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A Psychological Analysis of Adolf Hitler: His Life and Legend

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24 Highlights

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> A great many writers, both Nazi and anti-Nazi, have written extensively about his great love for children and the Nazi press is certainly full of pictures showing Hitler in the company of little tots.

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> Likewise, a great deal is written about his fondness for animals, particularly dogs. Here again, there are numberless pictures to prove it is so. As far as dogs are concerned, the propaganda is probably fairly near the truth but it goes far beyond that point in other respects. One writer even went so far as to attribute his vegetarianism to his inability to tolerate the thought of animals being slaughtered for human consumption (405). Hitler is pictured as an "affable lord of the manor", full of gentleness, kindliness and helpfulness, or, as Oechsner puts it, he is the Great Comforter - father, husband, brother or son to every German who lacks or has lost such a relative (668). Another

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> His primary rules were: never allow the public to cool off; never admit a fault or wrong; never concede that there may be some good in your enemy; never leave room for alternatives; never accept blame; concentrate on one enemy at a time and blame him for everything that goes wrong; people will believe a big lie sooner than a little one; and if you repeat it frequently enough people will sooner or later believe it.

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> Rauschning (275) claims that Hitler has a bed compulsion which demands that the bed be made in a particular way with the quilt folded according to a proscribed pattern and that a man must make the bed, before he can go to sleep. We have no other information on this subject but from his general psychological structure such a compulsion would be possible.

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> He dislikes desk work and seldom glances at the piles of reports which are placed on his desk daily. No matter how important these may be or how much his adjutants may urge him to attend to the particular matter, he

refuses to take them seriously unless it happens to be a project which interests him. On the whole, few reports interest him unless they deal with military or naval affairs or political matters. He seldom sits in a cabinet meeting because they bore him. On several occasions when sufficient pressure was brought to bear he did attend but got up abruptly during the session and left without apology. Later it was discovered that he had gone to his private theater and had the operator show some film that he particularly liked. On the whole, he prefers to discuss cabinet matters with each member in person and then communicate his decision to the group as a whole.

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0ne of Hitler's reactions which is carefully hidden from the public is his love for pornography. He can scarcely wait for the next edition of DER STUERMER to appear and when it reaches him he goes through it avidly. He seems to get great pleasure out the dirty stories and the cartoons that feature this sheet. (658: 261). To Rauschning Hitler said that the STUERMER "was a form of pornography permitted in the Third Reich". In addition, Hitler has a large collection of nudes and, according to Hanfstaengl and others, he also enjoys viewing lewd movies in his private theatre, some of which are prepared by Hoffmann for his benefit.

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There are some people who seriously doubt that Johann Georg Hiedler was the father of Alois. Thyssen and Koehler, for example, claim that Chancellor Dollfuss had ordered the Austrian police to conduct a thorough investigation into the Hitler family. As a result of this investigation a secret document was prepared which proved that Maria Anna Schicklgruber was living in Vienna at the time she conceived. At that time she was employed as a servant in the home of Baron Rothschild. As soon as the family discovered her pregnancy she was sent back to her home in Spital where Alois was born. If it is true that one of the Rothschilds is the real father of Alois Hitler, it would make Adolf a quarter Jew. According to these sources, Adolf Hitler knew of the existence of this document and the incriminating evidence it contained. In order to obtain it he precipitated events in Austria and initiated the assassination of Dollfuss. According to this story, he failed to obtain the document at that time, since Dollfuss had secreted it and, had told Schuschnigg of its whereabouts so that in the event of his death the independence of Austria would remain assured. Several stories of this general character are in circulation.

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Those who lend credence to this story point out several factors which seem to favor its plausibility: (a) That it is unlikely that the miller's assistant in a small village in this district would have very much to leave in the form of a legacy. (b) That it is strange that Johann Hiedler should not claim the boy until thirty-five years after he had married the mother and the mother had died. (c) That if the legacy were left by Hiedler on the condition that Alois take his name, it would not have been possible for him to change it to Hitler. (d) That the intelligence and behavior of Alois, as well as that of his two sons, is completely out of keeping with that usually found in Austrian peasant families. They point out that their ambitiousness and extraordinary political intuition is much more in harmony with the Rothschild tradition. (e) That Alois Schicklgruber left his home village at an early age to seek his fortune in Vienna where his mother had worked (f) That it would be peculiar for Alois Hitler, while working as a customs official in Braunau, should choose a Jew named Prinz, of Vienna, to act as Adolf's godfather unless he felt some kinship with the Jews himself. This is certainly a very intriguing hypothesis and

much of Adolf's later behavior could be explained in rather easy terms on this basis. However, it is not absolutely necessary to assume that he had Jewish blood in his veins in order to make a comprehensive picture of his character with its manifold traits and sentiments. From a purely scientific point of view, therefore, it is sounder not to base our reconstruction on such slim evidence but to seek firmer foundations. Nevertheless, we can leave it as a possibility which requires further verification. In

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There was unanimous agreement among the four psychoanalysts who have studied the material that Hitler is an hysteric bordering on schizophrenia and not a paranoiac as is so frequently supposed. This means that he is not insane in the commonly accepted sense of the term, but neurotic. He has not lost complete contact with the world about him and is still striving to make some kind of psychological adjustment which will give him a feeling of security in his social group. It also means that there is a definite moral component in his character no matter how deeply it may be buried or how seriously it has been distorted. With

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As one surveys Hitler's behavior patterns, as his close associates observe them, one gets the distinct impression that this is not one person but two which inhabit the same body and alternate back and forth. The one is a very soft, sentimental and indecisive individual who has little drive and wants nothing quite so much as to be amused, liked and looked after. The other is just the opposite - hard, cruel and decisive with an abundant reservoir of energy at his command - who knows what he wants and is ready to go after it and get it regardless of costs. It is the first Hitler who weeps profusely at the death of his canary, and the second Hitler who cries in open court: "Heads will roll". It is the first Hitler who cannot bring himself to discharge an assistant and it is the second Hitler who can order the murder of hundreds including his best friends and can say with great conviction: "There will

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It is the first Hitler who spends his evenings watching movies or going cabarets and it is the second Hitler who works for days on end with little or no sleep, making plans which will affect the destiny of nations.

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And so he has fallen in love with the image he, himself, created and does his utmost to forget that behind it there is quite another Hitler who is a very despicable fellow. He is hardly more successful in this, manouvre than any other hysteric. Secret fears and anxieties that belie the reality of the image keep cropping up to shake his confidence and security. He may rationalize these fears or displace them but they continue to haunt him. Underneath, Hitler is a bundle of fears. Some are at least partially justified, others seem to be groundless. For example, he has had a fear of cancer for many years. Ordinarily he fears that he has a cancer in his stomach since he is always bothered with indigestion. The assurances of his doctors are all to no avail. A few years ago a simple polyp grew on his larynx. Immediately his fear shifted to the throat and he was sure that he had developed a throat cancer. When Dr. von Eicken diagnosed it as a simple polyp, Hitler at first refused to believe him.

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> Then he has fears of being poisoned, fears of being assassinated, fears of losing his health, fears of gaining weight, fears of treason, fears of losing his mystical guidance, fears of anesthetics, fears of premature death, fears that his mission will not be fulfilled, etc. Every conceivable precaution must be taken to reduce these dangers, real and imagined, to a minimum. In later years, the fear of betrayal and possible assassination by one of his associates seems to have grown considerably. Thyssen (308) claims that it has reached the point where he no longer trusts the Gestapo. Frank (652) reports that even the generals must surrender their swords before they are admitted into conferences with him. Sleep

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> It may be of interest to note at this time that of all the titles that Hitler might have chosen for himself he is content with the simple one of "Fuehrer". To him this title is the greatest of them all. He has spent his life searching for a person worthy of the role but was unable to find one until he discovered himself. His goal is now to fulfill this role to millions of other people in a way in which he had hoped some person might do for him. The fact that the German people have submitted so readily to his leadership would indicate that a great many Germans were in a similar state of mind as Hitler himself and were not only willing, but anxious, to submit to anybody who could prove to them that he was competent to fill the role. There is some sociological evidence that this is probably so and that its origins lie in the structure of the German family and the dual role played by the father within the home as contrasted with the outside world. The duality, on the average is, of course, not nearly as marked as we have shown it to be in Hitler's case, but it may be this very fact which qualified him to identify the need and express it in terms which the others could understand and accept.

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> There is evidence that the only person in the world at the present time who might challenge Hitler in the role of leader is Roosevelt. Informants are agreed that he fears neither Churchill nor Stalin. He feels that they are sufficiently like himself so that he can understand their psychology and defeat them at the game. Roosevelt, however, seems to be an enigma him. How a man can lead a nation of 150,000,000 people and keep them in line without a great deal of name-calling, shouting, abusing and threatening is a mystery to him. He is unable to understand how a man can be the leader of a large group and still act like a gentleman. The result is that he secretly admires Roosevelt to a considerable degree, regardless of what he publicly says about him. Underneath he probably fears him inasmuch as he is unable to predict his actions.

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> These attitudes are probably the outcome of his early experiences with his mother who first seduced him into a love relationship and then betrayed him by giving herself to his father. Nevertheless, he still continued to believe in an idealistic form of love and marriage which would be possible if a loyal woman could be found. As we know, Hitler never gave himself into the hands of a woman again with the possible exception of his niece, Geli Raubal, which also ended in disaster. Outside of that single exception he has lived a loveless life. His distrust of both men and women is so deep that in all his history there is no record of a really intimate and lasting friendship.

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> Then, too, he speculated on why it is that comrades all around him are killed while he is saved and again he comes to the conclusion that Providence must be protecting him. Perhaps the exemplary courage he displayed in carrying messages at the front was due to the feeling that some kindly Fate was watching over him. Throughout MEIN KAMPF we find this type of thinking. It was Fate that had him born so close to the German border; it was Fate that sent him to Vienna to suffer with the masses; it was Fate that caused him to do many things. The experience he reports at the front, when a voice told him to pick up his plate and move to another section of the trench just in time to escape a shell which killed all his comrades, must certainly have strengthened this belief to a marked degree and paved the way for his vision later on.

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> The problem is not important in itself at the moment except insofar as it may help to throw some light on the origins of Hitler's conviction in his mission and his belief that he is guided by some extra-natural power which communicates to him what he should and should not do under varying circumstances. This hypothesis is tenable in view of the fact that during his stay in Vienna, when still in his early twenties, he grew a beard and again directly after the war when he again grew a Christ-like beard. Then, too, when he was a student at the Benedictine school his ambition was to join the Church and become an abbot or priest. All of these give some indication of a Messiah complex long before he had started on his meteoric career and become an open competitor of Christ for the affections of the German people.

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> In Hitler's case, however, the reverse has taken place. The conviction became stronger as he grew older until, at the present time, it is the core of his thinking. Under these circumstances, we must suppose that some powerful psychological stream continued to nourish these infantile modes of thought. This psychological stream is probably, as it is in many other cases, a fear of death. It seems logical to suppose that in the course of his early deliberations on the deaths of his brothers his first conclusion was probably that all the others die and that consequently he too would die. His fear would not be allayed by his mother's constant concern over his well-being, which he may have interpreted as an indication that the danger was imminent. Such a conclusion would certainly be a valid one for a child to make under the circumstances.

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> We can surmise from the psychological defenses Hitler has set up, that there was a period during which he struggled against these tendencies. In terms of unconscious symbolism meat is almost synonymous with faeces and beer with urine. The fact that there is a strict taboo on both would indicate that these desires are still present and that it is only by refraining from everything symbolizing them that he can avoid arousing anxieties. Rauschning reports that Hitler, following Wagner, attributed much of the decay of cur civilization to meat eating. That the decadence "had its origin in the abdomen -- chronic constipation, poisoning of the juices, and the results of drinking to excess." This assertion suggests decay (contamination, corruption, pollution, and death) as the resultant of constipation, that is, feaces in the gastro-intestinal tract, and if this is so, decay might be avoided both by not eating anything resembling feaces and by taking purges or ejecting as frequently as

possible. It has been reported that Hitler once said that he was confident that all nations would arrive at the point where they would not feed any more on dead animals. It is interesting to note that according to one of our most reliable informants Hitler only became a real vegetarian after the death of his niece, Geli. In clinical practice, one almost invariably finds compulsive vegetarianism setting in after the death of a loved object. We

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The belief that Hitler is homosexual has probably developed (a) from the fact that he does show so many feminine characteristics, and (b) from the fact that there were so many homosexuals in the Party during the early days and many continue to occupy important positions. It does seem that Hitler feels much more at ease with homosexuals than with normal persons, but this may be due to the fact that they are all fundamentally social outcasts and consequently have a community of interests which tends to make them think and feel more or less alike. In this connection it is interesting to note that homosexuals, too, frequently regard themselves as a special form of creation or as chosen ones whose destiny it is to initiate a new order.

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His nightmares, which frequently deal with being attacked by a man and being suffocated, also suggest strong homosexual tendencies and a fear of them. From these indications, however, we would conclude that for the most part these tendencies have been repressed, which would speak against the probability of their being expressed in overt form. On the other hand, persons suffering from his perversion sometimes do indulge in homosexual practices in the hope that they might find sexual gratification. Even this perversion would be more acceptable to them than the one with which they are afflicted.

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His passion for constructing huge buildings, stadia, bridges, roads, etc., can only be interpreted as attempts to compensate for his lack of confidence. These are tangible proofs of his greatness which are designed to impress himself as well as others. Just as he must be the greatest man in all the world, so he has a tendency to build the greatest and biggest of everything. Most of the structures he has erected he regards as temporary buildings. They are, to his way of thinking, on a par with ordinary mortals. The permanent buildings he plans to construct later on. They will be much larger and grander and will be designed to last at least a thousand years. In other words, these are befitting monuments to himself who plans on ruling the German people for that period of time through his new view of life.

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This is the most plausible outcome. Not only has he frequently threatened to commit suicide, but from what we know of his psychology it is the most likely possibility. It is probably true that he has an inordinate fear of death, but being an hysteric he could undoubtedly screw himself up into the super-man character and perform the deed. In all probability, however, it would not be a simple suicide. He has too much of the dramatic for that and since immortality is one of his dominant motives we can imagine that he would stage the most dramatic and effective death scene he could possibly think of. He knows how to bind the people to him and if he cannot have the bond in life he will certainly do his utmost to achieve it in death.