom is revealed, for the first time, i beauty and its danger.

he theatre gave me new courage. I didn't miss a single a performance. However tired I was after my work, ing could keep me from the theatre. Naturally, with mall wages that my father paid me, I could only afford et for standing room. Therefore I used to go regularly the so-called Promenade, from which one had the best and moreover, I found, no other place had better tics. Just above the promenade was the Royal box sup- dy by two wooden columns. These columns were very lar with the habitués of the Promenade as they were ily places where one could prop oneself up with an un-

disturbed view of the stage. For if you leaned against the walls, these very columns were always in your field of vision. I was happy to be able to rest my weary back against the smooth pillars, after having spent a hard day on the top of the stepladder! Of course, you had to be there early to be sure to get that place.

Often it is the trivial things which make a lasting impres- sion on one's memory. I can still see myself rushing into the theatre, undecided whether to choose the left- or the right- hand pillar. Often, however, one of the two columns, the right-hand one, was already taken; somebody was even more enthusiastic than I was.

Half annoyed, half surprised, I glanced at my rival. He was a remarkably pale, skinny youth, about my own age, who was following the performance with glistening eyes. I sur- mised that he came from a better-class home, for he was al- ways dressed with meticulous care and was very reserved.

We took note of each other without exchanging a word. During the interval of a performance some time later we started talking, as apparently neither of us approved of the casting of one of the parts. We discussed it together and re- joiced in our common adverse criticism. I marvelled at the quick, sure grasp of the other. In this he was undoubtedly my superior. On the other hand, when it came to talking of purely musical matters, I felt my own superiority. I cannot give the exact date of this first meeting; but I am sure it was around All Saints' Day in 1904.

This went on for some time — he revealing nothing of his own affairs, nor did I think it necessary to talk about myself. But all the more intensely did we occupy ourselves with what- ever performance there happened to be and sensed that we both had the same enthusiasm for the theatre.

Once, after the performance, I accompanied him home to No. 31 Humboldtstrasse. When we took leave of each other he gave me his name: Adolf Hitler.

sixteen. In May 1906 he paid his first visit to Vienna and stayed there with his sister for two months, after which he returned to Linz. In the autumn of 1907 he went again to Vienna and lived, for part of the time at least, in the Men's Home at No. 27 Meldemannstrasse, seeking to gain admission to the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts to study architecture. In October 1907 he was rejected by the Academy, and soon afterwards he returned to Linz where his mother was incurably ill. On December 21, 1907, she died. In February 1908, Hitler returned to Vienna and stayed with a friend in furnished rooms, at No. 29 Stumpergasse — an address which he had already used before. In November 1908, finding himself too poor to continue paying that rent, he suddenly left, and by the spring of 1909, when we next hear of him, he was back in the Men's Home in the Meldemannstrasse. He appears to have used various other addresses, including a doss house in the Meidling area and rooms in Simon Denk Gasse, but the Meldemannstrasse Men's Home evidently remained his base until 1913, when he left for Munich, apparently to avoid military service in the Austro-Hungarian army.

Now what evidence have we of Hitler's life and character in those crucial years? Apart from a few legal documents we have Hitler's own account in *Mein Kampf*, which may be suspect and is necessarily subjective; we have the accounts by a Sudeten tramp, Reinhold Hanisch, who knew him in 1909, and by some other more casual acquaintances in Vienna, as these accounts were given to the anti-Nazi journalist, Konrad Heiden, in the 1930s; and we have the full account given by Josef Greiner, who knew Hitler when both were lodging in the Men's Home in the Meldemannstrasse, first during Hitler's second visit to Vienna in September 1907, later on Greiner's return to Vienna in 1910. Of these sources, Greiner's account, which was published in 1947, is the fullest and has hitherto been regarded as by far the most valuable. Nevertheless, it does not answer the questions which we most want to see answered.

Meanwhile, my father had set up on his own and had opened an upholsterer's business at No. 9 Klammstrasse. The old Baernreiterhaus, heavy and ungainly, which still stands there unaltered, became the home of my childhood and youth. The narrow, sombre Klammstrasse looked rather poor in comparison with its continuation, the broad and airy promenade, with its lawns and trees.

Our unhealthy housing conditions had certainly contributed to the early death of my sisters. In the Baernreiterhaus things were different. On the ground floor there was the workshop and, on the first floor our apartment, which consisted of two rooms and a kitchen. But now my father was never free from money troubles. Business was bad. More than once he contemplated closing down the business and again taking a job with the furniture makers. Yet each time, he managed to overcome his difficulties at the last moment.

I started school, a very unpleasant experience. My mother wept over the bad reports I brought home. Her sorrow was the only thing that could persuade me to work harder. Whereas for my father there was no question but that I should in due course take over his business — why else did he slave from morning till night? — it was my mother's desire that I should study in spite of my bad reports; first I should have four years at the Grammar School, then perhaps go to the Teachers' Training College. But I would not hear of it. I was glad when my father put his foot down and, when I was ten, sent me to the Council School. In this way, my father thought, my future was finally decided.

For a long time, however, there had been another influence in my life for which I would have sold my soul: music. This love was given full expression when, at nine years of age, I was given a violin as a Christmas present. I remember distinctly every single detail of that Christmas, and when today in my old age I think back, my conscious life seems to have started with that event. The eldest son of our neigh-

FIRST MEETING

... was a young pupil-teacher. I learned fast and well. When my first violin teacher entered the lower grade of the school, it did not like it there very much. He was more advanced than the other teachers and more had private lessons, a sign of the Austro-Hungarian system. The highway made clear to me that I had to learn to teach me the elementary principles of "fashion." It was really a very dry subject. Sometimes when I was a major manners he could not make more progress, I should come into the army, in his opinion, to glory. I gave up my study of the intermediate class of the school by Professor Heinrich I. He was a very fine teacher. At the same time he was a very good musician and musical theory, and orchestra.

I was already playing with the orchestra's work when hard reality came. I left the Council School when I was ten as an apprentice. Formerly, as a labourer, I had had to lend a hand. I was familiar with the work.

It is a repulsive job to re-upholster and remaking the streets, clouds of dust in which the people walk. What rubbishy old mattresses were there. All the illnesses that had been on the streets — not overcome — left their mark. Under that upholsterers do not live. The more pleasant aspects of m-

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I thought for a long time about approaching Stefanie. And yet I went back. His conception of the matter was already then so high that the acquaintance of a girl seen in the street was opposed to flirting in a way that Stefanie had no other desire than to come to ask her to marry him. But Adolf, as was to be expected, was agitated by this, had already met a girl, who was a stranger to him, and word with him, succeeded even his mother had failed: for his future which would ask for Stefanie's hand.

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the carriage is quite close to us. A bright glance falls on Adolf. Stefanie sends him a beaming smile and, picking a flower from her bouquet, throws it to him.

Never again did I see Adolf as happy as he was at that moment. When the carriage had passed he dragged me aside and with emotion he gazed at the flower, this visible pledge of her love. I can still hear his voice, trembling with excitement, "She loves me! You have seen! She loves me!"

During the following months, when his decision to leave school had caused a conflict with his mother, and he was, his love for Stefanie was his only comfort and he always kept her flower in his locket. Adolf was never in greater need of my friendship; for as I was the only person who shared his secret, it was only through me that he could get news about her. I had to go every day to the usual spot at the Schmiedtoreck and to report to him all my observations and tell him in particular, who had spoken to mother and daughter. There I stood alone at the familiar corner, Adolf felt, would naturally upset Stefanie immeasurably. It did not, but I kept from him. Fortunately, it had never occurred to Adolf that I might fall in love with Stefanie, for his slightest suspicion in this respect would have meant the end of our friendship and as there was no real reason for it, I was able to give my reports to my poor friend wholly disinterestedly.

Adolf's mother had been aware for a long time of the change in her son. One evening — I remember it well because it embarrassed me considerably — she asked me straight out: "What's the matter with Adolf? He's so impatient to see you." I muttered some excuse and hurried into Adolf's room.

He was happy when I brought him some new facts concerning Stefanie. "She has a good soprano voice," I told him one day. He jumped up. "How do you know that?" "I followed her very closely for some time and I heard her speak. I know enough music to be able to tell that somebody

and pure voice must be a good soprano." And I was pleased that he, made Adolf. And I had a moment of happiness. I had to get back to the Humboldtstrasse stroll by the quickest route. I would often find a big blueprint. "Now I have made up my mind, in dead earnest, after having heard my father decided to build the house for Stefanie in Berlin. And then I had to give my opinion, especially I was satisfied with the shape and size of the room, he said, and asked me to say where I had paid special attention to the arguments as to where this villa would be built. I was all for Italy. Adolf insisted that it be in Germany, in the neighbourhood of a town and Stefanie could go to the opera and would leave his bed, he went down and took the Schmiedtoreck; he was still very pale as usual, Stefanie and her mother appeared, pale-faced and hollow-eyed, she smiled at me. "Oh, to hell with the money!" which he frequently employed.