HITLER AND ABDUCTIVE LOGIC

THE STRATEGY OF A TYRANT

BEN NOVAK

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ONE
The Historical Problem of Hitler

The question that initiated this study was a simple question that mystified Adolf Hitler's contemporaries and has subsequently baffled historians and biographers: Why was Hitler successful in his rise to power? Initially, this seems to be a straightforward question, answered by simply describing: (1) who this man was; (2) what he did; and (3) how he did it. However, most biographers and historians have answered only one of these three questions, namely, what he did. As for the other two questions, they have proved unable to arrive at consensus or provide satisfactory answers.

H. R. Trevor-Roper was the first post–World War II historian to recognize the mystery constituted by Hitler's rise to power and to identify these two unanswered questions as the essential elements of the continuing mystery of Hitler. Trevor-Roper raised these in a lengthy essay published in 1953, entitled "The Mind of Adolf Hitler,"[1] which begins with the stark question: "Who Was Hitler?" He then goes on to castigate his fellow historians for failing to answer that question, as well as for failing to answer the second question constituting the mystery: "How did he do it?" Indeed, Trevor-Roper accused historians of "evading" these questions. It is worth quoting him more fully, for he minces no words:

> Who was Hitler? The history of his political career is abundantly documented and we cannot escape from its terrible effects. And yet, . . . how elusive his character remains! What he did is clear; every detail of his political activity is now—thanks to a seizure of documents unparalleled in history—historically established; his daily life and personal behavior have been examined and exposed. But still, when asked not what he did but how he did it, or rather how he was able to do it, historians evade the question, sliding away behind implausible answers.[2]

In the intervening half century, despite an overwhelming amount of scholarship devoted to these two questions (Robert G. L. Waite has opined, "It seems likely that more will be written about Adolf Hitler than anyone else in history with the exception of Jesus Christ.")[3], no advance has been made in answering them or solving the mystery.

Eberhard Jaeckel pronounces the question "How could Hitler have come to power?" to be "the seminal question of the twentieth century."[4] James M. Rhodes writes that "The rise of the German Workers' Party (Hitler Movement)" is a phenomenon that has "never been adequately explained."[5] Biographer Robert Payne candidly admits at the beginning of his biography, *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler*, that "the rise of Adolf Hitler to supreme power is one of those events in world history which are almost totally inexplicable in any rational terms;"[6] while Joachim Fest, the author of one of the most respected biographies of Hitler,[7] acknowledges thirteen years after publication that "Hitler and National Socialism, despite years of study and reflection about them, have remained more myth than history."[8] Robert Nelken pithily summarizes the mystery: "Hitler has puzzled generations of investigators."[9]

The present status of this mystery, especially regarding the two unanswered questions identified by Trevor-Roper, is well reflected in three major works published as the twentieth century was ending. In 1997, John Lukacs published *The Hitler of History*, a survey of the major historical scholarship and research relating to Hitler. Lukacs was motivated to conduct his study because he felt that the same two questions that Trevor-Roper had identified in 1953 were still unanswered: "There is no disagreement about this among historians," writes Lukacs, "What they ask from the record—and from themselves—are two questions: How could Hitler have come to such power? And: What kind of a man was he?"[10] In his conclusion, Lukacs reiterates the judgment of Percy Ernst Schramm that "by virtue of his personality, his ideas, and the fact that he misled millions, Hitler poses an historical problem of the first magnitude."[11] Lukacs himself summarizes the mystery posed by Hitler in almost Biblical terms, capitalizing each word: "And Hitler Was, Is and Remains a Problem."[12]

The following year a second work appeared demonstrating the continuing mystery of Hitler. In 1998, Ron Rosenbaum, a journalist who sensed a significant story in the failure of historians to solve the mystery of Hitler, published *Explaining Hitler: The Search for the Origin of His Evil*. The story that Rosenbaum reports is the almost-scandal among historians that Hitler remains unexplained. For his book, Rosenbaum interviewed many of the most prominent Hitler scholars, recording his surprise—and their frustration—that the most fundamental historical and moral questions about this man remain unanswered. Rosenbaum identifies these two yet unanswered questions as (1) "The real search for Hitler—the search for who he was," and (2) "the question of his advent and suc-

cess."[13] Rosenbaum then records in eloquent language the layman's amazement at the failure of historians to find any coherent or consensus answers to these questions:

> Is it conceivable, more than half a century after Hitler's death, after all that has been written and said, that we are still wandering in this trackless wilderness, this garden of forking paths, with no sight of our quarry? Or, rather, alas, with too many quarries: the search for Hitler has apprehended not one coherent, consensus image of Hitler, but rather many different Hitlers, competing embodiments of competing visions, Hitlers who might not recognize each other well enough to say "*Heil*!" if they came face to face in Hell.[14]

Among the most significant of the interviews recorded by Rosenbaum is that of H. R. Trevor-Roper, who expressed his despair that the mystery of Hitler has not yet been solved, and may never be solved, for "[t]here is something irrational at the heart of Hitler's appeal, something not explicable by the ordinary tools of historical and psychological analysis."[15] Despite the passage of almost half a century, and the efforts of thousands of scholars, Trevor-Roper admits, "Hitler remains a frightening mystery."[16]

Finally, in 1999, the last year of the twentieth century, Ian Kershaw's *Hitler: 1889-1936: Hubris* appeared. Hailed as "the classic Hitler biography of our time,"[17] this work vividly illustrates the mystery of Adolf Hitler and the failure of historians to address the two questions raised by Trevor-Roper in 1953. In his introduction, Kershaw candidly admits that his subject—the life and career of Adolf Hitler, and the two questions of who this man was and how he did it—are still an unsolved mystery. "Hitler has proved," he writes, borrowing from Winston Churchill (though in a different context), '"a riddle wrapped in an enigma inside a mystery.'"[18]

Describing Hitler's mind as a "void" and his private life as a "black hole," Kershaw seeks to avoid answering the two questions of who this man really was and how it was that Hitler—of all people—was so phenomenally successful in politics. Hitler, in Kershaw's telling of his life, was an "unperson" who only existed in the effects he caused.

Thus Kershaw completely sidesteps, avoids, or "evades" the questions posed by Trevor-Roper, Lukacs, and Rosenbaum. Instead, he posits as his first premise that "[t]here was no private life for Hitler."[19] In other words, there was no man behind Hitler's public persona to explain. "Hitler's entire persona came to be subsumed with . . . the role of the Fuehrer,"[20] Kershaw insists. Therefore, Kershaw's task as a biographer is only to tell what Hitler did—not who he was, nor how he (the man behind the mask) did it. "The task of the biographer," Kershaw explains, "has to focus *not* upon the personality of Hitler, but . . . upon the character of his power—the power of the Fuehrer."[21] Thus Kershaw's approach leads us

right back to where the historical profession was in 1953, facing the same unanswered questions posed by Trevor-Roper, namely,

- Who was Hitler before he created the mask, assumed the persona, and became the Fuehrer?
- Who was Hitler when he first envisioned himself as the Fuehrer, and who with cunning and calculation set out to achieve it?
- How was it that this strange man could get anyone to believe that he—of all people—was the future leader of Germany?
- What was there about this man that enabled him to become the Fuehrer?

Kershaw offers little to resolve these questions other than to recite once again the facts of what he did on his way to power. Unless there is such a thing as a "born" Fuehrer (an idea Hitler would have liked), or a Fuehrer who arrives like a *deus ex machina*, then the questions Trevor-Roper asked are still unanswered and must still be faced.

This is the current state of scholarly research into the question of Hitler's rise to power today, and it has remained that way since Hitler first arrived on the stage of history. The rise of Adolf Hitler continues to be, as Robert Payne has written, "[t]he most mystifying event of this century."[22]

EXAMINING THE QUESTION

When a mystery involving factual questions (such as who was this man and how did he do it) remains unsolved for half a century despite intense efforts to solve it, then it is logical to assume that the problem lies in one or more of the following: (1) there are insufficient facts; (2) the right questions have not been asked; or (3) the correct method has not been applied. At the beginning of this study I investigated each of these possibilities.

Insufficient Facts

In the case of Hitler, it seems unlikely in the extreme that there are insufficient facts. As Trevor-Roper observed in 1953, due to an unparalleled seizure of documents after World War II, more was already known about the facts of Adolf Hitler's life than about that of any other public figure of the twentieth century. Moreover, both public and scholarly interest in the mystery of Hitler has intensified since Trevor-Roper's observation. Historians, biographers, scholars, researchers, and investigators have pored over every fact and document of Hitler's life and interviewed almost every person with whom he ever had contact, or even the slightest acquaintance. For example, Franz Jetzinger, the librarian of the

Provincial Archives at Linz, tracked down almost every document relating to Hitler's youth,[23] while biographer John Toland conducted and recorded more than 250 interviews of every person he could find who ever had known Hitler during his lifetime.[24] Eberhard Jaeckel and Axel Kuhn have attempted to collect and publish every document associated with Hitler's life.[25]

We can therefore conclude that the scholarship on the facts of Hitler's life has been immense. By 1975, J. P. Stern reports, "A host of German, English and American scholars are at work on specific accounts of Hitler's rise to power and his rule. Diaries, memoranda, police dossiers, Hitler's speeches, notes and table-talk have been and are being edited in great numbers."[26] By 1979, French bibliographer Pierre Aycoberry notes that "attempts to explain this possibly aberrant, certainly extreme, phenomenon of European history have multiplied at such a rate that a single reader would be unable to glance at them all even if he were to devote his life to the task."[27] In the mid-1970s, one report estimated that more than 50,000 serious works on Hitler had been published;[28] by 1999 the number of research and scholarly works on Hitler had risen to 120,000.[29] To date, more than one hundred scholarly, researched biographies have been published on Hitler's life. It seems most improbable that any key fact of Hitler's life has been missed.

This abundance of scholarly work suggests that the problem of solving the mystery of Hitler's rise to power does not lie in the insufficiency of facts, nor in the absence of data. Quite to the contrary, the massive amounts of data, details, facts, and observations sometimes seem to obscure the mystery rather than to help solve it. Stern, for example, notes:

> As we go down the list of the more important biographers . . . we find each more meticulous than his predecessor in the sifting of fact from fiction, of documented evidence from inference and interpretation. . . . Yet there is a point at which it is apt to defeat its own purpose, which I take to be an understanding of the past. A montage of biographical minutiae . . . does not necessarily lead to better insight. More details often entail less sense.[30]

In light of the massive amount of research and investigation to uncover and record every detail of Hitler's life and career, it appears that the problem of solving the mystery of Hitler's rise to power lay not in the insufficiency of the factual record, but rather in the problem of making sense of the facts. This involves examining the questions asked of the facts.

The Questions Asked of the Facts

Upon a thorough study of those scholars who have attempted to explain Hitler's rise to power, it appears that almost all scholars approach

the question from two illogically combined ways. The first way involves applying some descriptive label to Hitler, such as that he was an "unprincipled opportunist," or suggesting that he appeared to have "mediumistic powers," and then asserting or implying that the descriptive label is explanatory. The second approach is to focus not on what Hitler did to achieve success, but rather to focus upon the "conditions" that made Hitler possible. However, almost all of the conditions usually described as being the "cause" of Hitler's rise were equally present for all politicians of Hitler's day, and therefore offer little insight into why or how he, specifically, was able to capitalize on them. As a result, the answers elicited by the questions asked from these two approaches, while useful and enlightening for many purposes, are singularly lacking in explanatory value in answering the two questions identified by Trevor-Roper and Lukacs as constituting the continuing mystery of Hitler's political success; viz., who was this man, and how did he do it?

A brief review of the answers given will illustrate the failure of these two approaches to solve the mystery of Hitler. To illustrate this failure, I shall pose three sets of questions to each of the answers given by previous scholars: (1) What was there about this man Hitler that enabled him to succeed? What distinguished Hitler from the others? In other words: Why Hitler—and not someone else? (2) Granting the truth, for the sake of argument, of every previously proposed explanation, how exactly did he do it? (3) Why was it Hitler—of all people—who was able to do it? What was it that Hitler had that the others did not?

Opportunist

In the first major biography of Hitler after World War II, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, Alan Bullock led the way in explaining Hitler by labeling him as an "unprincipled opportunist." While this is undoubtedly true, the descriptive label lacks explanatory value for several reasons. First, there is no necessary connection between being an opportunist (unprincipled or otherwise) and being successful. Opportunism is not necessarily an attractive quality in a leader. For example, according to Klaus P. Fischer, Hermann Esser was a "demon speech maker and rabble rouser . . . [who] was intelligent, cunning and utterly unscrupulous," and considered a rival of Hitler for the leadership of the early Nazi Party. But "what disqualified Esser," according to Fischer, "was his selfish opportunism."[31] Thus, being an unprincipled opportunist does not always guarantee success in politics; indeed, it is often a liability.

Second, as a matter of fact, there were many other opportunistic politicians in Germany in the 1920s. Fifty new political parties and associations were founded in 1919 in Munich alone, and hundreds throughout the rest of Germany, containing many politicians and would-be politicians every bit as opportunistic as Hitler. However, he succeeded and they did not.

Labeling Hitler as an opportunist, therefore, neither explains Hitler's hold over people, nor why he was more successful than the others. The critical investigation, therefore, would be to go beyond the label to explain how Hitler's opportunism differed from the standard, garden-variety opportunism, and then to go on to explain how his different form of opportunism (whatever that may have been—Bullock does not define or explain it) contributed to his success in politics.

Was Hitler's form of opportunism, unlike Esser's, attractive in some new and unknown way? Or did Hitler discover a new and previously unknown way to mask his opportunism? In either case, how did he do this? Bullock simply fails to address these questions. Therefore, the answer that Hitler was an "opportunist"—no matter how true it may have been—fails to answer the questions: Why was Hitler successful as an "opportunist"—and not any of the others? What distinguished his opportunism from other forms of opportunism? And, how, exactly, did he make his "opportunism" so much more politically effective? Bullock's explanation that Hitler was an opportunist—unprincipled or otherwise—simply offers no insight into how or why Hitler was successful.

Demagogue

It has often been argued that Hitler was successful because he was a great orator and demagogue. It is no doubt true that Hitler was a great orator and demagogue. However, this fact alone also lacks explanatory value for several reasons. First, as a factual matter, Hitler was not the only outstanding orator and demagogue at the time. There were many others, such as Richard Kunze[32] and Karl Gandorfer,[33] who were also known to be exceptionally effective demagogues. To label Hitler as a demagogue does not explain how his demagogy differed from, or was superior to, that of other demagogues, and therefore fails to explain his success.

Second, again as a factual matter, scholars have noted that even in the Nazi Party, Hermann Esser was considered by many in the early days to be a "spit-fire orator" and a rival of Hitler in demagogy.[34] Therefore, any argument that Hitler succeeded because he was a demagogue would fail to explain why Hitler emerged as the dominant force in his own party. Nor would it explain how he was later able to attract such other demagogic speakers, such as Joseph Goebbels and Gregor Strasser, who were also known to be outstanding speakers, to support him rather than exploit their own gifts for demagogy on their own behalf.

Third, as Theodore Abel has argued, demagogy alone is rarely sufficient to ensure success: "No matter how skillfully an orator plays upon the emotions of an audience, he cannot long maintain his hold," Abel writes.[35] Hitler, however, established his hold on a small group and then constantly expanded it to greater and greater portions of the population

over a period of fourteen years—an accomplishment neither easily nor logically attributable to demagogy alone. Nor has anyone attributed Hitler's rise to a type of demagogy that has not yet been classified or explained.

Fourth, if Hitler's success were truly attributable to his oratory and demagogy, in light of the fact that he has been called one of the greatest orators of the twentieth century, it would seem that his rhetoric would have become the subject of intensive study. Yet, as Fritz Redlich points out, "No comprehensive study of all aspects of Hitler's language exists."[36] So far, no rhetorician has conducted a study of Hitler's rhetoric that would explain his phenomenal political success.[37] If Hitler's demagogy—his speechmaking, oratory, and rhetoric—were so important in explaining Hitler's success, why has no one seen fit to study it in order to explain the principles of its effectiveness?

Finally, if Hitler's political success were due to his demagogy, why and how did his movement grow so effectively during the period from November 1923 until April 1927, when Hitler was either in prison or under a ban on public speaking? During this period, the party grew from a "Party of one" in February 1925, after Hitler was released from prison, to more than 78,000 dues-paying, committed members by 1927. This phenomenal success cannot be attributed to demagogy. Indeed, if demagogy, oratory, and rhetoric could accomplish such success, it is a noteworthy fact that Hitler gave only one public speech during the three and a half years between November 1923, when he was imprisoned after the Putsch, and April 1927, when the ban on his public speaking was lifted. It is also particularly noteworthy that no other would-be demagogue arose in this period to take Hitler's place. If demagogy could have such amazing results, it is a wonder that no one else attempted to employ it in order to take Hitler's place while he was out of the picture.

Labeling Hitler as a demagogue, therefore, is not sufficient to explain his success. Something about Hitler's demagogy was different from that of others. An approach is necessary that would go behind the label to identify what it was about Hitler that was different. To paraphrase Trevor-Roper's questions: What was there about this man that enabled *him* to create a distinctively different and unusually effective form of demagogy? What were the means or methods by which he presented his demagogy differently from the others? It is in answering these two questions that the keys to solving the mystery of Hitler's rise to power lies.

In attempting to solve that mystery, one must approach the question of Hitler's demagogy from a quite different perspective than historians have employed so far. In this regard, the advice of the first private detective in literature, the Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin, is apropos: "[I]t should not be so much asked 'what has occurred,' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before.'"[38] So far as I know, no approach by historians or scholars of other disciplines, such as rhetoric, for example, has gone be-

yond any of the labels in order to identify what was distinctive about Hitler's demagogy that made it so effective. Even if one grants, for the sake of argument, that Hitler's success could be explained by his demagogy, no one has explained what there was about this man that enabled him—*and no one else*—to create and employ such an effective form of demagogy. To label Hitler as a demagogue simply explains nothing, and raises more questions than it answers

Pawn

Many scholars have argued that Hitler was the "pawn" of the army, the capitalists, industrialists, landowners, or other wealthy and entrenched groups, who financed and used him for their purposes.[39] Meticulous research has weakened most of these arguments.[40] However, to the extent that they may have any validity, they do not help to solve the mystery of Hitler, for they do not explain why or how *he* was able to impress the representatives of these groups, or how *he* came to be chosen as their pawn. Such theories do not explain what there was about Hitler—of all people—that caused them to invest in his political success. Of course, once he had built up his movement sufficiently to attract their attention, it becomes understandable why they may have supported him and may have wanted him to be their pawn. However, that begs the question of how Hitler built up his movement in the first place—before they supported or even took notice of him.

Thus, if Hitler had been chosen from the beginning, by the army, say, in 1919, the mystery becomes even greater. In 1919, according to all scholars who have studied Hitler during this period, he seemed like the most improbable of all potential politicians. Why, then, would the army or any other group have selected Hitler as their pawn?

This question suggests the next question: If any group saw Hitler as their pawn in the early to mid-1920s, what did they see in him that scholars have so far been unable to identify? A case in point: Ernst Roehm joined the tiny German Workers' Party in the same month as Hitler and committed himself to Hitler's advancement and leadership in the party.[41] Roehm, a major at the time, was one of the most politically astute and well-connected officers in the German army. Conversely, Hitler's military record up to this point evidenced no leadership capacity; he was still a corporal. What, then, did Roehm know about Hitler's potential as a politician that scholars have been unable to see?

So far, none of the scholars who have argued that Hitler was chosen as a pawn have addressed these questions.[42] In other words, the approaches that have focused on explaining Hitler as a pawn beg the question of why anyone would have chosen him to be their standard bearer. The essential questions, instead of being answered by the pawn theory, are brought into greater relief: Why would any groups have chosen Hitler as their

pawn in 1919 or the early 1920s, when he was still an obscure, radical leader of a small party on the extreme fringe?

Intellectual Currents

Many scholars have sought to explain Hitler based upon intellectual currents and ideas prevalent in Germany at the time.[43] However, whatever force these arguments may have, the fact is that all of the intellectual currents and ideas that are usually identified as contributing to Hitler's rise are claimed to have existed broadly across German society. They were thus known to, and available to, every other politician in Germany.

In the 1928 Reichstag election, for example, there were thirty political parties on the ballot, and in the 1930 election there were twenty-eight parties on the ballot. No scholar has explained, or even attempted to explain, why Adolf Hitler was more qualified or better situated than the leaders of these other parties to grasp these ideas and use them as the basis of his movement. In other words, who was this man, and how was it that *he* was able, alone among all the politicians in Germany, to seize these currents? Why was Hitler—of all people—the only person to benefit from these intellectual currents and ideas? What was there about *him* that enabled *him* to capitalize on them? The arguments that Hitler's success was the result of intellectual currents, cultural forces, or broadly held ideas shed no light on the question of what there was about Hitler that enabled him alone to recognize these currents, forces, and ideas and build his success upon them.

Economic, Political, and Social Conditions

Many scholars have suggested or implied that Hitler's success could be explained by economic, political, and social conditions in Germany. These conditions include Germany's defeat in the First World War, the imposition of the republic by the Allies, the humiliating Versailles Peace Treaty including onerous reparations, the Great Inflation, and the Great Depression.[44] It is often said that Hitler would have been impossible at any other time in German history, or under other conditions. However, even if one grants the validity of such arguments, the fact is that all of these conditions were present for all other politicians. No scholar has explained why Hitler was better able to take advantage of economic or political conditions than any of the others.[45] Nor has any scholar explained what there was about Hitler that enabled *him* to foresee the opportunities inherent in these conditions and to position himself to capitalize on them. In other words, no scholar has offered an explanation of why conditions affecting all others worked to the advantage of only one.[46]

In one sense, however, the argument that Hitler was the "product" of conditions is what John Lukacs has defined as a "half-truth." "A half-truth," writes Lukacs, "is not a 50 percent truth; it is a 100 percent truth

and a 100 percent untruth mixed together."[47] In one sense it is completely true that Hitler could only have risen politically in the confused conditions existing in Germany after World War I. However, this is not a valid reason to avoid the study of Hitler's mind and character and to treat him as an "unperson," as, for example, Joachim Fest and Ian Kershaw have done. Undoubtedly, Albert Einstein might never have been heard of if he had been born in, say, the Middle Ages; his genius in physics needed certain conditions in which to bloom. Similarly, we might never have heard of George Washington but for the conditions existing in the colonies prior to the American Revolution, nor of Abraham Lincoln but for the conditions existing at the time of the slavery controversy. Each of these was a genius who was able to more effectively understand and use the conditions than others. The conditions merely provided the field upon which their genius could play.

The half-truth involved with Hitler has been to ignore his mind and to look to conditions to explain him, rather than looking to his genius to try to understand how he perceived prevailing conditions differently than others. It may, indeed, be true that Hitler could not have thrived in other conditions, but the error lies in assuming that he was the "product" of those conditions. The significant point is that however mad or evil, he understood those conditions in a way that was different from all others and used them in a way that was extraordinarily powerful. As Trevor-Roper asked, as long ago as 1953, "Why then do historians tell us so little of Hitler's mind, often dismissing it as non-existent?"[48] The mystery of Hitler consists not in the conditions in which he thrived, but in the distinctive nature of his mind that enabled him to be successful in precisely those conditions.

Mediumistic Powers

Many of Hitler's contemporaries and several subsequent scholars have argued that Hitler was successful because he had some type of "mediumistic" power over both individuals and, especially, over crowds.[49] Ernst Nolte, for example, argues that "[t]here should be no doubt as to the mediumistic traits in Hitler."[50] Nolte's point is that Hitler's mediumistic traits constituted one of the three characteristics that "explain" Hitler's success. However, no scholar has focused attention on Hitler's speeches or other instances of his so-called mediumistic activities to discover whether these were paranormal abilities, or simply staged effects deliberately created. Although many scholars have discussed the elaborate planning that went into Hitler's appearances in public—the fanfare, the bands, the ritual, and the obvious efforts to create excitement and suspense—no one has explicitly studied these to uncover the method employed to achieve these effects. Thus it is quite conceivable that Hitler's "mediumistic effects" were not paranormal in any way, but known

tricks or methods that Hitler adapted to politics calculated to give him the appearance of a paranormal, or even supernatural, personage.

To describe Hitler as a "medium," or to credit him with mediumistic powers, therefore, is not by itself explanatory. It would be necessary to concentrate not on the effects that Hitler created, but on the means he used to create them. Only by studying the actual planning and execution of the effects would it be possible to reveal the nature of the mind that envisioned these effects and the nature of the mind that calculated the means to achieve them. Possibly Hitler was in fact the only politician who may have taken speaking lessons from a professional magician.[51] In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler states that it took him two years to learn all the tricks of public speaking. If this is accurate, it is strong evidence that Hitler was not a medium, but an extremely clever and calculating politician, who studied crowd psychology and planned every aspect of his speeches and public appearances to achieve the desired effect.

Psychological Interpretations

Psychological and psychohistorical interpretations have generally fallen into two categories, each of which alone is nonexplanatory. The first of these begins at the far end of the telescope, focusing on the psychological needs of Hitler's audiences or the needs of the entire German people. The classic example of this approach is Frederick L. Schuman's *The Nazi Dictatorship: A Study of Social Pathology and the Politics of Fascism*. Schuman argues that Hitler's rise to power can be explained by a collective psychological disorder experienced by the entire German middle class, which suffered acute paranoia, delusions of persecution, and systematic hallucinations of grandeur, resulting in "pathological regressions to infantilism of the *Kleinburgertum*."[52] While this argument has been ably criticized by some scholars,[53] it will be illustrative if, for the sake of argument, one assumes that it were true. The familiar questions would then immediately arise: Why was it that no other politician in Germany noticed this infantilism and capitalized on it? Why was it—and how was it—that Hitler alone perceived this situation and effectively acted upon it?

Essentially, Schuman's explanation is that Hitler was successful in building up the largest mass movement in German history because he was maladjusted. According to Schuman, Hitler was filled with "thwarted aggressions" and "unbearable emotional tensions," "obsessed with "mother-rescue fantasies" and "unconscious fears of impotence and castration." However, these "maladjustments" did not hold Hitler back, as logic would suggest; rather, according to Schumann, it was Hitler's very neuroses that paved his way to power. Schuman's formula for Hitler's success is as follows:

> Because his own personality difficulties had counterparts by the millions in the society in which he lived, he was to found a new political

> religion giving solace to its disciples. Because of his special talents as an actor, an orator, and a symbol-artist, he was to become the Messiah of this religion: Der Fuehrer. Therewith began a cycle: from neurosis to fanaticism, from fanaticism to a following of fanatics, from a following to a party, from the party to a great mass movement, from the mass movement to revolution and to power beyond the dreams of despots.[54]

Schuman argues, therefore, that Hitler was successful because he was the same as an entire class ("his own personality difficulties had counterparts by the millions"). However, the fact that he was the same as "millions" fails to explain why and how he—alone among millions—was able to distinguish himself from all the others by becoming their leader and "Messiah." Schuman's analysis begs the essential question: What is distinctive about Hitler that made him so successful in founding "a new political religion" on this? Schuman does not address this question. Having asserted that an entire class suffered from a collective neurosis, and that Hitler had the same neurosis, Schuman simply recites the facts of what Hitler did. He makes no effort to explain why Hitler was able to perceive the condition of the German middle class, or how it was that Hitler could imagine and build a political movement to appeal to that precise condition. Schuman, too, completely avoids Trevor-Roper's questions: Who was this man and how did he do it?

Other psychohistorians, while concentrating on Hitler himself, have sought to explain why he was motivated to use the powers he achieved in the manner that he did, but they shed little light on how he ever got into a position from which to exercise such powers in the first place. Indeed, while most psycho-historians, psychiatrists and psychologists agree that Hitler was a psychopath and sociopath affected by all kinds of psychological disorders, they fail to explain how a person with such neuroses or psychoses was able to rise to power. Hitler has been variously diagnosed as having a "narcissistic personality with paranoid features"[55] and a "borderline personality disorder,"[56] and of being a "hysterical psychopath"[57] and a "destructive and paranoid prophet."[58] However, none of these diagnoses shed light on why Hitler was politically successful. Nor do they explain what kind of a man, given these diagnoses, could have had the effect that Hitler had. Rather, many psychological analyses increase the mystery of Hitler's rise to power; such a maladjusted person neither should have, nor easily could have, acquired the power that Hitler acquired. One can only concur with what Ron Rosenbaum has written of as the "egregious failure of psychological and psychoanalytical explanations of Hitler."[59] The simple fact is that, no matter how correct the diagnoses may be, psychology, psychoanalysis, and psychohistory have failed to explain who this man was and how he did what he did.

Other Interpretations

In the half century that has elapsed since the death of Hitler and the collapse of the Third Reich, there have been many excellent studies of specific aspects of Hitler's rise to power and of National Socialism as a phenomenon. These may be divided into two categories.

First, there is the category of those who, through patient and meticulous research, have analyzed testimony in order to disprove myths and to explain hitherto unclear events. Among these studies one must prominently list the work by Brigitte Hamann, *Hitler's Vienna*, in which she carefully collected and analyzed all of the existing testimony and records of the Vienna period of Hitler's life.[60] Hamann disproved many myths and identified many spurious and unreliable sources in order to establish the credibility and corroborate the various testimonies and accounts. Henry Ashby Turner, Jr., in his monumental work, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler*, assembled facts to disprove the myth that prior to 1930 Hitler was financed by big business to a significant extent.[61] Turner's other work, *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power*, has sorted out and clarified the intrigues that resulted in Hitler's appointment as chancellor on January 30, 1933.[62] Although these studies, and many others like them, have served to clarify many details of Hitler's life and career, they have also further highlighted the mystery of how Hitler—of all people—was able to build up this movement and arrive at the pinnacle of power. Each fact corrected, and each myth disproved, has deepened the mystery—a fact reflected in the works by Lukacs, Rosenbaum, Nelken, and Kershaw mentioned above.

Second, there is the category of studies of broader aspects of Hitler's rise to power. Several studies of the apocalyptic appeal of Hitler and National Socialism have revealed a major basis for the success of National Socialism. These have included, for example, the studies of James M. Rhodes,[63] Robert Pois,[64] and David Redles.[65] Each of these, however, has only deepened the mystery of why and how Hitler—of all people—was able to create and lead such a movement. Similarly, studies of Hitler's charismatic appeal, such as those of J. P. Stern[66] and Joseph Nyomarky,[67] have highlighted Hitler's brilliance at creating a charismatic foundation for his power. However, they have also deepened the mystery as to how or why Hitler, who seemed to have so little personality, was able to become such a charismatic leader.

In these and many other studies neither the questions that have been asked nor the answers that have been given have unraveled the mystery of who this man was, or how he did what he did. Those scholars who have studied Hitler's youth, his personality, and his career, have so far given us no way to grasp how the *man* Hitler could have accomplished what the *politician* Hitler did. In other words, the relationship between *what is known about the man* simply does not relate to what is known about

what he did. Alan Bullock, five years after publishing his classic biography, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, describes the mystery this way:

> The more I learn about Adolf Hitler, the harder I find it to explain and accept what followed. Somehow, the causes are inadequate to account for the size of the effects. It is offensive both to our reason and our experience to believe that the Hitler August Kubizek knew in Linz . . . was the stuff of which Hegel's "world historical individuals," the Caesars and the Bonapartes, are made. Yet the record is there to prove us wrong. It is here, in the gap between the explanation and the event, that the fascination with Hitler remains.[68]

Thus the incongruity between the man and the effects he caused—the gap between "the explanation and the event"—is so enormous in the case of Hitler that, according to Bullock, it offends "both reason and experience." Thus, Hitler the man remains a total mystery hidden behind the events he caused.

J. P. Stern states the mystery of Hitler in terms of the failure to find any narrative story line that could encompass this man's career: "The facts of the case—chief among them the metamorphosis of the Nobody of Vienna into the Leader of Greater Germany—are so extraordinary that when they are 'left to tell their own story' they hardly make any sense at all."[69]

Ron Rosenbaum, reporting on the "scandal" of the failure of the historians to "explain Hitler," finds that there is simply no "coherent and convincing" account that

> would explain his transformation from a shy, artistically minded youth, to a dispirited denizen of a Viennese homeless shelter, from the dutiful but determinedly obscure army corporal, to the figure who, not long after his return to Munich from the war, suddenly leapt onto the stage of history as a terrifyingly incendiary street orator. One who proceeded to take over a party whose members numbered in the dozens and used it to seize power over a nation of millions.[70]

Thus, the questions that have been asked of the historical record have so far failed to provide answers to the questions posed by Trevor-Roper, and have so far failed to solve the mystery.

The Historical Problem

As a result of the inability of scholars to answer the two questions that have baffled them for over half a century—Who was this man and how did he do it?—a fundamental problem of historical understanding has arisen. This can be stated simply: As long as Hitler remains inexplicable, he stands out as unique in all human history. This was the premise of Joachim Fest, who began his biography *Hitler* with the statement: "History records no phenomenon like him."[71] The same position was taken by

Sebastian Haffner, who writes that Hitler is "unique in German history, without predecessors or successors."[72]

However, the conclusion that Hitler is unique in all human history carries with it two major implications and several corollary implications that serve to increase the fascination with him. The first major implication is that Hitler was possessed of some kind of supernatural powers beyond the ability of scholars to explain, and beyond the powers of ordinary mortals to understand.

This implication carries with it two corollaries: first, that Hitler himself lies outside, above, or beyond historical explanation; and, second, that those who followed him cannot be held accountable if it is found that they were acted upon by a supernatural force. These are precisely the dangerous implications that Saul Friedlander makes explicit in *Reflections on Nazism*:

> And finally this remains . . . the comprehension of Nazism passes through the mystical, through a strange deciphering of supernatural forces, the key to which is not given to us. . . . If that is so, all rational action within the order of politics becomes ridiculous. . . . If Nazism was the necessary response to the problems of the time, there is nothing for the individual to do but silently submit. . . . That implies, in fact, an implicit or explicit belief in a secret order of things determining the apparent course of events. . . . And here we are confronted by a moral dilemma: If reason is impotent and if events depend on mysterious and incomprehensible rules, crimes cannot be judged according to our conventional criteria.[73]

This concern about Hitler escaping explanation by removing him to the realm of the supernatural, and thereby escaping judgment, is also the theme of Ron Rosenbaum's work, *Explaining Hitler*. As Rosenbaum shows, some scholars argue that any attempt to explain Hitler is "immoral."[74] However, this work begins with the position that the failure to explain Hitler raises implications that are even more immoral, as will become clear upon considering the second implication arising from the failure to explain Hitler.

The second corollary implication is that Hitler may become a myth or legend of growing power—the man who came to his people as a "savior," but who could not be understood by the "wise men and scholars." As long as he remains inexplicable, the legend of Hitler remains beyond the ability of anyone to refute. Robert Payne describes the obvious possibility:

> There remains the legend of the lean, hard apostle of destruction with the burning eyes and the seductive voice, who crowded into his life more victories than Alexander, Napoleon and Timurlane combined. In an age when nihilism lies close to the surface, he will inevitably find many imitators and followers. He knew that the world had never seen anything like him, and he was certain he would have many sons. . . .

> For all the foreseeable future he will remain to haunt us, more alive than ever though he is dead.[75]

Thus the legend of Hitler—a man of superhuman and inexplicable power—exerts a fascination and a temptation that has long concerned scholars. John Lukacs states a similar concern about a possible future legend of Hitler in the concluding words of *The Hitler of History*. "Two dangers lie in the future," he writes: "During a rising flood of barbarism his reputation may rise in the eyes of orderly people, who may regard him as a kind of Diocletian, a tough, last architect of imperial order. At the same time he might be revered by at least some of the new barbarians."[76]

The fact is that the continuing inexplicability of Hitler leaves him beyond the reach of reason. This is the essential motivation of my inquiry. Like Alan Bullock, I find it "offensive to both reason and experience" that this man Hitler should continue to lie outside of historical explanation and comprehension.

Conclusions Drawn from Review of the Literature

The most essential conclusions that I have drawn from my review of the literature are as follows:

1. Scholars have already applied every known theory of the social sciences and humanities to explain Hitler, but so far the mystery has not been solved.
2. Almost all previous historical and biographical studies of Hitler have attempted to explain his power in terms of why people responded to him, rather than studying precisely what he did to elicit that response.
3. Other previous studies—biographical and historical—that have applied familiar labels, or employed familiar concepts, have been unsuccessful at explaining his success.
4. The failure to discover a satisfactory explanation for Hitler's success is an embarrassment to the historical profession and poses a danger in regard to the place of Hitler in myth and legend.

Most important of all, there seems to be no doubt that the central issues in Hitler studies, both historical and biographical, arise from the inability of scholars to discover the relationship between what is known about Hitler the *man* and what is known about Hitler the *politician*. This suggests that the proper focus of any new study or investigation designed to solve the mystery of Hitler must focus on Hitler himself.

The Question So Far Not Investigated

After reviewing the approaches of previous scholars I find that there is one question that has not been investigated by any post–World War II scholar. That question may be set out this way:

> What personality or character trait: talent, skill or ability (natural or acquired); genius, or method, did Hitler possess, whose identification and explication would meet the following five requirements:
>
> 1. distinguish Hitler from other politicians;
> 2. explain what it was that gave Hitler the advantage over other politicians;
> 3. explain why Hitler was so often underestimated;
> 4. explain why he was so much more successful than other men of seemingly better education, experience, and background, who seemed to possess more talents and abilities, more connections, and more resources; and, finally,
> 5. would connect Hitler's youth and young manhood prior to his entry into politics with his life after 1919, when he entered politics.

Among all of the scholars and biographers who have studied Hitler's life and career, I find only one who had specifically asked this last question, and he had done so not only before World War II, but even before Hitler came into power. That scholar was Konrad Heiden, who in the early 1930s asked: "What natural gifts determined Hitler's fate?"[77] In answer, Heiden argues that the secret to Hitler's success lay in a peculiar form of logic. "His strength is utterly in his logic," writes Heiden. This is a surprising and unexpected explanation of Hitler. However, Heiden personally knew and observed Hitler for a longer time and at closer quarters than any other journalist, opponent, or scholar. Strangely, no one has ever before investigated Heiden's explanation of Hitler's success.

METHOD

Frankly, Heiden's claim that Hitler's strength was utterly in his logic puzzled me for a long time. How could strength in logic be attributed to Hitler, who is generally described as irrational and emotional in his approach to politics? Nevertheless, I was intrigued by the fact that, on the one hand, all previous theories have failed to explain Hitler, and on the other, that this seems to be the only hypothesis left. In such a situation, the guidance of one skilled in solving mysteries ought to be sought. When Dr. Watson suggests to Sherlock Holmes that a certain hypothesis "seems most improbable," Holmes replies: "We must fall back on the old maxim that when all other contingencies fail, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth. Here all other contingencies *have* failed."[78]

Apart from Heiden, previous historians and biographers had applied only two methods in their attempts to explain Hitler. The first method identified some known and generally understood characteristic and then attempted to employ that characteristic to explain Hitler. Various characteristics have been singled out, such as that Hitler was an "unprincipled opportunist," a "demagogue," a "pawn," a "medium," a "sociopath," or a "psychopath." However, none of these characteristics, however accurate, had explanatory value; they did not explain why Hitler was successful. The second method applied some known theory or concept from the social sciences or humanities to explain Hitler's success. However, no known theory or concept has so far provided a satisfactory explanation regarding who this man was, or how he did it. As Friedlander writes, as to Hitler:

> Historical inquiry seems to strike at an irreducible anomaly. The emotional hold Hitler and his movement maintained on many Germans . . . defies all customary interpretation and can never be explained coherently within the framework of a historiography in which political, social, or economic explanations predominate. . . . The manifest presence of this unknown determinant has changed nothing about the routine of research. It is true that psychohistorical investigation of Nazism has become a discipline—which seems to answer the objection. But it must be admitted that this approach has proved disappointing because of an excessively schematic application of concepts both too general and too worn out. At best it seems artificial.[79]

The essential similarity of all the methods and approaches applied so far has been that they have attempted to explain Hitler in terms of previously known and existing theories. Their failure suggests that the solution lies in some previously unknown theory, or in some characteristic never before known to produce such effects as were produced by Hitler in his rise to power. The method employed to apply a known theory is well understood. It consists in identifying the principal point or points upon which the theory depends, and then searching the factual record to determine if those points are present. Once one identifies the facts necessary to apply the theory, one next determines whether the cause-and-effect relationship postulated by the theory explains all the known facts. In the case of Hitler, though every known theory has already been applied to the known facts, none has proved to be satisfactory, and no consensus among scholars has been achieved. Rather, the only consensus seems to be, in Alan Bullock's words, that the rise of Hitler is not "explicable by the ordinary tools and methods of rational historical and psychological analysis,"[80] or, as Saul Friedlander writes, Hitler "defies all customary interpretation and can never be explained coherently within the framework in which political, social, or economic explanations dominate."[81]

These observations suggest that an entirely different method, if such a one could be found, is essential if we are to solve the mystery of Hitler's rise to power. It would have to be a method by which one clears one's mind of all previous theories and conceptions, and looks at the facts in order to imagine a new and previously unknown cause that might account for the facts. In other words, it would have to be the sort of method that detectives use in their daily work. It would have to be a method that assumes Hitler used a means to achieve his political success never before used (or not heretofore recognized). At this stage of my inquiry, the question becomes: Is there a method by which to discover something when one does not know exactly what it is that one is looking for?

In this case, the mystery can be stated precisely: Why was Hitler—of all people—politically successful? However, I began my approach to this mystery with no preconceived idea at all as to what kind of answer might solve it. I, therefore, had to search for a method by which to discover or reveal the manner and means by which this man Hitler might have become so successful.

The key to the method I was searching for was given by Sebastian Haffner. In his first book on Hitler, published in 1940, shortly after he had emigrated from Germany, Haffner suggested a method that no scholar has so far applied to the mystery of Hitler. Haffner wrote:

> Though endless reams of paper have been covered with ink concerning Hitler, he is still able to surprise the world, a proof that the key to his personality and his behavior has not yet been found. Yet that key is within easy reach. Its whereabouts are so obvious that no one suspects it—a kind of hiding place familiar to every reader of detective stories.[82]

In this passage, Haffner acknowledges that the "key" to Hitler's "personality and behavior" had not yet been found. Nevertheless, he insists that there is a method by which to understand them. It is the method known to "every reader of detective stories."

The detective story is a genre of literature whose entire soul is method—the method used by the private detective to unravel mysteries. Further, it is a method that utilizes a peculiar form of logic. That form of logic has only recently been identified as a form of logic called "abduction." Abduction is a third form of logic, in addition to, and different from, the two traditional forms of logic known since Aristotle, namely, deduction and induction. Hence Heiden's baffling remark: "His strength is utterly in his logic."

The thesis of this work is that abductive logic furnishes the key to solving the mystery of Adolf Hitler's rise to power. In this dissertation, abductive logic will perform two functions. First, abductive logic shall be employed as the means or method to unravel the mystery of Adolf Hitler's mind and character. Second, it will be argued that abductive logic is itself the secret of the power of Hitler's mind and character. Essentially, it

will be argued that Hitler's talent and skill in the use of abductive logic is what distinguished him from other politicians and enabled him to be successful over them.

NOTES

1. Trevor-Roper's essay, "The Mind of Adolf Hitler," was published simultaneously in both England and the United States as the introduction to *Hitler's Table Talk* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1953) and *Hitler's Secret Conversations: 1941–1944* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Young, 1953), respectively. The pagination of the introduction (but not the subsequent texts) is identical in both works (vii–xxx).
2. Trevor-Roper, "Mind," vii.
3. Robert G. L. Waite, *The Psychopathic God: Adolf Hitler* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), xi.
4. Eberhard Jaeckl, *Hitler in History*, vol. 3 of *The Tauber Institute for the Study of European Jewry Series* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1984), 1.
5. James M. Rhodes, *The Hitler Movement: A Modern Millenarian Revolution* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), 1.
6. Robert Payne, *The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), ix.
7. Joachim Fest, *Hitler,* trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974).
8. Joachim Fest, "Encumbered Remembrance," in *Forever in the Shadow of Hitler?,* trans. James Knowlton and Truett Cates (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1993), 71. Originally in *Frankfurter Algemeine Zeitung* (August 1986).
9. Robert Nelken, *Hitler Unmasked: The Romance of Racism and Suicide* (Glastonbury: Darkside Press, 1997), 145.
10. John Lukacs, *The Hitler of History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1997), 45.
11. As found in Lukacs, *Hitler of History,* 255. Quoting Percy Ernst Schramm, *Hitler: The Man and Military Leader,* trans. Donald S. Detwiler (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 123.
12. Lukacs, *Hitler of History*, 50.
13. Ron Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler: The Search for the Origin of His Evil* (New York: Random House, 1998), xii.
14. *Ibid*.
15. *Ibid*., 67–68.
16. *Ibid*., 68.
17. Gordon A. Craig, "Working Toward the Fuehrer," *The New York Review of Books* (March 18, 1999): 32–35, at 32.
18. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: 1889-1936: Hubris* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), xxv.
19. *Ibid*., xxvi.
20. *Ibid*.
21. *Ibid*., xxvii. (Emphasis in original.)
22. Payne, *Life and Death,* xii.
23. Franz Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth,* trans. Lawrence Wilson (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1958).
24. For a recounting of Toland's efforts to uncover every possible fact relating to Hitler's life and career, see Toland's memoir, *Captured by History: One Man's Vision of Our Tumultuous Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), 287–337; as well as the foreword to his *Adolf Hitler* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), ix–x.
25. Eberhard Jaeckel and Axel Kuhn, *Hitler: Saemtliche Aufzeichnungen*, *1905–1924* (Stuttgart: Deutsch Verlags-Anstalt, 1980).
26. J. P. Stern, ed., *Hitler: The Fuehrer and the People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 12.

27. Pierre Aycoberry, *The Nazi Question: An Essay on the Interpretations of Nazism (1922–1975),* trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1981), vii.

28. Gerhard Schreiber, *Hitler: Interpretationen 1923–1983: Ergebnisse, Methoden, und Probleme der Forschung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1984).

29. As found in Kershaw, *Hubris*, xxi. Citing Guido Knopp, *Hitler: Eine Bilanz* (Berlin: Goldmann, 1995), 9.

30. Stern, *Hitler: The Fuehrer*, 12.

31. Klaus P. Fischer, *Nazi Germany: A New History* (New York: Continuum, 1995), 121.

32. Richard Kunze (*Kneuppelkunze*) was a "rabidly antisemitic demagogue: and leader of the *Deutschsoziale Partei*." Peter H. Merkl, *Political Violence Under the Swastika: 581 Early Nazis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 57.

33. Karl Gandorfer was the leader of the Peasants' League and the Bavarian Peasants Party (BBMB). Geoffrey Pridham noted that "Gandorfer's demagogic skill, the tone of the BBMB's radical propaganda and the threats of violence and terror strongly resembled the methods employed by the Nazis." Pridham, *Hitler's Rise to Power: The Nazi Movement in Bavaria: 1923–1933* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1974), 71.

34. Hermann Esser was an "agitator" who "almost understood the art of mass excitation better than Hitler himself . . . He was the archetype of the 'spit-fire' orator" [Konrad Heiden, *A History of National Socialism* (New York: Octagon Books, 1971), 21]; Esser "for a time rivaled Hitler" [Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 82].

35. Theodore Abel, *Why Hitler Came to Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 119. Reprint of original 1938 edition.

36. Fritz Redlich, *Hitler: Diagnosis of a Destructive Prophet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 268.

37. However, Redlich notes that "important contributions are contained in the literary study by J. P. Stern, *Hitler: The Fuehrer and the People* (Los Angeles, 1975), and the linguistic study by Cornelius Schnauber, *Wie Hitler sprach und schreib* (Frankfort, 1972)." *Ibid*., 410, fn. 43.

38. Edgar Allan Poe, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," in *The Complete Tales and Poems of Edgar Allan Poe,* ed., Harvey Allen (New York: The Modern Library, 1938), 154. Hereafter, cited by abbreviated form, RUE.

39. See, for example, Rudolf Olden, *Hitler,* trans. Walter Ettinghausen (New York: Covici, Friede, Inc., 1936); simultaneously published in England as *Hitler: The Pawn* (London: Gollancz, 1936). For the Marxist argument, see John Strachey, *The Menace of Fascism* (New York: Covici, Friede, Inc., 1933); and Robert Brady, *The Spirit and Structure of German Fascism* (New York: Citadel Press, 1971).

40. See, for example, Henry Ashby Turner, *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), where the author's study of the ties of big business to the Nazi Party shows that Hitler did not receive significant support prior to the very last period of his rise to power, after he had already become the leader of a large mass movement.

41. Hitler, with membership no. 555 was the fifty-fifth member of the German Workers' Party; "Roehm was about the sixtieth member of the German Workers' Party." Heiden, *A History,* 9.

42. Theodore W. Abel presents an excellent argument against, and critique of, the pawn thesis (See Abel, *Why Hitler,* 194–200). Abel correctly critiques the pawn thesis on the basis that it is improbable, because no such conspiracy or cabal, as the thesis requires, has ever been shown to have actually existed. The questions I raise go beyond Abel's critique to ask the further question that, even if they had existed, why would they have chosen Hitler, of all people? What would they have seen in this man that his opponents, rivals, and other observers did not see?

43. See, for example, William M. McGovern, *From Luther to Hitler: The History of the Fascist-Nazi Political Philosophy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1941); and George L. Mosse,

The Crisis of German Ideology: Intellectual Origins of the Third Reich (New York: Universal Library, 1964).

44. Leon Degrelle, *Hitler: Born at Versailles*, vol. 1 of *The Hitler Century* (Newport Beach: Institute for Historical Review, 1987). It is also the fundamental argument of Ian Kershaw in *Hubris,* and of Joachim Fest in *Hitler*.

45. As Konrad Heiden so often pointed out, "It was Hitler, and almost Hitler alone, who had a much clearer conception of the political situation and the immediate issue." Heiden, *Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power*, trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1944), 102.

46. "In the maelstrom of the German counter-revolution, dozens of hitherto nameless figures suddenly rose to the surface, founded and led so-called defense leagues, and with them conquered cities and provinces. Hitler started out as one of these, but soon distinguished himself from all the others." *Ibid*., 104.

47. Lukacs, *Hitler of History,* 44.

48. H. R. Trevor-Roper, "Mind," viii. Trevor-Roper went on to write: "It is surprising to me that no historian, as far as I know, has sought to discover the history of Hitler's mind, the impulse which drove him to seek and systematize these formidable ideas, or the sources from which he drew them." Ibid., p. xxiii.

49. Among contemporaries: Hitler is "one of the greatest mediums the world has ever known" [E. Amy Buller, *Darkness Over Germany* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1943), 177]; also, Otto Strasser's *Hitler und Ich* (Constance: Asmus, 1948), 87ff.; Hitler's "native town of Braunau . . . is famous for producing an exceptionally large number of mediums" [Ernst Jackh, *The War for Man's Soul* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, c. 1939), 163].

50. Ernst Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism: Action Francaise, Italian Fascism, National Socialism,* trans. Leila Vennewitz (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1966), 292.

51. Hitler took lessons in public speaking from "one of the most renowned seers and astrologists in Europe, Erik Jan Hanussen" (Toland, *Adolf*, 229).

52. Frederick L. Schuman, *The Nazi Dictatorship: A Study in Social Pathology and the Politics of Fascism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1935), 123.

53. See, for example, Abel, *Why Hitler,* 186–194.

54. Schuman, *The Nazi Dictatorship,* 12.

55. Norbert Bromberg and Verna Volz Small, *Hitler's Psychopathology* (New York: International Universities Press, 1983), 8.

56. Waite, *Psychopathic God,* 356–359.

57. Redlich, *Hitler: Diagnosis*, 333–34.

58. *Ibid*., 335.

59. Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler,* xxviii.

60. Brigitte Hamann, *Hitler's Vienna,* trans. Thomas Thornton (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

61. Turner, *German Big Business*.

62. Henry Ashby Turner, Jr., *Hitler's Thirty Days to Power: January 1933* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1996).

63. James M. Rhodes, *The Hitler Movement.*

64. Robert A. Pois, *National Socialism and the Religion of Nature* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986).

65. David Redles, "Nazi Apocalypticism As a Response to Rapid and Radical Social Change" (PhD diss., Penn State University, 1995). Published as *Hitler's Millennial Reich: Apocalyptic Belief and the Search for Salvation* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

66. Stern, *Hitler: The Fuehrer*.

67. Joseph Nyomarky, *Charisma and Factionalism in the Nazi Party* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967).

68. Alan Bullock, foreword to Jetzinger's *Hitler's Youth*, 10.

69. Stern, *Hitler: The Fuehrer,* 12.

70. Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler,* xiv.

71. Fest, *Hitler*, 3.
72. Sebastian Haffner, *The Meaning of Hitler*, trans. Ewald Osers (New York: Macmillan, 1979), 163. Haffner added: "Hitler's personality fits into the German national character in roughly the way his Party Rally structures fitted into Nuremberg—in other words, sticking out like a sore thumb" (*Ibid.,* 163–164).
73. Saul Friedlander, *Reflections on Nazism: An Essay on Kitsch and Death,* trans. Thomas Weyr (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 127–128.
74. See Rosenbaum's account of his interview with Claude Lanzmann, in *Explaining Hitler*, chapter 14.
75. Payne, *Life and Death,* 572–573.
76. Lukacs, *Hitler of History,* 268.
77. Heiden, *A History*, 61.
78. Doyle, LAST, 926.
79. Friedlander, *Reflections,* 120.
80. Quoted in Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler,* 67–68.
81. Friedlander, *Reflections,* 120.
82. Sebastian Haffner, *Germany: Jekyll and Hyde*, trans. Wilfred David (London: Secker and Warburg, 1940), 14.

TWO
The Third Logic

The Background and Formal Structure of Abduction

Adolf Hitler was one of the most logical leaders in modern political history, but the type of logic that he used was never taught in any college logic class—at least not prior to the 1970s. For the type of logic that Hitler employed was not discovered until the early twentieth century and was not generally known, even to scholars, until the 1970s.

Now this may seem to be a paradox: How could Hitler have employed a logic that was not known until a quarter of a century after he died? This seeming paradox is resolved by an understanding of the word "discovery." The fact that something is "discovered" does not mean that it did not exist before its discovery. The earth revolved around the sun, and some men, such as the Egyptians, knew it long before Kepler and Copernicus discovered that fact. America existed and had already been populated long before Columbus discovered it. Men and women were concerned with sex and had portrayed its power in art and symbol long before Freud discovered the unconscious. The "discovery" of each of these merely brought into view what had long existed.

Such was the case with the logic of Hitler. It was a form of logic that has always existed, but had never before been explicated. Thus, when Hitler employed this form of logic, no one was yet able to classify it, identify it, or show how he was using it. Although it was clear to many observers—both enthusiastic followers (such as Hermann Goering and Hans Frank) and ardent critics (such as Konrad Heiden), as well as later scholars (such as Hannah Arendt)—that Hitler was quite successfully employing a very peculiar and extraordinary type of logic, none were able to explain the phenomenon. Similarly, there were many observers, critics, and opponents who, judging according to their knowledge of the

normal and accepted forms of logic, believed Hitler to be the most irrational and illogical of political leaders, without being aware that Hitler was using a completely different form of logic than the forms they had been taught.

For more than 2,300 years—from the time of Aristotle until the twentieth century—there were only two recognized forms of logic. These two forms, known to every schoolboy, were deduction and induction. Each of these forms of logic has proven to be an important force in the development of civilization. Deductive logic, for example, was the dominant form of reasoning that characterized classical and medieval civilization. With the rise of the scientific method in the seventeenth century, inductive logic became the primary basis for the scientific and industrial revolutions, supplanting deductive logic as the dominant form of reasoning.

THE WORM IN THE APPLE OF SCIENCE

The birth of science and the scientific method based on inductive logic held out the promise of great advancement for humankind in making the world more rational and advancing human well-being. However, it was soon discovered that there was a worm in the apple of science. That worm consisted of a contradiction between, on the one hand, the promise of rationality and logical understanding held out by the adoption of the scientific method, and, on the other hand, the nonrational basis of scientific discovery.

The acceptance of science—by which I mean the scientific method and the primacy of inductive logic—was fueled by the fact that from it came an increasing stream of new discoveries and inventions that radically transformed daily life. These new discoveries and inventions in turn were based on new ideas and new theories, which called for new hypotheses. The scientific method based on inductive logic was the means for testing new ideas and explanations about nature (hypotheses) and applying them. As these new ideas and theories proved successful, there was generated an increasing demand for new hypotheses. This, however, was the worm and the contradiction in the rational apple of science: while science professed to explain the world rationally, it had no rational explanation of where its new ideas and hypotheses came from.

It was soon realized that although deduction could draw out the meaning of a theory, and induction could test a theory, there was no logic or theory by which one could scientifically generate new hypotheses. Although scientists could analyze the reasons for accepting or rejecting any given hypothesis, they had no logical way to describe how the hypothesis or new theory came to be in the first place. As one logician described it, "They begin with the hypothesis as given, as cooking recipes begin with the trout."[1] But that left the underlying question unanswered:

namely, where do trout (new hypotheses or new theories) come from? In other words, where are trout found, and how exactly does one catch hold of one? Scientists did not want to admit that new hypotheses, like trout, magically appeared out of nowhere in recipes or frying pans. But the fact was that neither scientists nor logicians had any rational explanation for where new hypotheses or new theories came from.

From the earliest days of science, this inability to provide any logical foundation based on either deduction or induction for the discovery of new hypotheses resulted in scientists taking a negative view of logic itself. Francis Bacon wrote in 1605 that "men are beholden . . .generally to chance, or anything else, than to logic, for the invention of arts and sciences."[2] By 1620 he wrote that "the present system of logic . . . [is] more hurtful than helpful to scientific discovery."[3] F. C. S. Schiller wrote that "among the obstacles to scientific progress, a high place must certainly be assigned to the analysis of scientific procedure which logic has provided."[4] Schiller went on to say: "It is not too much to say that the more deference men of science have paid to logic, the worse it has been for science. . . . Fortunately for the world, however, the great men of science have usually been kept in salutary ignorance of the logical tradition."[5]

With no logical basis for the advance of science, logicians and scientists could only ascribe the advancement of science to nonrational sources. They described these as intuition, hunch, guessing, insight, or some "mental jump" that could not be logically or rationally explained. The most outstanding philosophers and logicians agreed that the basic foundation of science—the discovery of new knowledge by inventing new explanations through hypotheses and new theories—was irrational or, at best, nonlogical. This has been a position well attested by scientists and logicians. Karl R. Popper argued that the source of new hypotheses and new theories was simply beyond science and logic: "The initial stage, the act of conceiving or inventing a theory, seems to me neither to call for logical analysis or to be susceptible of it. The question of how it happens that a new idea occurs to a man . . . is irrelevant to the logical analysis of scientific knowledge."[6] John O. Wisdom agreed: "There is no rational machinery for passing from observational premises to an inductive generalization but that the hypothesis is attained by some mental jump."[7] Irving M. Copi similarly agreed: "Logic has nothing to say about the *discovery* of hypotheses."[8] Thus, the entire basis of the modern world—the scientific revolution and the new knowledge it generated—lay beyond, or at least outside of rationality and logic.

As the twentieth century approached, the problem of discovering a rational basis for science became more insistent. The nineteenth century was the century par excellence of scientific invention and discovery, from the invention of the steam engine, the telegraph and telephone, and the automobile, to the theory of evolution and Freud's theory of the unconscious. The century's heroes were inventors and scientists, such as Eli

Whitney, Bell and Edison, Pasteur, Darwin, and Freud. Yet, despite the immense changes brought about by the new discoveries that were changing the face of the planet, and despite the insistence that science was based upon a rational view of the world, both scientists and logicians in general denied that there was anything logical or rational at the base of scientific discovery itself.

The problem of this lack of logic at the core of science was not generally bandied about in public. Scientists were described as geniuses, or simply as brilliant, and the matter was left at that. But there was no doubt that modern science, which presented itself as the liberation from irrational superstition and as the apex of rationality, was itself acknowledged to be based on something irrational and inexplicable.

THE DISCOVERY OF A THIRD FORM OF LOGIC

The problem of the rational basis of science occupied the mind of an American logician, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839–1914), for more than fifty years. Peirce insisted that there was a rational basis for science. Contrary to all other philosophers of science and logicians, he argued that there was a logic of scientific discovery, and that the discovery of a new hypothesis was not merely a guess, a hunch, or a "mental jump." Rather, he insisted that the discovery of a new hypothesis was a conceptual inquiry that involved a separate form of logic, quite different from, but equal to, deduction and induction. In other words, to the question—"Where do trout come from?"—Pierce might have replied: "Fishermen know where to fish, and have methods to catch them."

Peirce called this form of logic "abduction." He began working on this form of logic in 1867. At first he called it "retroduction," because it involved a kind of "backward thinking" that did not move "forward" from the cause to effect, but "backward" from effect to cause. He gave his first full statement of the logic of abduction a third of a century later, in 1901, but he continued working on it for the rest of his life.[9]

Peirce never held an academic position in a college or university, and much of his work on this new form of logic existed only in the form of notes and manuscripts that were not published during his lifetime. Harvard University acquired Peirce's papers and published an edited collection of about 10,000 pages of them (out of approximately 90,000 pages) in eight volumes, the first of which appeared in 1931, and the last of which did not appear until 1966. As a result, Peirce's work on this form of logic did not become readily available to scholars until the second half of the 1960s. Thus, although the discovery of abductive logic was made in 1901, this discovery was not "discovered" by scholars until almost two-thirds of a century later. The first major work on Peirce's discovery of a new

form of logic, K. T. Fann's *Peirce's Theory of Abduction*, was published in 1970.[10]

The logic of abduction is still not widely known. However, by the 1980s, it became accepted as a new and valuable form of logic in several fields, especially computer science and diagnostics.[11] It has also been accepted as a logical component of the Artificial Intelligence Project.[12] In addition, Peirce's work on logic has become the acknowledged foundation of the new field of semiotics.[13] Increasingly, abduction is being found to be a form of logic that explains mental processes in many other fields, including legal reasoning, medical diagnosis, and planning.[14]

THE NATURE OF ABDUCTION

Abduction has been defined as a "type of reasoning that derives plausible explanations for the data at hand."[15] It begins when one faces bare, unexplained facts that seem to "call out" for an explanation. Abductive logic takes the facts as "clues" that suggest a cause behind or antecedent to the facts, and then reasons "backward" to try to imagine a plausible explanation for how the given facts came to be. Abduction is the "operation of adopting an explanatory hypothesis," writes Peirce.[16]

The logic of abduction is not, however, something that is purely theoretical and academic, of interest only to scientists. It is part of the way mankind has always dealt with the world. Abduction has existed ever since the first caveman wandering in the forest saw indentations in the mud and wondered what had caused them. From the indentations he hypothesized that they might be footprints, and he reasoned backward to form a picture in his mind that a bear or a bison might have been standing at that spot at some time in the past. He may have noticed that the indentations were near a source of water and hypothesized that the animals came there to drink. Each of these was an abduction. From these abductions, he formed the very valuable hypothesis that he might catch his food more easily at the spot when the animals came to drink. Thus, abductive logic was one of humanity's earliest and most important discoveries.

The mental operation involved in abduction is just as much a part of our daily lives today as it was for a caveman. It is, in one sense, little more than common sense and, though it has been said that common sense is one of the most uncommon things in the world, abduction is nonetheless used often in our daily lives when we are confronted by an unexpected fact that calls for an explanation. Imagine, for example, that you go out to your automobile one morning to go to work. You turn the key and nothing happens. You immediately perform an abductive mental operation: you form the hypothesis that your battery is dead. You then move to inductive logic to test the hypothesis: you test the lights. If the lights do

not come on, this is evidence that supports your hypothesis that the battery is dead (though it is not certain evidence, since it is also possible that the battery cables are loose or disconnected or even corroded). If the lights do come on when you turn the switch, then your initial hypothesis is disproved: the battery is not dead. You must then form a new hypothesis: perhaps the wire to the starter is loose. You lift the hood and check the wires. If you find that they are securely connected, your hypothesis is disproved. It must be something else; perhaps the starter needs to be replaced. It is now time to call the automobile repairman.

Thus, one can see from this example that abductive logic is not anything unusual. In fact, it is easy to see that we have occasion to use abduction in a multitude of daily circumstances. Perhaps its very ubiquity is the reason it was not analyzed before. But the fact that abduction is a common part of our lives does not diminish the importance of its discovery. Freud, for example, analyzed ordinary events in our lives, such as dreams and "Freudian slips." These were parts of our everyday lives long before Freud, but no one would dispute that his analysis of these frequent and ordinary events in our daily lives revolutionized our thinking about the human mind. Peirce's discovery of abductive logic operative in the ordinary mental processes of our daily lives is a discovery of similar significance.

THE FORMAL STRUCTURE OF ABDUCTION

The best way to explain the formal structure of abduction is to distinguish it from deduction and induction. This can be clearly described by inverting the premises of a single syllogism to show the differences between the three forms of logic. I will use an example given by Peirce, without burdening the reader with all of the technicalities.[17]

Deduction. A deductive syllogism is made up of a General Rule, a Specific Case, and a Conclusion. Imagine that you walk into a room and see Socrates standing behind a table. On the table you see a large bag. Socrates tells you (and who can doubt Socrates?) that the bag is filled with beans and all the beans are white. This establishes the major premise or General Rule: "All the beans in the bag are white." Socrates then reaches in the bag and takes a handful of beans, which he then holds behind his back. He asks you if you can logically conclude anything certain about the beans in his hand. Of course, you can: the beans must, logically, be white. Thus the form of the deductive syllogism is as follows:

General Rule/Hypothesis	All the beans in this bag are white.
Specific Case	These beans are from this bag.

Therefore:

Conclusion/Result	These beans are white

In deduction, what is important to note is that the reasoning moves forward from a General Rule to a Specific Case. What is sought in the Conclusion/Result is the application of a known or given General Rule upon a Specific Case. In deduction, the conclusion is absolutely certain. If the premises are true, the conclusion must follow.

Induction. In inductive logic, the terms are reversed. Whereas in deductive logic one argues from a General Rule, the purpose of inductive logic is to reason to a General Rule. Let us now examine the same syllogism, only this time the position of the General Rule/Hypothesis is moved from the beginning of the syllogism to the end. Imagine that you walk into the same room and see Socrates behind a table with a bag on it; only this time you do not know what is in the bag. Socrates asks you if you can logically determine what is in the bag without emptying the entire bag. You reach in and pull out a handful of white beans. You then reach in again, moving your hand around in the bag to mix up whatever is in it. You feel only beans and pull out another handful of white beans. You do this again. After pulling out several more handfuls, all of which consist of white beans, you reasonably infer that all these fistfuls of white beans are Specific Cases of some General Rule, viz., that all the beans in the bag are white. The inductive syllogism thus looks like this:

Specific Case	These beans are from this bag
Conclusion/Result	These beans are white

Therefore:

General Rule/Hypothesis	All the beans in the bag are white

The purpose of induction is to test a general rule by experiment. If several actions all have the same result, one can assume, based on the law of regularity in nature, that the same actions, under the same conditions, will conform to a general rule. Of course inductive logic is never certain. In the example above, the next fistful may contain a black bean, nullifying the general rule.

Abduction. In both deduction and induction, both the premises are reasonable. In other words, they are known and make sense, and one can reason smoothly from them. However, the essence of abduction is strangeness. Abduction begins when one is faced with strange, unexpected, and unexplainable premises. Following our example, imagine that you walk into the same room and observe a bag of white beans on the table and beside it a small pile of white beans. Socrates asks you, "Can you logically determine where the pile of beans came from?" One must reason to the Specific Case. In both deduction and induction, the Specific Case is a "given," and one must reason to a Conclusion/Result or

to a General Rule. However, in abduction, one is faced with the specific case, and must reason backward to explain it. Using the same terms as in our above examples, the abductive syllogism looks like this:

General Rule/Hypothesis	All the beans in the bag are white
Conclusion/Result	These beans are white

Therefore:

Specific Case	These beans are from this bag

Consider the strangeness of Socrates' question. When one considers only the two given premises—"All the beans in the bag are white" and "These beans are white"—one cannot reason either deductively or inductively to answer Socrates' question. One does not know where the pile of white beans on the table came from. The pile may have come from the bag beside it, or maybe not. It may have been placed on the table by Socrates from another source. Or perhaps somebody else brought the pile of beans into the room and set it on the table beside the bag. Socrates has asked me a strange question. How would you reason to tell him where the beans came from?

Let us consider this a "Strange Case" that involves a strange logic. The logic of it runs like this: One needs to hypothesize a new General Rule, such that, if it were true, and if the Specific Case were considered an instance of that General Rule, the question asked by Socrates would no longer be strange, but rather reasonable.[18] The structure of the logic runs like this: One needs to form a hypothesis. So one hypothesizes a General Rule in which all the beans in the bag are white much like the beans on the table. If all the beans in the bag are white, and the beans in the pile are white, it would be only reasonable to hypothesize that the beans on the table came from the bag (though not necessarily true). Therefore, one formulates a theory that the beans in the pile came from the bag.

What Socrates did in asking the question in the above example of abductive logic was to ask for an explanation of an effect. You were asked to explain where the pile of beans came from. One could have imagined the following General Rule and deductive syllogism that would have been correct: All beans came from bean plants. These are beans. Therefore, these beans came from bean plants. That would have been absolutely true, but it would not have answered the question. Socrates was not asking for a General Rule to account for all beans. Rather, he was asking for a particular explanation of a Specific Case: these beans. What Socrates wanted was not a universal rule about beans such as deductive logic begins with and inductive logic ends with. Rather, what Socrates was asking for was a story—a story that would explain how these particular beans came to be at this particular place at this particular time.

Essential to abductive logic is the perception of strangeness. Socrates could have seen the bag of beans on the table and the pile of beans beside it and thought nothing of it. It is only when we saw them as strange and a question arose—"Why is there this particular pile of beans beside this particular bag of beans?"—that the application of abduction arises. In abductive logic one leaves the bright light of universals and the clarity of scientific laws to descend to the darkness and strangeness of explaining specific cases.

The epitome of abductive logic is put into practice in private detective novels.[19] In the very first private detective story, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, two women are found brutally murdered in an apartment in which all the doors and windows are locked from the inside. Who murdered them and how could the murderer possibly have entered or left the apartment? The police are baffled. The first detective in literature, The Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin, constantly insists throughout the story on the "strangeness" of the facts and begins to reason backward to find an explanation. He generates hypotheses from clues, tests them, discards them, and generates new hypotheses until he alights on the correct one. At the end of the story he is able to explain the facts, dissolve the strangeness and mystery, and solve the case. Thus the essence of abductive logic is to recognize the strangeness in a set of facts, to reason backward to a hypothesis that will remove the strangeness and explain the strange conjunction of facts, so that they appear natural; that is, "explained."

In the examples of syllogisms given above, the order of a single set of premises and conclusions was manipulated to illustrate the differences among deductive (1-2-3), inductive (2-3-1), and abductive (1-3-2) logic. However, abductive logic has its own special form of syllogism that brings out the strangeness essential to abduction. Peirce's original formulation of the abductive syllogism is as follows:

> The surprising fact C is observed.
> But if A were true, C would be a matter of course.
> Hence, there is a reason to suspect that A is true.[20]

Peirce's abductive syllogism emphasizes the element of surprise—strangeness—in its first premise. Abduction does not begin with bare facts, but with "surprising" facts—i.e., facts that "call out" for an explanation. Therefore, abductive logic does not begin until one has had an expectation that has been disappointed, or a surprising result. If all the facts are regular and expected, there is no occasion to apply abductive logic. Abductive logic is, therefore, only applicable when a sense of "mystery" arises, and where there is a mystery to solve.

Over the years Peirce's original formulation has undergone modification and development by subsequent scholars. One salutary modification has been to add a third premise before the "Hence" or "Therefore" con-

clusion. This added premise is that the proposed hypothesis, A, is a better (more plausible) explanation than other possible explanations. Thus, Josephson and Josephson, for example, have proposed the following formulation of the abductive syllogism, replacing the symbols, A and C, by D and H, respectively:

> D is a collection of data (facts, observations, givens).
> H explains D (would, if true, explain D).
> No other hypothesis can explain D as well as H does.
> Therefore, H is probably true.[21]

While this formulation improves on Peirce's original syllogism by the addition of a third premise (which Peirce had assumed), it is not entirely satisfactory because the Josephson and Josephson formulation omits the element of "surprise" (strangeness, unexpectedness) that is a major element in abduction. Peirce discusses the importance of this element extensively. Therefore, I suggest the following formulation of the abductive syllogism that includes all of the elements of abduction for the purpose of this work:

> One encounters a surprising and unexpected set of facts and events that calls out for an explanation.
> One hypothesizes a plausible explanation that accounts for the surprising and unexpected facts and events.
> No one else has offered an explanation; certainly not one that is better at accounting for all the facts.
> Therefore, this explanation is the most plausible explanation upon which to act.

This formulation is not stated in the usual abstract terms of textbook logic, but it does contain every element of the strict abductive syllogism, and it is phrased to describe the logic that, I argue, Hitler used to gain power. His ability to "explain" to the German people the traumas they had suffered since 1918 was the basis of his appeal. However, before beginning to offer an explanation of how Hitler used this logic, four points must be made that will bring this logic into focus in relation to Adolf Hitler. All of these points are important because abductive logic is the logic people use most often to make decisions in their daily lives.

First, it is obvious that merely inventing an explanation for a surprising set of facts does not make that explanation true. In order to determine the truth of any hypothesis it must be tested. Until it is tested and proved, it is merely plausible. Even the best explanation, though it covers all the facts and seems reasonable, may be false. Second, testing a hypothesis may take a long time. Third, in the meantime decisions must often be made and actions taken in the real world. Fourth, often the only basis for decision and action is one's understanding of the facts based upon the most plausible explanation available. Thus, although abductively generated hypotheses and explanations may not be either certain or proven,

they nonetheless play a very major role in our daily lives, where we are often called upon to make decisions based on incomplete knowledge, and must simply act on the best hypothesis available. Indeed, the most important decisions both in society and in our individual lives are based on such logic. Generals facing the enemy in war, politicians making policy, citizens deciding how to vote, and everybody in their daily lives must make decisions and take action based upon their best understanding of the factual situations they face. Most often this understanding consists in little more than accepting the best available explanation. Whoever offers the best explanation creates the foundation upon which people form their thinking and direct their actions. Therefore, to provide an explanation is to channel action.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FORMAL STRUCTURE OF ABDUCTION TO THE RISE OF ADOLF HITLER: HOW HE EMPLOYED ABDUCTIVE LOGIC

Up to this point I have been discussing the formal structure of abductive logic with little reference to the rise of Hitler. While there is much more to explain about abduction, what I have presented so far is sufficient to make the first two points in showing: (1) how abductive logic was used by Hitler to reach the masses; and (2) how it begins to explain the secret of his success.

Although Hitler drafted a party program that was adopted in February 1920, he never allowed that program to be altered, nor did he offer another in its place. Throughout the 1920s there were several attempts by major factions in the party (particularly in 1925 and in the period 1928–30) to alter the program. These factions believed that the party program had to be brought up to date, that it had to address current issues with specific policies, and that it had to propose detailed solutions to the massive problems faced in Germany in order to be credible. Hitler, however, fought off all such attempts. Instead he declared the party program to be immutable and unalterable. He did not allow the party to offer detailed policy proposals or new solutions to problems outside the party program. No matter how much conditions changed, nor how many new and different issues arose, Hitler refused to explain what policies he would adopt to deal with changes and developing issues. When the French occupied the Ruhr, Hitler had no specific policy of resistance (although he claimed Albert Leo Schlageter as a martyr to the cause). When the inflation began, Hitler offered no economic, financial, or monetary plan to solve the problem. He never offered new trade, tariff, or labor policies, and almost never proposed new laws. When the Great Depression hit, Hitler boasted that he was the only candidate who did not have an economic program.

All of his opponents (and many in the party itself) criticized him for his lack of concrete plans and proposals, and refused to take him seriously. They believed that the only rational approach to politics was to face the problems as they are, propose solutions, and move forward.

Hitler, however, eschewed their forward and rational approach. He did not follow his opponents' logic. Thus, he was often dismissed as "irrational" and "illogical." But he was not irrational and illogical; he merely followed a different logic. Instead of arguing as his opponents did, that the problems were palpably clear and that they knew exactly what to do about them, Hitler argued that the facts were strange and that they needed to be explained first.

Unlike almost all other politicians, Hitler reasoned that the essence of the new republic declared at Weimar was that the people would decide their own destiny. He further reasoned that for them to achieve that destiny, they would have to understand what had happened to them. What good would it do, he asked, to be one more politician like all the others, offering concrete proposals to remedy specific problems, if the people did not understand why the problems had arisen in the first place?

At the beginning of 1918 the German public had confidently looked forward to victory. The Russians were suing for peace on the eastern front, and the Italians had been defeated in major battles on the southern front. Hundreds of thousands of troops were released to the western front, and victory was in sight. The humiliating defeat of November 1918, therefore, was a complete surprise. The continuance of the blockade of Germany, and the refusal of the Allies to release prisoners after the armistice, were inexplicable. The war guilt clause of the Versailles Treaty was directly contrary to what had been expected ("Neither victors nor vanquished" had been promised). The immense reparations imposed on Germany were incomprehensible. The loss of colonies, the sinking of the fleet, and the removal of large parts of Germany made no sense to the German people. Then came the French invasion of the Ruhr and the Great Inflation. The German public reeled in confusion.

Hitler reasoned that what the German people really needed, and wanted most, was not a plethora of complex programs and incomprehensible policies to solve specific problems that they simply did not understand. Rather, Hitler's logic told him that what they needed and wanted most was explanation. Hitler saw that the German people had gone through a series of traumatic events that they did not understand. He realized that when people are conscious of the fact that they do not understand the situation, when they constantly encounter events, facts, and experiences that they do not understand, concrete plans and proposals cannot be understood either. When events make no sense, when one is not even sure what the problem is, then proposed solutions often make no sense.

Hitler realized—consciously or not—that this was the perfect situation calling for abductive logic. He, therefore, fashioned an explanation to account for the facts and events that had overcome and mystified the German people. Behind the succession of defeats, humiliations, burdens, and privations, behind the series of inexplicable traumas, Hitler explained, was a conspiracy of Communists, Socialists, Liberals, pacifists and Jews. Once that was understood, Hitler argued, all the facts came into focus. Hitler's audiences listened in rapt attention to his speeches, and felt an exaltation as he solved the mystery and lifted the strangeness from their minds. They left his speeches converted to his ways, for Hitler had explained their traumas and made them feel that they understood what had happened. After that, the details of policies and programs seemed superfluous. They believed that Hitler "understood," and they believed that Hitler had helped them to understand.

Hitler's explanation was false, simple, and, according to normal logic, crude. However, Hitler counted on the failure of any of the other parties or politicians to offer a better explanation. He was not disappointed. In general, the other parties all wrangled over policies and programs. Hitler had the field of explanation to himself. The second longest chapter of *Mein Kampf*,[22] chapter 10 is devoted to the "Causes of the Collapse" whose major argument is based on the classic abductive model: "The cure of a sickness can only be achieved if its cause is known, and the same is true of curing political evil."[23] Even a cursory reading of chapter 10 will disclose its basis in abductive logic. The logic runs like this:

> The German people have experienced an unexplained catastrophe in the loss of the war, the humiliating peace treaty, the burden of reparations, the great inflation, etc.
> However, this set of events would not be inexplicable if there were an international conspiracy.
> No one has offered a better explanation for the collapse of Germany in the world war and the chaos since.
> Therefore, there probably is an international conspiracy.

Hitler was the consummate master of abductive logic in his oratory. In his speeches he identified with every fear and every discontent in the minds of his audience. He told them their fears were justified and their discontents real. Then he told them that all of this was understandable. He told them that their fears were not irrational. He realized that, paradoxically, people feel relieved when told that their worst fears are not figments of their imagination. The German people felt oppressed by nameless, inexplicable fears that the whole world was in a conspiracy against their country, a conspiracy made all the more unendurable by the fact that they could neither name it nor understand it. Hitler was almost alone in German politics in comprehending this fact and in abducing a theory to explain it. Konrad Heiden describes Hitler's success:

> His revelation of a world conspiracy of Jews achieved its extraordinary effect, not because of the Jews, but because of a world conspiracy. The sentiment that our modern society had arrived at a breaking point, that millions and millions would be crushed in the impending collapse, tormented every man's soul. With unerring sureness Hitler expressed the speechless panic of the masses faced by the invisible enemy and gave the nameless specter a name.[24]

Hitler not only gave it a name, he explained it. After he had first brought to consciousness every fear he read in the eyes of each member of the audience, a deep feeling of relief swept over his audiences as he offered to them, for the first time perhaps, an explanation they could understand. Konrad Heiden describes this effect: "His speeches begin always with deep pessimism and end in overjoyed redemption, a triumphant happy ending."[25] Where people came to his speeches lost, timid, and frightened, he brought their fears to the surface, made them face those fears with him, explained them, and gave them the confidence that they could understand them. He explained to them the causes of their traumas, and they experienced a feeling of relief that they now understood, as well as a feeling of triumphant victory over their own fear and ignorance. After Hitler explained the causes, there was no need for programs, policies, and plans. The people who heard him knew what they faced and what had to be done.

Konrad Heiden writes that Hitler's speeches "can be refuted by reason, but they follow a far mightier logic which no refutation can touch."[26] The source and secret of Adolf Hitler's "far mightier logic" can now be explained. It was his skill at abduction, his ability to explain the causes of Germany's plight. All of his opponents and critics laughed at him and called him illogical. But Hitler knew a logic whose workings they did not understand. The secret of his logic was abduction, and with it (to make a pun) he kidnapped the entire German nation.

I said earlier that Hitler's "explanation" was false, simple, and crude. To its victims, it was scapegoating in the most horrific way. My point in bringing attention to it now, however, is to underline how powerful this new form of logic can be, by showing in a new way the tremendous effect it could have over Hitler's audiences. It is a tragic error, an evasion, to say that Hitler was "mad" as if to find relief in that. There was a method in his madness. Hitler took a noble, widely used, but little noted form of logic and turned it toward potentially explosive consequences and heartless cruelty. Those came later. Here I limit myself to explaining how Hitler planned his way to power, in a way that many more talented, more likely, more favored rivals did not come close to grasping. What most amazes many observers still, is that so many great professors, journalists, artists and other elites failed to detect how he was doing it.

NOTES

1. N. R. Hanson, "Is There a Logic of Scientific Discovery?" in *Current Issues in the Philosophy of Science*, edited by Herbert Feigl and Grover Maxwell (New York, 1959): 20–35, at 21.
2. Quoted in W. I. Beveridge, *The Art of Scientific Investigation* , 3rd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1958), 110.
3. *Ibid* .
4. *Ibid*., 111.
5. *Ibid* .
6. Karl R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 20.
7. John O. Wisdom, *Foundation of Inference in Natural Science* (London: Methuen, 1952), 49.
8. Irving M. Copi, *Introduction to Logic* (New York: Macmillan, 1953), 407. (Emphasis in original.)
9. The history of the development of Peirce's thought on abduction is presented in K. T. Fann, *Peirce's Theory of Abduction* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), 11–54.
10. Fann, *Peirce's Theory.*
11. Yun Peng and James A. Reggia, *Abductive Inference Models of Diagnostic Problem Solving* (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1990).
12. John R. Josephson and Susan G. Josephson, *Abductive Inference: Computation, Philosophy, Technology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
13. Umberto Eco and Thomas A. Sebeok, *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).
14. Peng and Reggia, *Abductive*, 2–3.
15. *Ibid*., 1.
16. *The Essential Peirce* , vol. 2 of the *Peirce Edition Project,* ed. Nathan Houser, *et al.* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 231. Hereafter cited as *EP* , followed by the volume number and page. For example, this citation would appear as *EP2* , 231.
17. The following examples are a mélange taken from three sources: *The Collected Papers of Charles S. Peirce: 1934–1966*, vol. 2, ed. Charles Hartshorne (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931–1966), 623–625; Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 157–158; and Nancy Horowitz, "The Body of the Detective Model," in *The Sign of Three*, ed. Umberto Eco and Thomas Sebeok (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 182–183.
18. The last several sentences of this paragraph are close paraphrases of Umberto Eco's argument in his *The Limits of Interpretation*, 157–158, which have been slightly altered to fit the context of this discussion. Eco's reads: "To keep to our example, I have a sack of beans on the table, and nearby, also on the table, is a bunch of white beans. I don't know how they've gotten there or who has placed them there, or even where they came from. Let's consider this Result a Strange Case. Now I need to find a Rule, such that, if it were true, and if the Result were considered a Case of the Result, the Result would no longer be strange, but rather extremely reasonable. At this point I make a conjecture: I theorize a Rule for which that sack contains beans and all the beans are white, and I try to consider the Result as a Case of that Rule. If all the beans in the sack are white and those beans come from that sack, it's natural that the beans on the table are white."
19. This is the thesis of Umberto Eco and Thomas A. Sebeok in *The Sign of Three*.
20. Peirce, "Pragmatism as the Logic of Abduction," EP2, pp. 226-241, at p.231.
21. Josephson and Josephson, *Abductive Inference* , 5.
22. Chapter 10 of *Mein Kampf*, "Causes of the Collapse," is devoted to explaining the reasons for the collapse of Germany, and is fifty-nine pages long (225–283). [Note: most publications of *Mein Kampf* keep the original pagination intact.] The only longer chapter is chapter 2, "General Political Considerations Based on My Vienna Period," which devotes considerable space to explaining the collapse of Austria (e.g., 68–75,

92–96); and the collapse of the Pan-German movements in Austria (97–124). Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* trans. Ralph Manheim (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943).

23. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 226.
24. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 106.
25. *Ibid*.
26. *Ibid*.

THREE
Characteristics of Abduction

Abductive logic has several characteristics that make it particularly relevant to political leaders in certain situations. This is especially true in times of political confusion, social upheaval, economic dislocation, or national trauma. When social conditions change, both surprisingly and negatively, people become confused and disoriented. Events begin to strike them as unpredictable. In terms of their previous certainties as to who they are or what is expected of them, they begin to experience a sense of lostness and anxiety. What they want most often is an explanation that will make sense, restore order in their minds, and give meaningful direction to their actions.

When political leaders are capable of explaining unexpected and dislocating events in a satisfactory manner, people usually place their faith in their leaders. Often people and nations will undergo great hardships and overcome extreme difficulties with dedication and good cheer when they believe in their leaders and believe that they understand the situation. However, when untoward events occur in society that the leaders are unable to explain satisfactorily, faith in them erodes, and the people begin to look for new leaders whose explanations make sense and in whom they can place confidence.

The essence of abduction is that it is a form of logic whose purpose is to generate a plausible hypothesis to explain a strange set of facts or events. Thus it is ideally suited for any political situation in which a large portion of the public believes that events no longer conform to their expectations. Adolf Hitler, perhaps more than any other leader in modern history, understood the potential of this form of logic, and was able to capitalize on it.

Logic, however, and especially abductive logic, is not only an abstract method of science. It is not simply a formula that applies to a specialized

or limited set of facts, such as a mathematical formula in physics. Rather, logic is a science of the mind, and it extends into every portion of our mental processes. Any particular form of thinking, logical or otherwise, affects much more of the mind than the formulas of abstract propositions. This is particularly so for the various logical modes of reasoning. Each logical method of reasoning, therefore, has a set of characteristics that affect many other parts of the mind and of the psyche. Many of these characteristics are directly relevant to, and observable in, the political activities of Adolf Hitler. An understanding of these characteristics is essential to understanding Hitler's success.

Each of the three forms of logic—abduction, deduction, and induction—has characteristics that distinguish it from the other two forms. Some of these characteristics are comparable, by which I mean that each form of logic participates in a particular characteristic either to a greater or lesser extent, or relates to the same characteristic as its complement or its opposite. In addition, abductive logic has several characteristics that are wholly unique to it and have no counterpart in the other forms of logic. In the following I shall discuss those characteristics of abductive logic that are comparable and unique, and that are relevant to the rise of Adolf Hitler. As shall be shown, an understanding of these characteristics explains many of the mysteries of Adolf Hitler's rise, such as the apparent irrationality of which he is often accused, his opponents' confusion and inability to respond effectively to Hitler's theories, and the fatal underestimation of Hitler by both his critics and opponents.

The relevant and important characteristics of abductive logic that I shall be discussing in this chapter arise from the nature of the situation to which abductive logic is applicable. Abduction is the first step in any scientific inquiry. Initially, all scientific inquiry leading to the discovery of new knowledge begins with a set of facts that annoy or irritate the inquirer for the reason that they do not meet his expectations. The facts intrude upon him so as to force his attention upon them in such a way that they "call out" for an explanation. At this point they become a "problem." The essence of the problem is that the inquirer can think of no general rule applicable to the facts by which the facts can be explained, or from which any conclusion can be drawn. The facts are there—they intrude upon one's consciousness—but one cannot deduce anything from them. Similarly, one does not have any general rule in mind by which even to test the facts. The "problem" initially consists in the fact that the "facts" facing one make no sense and admit of no generalization. Abduction begins by trying to imagine a cause competent to explain the facts. From this arise both those characteristics of abduction that are comparable to the other forms of logic, as well as abduction's unique characteristics.

COMPARABLE CHARACTERISTICS

With this initial situation in mind, let us first compare several of the characteristics normally associated with deduction and induction in order to distinguish them from abduction. That done, we will be in a better position to understand the unique characteristics of abduction. This is the only way I know to explain the stunning and surprising effect of the speeches of Adolf Hitler upon the most educated and sophisticated nation in the world.

Certainty and Uncertainty

The level of certainty ascribed to the three forms of logic varies from absolute certainty in the case of deduction; to a variable degree of certainty never rising to one hundred percent, and never going down to zero, in the case of induction; to absolute uncertainty or zero percent certainty in the case of abduction.

Deduction is absolutely certain because deduction describes what "must be"; if the premises are true, the conclusion must necessarily be true. Induction, by contrast, involves probability. It can never reach one hundred percent because no matter how often a given scientific law or rule produces its predicted results, there is always the possibility that the next time it will not occur as predicted. This is because in nature there is always the possibility that a factor may exist relative to a scientific law, which may not have been taken into account.

At the other end of the range of probability, inductive generalizations may reach very low probabilities, yet still be valid. For example, a "risk factor" that x percent of people who have high-fat diets may suffer more frequent heart attacks may be very low in terms of percentages, and yet is still a significant and valid inductive generalization.

Abductive logic, on the other hand, has absolutely no certainty and zero probability attached to it. It is based simply on an assumption that the unexplained facts have an antecedent cause. The abduction is only a hypothesis; in other words, an act of the imagination, as to what that cause may have been. No probability may be attached to the cause in advance; in this respect, it is only a suggestion, a plausible "guess." The hypothesis, or "guess," is not arbitrary, for it must meet two logical though minimum requirements in order to constitute a valid abduction. These requirements are: (1) the hypothesized cause must have been competent to have produced, as its effects, the facts one is trying to explain; and (2) the hypothesized cause must explain all of the relevant facts. This does not mean that the hypothesis or guess must be either true or even probable. It is a valid hypothesis if it meets these two tests. This comparative characteristic of abductive logic gives rise to a further characteristic that was extremely important in the rise of Hitler.

The Initial Immunity of Abduction to Refutation

Abductive logic, because it occurs at the initial stage of inquiry, is immune from both refutation and normal logical objections. The most improbable cause for the facts under investigation may be the true cause. No inductive argument can have any weight against a hypothesis at the initial stage of presentation because no testing of the hypothesis has yet occurred. While future testing will theoretically prove or disprove the hypothesis, until that testing has occurred, the hypothesis cannot be refuted by inductive logic. Similarly, deductive logic cannot prove a hypothesis wrong. For example, no matter how true one believes the deductive premise "All men are mortal" to be, it is of no avail against the "God-hypothesis" that at least one man, Ezekial, was not mortal, or that God can perform a miracle.

Or, as another example, imagine that the police receive a report that an explosion has occurred at a home in a residential area of the city. When the report is received, the police have no knowledge of why or how the explosion occurred. They will not have any clues as to its cause until they reach the scene. They will, however, assume that the explosion had an antecedent cause. Many hypotheses may flash through their minds: a gas main break, an accident involving a truck carrying hazardous materials, boys playing with a chemistry set, a terrorist attack, a suicide attempt, possession of illegal explosives, a meteor, a bomb, a plane fell out of the sky and fell on the house, and perhaps many others. At the initial stage, as the police are proceeding to the scene, each of these is a valid hypothesis, and each is as likely or probable as the other. None of them can be refuted at this stage by any deductive or inductive argument.

This is a characteristic of abductive logic that proved particularly useful to Hitler. Hitler explained that the successive defeats, humiliations, crises, and traumas that beset the German people were all caused by a Communist-Socialist-Liberal-Pacifist-Jewish conspiracy that aimed to destroy the German nation. Insofar as Hitler's theory appeared to explain and account for the known facts, it was a logical and valid hypothesis—no matter how improbable or distasteful.

This placed Hitler's critics and opponents in a logically difficult position. In order to refute Hitler's argument, they had only three logical alternatives: (1) to accept Hitler's conspiracy and race theory as a valid hypothesis suitable for testing; (2) to present a better explanation; or (3) to put Hitler in power and let him try out his theories in practice.

To Hitler's opponents and critics, the first alternative was completely unacceptable and impractical for two very obvious reasons. First, to acknowledge Hitler's theories as valid hypotheses would have been to give Hitler's "nonsense" legitimacy. His opponents would have had to acknowledge the logical possibility that his theories might be true. To have

acknowledged Hitler's theories as valid hypotheses might have been the best thing to do if it had been possible to quickly prove Hitler's theories false. However, the only means of proving them false would have been to turn them over to historians, geneticists, sociologists, etc., who might have taken decades (beginning in the 1920s) to arrive at a significant enough consensus to prove Hitler wrong. Meanwhile, his opponents would have dignified Hitler's hypotheses until that consensus evolved. It might further be noted, as a matter of fact, that by the time Hitler emerged as a significant force in German politics, on September 14, 1930, a large proportion of the students and faculty at German universities was National Socialist.[1] Thus, any effort to submit Hitler's race theory and historical explanations to the scientific examination of university scholars capable of evaluating them would likely have been disastrous, given the confused and politicized state of German universities at the time.

The second alternative to refute an abductive hypothesis is to present a better hypothesis. The major parties and political leaders presented little in the way of an explanation for the successive crises of Germany. They were progressive, practical, and forward-looking in attempting to solve problems, and not often amenable to making historical digressions in order to explain why or how the problems arose. Only the Communists (and to a lesser extent the Socialists) boldly proclaimed that they had a better explanation than the Nazis, i.e., the Marxist interpretation of history.

This logical situation played right into the hands of Hitler. He constantly insisted that the real threat to Germany was the Communist Party, for it was the only party that had a comprehensive alternative to his explanation. Unfortunately, the Communist explanation was anathema to large parts of the German population. Thus, those parts of the electorate who were confused and looking for a more logical or more acceptable explanation had only Hitler's explanation as an alternative; for the only two parties whose ideology sought to explain the problems and crises were the Nazis and the Communists.

The third method of refuting Hitler was the method eventually adopted in 1933. That was to put Hitler in power and let him try his theories out in practice. Many political leaders firmly believed that this would be his downfall. The Communists, for example, saw the Social Democrats as their main enemy. The Communists took the position in the 1932 elections that Hitler's theories were nonsense, and that if he were given power, this would soon become evident. Many other political leaders in Germany also believed that the solution to Hitler was to tame him by putting him in power. Similar logic motivated those political leaders who feared Hitler's ideas, but believed that the exigencies of power would soon either demonstrate the fallacies of his theories or would force him to abandon them.

The point is that, whatever political motives were involved, both Hitler's strategy as well as the dilemma faced by his opponents followed a certain logic. Here now is my thesis: Adolf Hitler followed a strategy based upon the logic of abduction, and opponents and critics reacted to that strategy in ways that, though disastrous, followed the logical course Hitler plotted, based upon the characteristics of abductive logic.

Thus, Hitler and the Nazis were often accused of being illogical and irrational precisely because their arguments and theories were irrefutable by the normal arguments of inductive and deductive logic. However, this immunity did not arise from irrationality or illogicality. Rather, it arose from the nature of the logic in which Hitler presented his theories. It is one of the characteristics of abductive logic that a well-formed hypothesis is irrefutable by normal methods of logical arguments, unless enough time is available to prove it wrong by scientific testing or scholarship. Until that testing or scholarly investigation is completed, a properly constructed abductive hypothesis remains a logically valid hypothesis. If a hypothesis or theory presents a cause that is competent to produce the effects it offers to explain, and if there is no better hypothesis or theory to explain the facts, then it cannot be knocked out of the ring—at least not quickly—by normal logical (deductive or inductive) argument.

Mendaciousness

Every form of logic is subject to manipulation that will enable it to be used for false purposes. In deductive logic, many false forms of syllogisms are apparently valid, but not logically conclusive. Many words have been written on recognizing false arguments based on defective syllogisms. Similarly, inductive arguments can be framed where the inference made in the conclusion is not validly stated in the premises.[2] However, in both deductive and inductive logic, the fault does not lie in the form of the logic, but in a misapplication of it. Both deduction and induction are a means of producing true statements. A proper understanding of the logical principles of each can facilitate the detection of falsely constructed syllogisms and arguments. In other words, both deduction and induction are systems of logic, each of which possesses rules internal to themselves for the determination of the validity of logical statements. However, this is so to such a lesser extent in abductive logic as to become almost negligible. It is for this reason that abductive logic has appeared to be a "scanty" form of logic. As a result, it lends itself much more easily to its being used for mendacious purposes.

One of the most important comparable characteristics of abduction, and one that must be kept in mind throughout all discussions of abductive logic, is its amenability to being used for mendacious purposes, in other words, for lying. Abduction is not only the first stage of inquiry for the scientist to make discoveries that will benefit mankind, but it is also

the stock-in trade of the liar, the cheat, the fraud, and the criminal; for the essence of abduction is the invention of explanations. The criminal seeks to invent an alibi for his crime; in other words, a plausible explanation of why he could not have committed it. The liar, the cheat, and the fraud must also constantly invent explanations that will explain away their actions so that the victim will not suspect what is really going on. When a person wants to cheat on his spouse, he or she must constantly invent plausible explanations to explain why he or she did not come home until late, or had to take a "business trip," or was "tired."

Thus, abductive logic is not only useful to discover the truth, it is also the same logic used to conceal or disguise the truth. In regard to the perception of facts, abductive logic is not only a method for reading clues that will lead to the truth, it is also a method for creating clues that will mislead. Indian scouts of the Wild West not only knew how to hide their trail, but also how to disguise their trail by leaving false clues that would mislead those attempting to track them. It is just as much part of the skill of a private detective to discern false clues left by a criminal to mislead the police as it is to follow up on correct clues. Abductive logic is, therefore, a two-edged sword. In the case of Adolf Hitler, few will dispute that he was an absolute genius in recognizing the potential use of this characteristic of abductive logic for mendacious purposes.

The potential of abductive logic to be used for mendacious purposes in politics arises out of the two characteristics already discussed: (1) the need of people facing unexpected political or social crises for some explanation of their cause; and (2) the ability to invent a "cause" that one may believe, or that one may know to be untrue, but one that people may accept because it appears plausible. Because abductive hypotheses are immune from the logical tests applicable to other forms of logic (in other words, because there is often a lag time between the assertion of an explanation and the testing of it), a politician can offer politically plausible abductive hypotheses to explain events that may be totally false but nonetheless perfectly valid in logical form.

This is especially true of the use of "conspiracy theories" for political purposes. Conspiracy theories rest for their success upon the existence of the preconditions for the application of abductive logic. The situation in Weimar Germany was particularly amenable to the propagation of conspiracy theories based on abductive logic. The Nazi syllogism followed this form:

> The loss of the war; the Versailles Treaty, involving the loss of German territory, reparations, war crimes trials, and the war guilt clause; the inflation; German disarmament; political instability and economic chaos, are all surprising, unexpected, and inexplicable phenomena that should not have occurred;

> But, they are not inexplicable and would be expected if there were a malevolent conspiracy of international Jews, Communists, and Liberals intent on harming the German people.
> No one has presented a better explanation of the misfortunes suffered by the German people that can meet the two requirements of the Nazi hypothesis: i.e., (1) describe a cause competent to have caused all these phenomena; and (2) account for all the facts.
> Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that such a conspiracy exists.

Konrad Heiden, in the chapter of his work, *A History of National Socialism*, in which he sets forth his claim that Hitler's "utterly logical way of thought" was the basis of Hitler's success, gives the following example. Although the theory of abductive logic was still unknown, existing only in the form of unpublished manuscripts, Heiden was able to catch the essence of it. Heiden begins his example by quoting a lengthy passage from Hitler's speech of April 12, 1922, in which he sought to describe the international Jewish conspiracy.

> The Jews have shown real genius in politics. This capitalistic people . . . has understood how to get the leadership of the Fourth Estate [the Press] into its hands; and by acting both on the Right and on the Left has its apostles in both camps. On the Right the Jew does his best to encourage all the evils there are to such an extent that the man of the people, poor devil, will be exasperated as much as possible.. . . [On the other hand] more and more Jews have wormed their way into our upper class families; and the consequence has been that the ruling class has been alienated from its own people.[3]

The abductions contained in that passage can be seen more clearly if it is expressed in the form of two abductive syllogisms. The first reads as follows:

> The leaders of industry are Germans who would ordinarily be expected to care about the workers in their factories as fellow Germans.
> But the fact is that industrial leaders do not care about their workers and refuse to give in to even the most reasonable demands of their workers. This is surprising and unexpected.
> But, this would not be surprising if the leaders of industry were not Germans, but were Jews, or had been infiltrated by Jews, or were influenced by the Jewish press.
> Therefore, it is reasonable to explain the hardheadedness of German capitalists by a conspiracy of Jews acting to deflect them from their true duty.

The second abductive argument contained in the above passage may be stated in the form of the following abductive syllogism:

> It would be expected that the ruling families of Germany would be very close to the people and care for the welfare of the people.

> But, the ruling families of Germany are alienated from the people. This is surprising and unexpected.
> But this would not be surprising if the ruling families were no longer completely German, but had been infiltrated by another non-German people or race.
> Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the German ruling classes have become alienated from the people because of Jewish infiltration.

Next in that speech, Heiden quotes Hitler as drawing these two abductive inferences into an inference that combines both the Capitalists and the Communists, Right and Left, in a single conspiracy:

> While Moses Cohen, the chairman, stiffens the board of his Company so that they shall be as inflexible, that is to say, as unreasonable as possible concerning the demands of their workpeople (*sic*), his brother, the Labor Leader, Isaac Cohen, is in the factory yard egging on the masses: "Look at them! They only want to oppress you! Throw off your chains!" And upstairs his brother is helping to forge those chains. The people is to destroy the backbone of its independence, its own trade, so as all the more surely to be fettered in the Jews' golden bonds of eternal slavery to money.[4]

Thus, for two palpable phenomena, both of which are inexplicable according to the thinking of the average German, Hitler abduced a single cause that he posited as capable of causing, and thus explaining, the facts that most Germans regarded as inexplicable. Hitler took his audience backward from known effects to explain a cause of those effects, which he then simply presented as the cause.

While the passage from Hitler's speech was not considered by Heiden to be true, Heiden quotes it at length because of its forceful logic to Germans at the time. Heiden presents this passage from Hitler's speech to demonstrate the following statement about Hitler's logic with which Heiden had preceded the passage quoted:

> Hitler knows one thing very well indeed—he knows his own people. The systematization of error is the stuff of many of his theories. To err is human, and is international in politics; but systemization is German. And this is the germ of truth in his politics. He saw and prophesied most definitely how the Germans would react to certain political facts. He was right where all wisdom failed, and European conventions were outraged.[5]

The chains of reasoning presented in the above abductive syllogisms were not valid according to deductive logic because: (1) the premises were not true, and (2) because the conclusion does not necessarily flow from the premises even if they were true. Nor could these syllogisms be true inductively. Testing could prove that the effects to be explained could have been (and were) caused by other factors. Immediately following the passages quoted above, Heiden remarks, "The whole is based

upon a large number of demonstrable errors."[6] Heiden, however, went on to point out the incredible fact that "nevertheless upon all these errors a great and forcefully expressed argument is finally based."[7]

Heiden goes on to demonstrate how such an argument worked: "The proposition to be proved is the existence of a plot";[8] however, "the conspiracy can only be recognized by its effects."[9] In noting this, Heiden grasps the most essential character of abduction. It is a "backward" or retroductive form of logic that reasons from effects back to cause. Heiden was unaware of the theory of abductive logic, and so he ascribes the force of Hitler's logic to "an ancient trick of sophistry." But he accurately describes the structure of abductive logic and how Hitler used it for mendacious purposes:

> The proposition to be proved is the existence of a plot. By an ancient trick of sophistry, this turns in the course of the argument imperceptibly into a proved assumption. From the antecedent follow most conclusively the individual theorems and practical applications, which really should be themselves proved before being used as evidence: the conspiracy exists, for the Socialist-revolutionary activities of the Jews are only directed towards the destruction of national prosperity; they are only directed towards the destruction of national prosperity because they are the outcome of a Jewish plot; but the plot exists because—.[10]

Heiden immediately comments that "such chains of reasoning are impossible to attack." Unfortunately, however, Heiden could not accurately identify the reason that they were impossible to attack. Heiden argues that they were immune from refutation "because they are fallacious all around." This is incorrect. For if every aspect of Hitler's statements were "fallacious all around," their fallaciousness would have been obvious, and his argument would have failed. It was not because Hitler's argument was fallacious that it had great power, for Heiden admits that it was "a great and forcefully expressed argument." Rather, the strength of Hitler's argument rested in the form of its logic. Hitler's argument, presented as a hypothesis, was immune from normal argument.

The key to this is acknowledged by Heiden in the word "demonstrable." Indeed, Hitler's argument could be (and later was) demonstrated to be false. But until it was demonstrated to be false, it was a valid hypothesis stated in proper logical form. The falseness lay simply in presenting one possible hypothesis as the only possible hypothesis. Hitler was able to get away with a lie because no one attacked the form of his logic. This would have required the following logical form:

> Yes, it is agreed that there are many events which appear to be inexplicable, and which call out for explanation.
> But the theory that a Jewish conspiracy is the cause of these effects is not the only possible cause of these effects.

> Nor is it the best hypothesis to explain those effects.
> Therefore, we should ignore the explanation of a Jewish conspiracy and calmly investigate what appear to be better explanations to explain these effects.

This, of course, would have been a politically inexpedient course to follow in the actual circumstances, for the most forcefully expressed alternative to explain the effects that all agreed existed was the Communist and Marxist explanation. Hitler was able to succeed with his logically correct (though fallacious) argument, because the "next best"—in the sense of most forcefully presented—alternative hypothesis was unacceptable to the largest proportion of German voters, including the bourgeoisie, the capitalists, the aristocracy, the nationalists, the liberals, the Catholics, and many other groups.

The point I wish to make is that Hitler's opponents often erroneously accused him of being irrational and illogical because his arguments were obviously so fallacious. Heiden recognizes this when he writes, "It will be objected that logic that begins with false premises and leads to false conclusions cannot have much value."[11] However, Heiden perceived the strangeness of the fact that Hitler was able to triumph despite such objections. Although Heiden could not explain it, since he was unfamiliar with abductive logic, he attempts to describe the phenomenon by a simile. Hitler, he explains, was like a painter working from several palettes of ideas, who constructed a system of thought that

> is in itself so complete, so perfect in the congruence of details as none other of its kind. Individual details come from other palettes; their union is the work of a strong head which is not interested in truth, but has evolved a design for a new world. The mind that constructed this system has been victorious with it over facts.[12]

The important fact to explain is why or how an argument that is "fallacious all around" has the power to be "victorious over facts." The answer is that an argument based on false facts can still be logical in form. This is especially true in the case of abductive logic, which presents itself in the form of a plausible explanation. An explanation may be stated in perfectly logical form and may "fit" the facts perfectly, and yet be false. However, until its falseness is proven, the explanation may stand as a plausible explanation, and may be stated in a perfectly logical form. The strength lies in the form of the logic, not in the truth of the theory.

Abduction, like deduction and induction, can be manipulated for mendacious purposes. However, abduction, whose essence is the generation of explanations, is susceptible to abuse to an extent far beyond anything imaginable in deductive or inductive logic. Adolf Hitler built his appeal, and his success, upon the failure of both his opponents and the public to understand the logical basis of his arguments. He was thus able to use them in politics for deceitful purposes in an extraordinary way.

Ampliativity

The next comparable characteristic of abductive logic relevant to Hitler is ampliativity. This characteristic relates to Hitler and to the following chapters in three respects. First, Hitler's theory of race arises out of and is a logical amplification of Hitler's abductive logic. Second, the ampliative character of abductive logic is related to Hitler's ideas of education that he learned from the novels of Karl May. Third, Hitler displayed the ampliative character of abductive logic on many occasions, suggesting that it was part of his character. I shall proceed to define and explain what is meant by the term "ampliative" and address its relation to Hitler in the three ways mentioned.

Abduction is ampliative, which means that at the end of an abductive operation, more information may result than was present at the beginning. Compared with the other forms of logic, deduction is not at all ampliative, whereas induction is sometimes ampliative. In deduction, there is no more information in the conclusion than was present in the premises. Induction sometimes produces more information than was present in its premises; while a successful abduction always produces more information than was present in the premises. Thus, it has been said that "deductions are truth preserving, whereas successful abductions may be said to be truth producing."[13]

The example frequently offered to explain the ampliative nature of abductive logic is that of the medical doctor diagnosing a patient's symptoms. When a patient comes to a doctor for a diagnosis, the patient describes his symptoms. These symptoms constitute the premises. The patient says, in effect, "I have symptoms A, B, and C"; and he asks the doctor, "What can you conclude from these?" Without more information coming from outside the premises, the doctor cannot make any conclusion. The doctor can only perform a diagnosis by reading the symptoms to suggest information beyond the facts themselves. The symptoms are only "clues" or "effects" that suggest an antecedent cause. The doctor must therefore range through his expertise to find that disease indicated by the symptoms. The doctor must bring to the diagnosis information not present in the premises, i.e., the mere description of the symptoms. Thus, when a doctor diagnoses a disease indicated by the symptoms, he introduces new knowledge about the cause of the disease and its course of treatment. Josephson and Josephson give the following example:

> [A]mpliative reasoning is something done by introducing new vocabulary in the conclusion. For example, when we abduce that the patient has hepatitis because it is the only way to explain the jaundice, we have introduced into the conclusion a new term, "hepatitis," which is from the vocabulary of diseases and not part of the vocabulary of symptoms. By introducing this term, we make conceptual connections with the typical progress of the disease, and ways to treat it, that were unavail-

> able before. Whereas valid deductive inferences cannot contain terms in their conclusions that do not occur in their premises, abductions can "interpret" the given data in a new vocabulary. Abductions can make the leap from "observation language" to "theory language."[14]

This characteristic ability of abduction to "interpret" given data and to make a leap from "observation language" to "theory language" is vital to understanding the logical relationship of Hitler's theories of race to his anti-Semitism. Often these are seen as a "hodge-podge," and the logical structure that connects them and gives them their power is missed. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the logical structure further by continuing with the example of a medical diagnosis.

A doctor would act non-ampliatively if he merely told the patient the name of his disease, and then advised the patient as to what to do: e.g., telling the client, in the case of hepatitis, for example, to go home and rest; prescribing a certain diet; and ordering the patient to take a daily blood test to monitor the course of the virus until the patient got better. When a doctor does only this, the patient may leave his office knowing exactly what to do, but with no greater understanding of what is going on than when he or she entered. However, the doctor who is familiar with the disease can "amplify" the patient's knowledge far beyond this. If the patient asks how he got the disease, the doctor can explain that the disease was contracted some weeks prior to the outbreak of symptoms. The doctor may further explain that the virus will remain in the body even after all the symptoms disappear. He might, of course, amplify the patient's knowledge of the disease by explaining how or from what the disease is usually contracted, or why the virus remains in the body even after the symptoms disappear, etc. The point is that the doctor, from a few symptoms, can amplify the entire course of the disease, providing extensive knowledge from his expertise. It is by this expertise that the doctor "amplifies" the mere recitation of the symptoms into the description of the causes and the course of a disease.

The importance of this aspect of abductive logic to Hitler's race theory and his *Weltanschauung* is immense. For Hitler did not only diagnose Germany's problems by pointing simply to an international conspiracy of Jews, Communists, etc. But also, he developed an entire etiology (defined as the "science or theory of the origins or causes of diseases"[15]) to explain the "disease." Hitler's etiology is set forth in the second half of chapter 11 of *Mein Kampf*.[16] There Hitler describes the Jews as a bodily infection. This section begins: "[T]he best way to know the Jew is to study the road he has taken within the body of other peoples in the course of the centuries."[17]

In the previous chapter of *Mein Kampf*, "The Causes of the Collapse" (chapter 10), Hitler describes every "symptom" of the illnesses that beset German society. It is a catalog of every imaginable indication of the pres-

ence of a disease. Chapter 11 provides the theory of how the "infection" is contracted; the course of the "disease"; a description of the "symptoms"; an explanation of why and how the "parasite" causes those specific symptoms; and the stages of the disease. Thus, Hitler presented himself not simply as a layman who could speak the obvious, e.g., "You are sick. You have a certain disease." Rather, he presented himself as a doctor and medical expert who not only could identify the disease, but also could explain everything about the disease.[18]

This ability not only to identify but also to explain placed Hitler in a very different position from other anti-Semites. Other anti-Semites merely pointed to the Jews and blamed them. In other words, they only labeled. Hitler, on the other hand, went far beyond the others in realizing the potential of abduction as the logic of diagnosis. The logic applicable to diagnosis is abductive in nature, because it not only identifies causes, but also explains them in terms of other systems of knowledge. In other words, symptoms invite—"call out for"—theory. Yun Peng and James A. Reggia describe this characteristic of abduction in diagnosis:

> A diagnostic problem is a problem in which one is given a set of manifestations (findings, symptoms) and must explain why they are present by using one's knowledge about the world. . . . [D]iagnostic inference falls naturally into the category of abduction.[19]

Medical diagnosis is the most obvious example of the ampliative characteristic of abduction, and it is the first example given by Peng and Reggia. A good medical diagnostician must go far beyond the knowledge of the patient by calling upon this deeper "knowledge about the world" to explain why the symptoms are present. In his race theory, Hitler recognized this logical necessity and the opportunity provided by the nature of abductive logic.

Once a simple diagnosis—e.g., the Jews are to blame for everything—is amplified into a larger theory that links and explains many apparently unrelated symptoms into a single theory, and further explains how other apparently independent symptoms are linked to a single, deeper cause, one has a much stronger logical position. This is the characteristic that Heiden noted when he wrote that "such chains of reasoning are impossible to attack at any one point."[20] An abduction amplified into a theory becomes no less of an hypothesis than before, but extremely difficult to refute logically except by inductive testing. When an amplified abduction is coupled with both structural and probabilistic knowledge, it becomes what Peng and Reggia have called a "high performance diagnostic system."[21] Adolf Hitler's racial and anti-Semitic *Weltanschauung* was false, but as an amplified abduction, it was a very "high performance diagnostic system," completely logical in form.

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF ABDUCTION

In addition to those characteristics comparable to the other two forms of logic (i.e., certainty, refutation, mendaciousness, ampliativity), abduction also has several unique characteristics. Three of these are relevant to Adolf Hitler. The first unique characteristic is that abduction is based upon instinct and sentiment (feeling, emotion) rather than upon abstraction. In the formal logic of deduction and induction, neither instinct nor sentiment has any role. However, abduction is the cultivation of those moments of insight, instinct, intuition, and inspiration in which new ideas, new inventions, and new discoveries occur. Thus abduction brings logic into deeper recesses of the mind whence all scientific discovery proceeds.

The second unique characteristic arises from the first. New ideas seem at first to be almost divinely inspired intuitions and often have a very special quality about them that verges on the supernatural.

This often leads to the third characteristic of abduction, the ability of this logic to have an extraordinary effect upon the belief systems of others, binding minds to an explanation that, although unverified, has a power over the human mind unknown to other forms of logic.

Instinct

Charles Sanders Peirce could be said to have discovered abductive logic in this way: There are, he noted, often a multitude of possible explanations for any given phenomenon. If mankind had had to stop and test all of the possible hypotheses before coming to the correct or true one, the progress of the human race would have been infinitesimal. What could account, he asked, for the fact that human beings are so often able to bypass all the testing that would be dictated by formal logic, by "guessing" the correct explanation?

For example, he noted that there were "billions" of possible hypotheses to explain the movement of galaxies and stars. If one had to test every possible theory, it might have taken centuries. How is it, he asked, that Copernicus and Kepler could alight on the correct answer without testing all the others? Peirce reasoned that the success of scientists in discovering natural laws could be explained by an affinity of the human mind to nature itself.[22] Peirce came to believe that "[t]he attunement to nature was the key to the advancement of knowledge—as it was for life itself—and he [Peirce] thought that the power to guess nature's way was one of the great wonders of the universe."[23]

This "power to guess" the correct explanation did not arise, Peirce's argument goes, from the formal rules of deductive or inductive logic, but from a third kind of logic that arises from instinct and feeling. Prior to

deductive and inductive logic there is a third kind of reasoning, which Peirce describes as follows:

> The third kind of reasoning tries to do what *il lume naturale*, which lit the footsteps of Galileo, can do. It is really an appeal to instinct. Thus reason, for all the frills that it customarily wears, comes down upon its marrow bones to beg the succor of instinct.[24]

Peirce accused logicians of "slumbering through ages of intellectual activity, listlessly disregarding the enginery [*sic*] of modern thought and never dreaming of applying its lessons to the improvement of logic."[25] Thus, Peirce insists, the advance of science and human understanding depend upon enlarging the understanding of logic to embrace both instinct and the voice of instinct, our feelings. "Reason," writes Peirce, "appeals to sentiment in the last resort."[26] Peirce goes on to say that "if I allow the supremacy of sentiment in human affairs, I do so at the dictation of reason itself."[27] He argues that as a matter of logic, "human instincts" are "sufficient to guide us in the greatest concerns" without any aid from deductive and inductive logic.[28] This is so because man has a certain faculty of "Insight" which Peirce describes as arising from instinct:

> Man has a certain Insight . . . This faculty is at the same time of the general nature of Instinct, resembling the instincts of animals in its so far surpassing the general powers of our reason, and for its directing us as if we were in possession of facts that are entirely beyond the reach of our senses.[29]

This is the essence of abduction: to comprehend facts "that are entirely beyond the reach of our senses." This ability to reach beyond our senses is based on our instinct, which guides us in all important questions more surely than deduction or induction. "We should chiefly depend not upon that department of the soul that is most superficial and fallible—I mean our reason—but upon that department that is deep and sure—which is instinct,"[30] Peirce writes. For abduction is based solely on instinct. "We call that opinion reasonable," he continues, "whose only support is instinct."[31]

The significance of instinct in the personality, political ideas, and *Weltanschauung* of Adolf Hitler is almost too obvious to need mentioning. Hitler's charisma and political success were often credited by his followers, as well as by critics and opponents, to his political instinct.[32] In his political strategy, Hitler constantly directed his appeal to the instinct of the masses because, he explained, "There instinct is supreme."[33] He opposed intellectualism because it "removes people from the instinct of nature."[34] The entire difference between the Aryan and the Jew, he argued, was based solely on a difference in their instincts.[35]

Hitler's primary characteristic was often said to be his instinct, usually described by his contemporaries as in opposition to his logic. John Gunther, for example, rejected Konrad Heiden's thesis that Hitler's strength came from his logic by arguing that Hitler was a man of instinct. Gunther argued as follows:

> Heiden says that Hitler's power is based on intellect, and his intellect on logic. This would seem a dubious interpretation because Hitler's mind is not ratiocinative in the least; he is a man of passion, of instinct, not of reason.[36]

However correct Gunther may have been in terms of the formal logic of induction and deduction, his objection is not valid in terms of abduction. For, as Peirce has pointed out, instinct is the very basis of abductive logic. To assume with Gunther that Hitler was illogical simply because he appeared to act on instinct, and because he appealed to instinct, is a fundamental error. For instinct is not opposed to, or excluded from, logic, but is a fundamental basis of one part of logic, i.e., abduction.

Similarly, Joachim Fest also saw an opposition between instinct and reason. Fest writes of Hitler: "He grasped what was happening in the world more by instinct than by reason."[37] But Hitler's appeal to instinct is not opposed to reason and is entirely proper in one of the three forms of logic. The point here is that instinct and reason are not opposed concepts. To grasp the world by instinct is not opposed by logic or reason, but is of the very essence of that portion of reason known as abductive logic. Fest was incorrect to conclude that Hitler was therefore beyond reason.

Now that the nature of abductive logic is known, we can begin to understand that Hitler was using a certain form of logic, that his apparent "instinct" was not some inscrutable force within him, but a logical approach that we can now, thanks to the discovery of abduction, analyze and understand.

The Divinatory Power of Abduction

Charles Sanders Peirce describes the "abductive faculty" as that faculty "whereby we divine the secrets of nature."[38] It has also been described both as a "sort of divinatory power,"[39] and as "a means of communication between man and his Creator, a 'Divine privilege' which must be cultivated."[40] In "On the Method of Zadig," Thomas Henry Huxley calls it a form of "prophecy" and of "divination," which he likens to the powers of a medium or a clairvoyant.[41]

Peirce argues that there "are mysterious agencies in ideas."[42] Pragmatism, he states, is "nothing else than the logic of abduction."[43] It is a process whereby one aligns one's mind with the logic of nature and allows one's instinct to lead to the correct answer to a problem. One who

has such an ability to reach the "divine secrets" and explain them to others is the true thinker who "communes with the Creator."

Peirce describes the process of the abductive thinker as a process in which the abductive suggestion, arising from our instinct and our mind's affinity with nature, "comes to us like a flash." It is "the idea of putting together what we had never dreamed of putting together which flashes the new suggestion before our contemplation."[44] Thus, the person who is adept at abductive reasoning will oftentimes appear to be possessed of mediumistic powers and of proceeding according to instinct instead of normal logic. One of the most common descriptions of Adolf Hitler is that he possessed some sort of mediumistic power over the masses. Ernst Nolte gives evidence of this view when he writes,

> There should be no doubt as to the mediumistic trait in Hitler. He was the medium who communicated to the masses their own deeply buried spirit. It was because of this . . . that a third of the German people loved him long before he became chancellor, long before he was their victorious supreme commander.[45]

The essence of the logic that leads to one appearing to have mediumistic or divine powers is described by Peirce as follows:

> A mass of facts is before us. We go through them. We examine them. We find them a confused snarl, an impenetrable jungle. We are unable to hold them in our minds. We endeavor to set them down on paper; but they seem to be so multiplex intricate that we can neither satisfy ourselves that what we have set down represents the facts, nor can we get any clear idea of what it is that we have set down. But suddenly, while we are poring over our digest of the facts and are endeavoring to set them in order, it occurs to us that if we were to assume something to be true that we do not know to be true, these facts would arrange themselves luminously. That is abduction. [46]

The essence of abduction lies in assuming, when one is faced with a confused mass of unexplained and unexpected facts, that there is some cause, some force, which would explain them. Abduction begins by imagining or divining what that cause or force may be. Thus the logic of abduction is very similar to paranormal powers. The power of the medium, the clairvoyant, and the fortune-teller, according to Thomas Henry Huxley, lies precisely in their ability to discern and describe something that is not immediately present to the senses. In other words, it is the ability to divine that there are powers acting in our lives that can be seen only by the medium.

Peirce and Huxley argue that this same ability is attainable by logic and is the province of science. They insist that there is a certain logic whose effects are much like that of the medium, clairvoyant, and fortune-teller, whose entire purpose is to discern and describe forces and powers that are not present to our senses. However, they do not see this as

anything "paranormal," but as a function of a certain type of logic. When people go to a medium or clairvoyant, they expect to be told why apparently inexplicable things are happening to them. The medium may tell them of evil forces or spirits. The person who seeks the aid of the medium is grateful to have the strange occurrences in his or her life explained. Science and medicine perform similar functions. The patient suffering from an illness he does not understand goes to a doctor who explains it. In terms of the logic, these two processes are identical. Each imagines or "divines" a cause sufficient to explain the phenomenon.

Early in his career, Adolf Hitler gave an example of how he imported precisely the same logic into politics. In discussions held with Dietrich Eckart, he was explaining to Eckart how such logic could be brought from science to describe the workings of politics.

> "We are on the wrong track," Hitler exclaimed.
> "Astronomers do things differently. Take, for example, an astronomer who has been observing a cluster of stars for a long time—heaven knows how long he has been looking at them. Suddenly he observes, dammit, that something has gone wrong. Previously they were arranged in a certain way, but now they are arranged differently. Some secret force has been exerted on them. So he makes endless calculations, and determines the exact location of a planet which an eye has never seen, but one fine day people discover that it really exists."[47]

This is a perfect example of abductive logic. It is the imagining of a cause sufficient to explain unexpected phenomena. In this case, Hitler uses the example of an astronomer who can predict the existence of a planet never before observed from the clues given by the motions of other stars or planets. He imagines or "divines" the existence of something of which he has no direct knowledge—in this case a planet no one ever knew was there. Though even the most powerful telescope cannot see such a planet, the astronomer can insist, based solely upon an operation of his mind, that such a planet does exist.

However, Hitler did not stop there. He insisted that the same logic could be applied to history and politics. He goes on with the discussion:

> "Well, what do historians do? They explain the regular movements of society by appealing to the society itself, the behavior of its prominent politicians. It does not occur to them that there may somewhere be a secret force which exerts its influence on everything and directs everything. Well, this force has existed since the beginning of history."[48]

This is precisely the form of the medium, the clairvoyant, the conspiracy theorist, and the scientific discoverer—it is the divining of active forces that cannot be seen. Its essence is abduction. Hitler's conclusion was to identify the hidden forces acting in German history: "You know its name—the Jew."[49] Although this is considered a totally unacceptable identification of causality today, the important point is that Hitler was

clearly familiar with this form of logic, and the form of logic he used was similar in form to the powers of a medium or a clairvoyant.

He insisted, like Marx, that he had peered into the forces of history and was able to explain them—as well as to explain how these invisible forces were affecting the present. He based his political future on his abductive ability, similar to that of a medium, to predict the future based on his special knowledge of the activities of these unseen forces in history. "I have never told you" he claimed in 1922, "that such and such things may come true, but always that they will come, because they must come and it cannot be otherwise. And what we foresaw has now come to pass."[50]

Most scholars who have examined Hitler's writings and speeches have only observed the substance of the speeches, i.e., the contents. However, they have failed to note the form, i.e., the logic in which and by which that substance was communicated. Hitler was always careful to present himself as the seer who divined the causes, or as the scientist who explained them, or as the doctor who diagnosed them. He claimed the power or skill to see forces that were not obvious and to divine both the ways of nature and of history.

The Power of Abductive Logic over the Mind

The third unique—and perhaps most important—characteristic of abduction is the strange power it has over the minds of ordinary people by which it forces them not only to accept a hypothetical explanation and act upon it, but also to follow through in acting out all the inferences of the hypothesis. Abductive logic has the capacity to impose a "straitjacket of logic with which man can force himself almost as violently as he is forced by some outside power."[51] This is a very strange power to be associated with a form of logic. Generally, people seem to be detached from the other forms of logic; they are able to walk away from the strictest deduction, or to ignore the most inductively well-proven fact of science (as, for example, the number of people who still smoke despite the uncontroverted evidence about its harmful effects).

No other form of logic has the power over men's minds that abductive logic has. This is all the more remarkable because abduction is only the first stage of scientific inquiry, and its goal is only to provide hypotheses for subsequent testing. However, the nature of the human mind—outside the laboratory—has such a need for explanation, and such a need to make the world rational, that improvised hypotheses are readily accepted.

In describing the course of an abductive inquiry and the process by which abduction works in the mind, Charles Sanders Peirce first outlines this effect upon the mind. "Every inquiry," whether scientific, practical, or political, Peirce notes, "takes its rise in the observation . . . of some surprising phenomenon, some experience which either disappoints an

expectation, or breaks in upon some habit of expectation."[52] For a scientist, this may be a strange development in a bacteria culture or an unexpected result of an experiment. For the average citizen, it may be the unexpected loss of a war, the surprising disappearance of the value of money, the unexpectedly harsh terms of a treaty, or the collapse of the economic system. Facing a strange phenomenon, one begins to wonder what might have caused it.

"The inquiry begins," writes Peirce, "with pondering the phenomena in all their aspects, in the search for some point of view whence the wonder shall be resolved."[53] During this stage, one invites the imagination to roam, trying to dream up any explanation that could possibly account for the facts as they are. Finally, the mind imagines one. "At length a conjecture arises," Peirce goes on, that furnishes a "possible Explanation."[54] Such an "Explanation" has an immediate effect upon the mind. Even though it may as yet be unproven, it has "resolved" the mystery. One suddenly has a basis on which to restore rationality to experience. Thus, Peirce records, "On account of this Explanation, the inquirer is led to regard his conjecture, or hypothesis, with favor."[55] However, the mental effect of the hypothesis does not end there. Once an "Explanation" is offered, it can have a whole range of mental effects. Peirce describes this range of acceptance and mental response:

> [T]his acceptance ranges, in different cases,—and reasonably so,—from a mere expression of it in the interrogative mood, as a question meriting attention and reply, up through all appraisals of Plausibility, to *uncontrolled inclination to believe*.[56] (Emphasis added.)

Thus, the suggestion of a hypothesis is not necessarily a scientifically neutral statement. The effect upon receiving of such an Explanation, even before it is proved, may be as strong as an "uncontrolled inclination to believe." One need only recall the many descriptions of the effect of Adolf Hitler's speeches on crowds to understand the importance of this characteristic of abductive logic. However, let us return to Peirce for the explanation of why this phenomenon occurs in relation to abductive logic. Keeping in mind the stages of the inquiry quoted above, Peirce goes on to describe the mental effect caused by the reception of an Explanation:

> The whole series of mental performances between the notice of the wonderful phenomenon and the acceptance of the hypothesis, during which the usually docile understanding seems to hold the bit between its teeth and to have us at its mercy—the search for pertinent circumstances and the laying hold of them, sometimes without our cognizance, the scrutiny of them, the dark laboring, the bursting out of the startling conjecture, the remarking of its smooth fitting to the anomaly, as it is turned back and forth like a key in a lock, and the final estima-

> tion of its Plausibility—I reckon on the First Stage of Inquiry [Abduction].[57]

Peirce here has certainly said a great deal. Imagine one of Adolf Hitler's audiences coming to his speech in order to hear what he has to say. For an hour he drills into the crowd the strangeness and inexplicability of all of the events of Germany's trauma. Then he begins to offer an "Explanation." The crowd's "usually docile understanding seems to hold the bit between its teeth"; they are at the mercy of their urgent desire to understand. The speaker begins to explain how all these traumas happened. The individuals in the crowd begin to follow his argument. He offers a "startling conjecture" and explains how it "smoothly fits" the problem. He turns it "back and forth like a key in a lock." Each individual in the crowd can see that it "fits" the facts. They make a "final estimate of Plausibility." They conclude that his Explanation precisely explains the strange events that have befallen the country. Peirce's words exactly fit how we imagine the crowd's experience at the point "where conjecture mounts the high peaks of Plausibility,—and is really most worthy of confidence."[58] The individuals in the crowd find themselves "surrendering" to the logic of the Explanation. Peirce describes this effect:

> Now the surrender that we make in retroduction [abduction] is a surrender to the insistence of an idea. The hypothesis, as the Frenchman says, *c'est plus fort que moi* ["is stronger than me"]. It is irresistible, it is imperative. We must throw open the gates and admit it, at least for the time being.[59]

Under the force of this surrender, the individuals in the crowd leave the speech in a state of wonder. Phenomena that have puzzled them for months, perhaps years, have suddenly received an explanation. They have waited so long for an explanation, and now one has been given. They want to accept it. They are ecstatic.

This is how abduction can have an effect on the mind that is so different from deduction or induction. One must recall that abduction only arises out of, and is applicable to, a state of "dissatisfaction," when one must face a set of facts that "call out" for explanation. It arises only when one is "penetrated with a sense of unsatisfaction of his present state of knowledge."[60] Then one casts about for an explanation. When a plausible explanation is given, one gives a sigh of relief, and embraces it with enthusiasm. It restores order and rationality to a world that had been so puzzling. The individual who sees the plausibility of the hypothesis "says to himself, HAH!"[61] He has found it.

CONCLUSION

When Hitler entered politics in 1919, he did not begin his career by offering anything new. "There was nothing new, different, original or distinctive about the ideas he was peddling in the Munich beerhalls," writes Kershaw. "They were common currency among the various völkisch groups and sects and had already been advanced in all their essentials by the pre-war Pan-Germans."[62] The Nazi ideology concocted by Hitler seemed to be no more than an "amalgam of prejudices, phobias, and utopian social expectations rather than a coherent set of intellectual propositions."[63] It was comprised of a strange set of ideas consisting of "integral nationalism, anti-Marxist 'national socialism,' social Darwinism, racism, biological anti-semitism, eugenics, [and] elitism."[64]

All of these were familiar to the German public, and each had its own limited plausibility. But many of these ideas were mutually contradictory, and they had never before been combined in a single political program. Yet, somehow, this strange and contradictory amalgam became the "granite" foundation for one of the most dynamic movements in modern European political history.

What held these ideas together? It was Hitler's genius to find the means to combine all of these ideas in a way that they had never been combined before. What Hitler did, writes Ian Kershaw, was to present "unoriginal ideas in an original way."[65] The secret lay in how he combined the ideas. "Others could say the same thing but make no impression at all. It was less what he said than how he said it that counted."[66] Ernst "Putzi" Hanfstaengl describes Hitler's unoriginality, as well as his originality, this way: "Hitler was not so much a distiller of genius as a bartender of genius. He took all the ingredients the German people offered him and mixed them together through his private alchemy into a cocktail they wanted to drink."[67]

The fact is, writes Alan Bullock, that Hitler "had hit upon a conception of how political power was to be secured and exercised which, when fully developed, was to open the way for a political career without parallel in history."[68] Hitler's secret is described by Kershaw: "He consciously learnt how to make an impression through his speaking."[69]

Many make the mistake of believing that Hitler's success grew out of some unique and indefinable element of his personality. But Hitler was able to succeed precisely because his secret of success could be—and was—taught to his followers. The Party produced an impressive list of speakers who carried the same message during the years Hitler was under a ban on public speaking. The Nazis were one of the few parties that established schools for training speakers in which they taught Hitler's methods. Prior to the 1930 election, in which Hitler made his breakthrough, the Nazis held 34,000 rallies. Hitler could speak at few of these, but the method employed and the effect produced were the same. At the

1933 Victory Party Day, held just a few months after becoming chancellor, Hitler gave a remarkable speech in which he explained to his opponents the secret of his success. Norman H. Baynes introduces that speech as follows:

> In his closing speech at the Parteitag in Nuremberg in September 1933, Hitler said that the lines on which the National Socialist Party had been built up had been determined after long and careful thought. . . . Such thought had been neglected by his opponents. [But] now after the victory of the Party, he could now speak freely of things which he had previously said only to Party members.[70]

Hitler then commenced the substance of that speech with a lecture on logic, which can be recognized today, thanks to Peirce, as abductive logic. "In Nature there are no such things as chance happenings," Hitler begins. "Every development runs its course in accordance with the laws of cause and effect." This is the fundamental basis of abduction and—Hitler is explaining—the fundamental basis of his success.

"But," he goes on, his opponents had not thought abductively: "Since it is the effect which is principally seen and felt, men are content to concern themselves only with the effect. The unwillingness to seek and discover causes is deeply seated." Hitler thus explains that it was his and his party's unique concern with the logic connecting effects back to causes that was the secret of their success. He and the Nazi Party had been successful because they had thought backward to uncover causes.

Hitler explains this by offering the classic abductive diagnostic model: "The only way to permanently cure diseased conditions is to disclose their causes," he says. This was both the secret of his *Weltanschauung* and the secret of the Party's success. "Only so," he exclaims, "does the riddle lose its mystery." Only with this understanding, he goes on, are "the individual happenings . . . made up of 100,000 apparent 'chances' . . . at length revealed."[71]

This speech is remarkable in that in it Hitler explicitly credits his success to his and his party's ability to give an amplified explanation of the traumas that the German people had undergone since the end of the war. He explains to his opponents that he had diagnosed the symptoms more successfully than they. He had presented himself as a doctor possessed of special knowledge who could cure the nation's ills. He alone had thought backward from the symptoms to the causes and had inculcated that method of thinking into his party. His opponents could now observe with what success his efforts had been crowned. This was the meaning that became the motif of many of his later speeches: "To be German is to be logical"[72] he insisted, and "to be logical" was the essence of his *Weltanschauung*:

> We wish to raise once more the value of our people . . . we want to free this fundamental value. . . . We wish that this value. . . should be raised

> to its highest potency through the way in which it is administered. This administration must be modelled (*sic*) on the law of logic.[73]

After he assumed power, Hitler was free to explain the "*eigentumliche Art von Logik*"[74] with which he had so mystified his opponents and critics. He had invented explanations, amplified them into a comprehensive worldview, and mendaciously presented them to the German nation. Though the substance was false, he had mastered a strange form of logic that brought him immense power.

NOTES

1. See Frederic Lilge, *The Abuse of Learning: The Failure of the German University* (New York: Macmillan, 1948), passim; Joachim Fest, "Professor NSDAP: The Intellectuals and the Third Reich," in *The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the Nazi Leadership*, trans. Michael Bullock (New York: Pantheon, 1970), 249–262; Hans Kohn, *The Mind of Germany: The Education of a Nation* (New York: Harper Torch Books, 1965), passim; Mosse, *The Crisis*, passim; Horst von Maltitz, "The Educators, The Students," in *The Evolution of Hitler's Germany* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1973), 420–442.
2. See, for example, Howard Kahane, *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric* (New York: Wadsworth, 1995); Irving Copi and Carl Cohen, *Introduction to Logic* (New York: Macmillan, 1994); and Robert Fogelin and Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, *Understanding Arguments* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991). See also a very simple and fun work in logic and the detection of false syllogisms in Ray Perkins, *Logic and Mr. Limbaugh* (Chicago: Open Court, 1995).
3. Heiden, *A History*, 65.
4. *Ibid*., 66.
5. *Ibid*., 65.
6. *Ibid*.
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid*.
9. *Ibid*.
10. *Ibid*., 67.
11. *Ibid*., 65.
12. *Ibid*., 70. (Emphasis added.)
13. Josephson and Josephson, *Abductive Inference,* 13.
14. *Ibid*.
15. *Ibid*.
16. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 308–329.
17. *Ibid*., 308.
18. John Gunther described this medical approach as the standard framework of Hitler's speeches: "His technique was something like this: He suggested to the German people first that they were sick, second that he alone could make them well. His argument was passionate and direct. 'You are humiliated. You are degraded. Germany is a sick nation. Admit it. Concede the extent of your misery. . . .'" *Inside Europe,* Again Completely Revised War Edition (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940), 31.
19. Peng and Reggia, *Abductive,* 5.
20. Heiden, *A History*, 67.
21. Peng and Reggia, *Abductive,* 13.
22. ". . . our success in discovering natural laws is explained by our affinity with nature." (Nathan Houser, explaining the development of Peirce's thought in the introduction of *EP2*, xx).
23. Ibid. (Emphasis added.)

24. Peirce, "Philosophy and the Conduct of Life," *EP2*, 32.
25. Peirce, "How to Make Our Ideas Clear," in *The Essential Peirce*, vol. 1 of *The Peirce Edition Project,* ed. Nathan Houser and Christian Kloesel. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 125. Hereafter cited as *EP,* followed by the volume number and page. For example, this citation would appear as *EP1*, 125.
26. Peirce, "Philosophy in the Conduct of Life," *EP2*, 32.
27. *Ibid*.
28. *Ibid*., 33. (Emphasis in original.)
29. Peirce, "The Nature of Meaning," *EP2*, 217.
30. Peirce, "Philosophy and the Conduct of Life," *EP2*, 40.
31. Peirce, "The Nature of Meaning," *EP2*, 218.
32. "The Legend of the Instinct Man," Heiden, *A History*, 61.
33. "Speech of November 8, 1938," in vol. IV of *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler,* ed. Norman H. Baynes, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1942), 1551.
34. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 244.
35. *Ibid*., 296–301.
36. Gunther, *Inside*, 14.
37. Fest, *Hitler*, 44.
38. Peirce, "What Makes a Reasoning Sound?" *EP2*, 244.
39. Nathan Houser, introduction to *EP2*, xxxi.
40. Thomas A. Sebeok and Jean Umiker-Sebeok, "You Know My Method: A Juxtaposition of Charles S. Peirce and Sherlock Holmes," in *The Sign of Three*, ed. Eco and Sebeok, 11–54, at 17.
41. Thomas Henry Huxley, "On the Method of Zadig," in *Science and Culture and Other Essays,* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1890), 135–155.
42. Peirce, "Pragmatism as the Logic of Abduction," *EP2*, 532, n. 12.
43. Peirce, "The Nature of Meaning," *EP2*, 224.
44. Peirce, "Pragmatism and the Logic of Abduction," *EP2*, 227.
45. *Ibid*.
46. *Ibid*., 531–532, fn. 12.
47. Dietrich Eckart, *Der Bolshewismus von Moses bei Lenin* (Munich, 1924), 5–6. As found in Payne, *Life and Death,* 140.
48. *Ibid*.
49. Quoted in Heiden, *A History*, 64–65.
50. "Logic as a Trick" in Heiden, *Eine Biographie*, 79.
51. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 2nd enlarged ed. (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), 470.
52. Peirce, "A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God," *EP2*, 440–441.
53. *Ibid*., 441.
54. Peirce explains that what he means by a "possible Explanation" is "a syllogism exhibiting the surprising fact as necessarily consequent upon the circumstances of its occurrence together with the truth of the credible conjecture as premises." *Ibid*.
55. *Ibid*.
56. *Ibid*.
57. *Ibid*.
58. *Ibid*.
59. Peirce, "The First Rule of Logic," *EP2*, 66.
60. *Ibid*., 48.
61. Peirce, "An Essay toward Reasoning in Security and Uberty," *EP2*, 467.
62. Kershaw, *Hubris*, 133.
63. *Ibid*., 134
64. *Ibid*.
65. *Ibid*., 133.
66. *Ibid*.

67. Ernst Hanfstaengl, *The Missing Years,* trans. Brian Connell (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1957), 269; *Unheard Witness* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1957), 283.
68. Bullock, *Hitler: A Study*, 56.
69. Kershaw, *Hubris*, 133.
70. "Speech of September 4, 1933," in Baynes, *The Speeches*, 462.
71. *Ibid*.
72. "Speech of July 18, 1937," *Ibid*., 587.
73. *Ibid*., 189. This speech was printed in *Volkischer Beobachter,* September 18, 1930.
74. Heiden, *Eine Biographie*, 111.

FOUR
Abductive Logic in Literature

"Whoever, then, wishes to locate Hitler in terms of intellectual history must descend to the level of the popular."

—Percy Ernst Schramm[1]

The study of logic has long been considered a dull and dry subject that does not easily capture one's attention or excite one's interest. The literature generated by the traditional forms of logic has not generally been considered popular literature. Its finest exponents, such as Plato, Aristotle, Leibnitz, Spinoza, and Kant are not light reading. In the case of abductive logic, however, the situation is the opposite.

Abductive logic first appeared in Western literature in a story by Voltaire, one of the most popular authors of the eighteenth century. Since that time it has not only furnished the basis of the twentieth century's most popular genre of literature—the detective novel—it has also served as the defining characteristic of two of the most popular, beloved, and enduring pairs of characters in all modern literature: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson; and Karl May's Old Shatterhand and Winetou.[2] Thus with abductive logic, one does not have to study it in the dry-as-dust pages of college logic textbooks, in the jargon of academicians, or in the abstract language of logicians. Rather, it can best be studied in the popular literature that embodies and exemplifies it.

Novels and stories based on demonstrations of the power of abductive logic first began to achieve worldwide popularity around the time Hitler was born in 1889. This occurred with the publication in 1887 of the first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, and the publication of Karl May's *Winnetou* in 1893. These works became immediately popular and raised their authors to heights of fame, resulting in the writing of many more stories about the fictional characters they created.

By the time Hitler entered high school in 1900, Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson, Winnetou, and Old Shatterhand were familiar names to the reading public. The period of Hitler's rise to power—the 1920s and early 1930s—coincided with what has become known as "The Golden Age of the Detective Novel"[3] as well as a tremendous growth in the popularity of Karl May's novels. Thus the growth in the popularity of this literature coincided with the major points of Adolf Hitler's life and career. That this is not merely a coincidence is an abduction with which the remainder of this chapter is concerned.

It was through this literature that Adolf Hitler first came into contact with this form of logic, and the very popularity of this literature guaranteed the receptivity of the public to anyone using this form of logic for political purposes. In many ways, Hitler's genius consisted in taking on a character similar to the fictional heroes of this literature, "Ratiocinative Man," and in providing a story line—his *Weltanschauung*—that matched his public's propensity for precisely the form of logic it demonstrated.

The popular literature embodying logic is directly relevant to Adolf Hitler in five important respects: First, this literature demonstrates how a form of logic that had not yet been fully defined or explicated by logicians came to be popular (i.e., familiar to, and understood by, the public), and therefore capable of being employed by Hitler, even before it was known or understood by scholars. Second, the nature of abductive logic, when portrayed in literature, resulted in a new type of fictional hero, "Ratiocinative Man," whose character traits bear a remarkable resemblance to the character traits of Adolf Hitler that have long puzzled historians and biographers. Third, the literature of abductive logic clearly displays and explains the astonishing powers of the abductive reasoner, and shows that these powers, which often appear to be the results of clairvoyance or mediumistic powers, were the results of the application of a strict method derived from this form of logic. Fourth, abductive logic created a new form of storytelling that corresponds to the logical form of Hitler's *Weltanschauung*. And, fifth, the study of this popular literature explains how Adolf Hitler became acquainted with abductive logic in the stories of Karl May.

Although the history of abductive logic in literature is very short, dating only from 1747, it has already produced two streams of literature. These might be said to be two distinct genres and exemplifications of the application of abductive logic in the characters of their heroes and the motifs of the stories.

The first stream, chronologically, is called the tracker stream, because its background is that of the tracker, hunter, or Indian scout, who has learned to read the slightest clues from broken twigs, fallen leaves, or indentations in the ground to predict the whereabouts of his quarry or his enemy. The heroes of this literature produced extraordinary and uncanny results from the application of this logic to the slightest signs,

enabling them to surprise their enemies and amaze their friends and observers. This stream is best exemplified, for our purposes, by Voltaire, who included in the story of *Zadig*, published in 1747, the first example of abductive logic to appear in Western literature. Thomas Henry Huxley recognized the revolutionary nature of the logic presented in Voltaire's story and wrote an essay extolling it in 1880 called "On the Method of Zadig." In 1893 Karl May published *Winnetou*, a novel set in the American Wild West, which, I intend to show, is an almost perfect embodiment—and learner's textbook—of Zadig's logic. It was through Karl May that Adolf Hitler first encountered the potential of abductive logic. I shall discuss this stream in the second part of this chapter.

The second stream consists of that entirely new and unique genre of literature known as the private detective story—or, as it is often called, the "detective mystery." This stream originated in 1841 with the publication of the first detective story in history, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and achieved worldwide popularity with the publication of the Sherlock Holmes stories beginning in 1887. It is in the stories of Poe and Doyle that the character and methods of Adolf Hitler are most clearly shown. Therefore, I shall discuss the private detective stream first. However, before I begin, a word is necessary on the discovery of abductive logic in these two streams.

THE DISCOVERY OF ABDUCTION IN LITERATURE

In the following two parts of this chapter, I shall discuss the presence of abductive logic in the works of five major authors: In the first part, Edgar Allan Poe and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; and in the second part, Voltaire, Thomas Henry Huxley, and Karl May. However, none of these authors ever heard of abductive logic, nor ever used the term "abduction" in relation to a form of logic. To all of these, the very idea of a third form of logic was unknown. Charles Sanders Peirce did not set forth this idea until 1901, and scholars were generally unaware of it until after the publication of Peirce's papers was completed in 1966. While it is true that Huxley recognized the "method of Zadig" as a revolutionary form of reasoning, he made no attempt to analyze it or classify it. Thus it is clear, at least in retrospect, that Voltaire, Poe, Doyle, and May were writing stories whose heroes employed a form of logic that no one had yet identified as a new and separate form of logic. Perhaps that very fact added to the public's fascination with these heroes. Both the fictional characters and their readers shared the secret that the stories contained a new and fascinating way of reasoning of which scholars and academicians were completely unaware.

This ability of the hero's reasoning to elude formal analysis is most obvious in the detective stream, in which (1) the logic of the detective is

the sole motif of the stories, and (2) the detectives were most equivocal about classifying it. In Poe's stories, for example, Dupin refers to his logic sometimes as "deduction,"[4] other times as "induction,"[5] and still other times as "guesses."[6] In Doyle's stories, Holmes usually uses the term "deduction," but qualifies it as a "backward form of reasoning." However, it is always clear that the reasoning process demonstrated in both cases is neither deduction nor induction, for Dupin and Holmes were reasoning backward from facts or clues, each of which was unique. Anyone even slightly acquainted with traditional logic knows that it is not logically possible either to *deduce* or to *induce* any valid conclusion from a single, unique, and unrepeatable fact. While it is perfectly obvious that Dupin and Holmes were applying some form of logic, their reasoning certainly did not fit the rules of any logic previously known.

As soon as the question—What form of logic are they using?—was asked, a logical mystery presented itself. It almost seemed that a detective was necessary to solve the mystery of Dupin's and Holmes' logic. Few scholars, however, seem to have been detectives. I have found little published addressing this subject during the first thirteen decades following Dupin's first appearance and the first eight decades after the advent of the Sherlock Holmes stories.[7] Apparently, on the idea that "a rose by any other name is still a rose," scholars and general readers alike enjoyed the fascinating and amazing demonstrations of logical acumen found in these stories, no matter what they were called.

But not long after the completion of the publication of Peirce's papers in 1966 this began to change, and scholars took a new interest in the logic displayed in detective stories. In his 1970 pioneering study, *Peirce's Theory of Abduction*, K.T. Fann identifies Sherlock Holmes as one of the "masters of abductive reasoning."[8] In 1973, Marcello Truzzi, an Italian sociologist and Sherlock Holmes buff, followed with an essay demonstrating at length that Holmes' "deductions" were actually what Peirce had called "abductions."[9] This was followed by several other scholars from around the world who also came to the same conclusion about the logic employed by Dupin. Eventually, the papers of these scholars were collected by Umberto Eco and Thomas Sebeok and published as *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce* in 1983. This work established abduction as the basis for the fascinating logic and methods demonstrated by both Dupin and Holmes. Applying the concepts and ideas about a third form of logic developed by Charles Sanders Peirce, this collection shows both the "praeternatural" powers of Dupin and the astonishing feats of Holmes to be nothing but the application of abductive logic. Logicians and other scholars who began studying abduction as a third form of logic for the Artificial Intelligence Project, and scholars in other fields where logic is fundamental, such as computer science and diagnostics, frequently point out that abduction is exemplified by Sherlock Holmes.[10]

Thus it is established that the detective story genre is based upon, indeed is entirely formed by, its heroes' demonstrations of abductive logic. The backward form of this genre's narrative is the result of the backward form of the logic that informs its story. The action of the detective story is a duel of abductive logic. The detective hero is portrayed as the incarnation of the abductive logic he employs. The astonishing feats and uncanny success of the heroes are explained as being solely the result of their mental ability and acumen in applying abductive logic and methods.

Although abductive logic accounts for a multitude of other unique qualities associated with this genre, it is beyond the scope of this work to discuss all of them. However, three are preeminently relevant to the relationship of abductive logic to Adolf Hitler. These are: (1) the character of the detective story hero, which has come to be known as "Ratiocinative Man"; (2) the logic of the methods applied by these detectives to achieve astonishing results; and (3) the backward form of the detective story, which is unique in literature. The first of these provides a significant clue toward answering the question *who was this man?* The second answers the question *how did he do it?* The third sheds light on Hitler's *Weltanschauung*.

While the scholars assembled in *The Sign of Three*: *Dupin, Holmes, Peirce* argued primarily for the presence of the abductive logic of Peirce in the characters and methods of Dupin and Holmes, they also established that the same logic was present in Voltaire's story of Zadig and in Huxley's essay on "The Method of Zadig."[11] In regard to the analysis of Karl May's *Winnetou* in the second part, there exists, to my knowledge, no prior study. The conclusion that abductive logic informs the story is solely my own discovery, which came about in the following manner. In June of 1998, I had just discovered *The Sign of Three: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce*, which led me to read Peirce's works on abduction and to reread the entire Holmes canon and Poe's detective stories. While doing so, I noticed that Karl May's *Winnetou* was to be republished in an English translation. I was interested in reading this because I knew that Hitler read May's works throughout his life. I immediately purchased and read *Winnetou*. Having just read Peirce, Doyle, Poe, and the analyses in *The Sign of Three*, I was immediately struck by finding the same logic present in *Winnetou*.

It is time now to explore the abductive logic found in private detective stories in relation to Adolf Hitler. As Sherlock Holmes would say, "Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot!"[12]

PART I: THE PRIVATE DETECTIVE STREAM

It is most fortunate for anyone attempting to explain the nature of abductive logic that the most popular form of literature of the twentieth century, the private detective story, provides an almost perfect embodiment of this form of logic. The essence of every private detective story and, by the very nature of the genre, its main ingredient "must be logic,"[13] and not simply logic in general, but very specifically that form of logic that has come to be known as abduction.

The two authors I intend to discuss in this part are Edgar Allan Poe and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Poe is universally recognized as the "Father of the Detective Story."[14] He originated the detective story stream with the publication of a short story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," in 1841. Poe published only two other detective short stories: "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (1842) and "The Purloined Letter" (1845). But in these three short stories, he not only created a new genre of literature, but also became the "grand master"—having established almost all of the standards, forms, and rules which have governed with little variation ever since.[15]

Deeply indebted to Poe, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle closely followed the forms established by Poe. Without changing the essential characteristics, he added only that touch of genius which converted the strange, uncanny, enigmatic, and antisocial character of the first detective in history, Dupin, into the most popular, beloved and enduring fictional personality of twentieth-century literature, Sherlock Holmes.[16] How such a character could ever become beloved is, indeed, one of the mysteries of both literature and human nature. But therein lies one of the keys to the character of Adolf Hitler and his political success.

The Uniqueness of the Detective Story

To bring the presence of abduction in detective stories into view, it is necessary to review the unique and entirely new characteristics of the detective story genre. For only when these are brought into focus will the nature of the distinct logic that informs them be brought into view. Here is the first application of the principle that *one must use abductive logic in order to detect the presence of abductive logic.* For it is a basic requirement of the logic I am attempting to explicate that, as Dupin stated it, "In investigations such as we are now pursuing, it should not be so much asked 'what has occurred,' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before.'"[17] The application of abductive logic always begins with what is surprising, unexpected, distinctive, unprecedented, and unique.

The private detective story was[18] both entirely new and unique in literary history in three ways. First, because it is based on a backward form of logic, it is one of the very few, if not the only new form of story-

telling to appear in the modern world. The detective story begins at the end of a completed story; the classic formula is: "the corpse on page one." At the end of the story, the detective explains the story that ended at the beginning of the story, i.e., how the "corpse on page one" came to be there. Thus the story line flows backward, from the end to the beginning. Where all other previous forms and genres of literature followed normal logic, portraying a growth, a progression, a sequence of events, or a course of development that flowed naturally from cause to effect, from past to present, and from antecedent to consequent, the detective story reversed these. For the first time in history, a form of storytelling was created in which the story line and narrative flowed backward: from effect to cause, from the present (or future) to the past, and from consequent to antecedent. Never before in history had stories been told in this manner.[19]

Second, the private detective story is unique in that the action and the drama in the story consist solely in a duel between two antagonists whose only weapon is logic—with which one antagonist, the criminal, attempts to conceal his crimes, while the other, the detective, attempts to reveal them.[20] Each attempts to read the other's mind, guessing what inference the other will draw from any fact, what ruses each will use to deceive the other, and what steps would be logical for the other to take next. The detective is "continually asked to guess at the meaning of events and to extrapolate an entire scenario from a handful of clues."[21] Never before in literature had popular stories been told whose action, suspense, and drama arose almost exclusively from the application of logic. Though murder and mayhem might be occurring all around the detective, these are but background. The real story lies in the mental acuity and coolness of the detective in logically uncovering what is behind the most shocking and horrendous events. Thus the real "action" in a detective story is an act of understanding, of "seeing," and of being able to explain. The "hero" may never move from his armchair, yet, the climax of the detective story occurs when the detective explains the solution of the mystery and how he arrived at it. It is not without cause that the first detective story has been hailed as a "very hymn to analytic reason,"[22] and that the genre of detective fiction has been called the "romance of reason"[23] and the "epitome of reason."[24]

Third, the detective story is unique in the nature of its hero: "Ratiocinative Man." Unlike all other literary heroes, the original detective hero is a "man without qualities." Ratiocinative man exists solely to display his mental acumen in applying logic. The private detective does not grow; in each story he exercises the same dazzling powers by which he logically solves what appear to be unsolvable mysteries. The original detective heroes are antisocial, impersonal and asexual—without wife, family, or private life. They are presented as superior to others, possessed of superhuman—almost praeternatural—powers that astonish their opponents

(the criminals), their competitors (the police), their admiring narrators (e.g., Watson), and the reading public alike. Never before in history or literature had such a "hero" been known: the hero as "unperson," whose personal life is a void except in the exercise of his brain. Yet, in the person of Sherlock Holmes, alike in all essential respects to Dupin, this character, so much like Adolf Hitler, became popular and beloved.

Let us now look more closely at each of these in relation to Adolf Hitler, beginning with the last point: the character of "Ratiocinative Man."

Ratiocinative Man

It was Sebastian Haffner who first suggested that the key to the character and personality of Adolf Hitler could be found in detective novels. In 1940, shortly after emigrating from Nazi Germany where he had followed Hitler's career as a journalist, Haffner wrote:

> Though endless reams of paper have been covered with ink concerning Hitler, he is still able to 'surprise' the world, a proof that the key to his personality and behavior has not yet been found. Yet this key is within easy reach. Its whereabouts are so obvious that no one suspects it—a kind of hiding-place familiar to every reader of detective novels.[25]

Haffner's observation is prescient. An examination of the character of the first private detectives in literature reveals a remarkable resemblance to the character of Hitler. Let us begin with the first private detective in history, the fictional character who served as the model for Sherlock Holmes, the Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin.

The Character of the First Detective Hero: C. Auguste Dupin

Dupin is introduced by Poe in the first detective story, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue.* The narrator, who remains unnamed throughout the story, devotes the first six pages of the twenty-seven-page story to a description of the character and background of Dupin, almost all of which consists of a description of his mental qualities. But the narrator also gives a brief description of how he met Dupin and what kind of a life Dupin has led. In examining the narrator's introduction of Dupin, we discover parallels with Hitler that are striking.

The narrator recounts that he met Dupin at an "obscure library in the Rue Montmartre where the accident of our both being in search of the same very rare and remarkable volume brought us into closer communion."[26] One is immediately reminded of August Kubizek's account of his meeting Hitler at the opera in chapters 1 and 2 of *The Young Hitler I Knew.* Like Kubizek and Hitler, the narrator and Dupin contrive to meet again often and the narrator records that he found himself astonished at the

"vast amount of his reading." Like Kubizek, the unnamed narrator of Dupin records that "above all I felt my soul enkindled within me by the wild fervor, and the vivid freshness of his imagination." Feeling that "the society of such a man would be a treasure beyond price," the two arrange to live together.[27] Similarly, Kubizek contrives to live together with Hitler in Vienna because of the fascination of Kubizek with the strange imagination of Hitler.[28]

Dupin is described as a man who came from a respectable family, but who, "by a variety of untoward events, had been reduced to such poverty that the energy of his character succumbed beneath it, and he ceased to bestir himself."[29] One is immediately reminded of Adolf Hitler in Vienna: reduced to poverty by both his failure to be admitted to the art academy and the death of his mother, he succumbed beneath it, living for a while on the streets until he finally found a dreary place to live in a home for destitute men. However, neither Dupin nor Hitler was entirely destitute. Each had a small source of income. Dupin received a patrimony that enabled him, "by means of a rigorous economy, to procure the necessities of life, without troubling himself about the superfluities."[30] Hitler was the beneficiary of an orphan's allowance, by which he survived at a similar poverty level. Both refused to engage in any regular work.

Dupin chose to live in the midst of a "fantastic gloom," in a "time-eaten and grotesque mansion, long deserted . . . and tottering." There he lived alone, with no friends, no job, no interest in women, and no apparent purpose. Hitler chose to live, in Vienna and Munich before the war, in similarly dreary surroundings, also without close friends, no job, no interest in women, and no apparent purpose. The narrator, apparently the only friend in Dupin's life, like Kubizek in Hitler's life, reveled in Dupin's "wild whims"; we "busied ourselves in dreams," he wrote.[31] Kubizek, too, wrote, "I marveled at my friend's uncanny imagination, which enabled him to find his way in his dream world better than in the real world."[32]

The narrator describes how his and Dupin's world would have looked to any outside observer: "Had the routine of our life at this place been known to the world, we should have been regarded as madmen."[33] They admitted no friends to their mansion and cut off all ties with their former associates. During the day they closed all the shutters to keep out the light. Dupin believed that thinking was best done in the dark.[34] Dupin and the narrator went out only at night, long after everyone in Paris had gone to bed—at the "the advent of true Darkness"—seeking "that infinity of mental excitement which only the night afforded."[35] Hitler, too, loved the night, staying up and sometimes wandering Vienna and Munich in its deepest hours, and sleeping long into the morning hours, a habit he maintained throughout his life.

Dupin's life consisted solely of sitting in an armchair, reading, dreaming, and thinking, all to no apparent purpose. He lived a life of utter

languor, sought no employment, had no friends other than his adoring narrator friend, had neither a social life nor a personal life, had no interest in women, family, or normal life. Dupin's physical appearance is never described. He is presented as though he has no being, no personal qualities except his amazing brain and imagination. He is, literally, a "man without qualities," neither noticed nor appreciated by anyone but his "bland and dim narrator,"[36] who is entranced by Dupin's mind and imagination.[37]

What, then, accounts for the fascination with this man, experienced by the narrator and millions of readers over the last century and a half? The answer is a "duality" in Dupin that leads his narrator to ponder the theory of the "Bi-Part Soul."[38] For Dupin was capable of completely becoming another person when he encountered a problem that was adequate to his mental skills. Then Dupin, like Hitler when he gave a speech, was transformed:

> His manner at these moments was frigid and abstract; his eyes were vacant in expression; while his voice, usually a rich tenor, rose to a treble which would have sounded petulant but for the deliberateness and entire distinctness of the enunciation. Observing him in these moods, I often dwelt meditatively upon the old philosophy of the Bi-Part Soul, and amused myself with the fancy of a double Dupin—the creative and the resolvent.[39]

Hitler, too, would be transformed when he applied his talent—public speaking—to crowds. Then this small man would be transformed into one of the most spellbinding orators in German history.

To create a new type of fictional hero, Poe deliberately stripped the character of Dupin of all personal life and normal human qualities. In the absence of normal qualities, Poe created a new character with only one dimension—the powers of his mind. Thus stripped and limited to only one quality and one power, "Monsieur Dupin [became] one of Poe's finest creations, his most believable portrait of the Man of Thought," writes Daniel Hoffman, who found this to be an "irresistible attraction." Hoffman describes this "irresistible attraction" by reference to Lagrand, an earlier character Poe had created, whose sole virtue was his "intellectual powers":

> This person is here called Lagrand and, as though to foreshadow Dupin, he too lives apart from the bustle of many men. He too 'had once been wealthy, but a series of misfortunes had reduced him to want.' Now a recluse, living (like Thoreau) in a hut he had built for himself, it was there on Sullivan's Island that the narrator first made his acquaintance. I found him well educated, *with usual powers of mind, but infected with misanthropy, and subject to perverse moods of alternate enthusiasm and melancholy. He had with him many books, but rarely employed them. This man of intellect, by the world scorned, is thought by his relatives to be mentally unbalanced.*[40] (Emphasis added.)

Here one finds a portrait of the character of Hitler. But rather than finding such an antisocial and misanthropic character repellent, Hoffman describes the character as "irresistible." Hoffman goes on to talk about Lagrand's collection of insects, which stands in for *any* interest taken by a "genius."

> Here begins that dandiacal distinctiveness of mind which sets off the master ratiocinator from the *hoi polloi*. His interest may be in natural sciences, or in foreign languages, or in cryptographic problems, or in mathematical puzzles, or any such variety of arcana requiring both special information and unusual intellectual propensities: Poe's version of the genius of the age.[41]

Or in politics, one might add. Poe's version of the "genius of the age" is an isolated, misanthropic, antisocial man who is thought to be mad. But this, according to Hoffman is only part of his attraction. The emptiness of such a character must yet be made clear. The genius must be absolutely barren of normal human feeling. Here is Hoffman's description of the new hero of our time, the "genius of the age":

> A Romantic genius. He has all the powers of a man of the Renaissance like Michelangelo or Leonardo, all the capacities of a man of the Enlightenment like Dr. Johnson or Thomas Jefferson, *save that in no way does he show any interest toward man in society. Au contraire,* he pursues his excellences in isolation. He *cares not a whistle for the knowledge that benefits mankind*, as did Franklin, *but devotes all his leisure hours*—and there are many—*to the knowledge that interests himself. His sole occupation, in the event is to understand the universe, not for the utility such understanding might confer upon his country or his race, but because his curiosity will not be assuaged until he himself has mastered the secrets written into the world by the Author of its so far uncracked code*. By analogy with . . . Dupin . . . we can infer that *if the detective, or to be more generic, the genius, can crack the code of the Author, he has made himself coequal with the perpetrator of the code*.[42] (Emphases added.)

In other words, the new type of modern hero, the "genius of the age," dreams of unlimited power. This is the true source of the "irresistible attraction" that Poe's new fictional hero exercises on his adoring narrator, on the author's readers, and on the public. William O. Aydelotte draws the obvious inference that this picture of "Ratiocinative Man" suggests:

> Though the detective story appears non-political on the surface, the roles of its two protagonists [the detective and the criminal] are saturated with political meanings. . . . The detective . . . has many characteristics in common with the modern political leader or agitator. He simplifies life, makes sense out of it and gives it meaning. His strength is real, . . . for it is based not just on externals but on intuition and a sense of community . . . . [H]e is conservative, and objects not to the system but to certain people . . . who seem to be endangering it. And yet the detective is not really part of the established framework of society, for

> he neither belongs to the police [nor] the official guardians of the law. . . . Thus, though he moves in an ordered universe, the order is not that of the . . . regular authorities, but an order that is discovered and imposed by him. The detective may have a democratic aura, for he frequently rises from the ranks and is not distinguished by birth, and although he moves unperturbed among the highly placed, he is not one of them. Yet he is indispensable, *for he alone can solve the riddle*. Therefore, the authorities . . . perforce surrender the controls to him, sometimes reluctantly and occasionally with sharp protest. *One could argue that all these qualities add up to a dictator, that the detective is the extra-legal superman who is called in to accomplish by extraordinary measures what is impossible within the traditional organization of society*.[43] (Emphases added.)

Hitler's character and personality fit almost every detail of this picture. He simplified life and gave it (*ersatz*) meaning; he based his personality on intuition and his *Weltanschauung* on "a sense of community." Hitler was definitely not part of the "established framework of society." He created an order in his fantasies that was far from that of regular society and set out to impose it. He had a "democratic aura," and rose from the ranks. Although he moved unperturbed among the highly placed, he was not "one of them." He presented himself as indispensable, for "he alone can solve the riddle." As Hoffman suggests, and as Aydelotte makes explicit, the detective hero is the model of the political hero who comes from outside the regular political process as an *"extra-legal superman to accomplish by extraordinary measures what is impossible*," for "*he alone can solve the riddle."* This is precisely how Hitler saw and presented himself—as the outsider who could solve the riddles. When asked to explain his success, Hitler once replied:

> It has been said that I owe my success to the fact that I have created a mystique . . . or more simply that I have been lucky. Well, I will tell you what carried me to the position I have reached. Our political problems appeared complicated. The German people could make nothing of them. In these circumstances they preferred to leave it to the professional politicians to get them out to this confused mess. I, on the other hand, simplified the problems and reduced them to their simplest terms. The people realized this and followed me."[44]

Aydelotte goes on to suggest precisely the conditions in which the detective as political "hero" would be expected to appear: "The detective story does not reflect order, but expresses on the fantasy level a yearning for order; it suggests then, a disordered world, and its roots are to be sought in social disintegration rather than in social cohesion."[45]

Hitler rose to power in the aftermath of a lost war, amidst political, economic, and social crisis, in a society that was yearning for order. He was the loner, the outsider, the "Ratiocinative Man," who insisted that he would convict the "November Criminals" and restore order. He claimed

access to special knowledge, special intuition, and special talents. An understanding of detective stories and the character of the detective as hero, then, provides the key, as Sebastian Haffner suggests, to the character, personality, and behavior of Adolf Hitler.

The Character of the Most Popular Hero: Sherlock Holmes

But is it really possible that such a character could ever become popular with the general public? Would not such a man who is so unbalanced that he utterly lacks a personal life and seems to exist solely in his mental powers be repellent to the public? Would not the lack of "wholeness" be an insuperable hindrance? Joachim Fest cites "an ancient tenet of aesthetics" holding that "one who for all his remarkable traits is a repulsive human being, is unfit to be a hero."[46] It seems contrary to both common sense and all wisdom that "Ratiocinative Man" could ever become a popular hero.

An examination of the character of one of the most popular fictional heroes of the twentieth century, however, would prove how wrong both common sense and the "ancient tenet" could become in our time. One of the most unique and unprecedented elements of the detective story is that the author can develop the most repulsive character traits to enhance a hero's status, rather than to reflect negatively upon it.

This may be most clearly seen in the character of the most popular, beloved, and enduring fictional hero of the twentieth century, Sherlock Holmes. Let us begin with Watson's description of Holmes in the second story of the Holmes canon, "The Sign of Four":

> Sherlock Holmes took his bottle from the corner of the mantelpiece, and his hypodermic syringe from its neat morocco case. With his long, white nervous fingers he adjusted the delicate needle and rolled back his shirtcuff. For some little time his eyes rested thoughtfully upon the sinewy forearm and wrist, all dotted and scarred with innumerable puncture-marks. Finally, he thrust the sharp point home, pressed down the tiny piston, and sank back into the velvet-lined armchair with a long sigh of satisfaction. Three times a day, for many months I had witnessed this performance.
> "Which is it today," I asked, "morphine or cocaine?"
> "It is cocaine," he said . . . .[47]

The fact is that Sherlock Holmes—depicted as the noblest man who ever lived—is a drug addict. Worse, according to Watson, he is a drug addict because he has no other life; he has absolutely *no* personal life. Watson asks him, on this occasion, whether he has any "professional inquiry afoot at present?" Holmes replies, explaining the cocaine and the emptiness of his life, "None. Hence the cocaine. I cannot live without brainwork. What else is there to live for?"[48] Holmes, like Hitler, despises the

humdrum, workaday world of ordinary life; he lives only for the "highs" of either crime or drugs:

> "My mind," he said, "rebels at stagnation. Give me a problem, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram, or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can then dispense with artificial stimulants. But *I abhor the dull routine of existence*. I crave for mental excitation."[49] (Emphasis added.)

Holmes, like Hitler, refuses to take any regular job—all jobs are part of that world he abhors, "the dull routine of existence." "That is why," he says, "I have chosen my own particular profession, or rather created it; for *I am the only one in the world*."[50] Holmes forsakes all private life, all normal emotions, all normal joys in life, for only the chance to use his powers. For Holmes, like Hitler, everything else in the word is dross except his own powers:

> "Stand by the window here. Was ever such a dreary, dismal, unprofitable world? . . . What could be more hopelessly prosaic and material? What is the use of having powers, Doctor, when one has no field upon which to exert them. . . . [E]xistence is commonplace, and no qualities save those which are commonplace have any function upon earth.[51]

Holmes has absolutely no normal, human feeling for people in general, not even for the clients he serves. A beautiful young lady comes as a client. After she leaves, Watson comments, "What a very attractive woman!" To which Holmes replies languidly, "Is she? I did not observe." Watson records his reaction to Holmes' reply: "'You really are an automaton—a calculating machine,' I cried. 'There is something positively inhuman in you at times.'" Holmes responds that Watson is correct and explains that such an attitude of mind is necessary for the proper functioning of his powers: "A client is a mere unit, a factor in a problem. The emotional qualities are antagonistic to clear reasoning."[52] For Hitler, even the people whose support he was seeking were just voting cattle.[53]

When Watson tells Holmes that he is engaged to be married, Holmes replies, "I cannot really congratulate you." Holmes then explains that he would forever forsake marriage for the sake of his mental powers. "Love is an emotional thing, and whatever is emotional is opposed to that cold reason which I place above all things. I should never marry myself, lest I bias my judgment."[54] Elsewhere, Watson enlarges upon the absence of not only love, but also the absence of all human emotions from the make-up of his hero—an absence demanded by the nature of Holmes' logic:

> All emotions, and that one [love] in particular, were abhorrent to his cold, precise, but admirably balanced mind. He was . . . the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world had ever seen; but, as a lover, he would have placed himself in a false position. He never spoke of the softer passions except with a gibe and a sneer. They

> were admirable things for [others]. But for the trained reasoner to admit such intrusions . . . was to introduce a distracting factor. . . .[55]

In another place Holmes says of himself, "I am a brain, Watson. The rest of me is a mere appendix."[56] Thus Holmes neither can, nor will, permit himself to love any human being. Nor did he have any love for society; Watson records that Holmes "loathed every form of society with his whole Bohemian soul."[57]

Watson also sees the completely amoral character of Holmes' powers: "I could not but think what a terrible criminal he would have made had he turned his energy and sagacity against the law instead of exerting them in its defense."[58] Holmes himself ruminates on the possibility: "I have always had an idea that I would have made a highly efficient criminal."[59] For Holmes had not the slightest compunction about breaking the law nor in pulling others with him:

> "By the way, Doctor, you don't mind breaking the law?"
> "Not in the least."
> "Nor running a chance of arrest?"
> "Not in a good cause."
> "Oh, the cause is excellent!"
> "Then I am your man."[60]

Holmes is depicted as above the law, a law unto himself. For Holmes' powers do not stem from the goodness or nobility of his character, but solely from his logic, which is a tool that can be used for good or evil, a fact over which he and Watson mused. Holmes exercises his powers for no ordinary human purpose: neither for good of society, nor for the honor of his peers, nor for money or fame, but solely for his own mental excitation. That he used them for good and on the side of the law is purely a stroke of good fortune—an inexplicable accident of fate. For Holmes, like Hitler, good or evil in a man is a mere matter of genetics. Thus he explains the character of Moriarty, his alter ego:

> The man had hereditary tendencies of the most diabolical kind. A criminal strain ran in his blood, which, instead of being modified, was increased and rendered infinitely more dangerous by his extraordinary mental powers.[61]

The implication is that Holmes works for good for no other reason than that he inherited different tendencies. Indeed, Holmes has no other reason at all to be on the side of the law. At the end of one story, Watson remarks, "'You have done all the work in this business. I get a wife out of it, Jones gets the credit, pray what remains for you?' 'For me,' said Sherlock Holmes, 'there still remains the cocaine bottle.' And he stretched his long white hand up for it."[62] For Holmes could only find pleasure in "all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of everyday life."[63] "My life is spent in one long effort to escape the com-

monplaces of existence," he says.[64] Holmes fought crime only as a way to fight his own boredom and ennui.

Indeed, fighting crime for Holmes, like politics for Hitler, was the only content and purpose of his life. Holmes often complained that there was not enough crime: "The days of the great cases are past," Holmes sighs. "Man, or at least criminal man, has lost all enterprise and originality."[65] When there is no great crime to pursue, Holmes is desultory: "My dear Watson, you know how bored I have been. . . . My mind is like a racing engine, tearing itself to pieces because it is not connected up with the work for which it was built."[66]

Moreover, in almost all the ways employed by Doyle to describe the character of Holmes in the stories, Holmes is intentionally depicted as contrary to the norms of civilized society. Holmes is repellent in his egotism, according to Watson, who records that he is "repelled by the egotism which I had more than once observed to be a strong factor in my friend's singular character."[67] In fact, viewed as a man, there was almost nothing in his character, personal life, or behavior that Watson did not seem to mention in a derogatory way.[68] His ignorance was "remarkable"; he did not even know that the earth revolved around the sun.[69] His self-absorption was complete. As to his laziness, Doyle had Holmes boast, "I am the most incurably lazy devil that ever stood in shoe leather."[70]

Holmes rarely laughs, and when he does, it is not good. "I have not heard him laugh often," observed Watson, "and it always boded ill to somebody."[71] Holmes is also a man who, like Hitler, hid his roots and his background to the point of unnerving secretiveness. In summing up the character of Holmes, Watson observes:

> During my long and intimate acquaintance with Mr. Sherlock Holmes I never heard him refer to his relations, and hardly ever to his own early life. This reticence upon his part had increased the somewhat inhuman effect which he produced upon me, until sometimes I found myself regarding him as an isolated phenomenon, a brain without a heart, as deficient in human sympathy as he was preeminent in intelligence. His aversion to women and his disinclination to form new friendships were both typical of his own unemotional character, but not more so than his complete suppression of every reference to his own people.[72]

In short, Holmes, as described throughout the stories, is "misanthropic and egotistical"; amoral, asexual, antisocial; cynical and calculating; inhuman and impersonal. He is an unfeeling machine who treats people as ciphers, no more than factors of a problem; who abhors everything that is ordinary; who considers himself superior; and who lives only for the bizarre and the unusual. Essentially, Doyle depicts him as an "unperson" who has no private live outside of his persona as "the world's only consulting detective." Secrecy and detachment are painted as the essential features of his portrait. It could be said that the character of Sherlock

Holmes, as it has been said of Hitler, is a "void," and his private life a "black hole."

Yet despite all of these negative character traits, Sherlock Holmes becomes a hero. How is this possible? Holmes is often called a "magician,"[73] a "wizard," and a "sorcerer."[74] He worked miracles solving crimes and mysteries. But, like a saint, he did not ascribe the power to work these miracles to himself, but to a "method"—his logic. Marcello Truzzi writes of the power of the Sherlock Holmes legend:

> The character of Sherlock Holmes and his exploits touch a deeper reality, for. . . "this legend fulfills a need beyond the realms of literature." . . . Holmes symbolizes the sportsman and hunter, a modern Galahad hot on the scent of a blood trail, the character of Holmes even more clearly epitomizes the attempted application of man's highest faculty—his rationality—in the solution of the problematic situations of everyday life. . . . "The Holmesian cycle offers us for the first time the spectacle of a hero triumphing again and again by means of logic and scientific method."[75]

Understanding "Ratiocinative Man," and the characters who were created in the most popular literature of the age to embody this concept, it now becomes clear how a personality like Hitler could arise. This man, who was on a quest to convict the "November Criminals," who foreswore wife and every aspect of ordinary life, and who only lived to exercise his powers, fit precisely what the popular imagination was looking for. But there was something more to the fictional characters of the age, there was the strange emanation of power they exuded. Let us now explore the powers demonstrated by the detective hero.

THE POWER OF ABDUCTIVE LOGIC IN DETECTIVE STORIES

The second unique characteristic of the detective story is the form of its action. The form of action is cerebral; it is the application of a logic and a method to derive inferences from the most simple facts—facts that appear totally insignificant to others. In one story, for example, Sherlock Holmes abduces (Holmes would say "deduces") an entire life history and character sketch from a hat;[76] in another, he abduces from a watch.[77] Relying on his mental powers, the detective may sometimes not even "act" at all, but may sit through the entire story in an armchair, with the drama consisting solely of the "deductions" he makes from the facts brought to him.[78] Nevertheless, detective stories demonstrate powers with startling effects.

The first of these is the power to read minds. Dupin boasts that "most men, in respect to himself, [wear] windows in their bosoms" through which he can read their thoughts.[79] He demonstrates this by reading his friend's (the unnamed narrator's) thoughts. Dupin and the narrator had

been silently walking for fifteen minutes through the streets of Paris, each apparently engrossed in his own thoughts, when Dupin suddenly breaks into his friend's thoughts with the exact sentence that is occurring to the narrator at that moment. Dupin says, "He is a very little fellow, that is true, and would do better for the *Theatre des Varietes*." The narrative voice continues:

> "There can be no doubt of that," I replied, unwittingly, and not at first observing (so much had I been absorbed in reflection) the extraordinary manner in which the speaker had chimed in with my meditations. In an instant afterward I recollected myself, and my astonishment was profound.
> "Dupin," said I, gravely, "this is beyond my comprehension. I do not hesitate to say that I am amazed, and can scarcely credit my senses. How was it possible that you should know that I was thinking of——?" Here I paused, to ascertain beyond a doubt whether he really knew of whom I thought.
> "——of Chantilly," said he, "why do you pause? You were remarking to yourself that his diminutive figure unfitted him for tragedy. . . ."
> This was what had formed the subject of my reflections. . . . "Tell me, for Heaven's sake," I exclaimed, "the method—if method there is—by which you were enabled to fathom my soul in this matter." In fact I was even more startled than I would have been willing to express.[80]

Dupin then explains the precise method by which he had read his friend's thoughts. It is not by the paranormal power of a medium or a clairvoyant, though it appears that way. Rather, based on Dupin's knowledge of his friend, he employs a logical process of inference from his friend's eye movements and facial expressions to read his precise thoughts. This characteristic power is also demonstrated by Sherlock Holmes in an oft-cited example of reading Watson's mind:

> Finding that Holmes was too absorbed for conversation, I had tossed aside the paper, and, leaning back in my chair, I fell into a brown study. Suddenly my companion's voice broke in upon my thoughts.
> "You are right, Watson," said he. "It does seem a very preposterous way of settling a dispute."
> "Most preposterous!" I exclaimed, and then, suddenly realizing how he had echoed the inmost thought of my soul, I sat up in my chair and I stared at him in blank amazement.
> "What is this, Holmes?" I cried. "This is beyond anything which I could have imagined. . . . I have been seated quietly in my chair, and what clues can I have given you?"[81]

Holmes then explains how he does it. "The features are given to man as the means by which he shall express his emotions, and yours are faithful servants," says Holmes. Watson asks, incredulously, "Do you mean to say that you read my thoughts from my features?" To which Holmes replies, "Your features, and especially your eyes." Holmes then explains

the logical method by which he can so accurately read his friend's thoughts:

> "Perhaps you cannot yourself recall how your reverie commenced?"
> "No, I cannot."
> "Then I will tell you. After throwing down the paper, which was the action which drew my attention to you, you sat for half a minute with a vacant expression. Then your eyes fixed themselves upon your newly framed picture of General Gordon, and I saw by the alteration in your face that a train of thought had been started. But it did not lead very far. Your eyes turned across to the unframed picture of Henry Ward Beecher, which stands upon the top of your books. You then glanced up at the wall, and of course your meaning was obvious. You were thinking that if the portrait were framed it would just cover that bare space and correspond with Gordon's picture over there."
> "You have followed me wonderfully!" I exclaimed.
> "So far I could hardly have gone astray. But now your thoughts went back to Beecher, and you looked hard across as if you were studying the character in his features. Then your eyes ceased to pucker, but you continued to look across, and your face was thoughtful. You were recalling the incidents of Beecher's career. I was well aware that you could not do this without thinking of the mission which he undertook on behalf of the North at the time of the Civil War, for I remember you expressing your passionate indignation at the way in which he was received by the more turbulent of our people. You felt so strongly about it that I knew you could not think of Beecher without thinking of that also. When a moment later I saw your eyes wander away from the picture, I suspect that your mind had now turned to the Civil War, and when I observed that your lips set, your eyes sparkled, and your hands clenched, I was positive that you were indeed thinking of the gallantry which was shown by both sides in that desperate struggle. But then, again, your face grew sadder; you shook your head. You were dwelling upon the sadness and horror and useless waste of life. Your hand stole toward your old wound, and a smile quivered on your lips, which showed me that the ridiculous side of this method of settling international questions had forced itself upon your mind. At this point I agreed with you that it was preposterous, and I was glad to find that all my deductions had been correct."
> "Absolutely!" said I. *"And now that you have explained it, I confess that I am as amazed as before."* (Emphasis added.)
> "It was very superficial, my dear Watson, I assure you."[82]

In this story, Holmes explains how easy it is for one trained in close observation and in making abductive inferences to know and to follow the thoughts of another person by reading the smallest signs. Holmes notes that he is "constantly in the habit" of reading thoughts,[83] even claiming that:

> By a momentary expression, a twitch of a muscle or a glance of an eye, to fathom a man's inmost thoughts. Deceit, according to him, was an impossibility in the case of one trained in observation and analysis. His conclusions were as infallible as so many propositions of Euclid. So startling would his results appear to the uninitiated that until they learned the processes by which he had arrived at them they might well consider him as a necromancer.[84]

To Watson, and to the unnamed narrator to whom Dupin demonstrates the identical skill, these feats seem extraordinary and incredible. But in both cases the detectives explain their results as simply the application of a logical method.[85] Yet the accomplishment remains just as astonishing to Watson. "Now that you have explained it," says Watson, "I confess that I am as amazed as before." To one untrained in abductive logic, such results *are* astonishing. However, to its exponents, the results are not only unremarkable, but simple. Recall Holmes' reply: "It was very superficial, my dear Watson, I assure you."

A second power demonstrated in detective stories is the ability to read a person's background and character upon first meeting. Both Sherlock Holmes and his brother, Mycroft, are experts at apprehending a person's background and character on first sight from the minutest indications in bearing, facial expression, and personal appearance. This is a faculty, Sherlock Holmes insists, whose purpose is not only to predict behavior, but also to impress any person he meets with his power. In *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier,* Holmes, at Watson's urging, takes it upon himself to relate one of his own experiences. "I have found it wise to impress clients with a sense of power," he writes, and then goes on to demonstrate this piece of wisdom by recording his initial conversation with a prospective client who had just entered the room:

> "From South Africa, I perceive."
> "Yes, sir," he answered, with some surprise.
> "Imperial Yeomanry, I fancy."
> "Exactly."
> "Middlesex Corps, no doubt."
> "That is so, Mr. Holmes, you are a wizard."
> I smiled at his bewildered expression. "When a gentleman of virile appearance enters my room with such tan upon his face as an English sun could never give, and his handkerchief in his sleeve instead of his pocket, it is not difficult to place. You wear a short beard which shows that you were not a regular. You have the cut of a riding man. As to Middlesex, your card has already shown me that you are a stockbroker from Throgmorton Street. What other regiment would you join?"
> "You see everything."
> "I see no more than you; but I have trained myself to notice what I see. However, Mr. Dodd, it was not to discuss the science of observation that you called upon me this morning."[86]

Holmes' method, explained by him on many occasions as the art of "backward reasoning," is the basis of the logic of abduction. Holmes is able to achieve the most impressive effects by the minutest observation of details, from which he is able to abduce (Holmes would say "deduce") all the inferences that logically flow from the slightest sign. Holmes explains the logical method as follows:

> The ideal reasoner . . . would, when he had been shown a single fact in all its bearings, deduce from it not only all the chain of events which led up to it but all the results which would follow it. As Cuvier could correctly describe a whole animal by the contemplation of a single bone, so the observer who has thoroughly understood one link in a series of incidents should be able to accurately state all the others, before and after.[87]

Holmes believed that this logic constituted a new type of reasoning—one that held out great promise for the future. "We have not yet grasped the results which the reason alone can attain to," he says. With this new type of reasoning, he adds, "Problems may be solved in the study which have baffled all those who have sought a solution by the aid of the senses." What was this new type of reasoning? The rare ability to reason backward:

> In solving a problem of this sort, the grand thing is to be able to *reason backward*. That is a very useful accomplishment, and a very easy one, but people do not practice it much. In the everyday affairs of life, it is much more useful to reason forward, and so the other comes to be neglected. There are fifty who can reason synthetically for one who can reason analytically. . . . Most people, if you describe a train of events to them, will tell you what the result would be. They can put these events together in their minds, and argue from them that something will come to pass. There are few people, however, who, if you told them a result, would be able to evolve from their own inner consciousness what the steps were which led up to that result. *This power is what I mean when I talk of reasoning backward*, or analytically.[88] (Emphases added.)

Sherlock Holmes demonstrates the extraordinary results that the systematic application of the abductive method can yield. It is a method that can be used to know more about an individual on first sight than that person could ever expect anyone to know. It is also a method that can read minds and follow the turns in their thoughts from the simplest facial expressions or movements. And it is a method that can divine the intentions of one's opponents. From a few facts, Holmes and Dupin can abduce the plans of criminals and so catch them in the act.

This ability to read the thoughts and anticipate the actions of another is one of the most important aspects of abductive reasoning. It consists of imagining oneself into the mind of one's adversary. Dupin expatiates on this at length in *The Murders in the Rue Morgue* where he explains how the

reasoner "throws himself into the spirit of one's opponent, identifies himself therewith, and not infrequently sees thus, at a glance, the sole methods (sometimes absurdly simple ones) by which he may seduce into error or hurry into miscalculation."[89] Here the method, which lies "frequently among recesses of thought altogether inaccessible to the ordinary understanding,"[90] most clearly approaches a distinct logic. It is composed of four elements: (1) the knowledge of what to observe; (2) the ability to reason backward; (3) the ability to imagine causes; and (4) the willingness to act on the inferences derived from (1), (2), and (3).

Sebastian Haffner argued in 1940 that no one had yet made a study of Hitler's methods. "We have not fully probed into his method," Haffner wrote, "the method that made possible the stupendous rise of a down and out."[91] Let us now explore the method of abductive logic as demonstrated by Dupin and Holmes and compare it to Hitler's method.

Sherlock Holmes once remarked that "while the individual man is an insoluble puzzle, in the aggregate he becomes a mathematical certainty."[92] Imagine the possibilities this insight could open up to any politician who employed the logical methods of Sherlock Holmes and Dupin. Adolf Hitler, I suggest, applied precisely these methods and achieved similarly startling results. He could walk into a crowd and gauge its temper and feelings almost instantly. He, like Holmes, was said to be a wizard or a sorcerer wielding some kind of paranormal power. But now, thanks to Peirce, Poe, and Doyle, we know there is a logical method by which these results can be achieved.

When Hitler gave speeches he would often begin slowly. He would make simple statements and carefully watch the facial expressions of his listeners. He could read their minds as they displayed their reactions to each of his statements as clearly as Dupin could read the mind of his narrator or Holmes could read the mind of Watson. He could then lead the crowd's thoughts to wherever he wanted them to go. Hitler explains in *Mein Kampf* that this was precisely his method. A "brilliant popular orator," he writes,

> will always let himself be borne by the great masses in such a way that instinctively the very words come to his lips that he needs to speak to the hearts of his audience. And if he errs, even in the slightest, *he can read from the facial expressions of his audience* whether, firstly, they understand what he is saying, whether secondly, they can follow the speech as a whole, and to what extent, thirdly, he has convinced them of the soundness of what he has said. . . . He himself will utter their objections, *which he senses though unspoken*, and go on confuting them and exploding them, until at length even the last group of an opposition, *by its very bearing and facial expression, enables him to recognize* its capitulation to his arguments.[93] (Emphases added.)

Just like Dupin and Holmes, Hitler was a master at reading facial expressions and tailoring his speeches to the crowd's minds—so much so that he was considered a medium or a clairvoyant in his ability to do so. To Hitler, it was as simple and obvious as it was to Dupin and Holmes, only Hitler's goal was to read the minds of crowds and lead them to his *Weltanschauung.* But the method was the same:

> [A] speaker gets a continuous correction of his speech from the crowd he is addressing, since he can always see in the faces of his listeners to what extent they can follow his arguments and whether the impression and effect of his words lead to the desired result. [94]

This ability to take in the background, tenor, and mood of a crowd in a single glance, and then to be able to read the minds of the individuals in the crowd as he spoke, was crucial to Hitler's success, especially in the early part of his career:

> Nearly always it came about that in these years I faced an assemblage of people who believed the opposite of what I wanted to say, and wanted the opposite of what I believed. Then it was the work of two hours to lift two or three thousand people out of a previous conviction . . . and finally lead them across to our philosophy of life. [95]

It is strange that, as Haffner observed, no one has previously inquired into the logical method that Hitler employed to sway crowds—strange, not only because he was spectacularly successful at it, but also because he gave so many explanations of it. However, it is no less strange that for decades no one inquired into the logic employed by Dupin and Holmes, both of whom also gave as many or more explanations.

But the solution to this mystery is simple: it was not possible to commence inquiry until Peirce's explication of abductive logic became known to scholars. Nonetheless, it is now clear that Hitler, like Dupin and Holmes, was a genius at reading minds from the slightest facial expressions and movements. People came away from his speeches exclaiming that he had spoken exactly the words that were in their hearts and minds. Dupin and Holmes have shown the methods by which this was possible. Karl May, as will be shown in part II, *infra,* introduced this method to Hitler. But in each case the logic is the same.

Hitler knew what Holmes points out, namely, that man in the aggregate was predictable. He inferred that their minds ran on ascertainable tracks. He, therefore, undertook to learn all the possible tracks on which the minds of the individuals in the crowd could be thinking. He could then lead their trains of thought onto the track that he wanted them to go. Hitler specifically writes of this as the learning of a method:

> In those days I learned something important in a short time, to strike the weapon of reply out of the enemy's hand myself. We soon noticed that our opponents, especially their discussion speakers, stepped for-

> ward with a definite 'repertory' in which recurring objections to our assertions were raised, so that the uniformity of this procedure pointed to a conscious, unified schooling. And that indeed was the case.[96]

Stripped of its coarse language, Hitler is here saying that he made an abductive inference that constantly recurring objections indicated prior preparation. In other words, he treated the phenomenon as a clue to the existence of something behind the phenomenon. In *Mein Kampf,* he explains what he was led to discover:

> Here we had an opportunity to become acquainted with the incredible discipline of our adversaries' propaganda, and *it is still my pride today to have found the means*, not only to render that propaganda ineffective but in the end to strike its makers with their own weapon. *Two years later I was the master of this art.*[97]

The "art" that Hitler here says he mastered is none other than the divining of the causes of the slightest signs, and the countering of these causes. His use of abductive logic enabled Hitler to read the minds of his audiences and to speak directly to their hearts. He was also enabled by that logic to discover the methods of his adversaries and to become even more adept at those methods than they themselves were. That this was a learned art, Hitler readily admits; he writes that it took him two years to learn it. What he learned was the application of a method derived from a unique form of logic that is concerned with reasoning backward from effects, and learning to manipulate the means by which effects are caused.

Hitler became the most powerful politician in the Weimar Republic because he learned that unique form of logic and how to apply it to create his desired effects. It was because he was adept at this form of logic that he was considered mediumistic, clairvoyant, irrational—and that he was constantly underestimated.

THE BACKWARD FORM OF THE STORY

The third unique characteristic of the detective story is the backward form in which the story is told. It is this characteristic in particular that distinguishes the detective story from all previous forms of literature. It is also a vital key to understanding Adolf Hitler's career and his *Weltanschauung*.

At the beginning of almost every detective story an inexplicable crime—usually a murder—has already been committed, and all the action that leads to that event has been completed. The classic formula for the detective story is: "the corpse on page one." When the detective enters the story, he or she is faced with the effects (the crime scene) of a story that is over. It is from this point—the end of the one story—that the

detective novel begins. The entire purpose and plot of the detective novel consists in uncovering the story that led to "the corpse on page one." However, at the beginning, that story is not known to the reader. The rest of the novel, therefore, consists in the detective's application of his or her method and abilities to uncover and reconstruct the events that led to the story that ended at the beginning of the novel. At the end of the novel, the detective often assembles all the people affected by the crime in the parlor in order to reveal the story that led to the events described on page one. Thus the "backward" nature of the novel: at the end the reader learns the story that led to the beginning.

The detective story is also unique in that its backward form results in two stories superimposed upon one another. The first story is the crime, whose protagonist is the criminal, and whose hero (by default) is the victim. The detective comes into the story as a "stranger" to the first story. The second story, imposed on the first, consists in the detective's efforts to identify with the mind of the criminal in order to uncover and reveal the first story.

In the second story, the roles are reversed. The criminal becomes the intended victim, and the detective becomes the hero. In the first story, the criminal had taken, in advance, every action that he believed necessary to prevent the detection of the crime; (i.e., disguising his actions, leaving false clues, creating an alibi, etc.). The drama of the second story, therefore, comprises the detective's skill at identifying with the criminal's mind in order to be able to see through all the ruses and reveal the "real" story behind the mysterious facts that occurred at the beginning.

The backward form of the detective novel is relevant to uncovering and revealing the character of Adolf Hitler in three ways. First, Adolf Hitler based his entire political career upon the allegation of a mysterious crime. The mystery was how the German nation had so surprisingly and unexpectedly lost the war and how the chaos that followed had come upon the German people. The crime was alleged to be treason and the criminal was alleged to be an international conspiracy. The victims were both the heroes who had fought in that war and the German people suffering the consequences of its loss.

The German people experienced a state of shock and surprise at the events that transpired in November 1918. In the fall of 1917 the Germans had achieved victory in the east with the withdrawal of Russia from the war, and had also stabilized the southern front through a string of victories. Everything was set for a final push on the western front to bring a victorious conclusion to the war. Then came the surprising defeat, the flight of the kaiser, the disarming of the army and dejected return of the troops, the sinking of the fleet at Scapa Flow, revolution, and chaos. In their wake even more shocks followed in the form of the onerous provisions of the Versailles Treaty: the loss of German territory, reparations, and the war guilt clause. Then came the French invasion of the Ruhr and

the Great Inflation. Rocked by economic, political and social crises that completely mystified them, the German people were ripe for explanations.

Most of the political leaders in Germany, however, looked upon these events as expected consequences from known causes; while the defeat was certainly disastrous, there was nothing mysterious about it. They accepted the situation, therefore, and reasoned in a forward and progressive manner.

Hitler, however, did not see these events as normal "history." He saw the story line quite differently. He was the only politician who saw that what was transpiring could be molded into the form of the detective story. He saw these events as constituting a mystery that had to be solved and a criminal plot that had to be exposed. From the beginning of his political career, the central theme of all his speeches and activities was the Crime of November 1918, and his goal was to convict the November Criminals.

Seeing his political career in the form of the detective story, Hitler assumed both of the roles of hero in the two superimposed stories of the detective genre. In the first story, he is the heroic victim—the frontline soldier who has been "stabbed in the back" (certified by the Iron Cross, First Class, that he always wore on his brownshirt). In this role he identifies both with all the German soldiers of the war and with the German people who are also the victims of the November Crime. However, Hitler further realized that seeing history according to this story line gave rise to a second role for him to play—the role of the detective hero who solves the mystery, exposes the crime, and brings the criminals to justice. Thus Hitler's genius consisted in being the first politician in Germany to perceive a role in which he, as a political leader, could be both victim and hero, and in which the German people could be both victims and heroes with him. He then set out to convince the German people to see their history in a different form of narrative—the narrative of the detective story.

Second, abductive logic and the backward form of the detective story can be said to provide a methodological as well as a narrative basis for Hitler's *Weltanschauung*. Hitler's worldview, particularly as it was stated in *Mein Kampf,* has long puzzled scholars. For many scholars, the work makes no sense and consists of little more than "pretentious and disordered thoughts." But others have detected something else. Joachim Fest, for example, writes, "As one begins to arrange the scattered sections and grasp their inner logic, *one comes upon a scheme of thought so consistent as to take one's breath away*."[98] (Emphasis added.) Ernst Nolte came away from his study of Hitler's ideas with a similar impression: "Seen collectively, however, these ideas *form a structure of staggering logicality and consistency*."[99] (Emphasis supplied.) Fest and Nolte, however, were never able to

identify exactly what this logic was; nevertheless, their long studies of Hitler had made it clear that such a logic was present.

Hitler's *Weltanschauung*, like his career, begins with the logic of a mystery story, and his so-called philosophy can only be understood in relation to that story line. Like a detective story it must be read backward. The philosophy has no relation to history, but arises only out of the need to explain the present. For example, Hitler made race the centerpiece of his philosophy, but he had no real concept of biological race. In *Mein Kampf*, he gives the sole basis on which he formed his idea of race. Using an abductive argument to explain the present, he writes:

> It is idle to argue which race or races were the original representatives of human culture and hence the real founders of all that we sum up under the word 'humanity.' *It is simpler to raise this question in regard to the present, and here an answer is easy.*[100] (Emphasis supplied.)

Hitler always began in the present and thought backward. The German people faced a crisis; he would offer an explanation. It would be idle, he said, to research or prove any statement or proposition about race; for the only thing that mattered was the theory's utility as an explanation of the present. It was a hypothesis that "worked." As the result of abductive logic, Hitler knew that no degree of certainty could be attached to his hypothesis. He could merely assert it, with no need to prove it. As a hypothesis, it was as good as any other that served the same ends. And as a hypothesis, it was no more provable or disprovable than any other hypothesis. Thus the Nazi Party was unique in German politics in the breadth of views its members held. Konrad Heiden was one who noticed the startling results this produced:

> Every kind of political theory, from the most reactionary monarchism to pure anarchy, from unrestricted individualism to the most impersonal and rigid Socialism, finds representation within the Nazi Party. The Party has a welcome for each and every form of political theory. Each Nazi is left under the illusion that the party's only aim is to realize his pet theory. Hitler makes one categorical demand of his followers in return for this liberty—unconditional submission to his political leadership. It has thus become possible for every German—time-server and idealist alike—to see in the Nazi Party *the* leader specially summoned to realize his own particular theory. The Nazi Party resembles a vast army of individualists on the march, each of whom believes the army is marching towards his own objective.[101]

Logically this is an astonishing accomplishment—one that has never been explained. To convince millions of people to join a movement is one thing; to convince millions of people that the movement stands for each of their totally divergent and contradictory goals without them realizing it is quite another. This could only be done by a form of reasoning that worked backward from an agreed upon present. It is my thesis that Hit-

ler's *Weltanschauung* was a logical (though false) and brilliant (though meretricious) example of abductive logic applied to politics.

Summary

In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle created another character who was the mirror image of Holmes, but who devoted his life to crime: the infamous Professor James Moriarty. Moriarty was, according to Holmes, one of the most brilliant men of his time, the evil alter ego of Holmes himself:

> He is the Napoleon of crime, Watson. He is the organizer of half that is evil and nearly all that is undetected in this great city. He is a genius, a philosopher, an abstract thinker. He has a brain of the first order. He sits motionless, like a spider in the center of its web, but that web has a thousand radiations, and he knows well every quiver of each of them. He does little himself. He only plans. But his agents are numerous and splendidly organized.[102]

In order to understand Adolf Hitler, one need only imagine that instead of dying at the Reichenbach Falls, Professor James Moriarty survived, decided to leave his prior life of masterminding petty crime in London, and moved to Munich, where he began imagining and planning the greatest crime of the century. Imagine taking over an entire nation, its police and army, too, for criminal purposes. It would have been a crime truly worthy of the "Napoleon of Crime." Imagine further that he found a young disciple to whom he could teach all his methods, and through whom he could carry out his fiendish plans. As Adolf Hitler once joked with his secretary, Christa Schroeder, on being accused of stealing her flashlight: "I don't steal flashlights, I steal countries."[103]

PART II: THE TRACKER STREAM: FROM VOLTAIRE TO KARL MAY

Although abductive logic does not make its appearance until 1747, some scholars speculate that it may have been the first form of logic, and that it was largely forgotten, remembered only in folktales, after the discovery of deductive and inductive logic in ancient Greece. Carlo Ginzburg speculates on such a prehistory for abductive logic:

> For thousands of years mankind lived by hunting. In the course of endless pursuits, hunters learned to reconstruct the appearance and movements of an unseen quarry through its tracks—prints on soft ground, snapped twigs, droppings, snagged hairs or feathers, smells, puddles, threads of saliva. They learned to sniff, to observe, to give meaning and context to the slightest trace. They learned to make complex calculations in an instant, in shadowy wood or treacherous clearing.

> Successive generations of hunters enriched and passed on this inheritance of knowledge. We have no verbal [written] evidence to set beside their rock paintings and artifacts, but we can turn perhaps to the folktale, which sometimes carries an echo—faint and distorted—of what those far-off hunters knew.[104]

A collection of such folktales, *Peregrinaggio di tre giovani figliuoli del re di Serendippo* (*Travels of the Three Young Sons of the King of Serendippo*), was published in sixteenth-century Venice, and was subsequently translated and published in many other European languages. The great enlightenment philosopher Voltaire reworked one of these tales into the third chapter of a story he published in 1747, called "Zadig or Destiny: An Oriental Tale."[105] It is from this story that the history of abductive logic begins in the modern world.

Voltaire's "The Tale of Zadig"

"Zadig" is the fictional story of a young man who lived "once upon a time" in ancient Babylon. After several Voltaireesque incidents (in one of which his wife conspires to cut off his nose), Zadig leaves his wife, quits the city, and retreats to a house in the country where "he sought his happiness in the study of nature."[106] The significance of the story for our purposes lies in only three pages of that tale in which a new method of reasoning about nature (though very much like the reasoning ascribed by Carlo Ginzburg to ancient hunters)—in other words, a new logic—is described.

In the story, Zadig does not study nature in the usual way. He does not calculate, measure, or classify. Nor does he conduct experiments. He does not study how to grow anything, or how to make anything. Indeed, he does not apply himself to any apparently useful activity at all. Rather, he engages in a patient but very different kind of observation whose sole purpose is to discover a way of reasoning "which revealed to him a thousand differences where other men see nothing."[107] While such study seems to have no useful purpose in any sense previously known, it bestows upon the young man extraordinary abilities, which he displays in the following incidents related in the story:

> One day, walking near a little wood, he saw one of the Queen's eunuchs running up to him, followed by several officers who appeared greatly worried and who were running hither and thither like distracted men looking for their most precious possession, which they have lost.
>
> "Young man," said the chief eunuch to him, "haven't you seen the Queen's dog?"
>
> Zadig answered modestly: "It's a bitch, not a dog."
>
> "You are right," returned the chief eunuch.

"It's a very small spaniel," added Zadig. "She has recently had puppies, she is lame in the left forefoot, and she has very long ears."
"Then you have seen her," said the chief eunuch, quite out of breath.
"No," replied Zadig, "I have never seen her, and I never knew the Queen had a bitch."
At precisely the same time, by an ordinary freak of fortune, the finest horse in the King's stable had escaped from the hands of a groom into the plains of Babylon. The chief huntsman and all the other officers were running after him with as much anxiety as the chief eunuch after the bitch. The chief huntsman addressed Zadig and asked him if he had not seen the King's horse go past.
"He is the horse that gallops best," said Zadig. "He is five feet high and has a very small huff; his tail is three and a half feet long; the studs on his bit are of twenty-three carat gold, his shoes of eleven-pennyweight silver."
"What road did he take? Where is he?" asked the chief huntsman.
"I haven't seen him," said Zadig, "and I have never heard of him."
The chief huntsman and the chief eunuch had no doubt that Zadig had stolen the King's horse and the Queen's bitch; they had him brought before the Assembly of the Grand Desterham, which condemned him to the knout and to spend the rest of his days in Siberia. Scarcely was the judgment rendered when the horse and the bitch were found. The judges were in the painful necessity of reversing their decision. But they condemned Zadig to pay four hundred ounces of gold for having said he had not seen what he had seen; first he had to pay this fine; after which Zadig was permitted to plead his cause before the Council of the Grand Desterham. He spoke in these terms:
"Stars of justice, abysses of knowledge, mirrors of truth, you who have the weightiness of lead, the hardness of iron, the brilliance of the diamond, and much affinity with gold: since I am allowed to speak before this august assembly, I swear to you by Ormuzd that I have never seen the respectable bitch of the Queen or the sacred horse of the King of kings. Here is what happened to me.
"I was walking toward the little wood where I later met the venerable eunuch and the most illustrious chief huntsman. I saw on the sand the tracks of an animal, and I easily judged that they were those of a little dog. Long shallow furrows imprinted on little rises in the sand between the tracks of the paws informed me that it was a bitch whose dugs were hanging down, and that therefore she had had puppies a few days before. Other traces in a different direction, which seemed to have always skimmed the surface of the sand beside the forepaws, taught me that she had very long ears; and since I noticed that the sand was always less furrowed by one paw than by the three others, I understood that the bitch of our august Queen was a little lame, if I may venture to say so.
"As regards the horse of the King of kings, you shall know that while walking along the roads of this wood I perceived the marks of horseshoes, all equal distances apart. 'There,' I said, 'is a horse with a perfect gallop.' The dust on the trees, along this narrow road only seven feet

> wide, was brushed off a little right and left three and a half feet from the middle of the road. 'This horse,' I said, 'has a three and a half foot tail, which by its movements right and left has swept off this dust.' I saw beneath the trees, which formed a bower five feet high, leaves newly fallen from the branches; and I knew that this horse had touched them, and that thus he was five feet high. As for his bit, it must be of twenty-three carat gold, for he rubbed the studs on it against a stone which I recognized as a touchstone and which I tested. Lastly I judged by the marks his shoes left on another kind of pebbles that he was shod with eleven-pennyweight silver."
>
> All the judges marveled at Zadig's profound and subtle discernment; the news of it came even to the King, and to the Queen. The talk was of nothing but Zadig in the ante-chambers, the chamber, and the cabinet; and although several magi opined that he should be burned as a sorcerer, the King ordered that the fine of four hundred ounces of gold, to which he had been condemned, be returned to him. The clerk of the court, the ushers, the attorneys came to his house in grand apparel to bring him back his four hundred ounces; they retained only three hundred and ninety-eight of them for the costs of justice; and their valets asked for honoraria.[108]

This is one of the most often quoted passages from literature in the history of abductive logic. It is acknowledged by almost all scholars as the first example of abductive logic in Western literature. It was to have an extraordinary effect, for it directly influenced the precursors of the detective story genre, such as the acknowledged father of the detective story, Edgar Allan Poe. It also indirectly inspired Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who created Sherlock Holmes.[109] Therefore, it is the starting point of both literary streams: the tracker and the detective story. It illustrates the essential logic of abductive reasoning—not forward from causes to effects, but backward from effects to discover their antecedent causes. It is the reading of clues to enable one to tell the story of how observable effects came about; in other words, it enables one to solve mysteries. However, it fits most closely into the tracker stream. Thomas Henry Huxley was the first to recognize in this story the basis of a new and revolutionary form of logic.

Thomas Henry Huxley on "The Method of Zadig"

As the story recites, though the king greatly admired Zadig's powers of reasoning, the wisest men of Babylon, the magi, saw his reasoning quite differently. They saw it as a dangerous form of magic and urged that Zadig be "burnt as a sorcerer." This is one of the first and most important characteristics of abductive logic: it often appears at first sight to be the result of some kind of magic, enabling the reasoner to describe what he has never seen. In 1880, nine years before the birth of Adolf

Hitler, Thomas Henry Huxley saw in this story an entirely new form of logic, and wrote an essay called "On the Method of Zadig."

In his essay, Huxley argues that the logic extolled in *Zadig* constituted a revolutionary form of reasoning "fraught with danger" to all "established canons."[110] "Truly the magi were wise in their generation," Huxley writes, "for they rightly foresaw that . . . application of the principles . . . inaugurated by Zadig would be their ruin."[111] However, far from approving of the old systems of thought, Huxley was eager to see the former destroyed and replaced by Zadig's logic. Hitler, it might be said, saw precisely the same potential in this logic and adapted it to politics.

Huxley saw in this new form of logic two qualities, or powers, that prior forms of logic did not possess. He called these powers "retrospective prophecy" and "divination."[112] By "retrospective prophecy," Huxley means the power to see, and to reconstruct in the imagination, "events which had vanished and ceased to be."[113] By "divination" he means the power to see things that are not present. Hitler was to claim both the same quality of divination for the creation of his charismatic authority and to employ the same "retrospective prophecy" in developing his theory of race to explain the plight of the German nation after World War I.[114]

Huxley acknowledged that "[t]he power of prediction, of prospective prophecy, is that which is commonly regarded as the great prerogative of science."[115] However, he argues, the power of "postdiction," i.e., of retrospective prophecy, was equally important. Most of the important scientific advances of the nineteenth century had not resulted from the traditional forms of logic, which are concerned with prediction, but from a different logic concerned with retrospective prophecy. For example, Darwin's theories of evolution and natural selection enabled him to "see" and describe events of hundreds of thousands—even millions—of years ago. The new sciences of geology and paleontology, as well as many of the advances in biology had been the result of "imagining" what had happened eons ago by reading the clues they left, in terms of their effects, in the environment (or in our bodies).

The importance of Voltaire's story is, as Huxley notes, that Zadig had been able to reconstruct and to describe events he had never seen. This was revolutionary because the logic of science—the scientific method—had previously been based on observable facts, but the logic of Zadig enabled the scientist to describe and make predictions based on events that he had never observed. From the most minute clues—scrapings of the sand, fallen leaves, rubbings on a stone—Zadig had been able to fully describe both a dog and a horse that he had never himself seen. This entirely new logic enabled scientists to escape the limits of observable facts and the limits of the scientific method.

Huxley characterizes this as a form of "prophecy." Although the term "prophecy," he explains, normally refers to predicting events in the future, prophecy also refers to "backspeaking" or, in Huxley's phrase, "out-

speaking"—that is, the describing of events in the past that give significance to events in the present. Thus, while the word "prophecy" is "in ordinary use restricted to 'foretelling,'" Huxley argues that

> strictly, however, the term prophecy as much applies to outspeaking as to foretelling; and, even in the restricted sense of "divination," it is obvious that the essence of the prophetic operation does not lie in its backward or forward relation to the course of time, but in the fact that it is the apprehension of that which lies out of the sphere of human knowledge; the seeing of that which to the sense of the seer is invisible.[116]

Thus, Zadig's method enables one to see that which is not present. It is a form of backward logic that proceeds not from cause to effect, but allows one to "conclude from an effect to the pre-existence of a cause competent to produce that effect."[117] This ability to see what is invisible to the sense of the seer is what Huxley means by "divination." It is, Huxley writes, the sense we ascribe to the medium, the clairvoyant, or the fortune-teller, which is of the same logical structure as postdictive science:

> The foreteller asserts that at some future time, a properly situated observer will witness certain events; the clairvoyant declares that, at the present time certain things are to be witnessed a thousand miles away; the retrospective prophet (would that there were such a word as "backteller"!) affirms that so many hours or years ago, such and such things were to be seen. In all these cases, it is only the relation to time which alters—the process of divination beyond the limits of possible direct knowledge remains the same.[118]

Thus, abductive logic, though perfectly rational, often appears as partaking of the qualities of a medium—divination, foretelling, or even clairvoyance—for all of these describe events that occur outside of a reasoner's direct observation. Huxley writes that if Zadig's logic "was good for the divination of the course of events ten hours old, why should it not be good for those of ten years old or ten centuries past; nay, might it not extend to ten thousand years."[119]

This is the new logical basis, Huxley argues, for the great advances in human knowledge. From the "rigorous application of Zadig's logic," Huxley writes, have been "founded all those sciences which have been termed historical and palaetiological, because they are retrospectively prophetic and strive towards the construction in human imagination of events which have vanished and ceased to be."[120] The very essence of this logic is a new method of observation that does not simply see facts as "facts," but sees them as effects, or as clues to prior facts that no longer exist, or as clues of the existence of forces that either no longer exist or are not visible. Neither the abstract logic of deduction nor the experimental logic of induction had ever produced such results.

As the first example of the method of Zadig, Huxley offers the following, which is the best expression of the tracker stream of literature, as well as an excellent exemplification of abductive logic:

> From freshly broken twigs, crushed leaves, disturbed pebbles, and imprints hardly discernable by the untrained eye, such graduates of the University of Nature will divine not only that a party has passed this way, but its strength, its composition, the course it took, and the number of hours or days which have elapsed since it passed. But they were able to do this because, like Zadig, they perceive endless minute differences where untrained eyes discern nothing.[121]

For our purposes, this passage is especially important for three reasons. First, it is a classic statement of the tracker tradition in the literature of abductive logic. The second reason is his reference to "graduates of the University of Nature." What Zadig learned was not taught in any school; it results only from a decision to look at facts differently—to see them as "effects" and clues, rather than simply as bare facts. It is not what the eye sees, but what the mind infers that becomes important. From this logical decision, one can acquire, as Zadig did, "profound and subtle discernment" that appears to be some kind of divine knowledge. As Huxley points out several times in his article, this knowledge was extremely powerful in destroying established ways of thought. Adolf Hitler also realized this logic would be extremely powerful in destroying political institutions.

The years after Hitler dropped out of school in 1905, until he entered politics in 1919, were his years of attendance at the "University of Nature." Only Hitler did not, like Zadig, go into the country to study "nature." Rather, Hitler studied "human nature" in the city, and among its lowest classes: in the men's home and in the street. His subject was not the tracks left by animals, but the tracks left by the forces of human activity. He searched for the causes behind the effects that he saw not in the world of "natural events," but in the world of political events. He did not see history as merely the chronicling of facts, but as evidence of invisible forces acting in history that cause effects. He writes in *Mein Kampf* that he had learned to "see" history differently; not as facts to be learned, but as clues to be learned *from*: "To 'learn' history means to seek and find the forces which are the causes leading to those effects which we subsequently perceive as historical events."[122]

This was precisely the logic that Zadig learned, and that Huxley celebrated in his essay. Thus Hitler set out, like Zadig, to learn to see "facts" as the clues "to those effects which we subsequently perceive as historical events," to see "differences where other men see nothing but uniformity." Thus, just as nature became for Zadig an inexhaustible source for understanding natural events in the present, Hitler wrote that "world

history became for me an inexhaustible source of understanding for the historical events of the present."[123]

Also, like Zadig, Hitler, in conducting his studies in the "University of [Human] Nature," appeared to be doing nothing, and his reading appeared to serve no useful purpose. For Hitler this could be said to have continued from 1900, when he first encountered this "method" of thinking, until 1919, when he entered politics. During this period, Hitler's mind, like Zadig's, was not idle, as many of his biographers contend. Rather, Hitler was in the process of learning and practicing a new form of logic, the "Method of Zadig," with the only difference that Hitler was applying it to politics. And, too, like Zadig, when Hitler emerged to demonstrate the application of the logic he had learned, it dazzled everyone to whom he spoke. Again, like Zadig, when Hitler began demonstrating his newly acquired powers, some believed that he was a medium, some believed that he was a "sorcerer," and some believed that he possessed an almost magical "discernment and sagacity."

The third reason for the importance of this passage is that Zadig's logic could reveal not only events in the past, but also could disclose dangers or forces existing in the present but invisible to the normal eye. A broken twig might not only reveal that an enemy had passed this way in the past, it might also suggest that he is present, hiding behind a nearby bush. Thus, Zadig's method was also applicable to revealing unseen forces acting in the present. This particular characteristic was Hitler's forte. His strongest appeal lay in his claim that all the problems of Germany were caused by an unseen conspiracy. Hitler's theory of race and history was offered to explain the present effects observed in society in terms of forces that could not be seen. That theory shared the same logical structure as Darwin's theory of evolution and natural selection, which explained the present effects observed in nature. Hitler insisted to the German people that these forces not only acted as causes in the past, but that they were still acting in the present, and that he alone, among all of Germany's politicians, had properly diagnosed the causes of Germany's problems.

This form of reasoning—from the observation of effects to the inference of a cause "competent to produce the effect," is the basis of all conspiracy theories. One can argue that random, untoward facts suggest an unseen power acting causally, and can hypothesize a conspiracy acting behind the scenes to orchestrate events. This was the logic of Hitler's claim that the Germans were the victims of a world Jewish-Bolshevist-Capitalist-Communist conspiracy. It was also the logical basis for Hitler's racial theories, which argued that the effects observed in Germany were the result of events in the past. Hitler argued that these forces, till then unseen and unnoticed, were growing stronger in the present, and constantly producing facts and events that, he argued, were evidence of those forces at work.

The method of Zadig discloses many of the characteristics of abductive logic. First, it is a form of logic that focuses on facts, events, and causes that are not present, or not discernible to the senses. Second, it does not see the world as "facts," but as clues. Abductive logic is premised upon the idea that there is another reality behind the facts. Third, abductive logic, for these reasons, often seems to be a form of divination, i.e., the power to see the past as well as forces acting in the present that are outside immediate vision. Fourth, abductive logic is a backward form of thinking that reverses our normal reasoning. In other words, the past leaves tracks, and invisible forces cause effects that the trained mind can reason back from to describe either the past or what is concealed in the present. Finally, the method of Zadig is not taught in the schools. It is only learned outside them, in the "University of Nature," by minds which do not see facts as merely "facts," but as effects and clues of hidden forces.

Voltaire furnished the first example of abductive logic in 1747. By 1880, Thomas Henry Huxley was able to describe that new form of logic, which he called "The Method of Zadig," as one of the most creative, as well as one of the most destructive, forces in history. But where and how did Hitler learn this logic? One could say that within the six years surrounding Hitler's birth in 1889, this logic "broke out" in popular literature. In 1887, the first Sherlock Holmes detective stories, embodying and exemplifying this logic to an extraordinary degree, first appeared and immediately made their author famous.

In Germany, the same logic was embodied and exemplified by Karl May. In 1893, *Winnetou der rote Gentleman* appeared. It illustrated and exemplified the "Method of Zadig" and the abductive logic of the tracker to an extraordinary degree. By 1901, Hitler, as I shall show, was assiduously reading and studying Karl May's works. Let us now turn to Karl May to see how the logic of Zadig formed the central motif of his most famous work, *Winnetou*.

Karl May

Although almost completely unknown in America, Karl May is one of the most popular German authors of all time. More copies of his works have been sold in Germany and in translation around the world than any other German author in history, including Herman Hesse, Thomas Mann, and even Goethe. It has been said that "[h]is public appeal thus surpasses that of any other German author in any literary category and is not likely to be approached by many authors worldwide."[124] Indeed, his popularity continues to grow. By 1962, half a century after May's death in 1912, twenty-six million copies of his works had been sold; by 1996, that figure had quadrupled to more than one hundred million copies in the German language alone.[125]

During his lifetime, the literati considered Karl May's works "trivial literature,"[126] little more than adolescent adventure stories for boys. However, within fifty years after May's death, his works were recognized as important works of literature, taught as classic texts in many German universities.[127] In 1962, *Der Spiegel* accorded May the title of "Preceptor Germaniae," recognizing that his "influence, without doubt, is greater than that of any other German author between Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Thomas Mann."[128] Today the Karl May Gessellschaft is ranked as one of—if not *the*—largest organized literary society in the world.[129]

May published seventy books during his lifetime (1842–1912), almost all of them adolescent adventure stories set in the American Wild West or in the Near East. His most popular by far is *Winnetou: der rote Gentleman*.[130] This work has "captivated the hearts of generations of central European readers through the vivid odysseys of the noble Winnetou, chief of the Apaches, and Old Shatterhand, a Teutonic super-cowboy."[131]

Winnetou*: A Textbook on Abductive Logic*

In this work, the importance of the novel *Winnetou* is twofold. Its first importance lies in its logic. It is not an exaggeration to say that the entire novel is a learner's textbook on the "Method of Zadig" presented as an adventure story. The second element of importance is that it was through Karl May's works, and especially *Winnetou*, that Adolf Hitler learned the logic of abduction, which he put into practice, first as the basis of his own education and subsequently in his rise to power. In chapter 6, I shall discuss Hitler's discovery of Karl May's novels. The remainder of this chapter I shall devote to explicating the logic found in *Winnetou*. In order to show this logic, I shall first lay out the essential plot or action of the novel. I shall then discuss its motif, which is the learning of a new form of logic, at the end of which learning period the hero-narrator is finally told that he has become a full fledged "Man of the West" because he proved that he could "become rational."

The Plot of *Winnetou*

The plot of *Winnetou* is as follows: The narrator, Charlie (the author writes in the first person), is a young graduate of a German university who has emigrated to the American West, where he obtains a position as a tutor to the children of a family in St. Louis. There he befriends an older man, Mr. Henry, whose wife and son were killed in an Indian raid. Mr. Henry is impressed by Charlie and gets him a job as a surveyor. He also arranges for Charlie to be taken under the wing of another famous "Man of the West," Sam Hawkens, who, with his two friends, is to guard the

railroad surveying party to which Charlie is assigned. Sam's special function is to educate Charlie to become a "Man of the West."

Charlie is the most competent surveyor on the team and, through his willingness to work hard, earns the envy and enmity of the other team members. On one occasion, Charlie knocks a man out with a single blow to the temple, and is given the sobriquet "Old Shatterhand." Over the next few days, Old Shatterhand kills two buffalo bulls, thereby saving Hawkens' life; single-handedly kills a grizzly bear; and lassos a wild horse for Hawkens.

He then meets Winnetou, the son of the Apache chief, with whom he forms an instant bond. However, the Apaches are enemies of the surveyors and attack the team. Old Shatterhand is captured, and can only save himself by cunningly defeating Winnetou's father in a challenge. Winnetou's father recognizes Old Shatterhand's inner nobility and strength, and he consents to allow Winnetou to become Old Shatterhand's blood brother. Winnetou takes over the education of Old Shatterhand, and they undergo many wars, adventures, and hair-raising escapes together. Finally, Winnetou is killed but Old Shatterhand avenges his death. By the end of the novel, Old Shatterhand has learned to reason as a "Man of the West" and has become famous. At Winnetou's death, he leaves the Wild West for other adventures in the Near East but then comes back to the Wild West for new adventures.

The Logic of the Novel

The first chapter of *Winnetou* is entitled "A Greenhorn." It establishes the foundation for the central motif of the novel, which is the course of Charlie's education in growing from a "greenhorn" to becoming a "Man of the West." A "greenhorn" is someone who, no matter how much knowledge he may have, does not really know what is going on. "A greenhorn," the narrator (Charlie) writes, "has studied astronomy for five years, but even if he spends the same length of time staring at the sky, he will never know what time it is."[132] A greenhorn does not know the natives or the customs; he does not know what he sees or what he needs to survive. But even more important, a greenhorn is one who does not know that he does not know. This is a hard lesson to learn for the hero:

> For what really characterizes a greenhorn is the belief that all others may fit into that category, but certainly not himself.—On the contrary, I felt that I was an exceptionally intelligent and experienced person. For hadn't I done my studies and never been afraid of examinations? Young as I was, I hadn't understood that life is the only school that counts; that its students are tested every hour of every day, and that providence calls on them to test their mettle.[133]

Though Charlie was already a university graduate, who had passed all his courses with top grades, he has to learn that none of this is important. Like Zadig when he first went to the country, Charlie starts as a freshman again in the University of Nature. The uselessness of book knowledge is relentlessly hammered home. Mr. Henry, who takes Charlie under his wing, exclaims:

> You are a greenhorn, and what a greenhorn! You know what is in your books, that's true enough. It's amazing what they make people learn over there. This young man knows precisely how far the stars are away, what King Nebuchadnezzar wrote in his tablets, or what the air weighs even though he can't lay his hands on it. And because he knows all this, he imagines he's clever. But go out and get some real experience, you understand, . . . and you'll find out what cleverness really is. What you've learned so far is nothing, nothing at all. And what you can do with it is even less.[134]

But Charlie shows that he can both ride and shoot and also knows something practical like surveying. So Mr. Henry decides to help him learn what is not taught in books. He gives him his favorite rifles and calls on his friend, Sam Hawkens, to take the boy under his wing and teach him how to think right and to become a "Man of the West." This education is exactly what Charlie wants, a mentor to teach him a new way of seeing, of thinking, and of reasoning. As they set off from St. Louis, the relationship of teacher and pupil grows:

> Quietly a relationship between him and myself developed which could best be described as paternalistic. He had taken me under his wing, like a person one need not ask for his consent to such an arrangement. I was the greenhorn and he the experienced man of the West whose will could not be challenged. Whenever there was time and opportunity, he gave me theoretical and practical lessons in everything one must know and be able to do in the Wild West.[135]

Soon after acquiring the sobriquet of "Old Shatterhand," the young man receives his first lesson in an entirely different form of logical thinking. Mr. White, the foreman of another surveying team, visits the surveyor camp to warn of Indians:

> "Did you see any?" Old Shatterhand asks.
> "No but their trail. [replied White.] This is the time of year when the wild mustangs and buffalo move south. The Indians leave their villages to hunt.[136]

Sometime later Old Shatterhand is out on the plains with Sam Hawkens and gets his first chance to learn to reason backward from the minutest sign. The following exchange between Old Shatterhand and Sam Hawkens illustrates the first lesson in the chain of abductive reasoning that Old Shatterhand must master to become a "Man of the West":

> Shortly before we set out to return to camp, I bent down to scoop up some water to drink. Through the crystal liquid on the ground, I saw a shallow impression in the sand which seemed to have been made by a foot. I called Sam's attention to it.
> "Mr. White was right when he warned us about Indians." [replied Sam.]
> "Sam, do you think this was made by an Indian?"
> "Yes." . . .
> "When do you suppose the Indian was here?"
> "Perhaps two days ago. We could see his tracks here in the grass if it hadn't stood up again in the meantime."
> "Was he a scout?" [137]

Here Sam takes a jump in logic. For he not only confirms that the Indian was probably a scout, but that he was looking for buffalo. Sam replies to the younger man's question about being a scout: "He was probably looking for buffalo. Since the tribes in this area are at peace with each other right now, he cannot have been looking for enemies." [138]

This, of course, is not a logically deducible conclusion. From the footprint in the sand, there is no way that Sam could deduce that the Indians were at peace. This information came from outside the premise (the observable footprint). It is only an abductive hypothesis—a war between tribes could have begun that Sam had not heard about yet, or a war could be just about to begin. But abductive logic, the logic Sam is teaching, runs not on airtight deductive syllogisms, nor on immediately testable inductions, but rather upon hypotheses; in other words, it runs upon one's ability to make strong inferences—inferences upon which one will learn to risk one's life. Sam then demonstrates how one can build a series of inferences from a single clue—just like Zadig, Dupin, and Sherlock Holmes—not only to identify the footprint as that of an Indian, but also to infer the age and experience of the Indian who left it. Sam demonstrates this in the next sentence of his reply to Old Shatterhand:

> "The fellow was very careless and therefore probably very young."
> "How so?" asks Old Shatterhand.
> "An experienced warrior does not step into water like this where his imprint remains on the shallow bottom and can be seen for some time. Such stupidities are only committed by someone who is as much of an Indian greenhorn as you are a white one." [139]

But Sam is not finished with his lesson. For the important lesson is not the inference that Indians are near, but that buffalo will soon be seen. He is able to reason beyond the bare fact of the Indian's footprint to the proximity of buffalo. This is conveyed a half an hour later as the two ride through a wide valley:

> "There they are," [Sam] explained. "Yes, indeed, there they are, the very first."

> "Who?" I asked.
> Far ahead of us I saw perhaps eighteen or twenty dark, slowly moving dots.
> "Who?" he repeated my question . . . "You should be ashamed of such a question. Ah well, you are a greenhorn, and a huge one at that. *People like you have their eyes wide open but don't see*." [140] (Emphasis added.)

This is an important lesson. The experienced reasoner does not see merely what his eyes can sensibly perceive, he sees what his logical mind can infer from the signs. Sam challenges Old Shatterhand to use his mind to see, instead of his eyes, so he asks him to guess: "Be so kind, dear sir, and guess what your eyes are looking at." [141] Sam is asking the younger man to use his reasoning powers to tell him what his eyes see. The young university graduate, however, has not learned yet how to see with his mind instead of with his eyes. He is unable yet to escape the strict force of the logics of deduction and induction that he learned in school. Unable to either "deduce" or "induce" an answer, he wildly guesses. Old Shatterhand replies to Sam's question:

> "Guess? Hmm. I would think that they were deer if I didn't know that deer don't form herds of more than ten. And when I consider the distance, I'd have to say that although these animals look quite small from here, they must nonetheless be considerably larger than deer." [142]

Sam finds the young man's wild guess that the dots might be deer to be ludicrously illogical:

> "Deer, hehehe," he laughed. "Deer up here, at the sources of the Canadian [River]? That's a stroke of genius! But the other thing you said wasn't so dumb. Yes, these animals are certainly larger, much larger, than deer." [143]

The young man still hasn't "gotten it." The logic Sam is trying to teach him remains unclear. He still trusts to his eyes instead of to his mind to see. Old Shatterhand asks, "But, my dear Sam, surely they aren't buffalo?" [144] Sam then explains the new logic he is trying to teach. Sam sees with his mind and explains the inferences by which he sees the same "dots" as clearly buffalo:

> "Buffalo, of course. They are bison, real bison, and they are on the move, the first I've seen this year. Mr. White was right. Bison and Indians. We saw footprints left by an Indian, here are the buffalo, large as life. What do you say now . . .?" [145]

The point of observing with one's mind rather than with one's eyes is further brought home by the exchange that follows. In answer to Sam's question of "What do you say now?" the greenhorn replies that he wants to "ride up there . . . and observe them." "Observe? Is that all?" asks Sam in amazement. "Yes," replies Old Shatterhand, still the greenest of greenhorns, "I've never seen bison before and would like to have a closer

look." Sam reacts in mock horror at such an irrational—by his logic—reaction: "Observe them, just observe them? Like a little boy peeking through a crack in the rabbit hutch to listen in on the little darlings. Oh, greenhorn, I will never stop marveling at you."[146]

Sam's next lesson is the purpose of the new logic that he is trying to teach, which is neither truth nor goodness, but rather usefulness (a criterion of Hitler's logic that is also essential to abduction). Old Shatterhand had ridden into the buffalo herd without Sam's permission and killed a bull. When asked why he killed the giant bull rather than a cow, Old Shatterhand replied, "Because that was more chivalrous." Sam at once ridicules his pupil's logic.

> "More chivalrous? This greenhorn wants to play the knight! Splendid, hehehe." Sam was laughing so hard he had to hold onto his belly. Then, still laughing, he went on. "Listen to me, sir! Forget about those foolish ambitions in the future. When a real hunter does something, he doesn't ask himself if it is chivalrous, but whether it's useful."[147]

The lesson still is not over, however; the young man's former logic must be totally replaced to learn the new logic. The lesson goes on with Old Shatterhand insisting that he had another, better reason, to kill the bull. "I chose the bull because it has more meat than a cow," Old Shatterhand explains, trying to rescue his rationality.

Sam's reaction to this effort is instant incredulity: "For a moment he [Sam Hawkens] looked at me uncomprehendingly, amazed." Old Shatterhand's reasoning is as ridiculous as the child who, when offered a choice between a nickel and a dime, chooses the nickel because it looks bigger. Sam, therefore, has to explain to this university graduate the same kind of lesson one would teach a child: that one does not reason with one's eyes. To kill a bull for its meat because it is bigger is illogical, Sam sarcastically explains:

> "To eat bull meat? Aren't you a clever fellow? . . . The meat is as tough as leather and if you were to roast or boil it for days on end, you still wouldn't be able to chew it. There's more proof that you are nothing but a greenhorn."[148]

Old Shatterhand has much to learn. Later, he helps Sam to capture a wild mustang on the prairies and chooses the most desirable animal in the herd. Sam compliments him, and Old Shatterhand replies, beginning to get the point: "I should hope that I can reason as well as you, Sam."[149]

The goal of his education is to learn to see what is before his eyes with a new logic that completely reorients his mind. He finally realizes that what Sam is teaching him is not a set of facts to be memorized, but a new way of thinking; a new type of logic that reasons from facts totally different from the deductive and inductive logic of his college textbooks.

Soon, however, Old Shatterhand begins to display not only "horse sense" but also that he has learned to apply the new logic, i.e., the ability to reason abductively by inference and hypothesis. The Apaches declare their intention to attack the camp, and it becomes a question of how long it will be before the attack will come. Sam rapidly analyzes the situation, makes several hypotheses, and concludes that it will take seven days—enough time to finish the surveying and leave the area safely. But Old Shatterhand suggests several other possible hypotheses that could result in an attack much sooner. "All these possibilities should be weighed and taken seriously if we want to be safe," Old Shatterhand adds. Sam is surprised that his young protégé is learning so fast:

> Sam Hawkens closed one eye and made a surprised face. "Good heavens, how clever, how wise you are! Truly; these days the chicks are ten times smarter than the hens. . . . But to be perfectly honest, what you say isn't so unintelligent. We have to consider all those possibilities."[150]

Sam admits that the younger man has begun to learn the logic and reasoning that he has been trying to teach. Soon, however, the young German is able to bring a new, ampliative element into the reasoning. The two are following the Apaches and find that the number of hypotheses about their quarry has grown too large. The possibilities that the Apaches will ambush their pursuers or that they will make haste to return to their camp are among the dangers the two face.

At this point the younger man surprises Sam again, this time by drawing on knowledge he has learned from books to suggest the most likely hypothesis to act upon. Old Shatterhand insists that the Apaches will not wait to ambush them on the basis of what he knows about Apache customs. Old Shatterhand concludes his inferences with a reference to knowledge he has that comes from outside the facts they have been discussing. "Judging by what I know about them," the younger man concludes, "that's what we should expect."

Sam is surprised at the intrusion into his thought process of such knowledge. He responds: "Judging by what you know? So you were born among the Apaches?" Old Shatterhand at once dismisses Sam's ridicule: "Nonsense. No one is saying that." But Sam persists in finding the basis of the younger man's logic. "How else would you know about them?" he asks. Here the young university graduate begins to turn the tables on his mentor. He replies: "From the books you have no use for."[151]

With this reply, Old Shatterhand shows that he has now learned to bring knowledge into the hypothesis that was not in the premises, as Sam had done earlier with the Indian footprint in the sand. The young German shows that he has begun to apply his reasoning powers not only to the facts seen by his eyes, but also in a new way to the facts he has

previously stored in his mind. These facts are no longer "dead" facts, memorized and simply stored in the mind at random. Rather, Old Shatterhand begins to draw on his prior reading and store of facts as usable information. Karl May's character is here illustrating the lesson in logical reading that Hitler described in the often-quoted passage in *Mein Kampf* on the art of reading:

> By 'reading,' to be sure, I mean perhaps something different than the average member of our so-called intelligentsia. I know people who 'read' enormously, book for book, letter to letter, yet whom I would not describe as 'well-read.' True, they possess a mass of 'knowledge,' but their brain is unable to organize and register the material they have taken in. They lack the art of sifting what is valuable [real, useful] for them in a book from that which is without value, of retaining the one forever, and, if possible, not even seeing the rest, but in any case not dragging it around with them as useless ballast. *For reading is no end in itself, but a means to an end*.[152] (Emphasis added.)

Hitler has here stated precisely the logic illustrated in this passage from *Winnetou*. Old Shatterhand has not only applied the logic to the facts and clues that both he and Sam had seen with their eyes, but also his mind has ranged over all the knowledge stored in it, culling from it what was useful. Suddenly, it is not just "useless ballast," but can be reworked into the new logic and so become as useful as the tracks on the trail in front of them in building hypotheses.[153]

When Old Shatterhand replies that he knows what the Apaches will do based upon what he had learned in books, Sam is taken aback. This is a new element, a new source of logical inferences with which he is not familiar. Old Shatterhand records Sam's thoughtful reaction to this new development indicating a source of superiority in his protégé that Sam could not fully grasp. Old Shatterhand describes how he perceives his mentor's surprise and confusion at this new element brought into the logic: "He didn't tell me whether he agreed. But when he glanced at me occasionally, there was a slight trembling in his beard. That was always a sign that he had difficulty digesting something."[154]

Old Shatterhand provided a better hypothesis, and they act upon it, though Sam did not yet fully understand its source. However, soon Sam puts it in the back of his mind. He still has much more to teach:

> Now Sam Hawkens believed that the time had come to resume his role as teacher. He told me how it was possible to *infer* from the appearance of the tracks whether the men had been riding at a walking pace, trotting, or galloping.[155]

Abductive logic is the logic based on inferences, and Old Shatterhand is learning it quickly. Soon the Apaches whom they are following do something that seems strange to Sam Hawkens. Once again the younger man is able to show Sam that he can see not only with his eyes, but with his

mind, by bringing in facts that he had long ago learned from books. By utilizing book learning to make hypotheses, the young protégé again reverses their roles.

The two Apaches, carrying with them the dead body of a warrior for proper burial back at their village, have stopped to cut oak rods and strip them of their branches. Sam is puzzled and the following exchange takes place:

> "I wonder what they did with those poles?" Sam asked, looking at me like a schoolmaster.
> "They constructed a stretcher or conveyance of some sort for the body," I answered calmly.
> "How do you know?"
> "I just know."
> "How?"
> "I was waiting for something like this. To keep the body propped up for such a long time wasn't easy. So I assumed that at their first stopping place, they'd do something about it."
> "Not bad. Does one find that sort of information in your books too, sir?"
> "Not that specifically, or about this particular situation. *It depends on how you read such books.* One can learn a great deal and apply it to similar situations." [156] (Emphasis added.)

The lesson for the reader is that one needs to learn a new logic to make book learning useful. Sam begins to recognize its value. "Hmm, strange," Sam muses. "Perhaps the fellows who write that sort of thing were in the West after all. In any event, I agree with you. Let's make sure we are right. [157]

The next incident involves the young German showing that he has mastered Sam's logic as applied to tracking. The Apaches they are following had been traveling side by side, but now begin to travel in single file. Old Shatterhand notices this and thinks it strange, the first requirement for forming a hypothesis in abductive logic. Sam does not note this as strange, but his protégé insists: "There must be a reason, for there is room for two horses running side by side." Old Shatterhand begins to search for a hypothesis to explain the change in their riding: "I was wondering why the Apaches should have proceeded in single file and after some time I felt I had the answer. I told my companion." [158] His next statement is a throwback to the words Sam had earlier used to admonish him: "Sam, use your eyes." Here he means not Sam's physical eyes, but the eyes of logic, as the conversation clearly shows:

> "Sam, use your eyes. It's possible [a plausible hypothesis] that these tracks will change in a way we were not meant to notice."
> "Why should they change?" He looked surprised.
> "They made the travois not only to proceed more easily, but also to separate inconspicuously."

> "What are you saying? Separate? They wouldn't dream of it, hehehe."
> "They might not dream of it but they came to that decision fully awake."
> "Then tell me where you get this idea. I can see that your books really mislead you this time."
> "It's not something I have read, I have figured it out myself, but only because I read those books very attentively and really pondered them."
> "Well?" [159]

This exchange is important, for it means that the younger man has now learned how to think logically and can now not only apply that logic to what Sam is showing him, but also can bring in a much larger basis of knowledge—now seen as no longer "useless ballast," but as a source of hypotheses—to infer what the Apaches will do next. This is the characteristic of amplification.

Old Shatterhand continues the conversation. It is an excellent exchange regarding the role of abductive logic:

> "Up to now you were the teacher. Now it's my turn to ask you a question."
> "I bet it'll be a bright one. I am curious to hear it."
> "Why do Indians usually ride single file? Surely not because it's more convenient or more companionable."
> "No, they do it so that the one who discovers their tracks cannot tell how many they were."
> "There you are! And I think that also applies here."
> "Why?"
> "What other reason could there be for the two to ride single file? There's certainly enough room here." [160]

But Sam Hawkens dismisses Old Shatterhand's logic, by first claiming that there was no purpose to the change in the Indians' riding order, i.e., that it did not call out for an explanation, and then by adding a different hypothesis to explain the change. The exchange on the conflicting logical hypotheses and the younger man's thoughts continues:

> "They did it without thinking or, perhaps more accurately because of the dead man. One rides ahead to point the way. The horse with the corpse on it next, and that is followed by the second man who sees to it that the travoy [*sic,* travois] doesn't come apart and that the body doesn't slide off."
> "Perhaps. But I keep thinking that they are in a hurry to attack us. Moving the dead man is too slow. Soon one of them hurries ahead to inform the Apache warriors more quickly."
> "That's just your imagination. I tell you that it would not occur." [161]

This latter comment is a critical signal of the presence of abductive logic. The nature of abduction is precisely that of an active imagination which can imagine all possibilities. Sam's dismissal of the young man's hypoth-

esis is accepted for the moment, but the young man keeps thinking about it. He goes on to explain what he will do:

> There was no reason for me to argue with him. I could be wrong, indeed I probably was, since he was an experienced scout and I a greenhorn. So I said nothing further, but paid close attention to the ground and the tracks.[162]

They soon come to a dry riverbed. Here tracks cannot be seen easily on the dry stones. The young man reasons, "If I had been correct before [in my hypothesis], this was the most suitable place for one of the two to have taken a different direction."[163] He, therefore, closely examines the riverbed looking for clues. He admits he is not an expert yet, but he sees an indentation in the sand that might be a hoofprint. He records the reasoning that leads him to discover the Apache's plan:

> I was riding close behind Sam Hawkens. I had almost reached the far side [of the riverbed] when I noticed in a layer of sand at precisely the point where it bordered the rocks of a round depression with sunken edges. It had about the diameter of a large coffee cup. At that time, I did not have the reliable eye, the keen perception, and the experience I acquired in later years. *I had to make guesses where later I could prove my assumptions*, and that this slight depression had been caused by a horse's hoof that had slipped from the higher rocks into the lower lying sand.[164] (Emphasis added.)

Old Shatterhand calls Sam over to look at the depression in the sand. "Sam's small eyes seemed to retreat into their sockets and his crafty face lengthened. 'Hoof prints,' he said in surprise."[165] Old Shatterhand's "prediction" is confirmed. But Sam is awed by his protégé's power of reasoning and keeps asking about the logic that Old Shatterhand used. The younger man makes the following attempt to explain it:

> "What gave you the idea that that single trail would lead out of the riverbed there?" [Sam asks.]
> "I found a horse's hoof print down there in the sand *and inferred the rest*."
> * * *
> "I have to admit that you were right. But why? I can't explain it."
> *"Because I thought and inferred logically. To draw correct conclusions is very important."*[166] (Emphasis added.)

The language here is the language of abductive logic. The pupil has now surpassed his teacher, and, in fact, has gone so far beyond him that Sam cannot keep up. "I don't understand that. It's too difficult for me," admits Sam.[167] But Sam also makes another admission to his younger protégé—one that acknowledges that books can be a source of clues from which to make hypotheses and draw inferences: "And as for the books—I see now

that they aren't as useless as I thought at first. There is a lot to be learned from them."[168]

Old Shatterhand and Sam now begin a series of exciting adventures, first fighting the Apaches and then being captured. On each occasion, Old Shatterhand faces new challenges for which he has no prior experience to draw upon, but trusts in his instincts and mind—his ability to reason abductively—to find a way to win through. In one of the most exciting escapades, he accepts a challenge to a knife fight to the death with the Kiowa tribe's most famous knife-fighter, Metan-akva, whose name means "Lightning Knife." The young German had never engaged in a knife fight before in his life, but he is utterly convinced that he can win it by the use of logic.

Such fights always begin among the Indians with an exchange of threats and insults. In the exchange, the Indian, a giant Goliath of a man, roars at the small young German, "This stinking coyote dares insult Metan-akva. Well, then, the vultures shall devour his entrails."[169] This is precisely the clue that Old Shatterhand needs to win the fight. He reasons that Metan-akva will attack him from below—with a knife thrust at his stomach. Sure enough, the Indian enters the circle holding his knife with the blade in his hand to thrust upward. Old Shatterhand describes the logic by which he wins against this most experienced foe:

> We were standing so close that we could reach each other with our knives by leaning slightly forward. His right arm was hanging straight down. He was holding his knife in such a way that the handle rested against his small finger and the blade stuck out between thumb and index finger. The cutting edge was turned up. *I had guessed correctly*. He was going to slash upward, for if one wants to slash downward, one must hold the knife so that the end of the handle rests against the trunk and the blade protrudes along the little finger. *So I knew the direction of his attack*. What counted now was the split-second timing. Everyone has seen the curious quiver in the pupil before a sudden decision. I lowered my eyelids to make my opponent feel secure but observed him all the more carefully through my eyelids. . . . A lightning dilation of his pupil warned me and the next second, he thrust his arm powerfully forward and upward to slit my abdomen. Had I expected the knife to strike from above, that would have been the end of me. As it was, I could easily deflect his attack by rapidly thrusting my blade downward out slitting his forearm.[170] (Emphasis added.)

Metan-akva is so surprised by Old Shatterhand's wounding him that he stands up, and the young German plunges his blade into his heart, thus winning the fight in two quick moves. He does this, not by any special physical skill, but solely by his skill at logic. The Indians immediately fear that he must have, like Zadig, supernatural powers: "You are a white son of the Evil Spirit," the chief accuses him. "Our medicine man will strip you of your magic."[171]

Next, Sam and Old Shatterhand are captured by the Apaches, who condemn them to death, even though Winnetou loves and admires the young German. All is lost, but Old Shatterhand has no doubt that he can logically find a way to overcome any situation. He tells Sam, "A tiny amount of cunning is worth more than a large amount of physical strength."[172] Old Shatterhand's logic once again triumphs over impossible circumstances. As a result, he and Sam are not killed, but welcomed as the noblest of warriors. Winnetou offers to become his blood brother.

From this point on, it is clear that Sam will be replaced as the young German's teacher by Winnetou. In turning his protégé over to Winnetou, Sam, in an eleoquent speech, describes Old Shatterhand's growth under Sam's tutelage in learning the logic of a "Man of the West":

> Who and what were you when we first met you in St. Louis? A tutor who had to pound the alphabet and arithmetic into the heads of his pupils. And you would have remained an unfortunate wretch, had we not adopted you. . . . We pulled you away from that miserable multiplication table and dragged you into the savanna. . . . We watched over you like a tender mother over her smallest child, or a hen over its chicks. *Among us you gradually became rational. We trained your mind*.[173] (Emphasis added.)

Old Shatterhand is now ready to progress to a higher level. The training to achieve the next level is provided by Winnetou, who takes him out into the plains to teach every form of logic, from tracking to concealment, to reading the smallest sign, to looking for the smallest clue. After Winnetou teaches Old Shatterhand all he knows of the logic of the plains, he prepares one final test for his blood brother, one he does not yet believe the young German can pass.

Winnetou devises what he considers the hardest task possible: to find someone not by observing tracks and with an acute eye, but by logically following a track wholly with the power of the mind. He instructs Old Shatterhand to follow the tracks of Nsho-tschi, his sister. But he devises a way for her tracks to disappear. "He learned everything quickly," explains Winnetou to Nsho-tschi, but "today I gave him the hardest task possible. His eye will find every track. But yours can only be found by thought, and he hasn't learned that yet."[174]

But the young German proves that he can meet the test, and that he can find Nsho-tschi, even though there are no physical tracks for the eye to see. He is able to follow tracks solely by hypothesis and inference. He proves that he has become a totally proficient, acute logical reasoner. When Old Shatterhand finds Nsho-tschi, Winnetou happily congratulates him: "Old Shatterhand can read someone's track not only with his eyes, but also with his mind. There is almost nothing left for him to learn."[175]

Winnetou and Old Shatterhand go on to have many adventures together. They become so well attuned that they can read not only the slightest changes of mood, but can read each other's minds. Indeed, Old Shatterhand even surpasses that. He insists to Winnetou that one could read not only the mind of someone one knows, but also that "you could anticipate what people you've never seen are going to do." The young German explains:

> "I've spend a lot of time among the Indians, so I know how they act. Do you know the best way to predict what someone is going to do?"
> "Tell me," [says Winnetou].
> "You put yourself in their shoes, and take their character into account." [176]

This is exactly the point discussed by Dupin in *The Purloined Letter,* and demonstrated by Holmes in many of the stories of the canon. This development involves identifying with the mind of both friends and opponents alike so that one can imagine the inferences that the other will draw from any observed fact.

It is my hypothesis that Hitler had an affinity to the logic that he found in Karl May's novels. It might be wondered whether any other political leader of the twentieth century ever learned the lessons of the logic taught by Karl May through the characters of Sam Hawkens, Winnetou, and Old Shatterhand better than Adolf Hitler. Perhaps not since Old Shatterhand himself could anyone so read the minds of his opponents, put himself into their shoes, and counter their every move until he was victorious over them in his rise to power as Adolf Hitler was. It could be said that Adolf Hitler, who called himself "Wolf," was one of the greatest hunters and trackers in modern political history. He had learned the lessons of the most ancient hunters, the "Method of Zadig," and of the abductively rational minds of Winnetou and Old Shatterhand.

SUMMARY

The purpose of part 2 of this chapter has been to show the development of the "tracker" stream of abductive logic in literature from Voltaire through Thomas Henry Huxley to Karl May. The reader may think that an inordinate amount of space has been devoted to demonstrating both the implicit and explicit theme of abductive logic in the *Winnetou* novel. However, I have done so for two reasons. First, I was unable to find any previous study of the presence of the theme of abductive logic in the works of Karl May. There is, of course, a logical reason for this. Charles Sanders Peirce was an American logician whose theory of abductive logic did not become generally known even to American scholars until recently. Since this logic has not been shown previously to be present in *Winne-*

tou, it seemed necessary to establish it. The second reason is the importance of Adolf Hitler's discovery of this logic in the works of Karl May. I shall address this further in chapter 6.

However, before leaving the development of the tracker stream, I wish to tie together this chapter by including another passage from *Winnetou*. At the beginning of the discussion of the tracker stream, a lengthy passage from Voltaire's "Zadig" was quoted.[177] This was the same passage quoted by Thomas Henry Huxley in his essay on "The Method of Zadig" to exemplify the new form of logic he discovered in it.

I invite the reader to read the following passage from *Winnetou* and to compare it with the passage quoted earlier (97–99) from "Zadig." I believe that this will be valuable in demonstrating the similarity of the logic found in Karl May to that logic extolled in the "The Method of Zadig."

The background of this passage is as follows: After many adventures with Winnetou, Old Shatterhand leaves the Wild West to return to the Old World. However, he soon experiences "that restlessness which time and again seizes the plainsman unexpectedly and peremptorily called me once again."[178] Upon his return, he purchases a new set of clothes and a new set of boots. On the train he meets a man who, though "chubby," is obviously a "Man of the West." His traveling companion does not recognize Old Shatterhand, and takes him to be an inexperienced city slicker in his new clothes and boots.

A thousand kilometers west of Omaha, the train screeches to a stop. Outlaws have torn up the tracks and derailed the train that had preceded them in order to rob it. Old Shatterhand and his companion both alight to survey the scene of the outlaws' attack. In the following passage, Old Shatterhand demonstrates, to the amazement of his traveling companion, the same logical skills that Zadig had demonstrated to the amazement of the judges and King of Babylon:

> While the passengers were still pointlessly digging about in the debris, I thought it best to look for the tracks of the outlaws. The terrain was an open, grass-covered area with occasional bushes. I walked back some distance along the rails and then turned right, describing a half circle around the scene of the disaster. If I was reasonably attentive, I would not miss anything.
>
> About some three hundred paces away, the grass had been trampled. A fairly large number of men had been sitting here, and clearly visible prints led me to the place where the horses had been tethered. I examined this spot carefully to determine their number and condition. Then I continued my investigation. Along the rails, I ran into my companion. He had had the same idea and looked over the area to the left of the site. He was somewhat taken aback when he saw me, and asked,
>
> "You here, sir? What are you doing?"
>
> "What every man of the West would do in this sort of situation. I am looking for tracks."

"Yes, yes, and a lot you'll find. They were clever enough to conceal them. I didn't see a thing. So what would a greenhorn like you come up with?"

"Perhaps the greenhorn has better eyes, sir," I said with a smile. "Why are you looking here on the left? You claim to know the savanna, and yet you failed to observe that the terrain here on the right is much better suited for camping and concealment than it is over on the left where there are almost no bushes."

Visibly startled, he looked me in the face.

"Not bad. It seems that even a writer sometimes has the right idea. Did you notice anything?"

"Yes. They camped back there, behind those tall wild cherry bushes and the horses stood by the hazel."

"Ah. I'll have to go and look. I don't believe you know enough to tell how many animals there were."

"Twenty-six."

Again, he was surprised.

"Twenty-six," he repeated incredulously. "How can you tell?"

"Not by looking at the clouds, certainly, but from the ground," I laughed. "Eight of those twenty-six horses were shod, the others weren't. And twenty-three of the horsemen were whites, the other three Indians. The leader of the gang is a white man with a lame right foot. I think his horse is a sorrel. But the Indian chief with him either rides a black or a brown horse, and I should say he's an Oglala Sioux."

The face of my chubby friend defied description. With mouth agape, he looked at me as if I were a ghost.

"What the devil! You must be dreaming!"

"Look for yourself," I answered dryly.

"But how can you possibly know how many whites or how many Indians there were? And how can you tell which horse was brown or black, which rider limped, and what tribe the redskins belonged to?"

"I suggested that you go look for yourself. Then you'll see whose eyes are better, the greenhorn's or yours."

"How could a greenhorn possibly figure out who those scoundrels were?"

And with a laugh, he dashed off to the place I had pointed out while I followed slowly.

When I reached him, he was so intent on examining the ground that he paid no attention to me. Only after he had looked over the surrounding area for some ten minutes did he come up to me and say,

"It's true! You're right! Twenty-six horses were here, and eighteen of them weren't shod. But the rest is nonsense, pure and simple nonsense. They camped here and rode off in that direction. That's all one can tell."

"Then come with me. I'll show you the sort of nonsense a greenhorn discovers."

"I'm really curious."

"Look more closely at the hoofprints. Three horses were kept off to one side and from the way they were tethered, you can tell they were Indian."

The chubby fellow bent down to measure the distance between the prints. The grassy soil was damp, and a trained eye could still make them out fairly well.

"By Jove, you're right," he said with amazement.

"They were Indian nags."

"Now come along to that little puddle. Here, the redskins washed their faces and then repainted them. The paint was ground with grease. Do you see those small, ring-shaped impressions in the soft soil? That's where the paint containers stood. It has been warm, so the paint became thin and dripped. Do you see a black, a red, and two blue drops there, sir?"

"It's really true."

"And isn't black-red-blue the war paint of the Oglala?"

He merely nodded. There was a look of deep thought, even mistrust in his face. I didn't concern myself with that but went on,

"Now! When the gang arrived here, it stopped next to that muddy puddle. That's apparent from the hoof-prints. Water has seeped into them. Only two rode on, probably the leaders. They were first going to reconnoiter while the rest remained behind. Do you see the trail here in the swampy soil? One of the horses was shod; the other wasn't. Its hind legs sank down deeper than its forelegs. So an Indian must have been riding it. But the other man is white, for his horse was shod and its prints show the reverse pattern. Surely you know the difference between the way a red man and a white man sit in the saddle?"

"Sir," he said. "I am beginning to believe you have . . ."

"All right," I interrupted him. "Now look carefully! Six steps away from here, the horses bit each other. Only stallions do that after the long and strenuous ride that lay behind these people. Do you understand?"

"But what tells you that they bit each other?"

"First, the position of the prints. The Indian horse jumped against the other one. You'll admit that much. And then, have a look at the hairs in my hand. I found them a while ago when I was examining these tracks before you came. Those are four hairs from the mane, of the light brown color which the Indian horse pulled out of the other one, and then dropped. But further ahead I found these two black hairs and I can tell from the position of the prints that the Indian horse bit the other in the mane but was immediately pulled back by its rider, and then driven forward. While this went on, the other horse tore these hairs out of its tail. They stuck in its mouth for a few steps, and then fell on the ground. The horse of the Indian is either black or brown; that of the white man is a sorrel. Let's look some more. Here, the white man dismounted to climb the embankment. His trail has remained visible in the soft sand, and you can see very clearly that he put down one foot more heavily than the other. So he limps, I might add that these men were extremely careless. They didn't take the slightest trouble to con-

> ceal their trail. So they must feel quite secure, and there can only be two reasons why."
> "Which?"
> "Either they were prepared to put a considerable distance between themselves and their pursuers. But I doubt that because it's apparent that their horses were quite tired. Or they knew that a still larger party of their men was close by, and that they could rejoin them. This seems more plausible. And since the Indians will not readily join twenty whites, I would think that there is a large contingent of Oglala north of here, and those twenty-three criminals probably joined up with them."
> It was really amusing to observe the curious face of my companion as he looked me over from head to toe.
> "Who are you?" he finally asked.[179]

In this incident, Old Shatterhand is shown to be as proficient in perceiving and reading the slightest clue as Zadig had been. From marks on the ground, a few hairs, and paint droppings, he was able to describe to the amazement of his companion, not only how many men were in the outlaws' party, but also how many were whites and how many were Indians; what tribe the Indians belonged to; who the leader of the outlaw party was; what color horse the leader rode; and that the leader was lame. He could also divine not only the direction in which they fled, but that they were going to meet another Indian party nearby.

At the end of the book, Old Shatterhand sums up the most significant quality constituting the ideal "Man of the West": "All of us were men who had learned to make correct inferences from the most insignificant mark or sign."[180] In this pithy statement, Karl May summarizes the distinctive form of logic that formed the theme of the entire work. It was precisely the same type of logic displayed by Zadig, and extolled by Thomas Henry Huxley as a revolutionary form of logic that is "fraught with danger" to all established canons.

As we shall see, this powerful logic came into the hands—and mind—of a young aficionado of Karl May, an eleven-year-old boy in the Empire of Austria-Hungary whose name was Adolf Hitler.

NOTES

1. Schramm, *Hitler: The Man and the Military Leader* (Malabar: Krieger Publishing, 1986), 127.

2. See, Ben Novak, "The Sign of Four: Dupin, Holmes, Peirce—and Karl May," A Paper Presented at the Karl May Symposium, September 7–13, 2000, Lubbock, Texas. Accessed November 10, 2013. http://www.indokarlmay.com/v6/?p=99#sthash.ZumsvRyZ.dpuf.

3. Jon L. Breen, introduction to *The Fine Art of Murder: The Mystery Reader's Indispensable Companion,* eds. Ed Gorman *et al*., (New York: International Universities Press, 1995): 3–6, at 4.

4. "I do not hesitate to say that legitimate *deductions* even from this portion of the testimony—the portion respecting the gruff and shrill voices—are in themselves suffi-

cient to engender a suspicion which should give direction to all further progress in the investigation of this mystery" (Poe, RUE, 156).

5. "Now if, after all, I am wrong in my *induction* from this ribbon . . ." (*Ibid.,* 163).

6. "I will not pursue these guesses—for I have no right to call them more—since the shades of reflection upon which they are based are scarcely of sufficient depth to be appreciable by my own intellect, and since I could not pretend to make them intelligible to the understanding of another. We will call them guesses, then, and speak of them as such." (*Ibid.,* 162–163)

7. Although at least one scholar believed that Holmes' amazing feats at reading minds and solving cases might be accounted for by the suggestion that Holmes had psychic powers of extrasensory perception. See John Shelton Reed, "The Other Side" (unpublished ms.), Department of Sociology, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, cited in Eco and Sebeok, *The Sign of Three,* 232, n. 28.

8. Fann, *Peirce's Theory*, 57.

9. Marcello Truzzi, "Sherlock Holmes: Applied Social Psychologist," in *The Sign of Three*, ed. Eco and Sebeok, 55–80. Originally in *The Humanities as Sociology, An Introductory Reader*, ed. Marcello Truzzi (Columbus: Charles E. Merrill Co., 1973): 93–126.

10. Fann, *Peirce's Theory*; Josephson and Josephson, *Abductive Inference*; and Peng and Reggia, *Abductive Inference Models.*

11. See Carl Ginzburg, "Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and the Scientific Method," 102–103; and Umberto Eco, "Horns, Hooves, Insteps," 207–215, both in *The Sign of Three,* eds. Eco and Sebeok.

12. Arthur Conan Doyle, "The Abbey Grange" in *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1988), 636. The body of literature relating to the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories has grown so voluminous that a standard form of citation has been adopted. This consists of four capital letters or numerals designating each story (See: Matthew E. Bunson, "Abbreviations of the Canon," *Encyclopedia Sherlockiana* (New York: Macmillan, 1997), xix). A list of abbreviations and the corresponding story used in this work may be found in the bibliography. Hereafter, citations will be by author (Doyle), standard abbreviation, and page. Thus this citation would be: Doyle, ABBE, 636.

13. H. Douglas Thompson, "Masters of Mystery," in *The Art of the Mystery Story,* ed. Howard Haycraft (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946): 128–145, at 145.

14. Howard Haycraft, "Murder for Pleasure," in *The Art of the Mystery Story,* ed. Haycraft: 158–177, at 177.

15. "Nothing really primary has been added either to the framework of the detective story or its internals since Poe." *Ibid*., 166.

16. "Poe's masterful detective, Chevalier Dupin, had from childhood been one of my heroes." Arthur Conan Doyle, *Memories and Adventures,* 2nd edition (London: John Murray, 1930), 69.

17. Poe, RUE, 154.

18. I use the past tense in describing the newness and uniqueness of the detective story genre because arguably newer forms of storytelling appeared later in the twentieth century. However, my point is that the form of storytelling that the detective story inaugurated was new and unique at the time it appeared and during Hitler's life and career.

19. "The detective story is unique among literacy forms in that the narrative line flows backward, from effect to cause . . . " David Lehman, *The Perfect Murder* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), xviii). "The detective story is the only really modern novel form that has come into existence." Gertrude Stein, "What Are Masterpieces and Why Are There So Few of Them" (1936), in *Writings and Lectures: 1909–1945*, ed. Patricia Meyerwitz (New York: Penguin, 1971), 151.

20. "In its simplest form the detective story is a puzzle to be solved, the plot consisting in a logical deduction of the solution from the existing data. . . . I am insisting that the construction is essentially synthetic and scientific. . . . The detective story is, then, a

problem; a dramatic problem. . . . The basic element is rational theorizing." Thompson, "Masters of Mystery," 129.

21. *Ibid*.

22. Ross MacDonald, "The Writer as Detective Hero," in *The Mystery Writer's Art*, ed. Francis M. Nevins (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Press, 1970): 295–305, at 296.

23. Francis M. Nevins, *The Mystery Writer's Art*, 42.

24. *Ibid*., 285.

25. Haffner, *Jekyll and Hyde*, 14.

26. Poe, RUE, 143.

27. *Ibid*.

28. August Kubizek, "Come with me, Gustl," chapter 13 in *The Young Hitler I Knew*, trans. E. V. Anderson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1955).

29. Poe, RUE, 143.

30. *Ibid*.

31. Kubizek recalled, "Today I cannot help smiling when I think of the heat with which we argued about matters that existed only in our imagination, and yet those were wonderful times when we got more excited over nebulous dreams than over the reality of everyday life." Kubizek, *The Young Hitler*, 209.

32. *Ibid*., 209.

33. Poe, RUE, 144.

34. Poe, PUR, 208.

35. Poe, RUE, 144.

36. Daniel Hoffman, *Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe* (New York: Doubleday, 1972), 117.

37. Poe, RUE 144.

38. *Ibid*.

39. *Ibid*.

40. *Ibid*., 126.

41. *Ibid*., 126–127.

42. *Ibid*., 127. (Emphases added.)

43. William O. Aydelotte, "The Detective Story as Historical Source," in *Dimensions of Detective Fiction*, ed. Larry N. Landrum, *et al*., 68–82, at 80. (Emphases added.)

44. Interview with Bertrand de Jouvenal, as quoted by Alan Bullock in *Hitler: A Study*, 381. H. R. Trevor-Roper called Hitler one of the "terrible simplifiers of history, the most systematic, the most philosophical" (Trevor-Roper, "Mind," xxx).

45. Aydelotte, "The Detective Story," 80.

46. Fest, *Hitler*, 5.

47. Doyle, SIGN, 89.

48. *Ibid*., 91.

49. *Ibid*., 89–90. (Emphasis added.)

50. *Ibid*., 90. (Emphasis added.)

51. *Ibid*., 93.

52. *Ibid*., 96.

53. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 341.

54. Doyle, SIGN, 157.

55. Doyle, SIGN, 161.

56. Doyle, MAZA, 1014.

57. Doyle, SCAN, 161.

58. Doyle, SIGN, 112.

59. Doyle, CHAS, 577.

60. Doyle, SCAN, 169–70.

61. Doyle, FINA, 471.

62. Doyle, SIGN, 158.

63. Doyle, REDH, 176.

64. *Ibid*., 190.

65. Doyle, COPP, 317.
66. Doyle, WIST, 870.
67. Doyle, COPP, 317.
68. Doyle even has Watson remark that Holmes was "in his personal habits one of the most untidy men that ever drove a fellow lodger to distraction" (MUSG, 386). Such a comment, Watson implied, was a classic of British understatement; for one of the personal habits to which Watson referred was Holmes' habit of sitting in his armchair with a pistol and a hundred cartridges shooting bullets at the living room wall for fun.
69. When Watson explained to him the Copernican theory, Holmes replied: "What the deuce is it to me? . . . You say that the earth revolves around the sun. If we went around the moon it would not make a pennyworth of difference to me." Doyle, STUD, 21.
70. Doyle, STUD, 27.
71. Doyle, HOUN, 750.
72. Doyle, GREE, 435.
73. Doyle, BERY, 310.
74. Doyle, SECO, 666.
75. Marcelle Truzzi, "Sherlock Holmes," in *The Sign of Three,* Eco and Sebook, eds, 56–57. The portions within quotation marks are from Pierre Nordon, *Conan Doyle: A Biography* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), at 205 and 247, respectively.
76. Doyle, BLUE, 246.
77. Doyle, SIGN, 92.
78. As, for example, Dupin does in The Mystery of Marie Roget.
79. Poe, RUE, 144.
80. *Ibid*., 145.
81. Doyle, RESI, 423; cf. CARD, 889.
82. *Ibid*.
83. Doyle, CARD, 888.
84. Doyle, STUD, 23.
85. See Thomas A. Sebeok and Jean Umriker-Sebeok for the principles of abductive logic demonstrated in the example of Holmes given above ("You Know My Method" in *The Sign of Three,* 11-54). Nancy Horowitz's essay, "The Body of the Detective Model," explains the logical principles and the logical steps of the reasoning in the examples given above. "The principles of Dupin's method were lifted outright by Conan Doyle and immortalized in his creation of Sherlock Holmes. The basis of those principles is, of course, the abductive method" (*Ibid.,* 187-193).
86. Doyle, BLAN, 1000.
87. Doyle, FIVE, 225.
88. Doyle, STUD, 83–84. (Emphases added.)
89. Poe, RUE, 142.
90. *Ibid*.
91. Haffner, *Jekyll and Hyde*, 26.
92. Doyle, SIGN, 137.
93. Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* 470–471. (In quoting this passage, I have italicized certain phrases for emphasis and omitted the italicization of other words and phrases italicized in the text.)
94. *Ibid*., 469.
95. *Ibid*., 466.
96. *Ibid*.
97. *Ibid*., 467. (Emphases added.)
98. Fest, *Hitler*, 206
99. Nolte, *Three Faces*, 23.
100. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 290.
101. Heiden, *A History*, xvi.
102. Doyle, FINA, 470–41.

103. Christa Schroeder, *Er war mein Chef: Aus dem Nachlass der Sekretaerin von Adolf Hitler,* ed. Anton Joachimstaler (Munich: Albert Langen-Georg Müller Verlag, 1985), 112. As quoted in Redlich, *Hitler: Diagnosis,* 334.
104. Ginzburg, "Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes," 88.
105. *Ibid*., 102.
106. Arouet de Voltaire, "Zadig" in *Candide, Zadig, and Selected Stories*, trans. and ed. Donald Frame (New York: Signet, 1961): 102–172, at 109.
107. *Ibid*., 109.
108. *Ibid*., 109–111.
109. Ginzburg, "Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes," 102. Citing Regis Messac, *La "Detective Novel" et l'influence de la pensee scientifique* (Paris, Libraire Ancienne Honore Champion, 1929).
110. Huxley, "On the Method," 140–141. This essay was originally presented in a lecture delivered in 1880, and subsequently published in this collection of essays.
111. *Ibid*., 150.
112. *Ibid*., 139.
113. *Ibid*., 142.
114. See Nyomarky, *Charisma and Factionalism*, especially chapter 1, "Hitler as Charismatic Leader," 9–15; and chapter 2, "The Role of Ideas in the Nazi Movement," 15–25.
115. Huxley, "On the Method," 143.
116. *Ibid*., 139.
117. *Ibid*., 141.
118. *Ibid*., 139–140.
119. *Ibid*., 142.
120. *Ibid*., 141–142.
121. *Ibid*., 142.
122. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 44.
123. *Ibid*., 16.
124. Karl W. Doerry, "Karl May," in vol. 129 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography: Nineteenth-Century German Writers: 1841–1900,* ed. James Hardin and Siegried Mews (Detroit: Gale Research, 1993), 243.
125. Greg Langley, "A Fistful of Dreams: Taming the Wild West in the Old World," *Munich Found: Bavaria's Magazine in English,* vol. 8, no. 8 (August–September 1996): 33–35. For further background on the popularity of May's works, see Friedholm Munzel, *Karl May's Erfolgsroman, "Das Woodroschen," Germanien Texte and Studien*, Bd. 6 (Hildesheim, 1979).
126. Colleen Cook, "Nazism and the American West: The Literature of Karl May," *Red River Valley Historical Journal*, vol. 5, no. 5 (Summer 1981): 339–355, at 340.
127. Langley, "A Fistful of Dreams," 34.
128. "Karl der Deutsche" in *Der Spiegel* (September 12, 1962), 73.
129. Doerry, "Karl May," 243–244; Langley, "A Fistful of Dreams," 34.
130. Karl May, *Winnetou: der rote Gentleman,* vols. 7–9 of *Gesammelte Reiserromane* (Bamberg: Fehsenfeld, O. J., 1893).
131. Cook, "Nazism," 340.
132. Karl May, *Winnetou*: *A Novel,* trans. Michael Shaw (New York: Continuum, 1998). This translation is a condensed version of the first three volumes of *Winnetou*, and is a reprint of the 1977 edition of this work published by Seabury Press. All subsequent references shall be to the Shaw translation.
133. May, *Winnetou*, 4.
134. *Ibid*., 6.
135. *Ibid*., 25.
136. *Ibid*., 34.
137. *Ibid*., 35.
138. *Ibid*., 36.
139. *Ibid*.

140. *Ibid*.
141. *Ibid*.
142. *Ibid*.
143. *Ibid*., 37.
144. *Ibid*.
145. *Ibid*.
146. *Ibid*.
147. *Ibid*., 44.
148. *Ibid*.
149. *Ibid*., 59.
150. *Ibid*., 96.
151. *Ibid*., 107.
152. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 35. (Emphasis added.)
153. This is also exactly the same as Sherlock Holmes' abductive approach to reading. "You see," Holmes explains to Watson, "I consider a man's brain originally is like a little empty attic, and you have to stock it with such furniture as you choose. A fool takes in all the lumber of every sort that he comes across, so that the knowledge which might be useful to him gets crowded out, or at best is jumbled up with a lot of other things, so that he has a difficulty in laying his hands upon it. Now the successful workman is very careful indeed as to what he takes into his brain attic. He will have nothing but the tools which may help him in doing his work, but of these he has a large assortment, and all in the most perfect order. It is a mistake to think that that little room has elastic walls and can distend to any extent. Depend upon it there comes a time when for every addition of knowledge you forget something you knew before. It is of the highest importance, therefore, not to have useless facts elbowing out the useful ones." Watson summarized Holmes' approach to reading: "He said that he would acquire no knowledge which did not bear upon his object. Therefore all the knowledge which he possessed was such as would be useful to him." Doyle, SCAR, 21.
154. May, *Winnetou*, 107.
155. *Ibid*., 107–108. (Emphasis added.)
156. *Ibid*., 108–109. (Emphasis added.) Note Sam's interesting assumption (inference) that the logic he is teaching could only have been learned if the book writers had been in the American West.
157. *Ibid*., 109.
158. *Ibid*.
159. *Ibid*., 109–110.
160. *Ibid*., 110.
161. *Ibid*.
162. *Ibid*.
163. *Ibid*., 111.
164. *Ibid*. (Emphasis added.) The essence of abduction is to guess, not wildly, but logically.
165. *Ibid*.
166. *Ibid*., 112–113. (Emphasis added.)
167. *Ibid*., 113.
168. *Ibid*., 114.
169. *Ibid*., 185.
170. *Ibid*., 186. (Emphasis added.)
171. *Ibid*., 187.
172. *Ibid*., 232.
173. *Ibid*., 283. (Emphasis added.)
174. *Ibid*., 287.
175. *Ibid*., 291.
176. *Ibid*., 599
177. See 97–99 above.

178. Ibid., 574.
179. *Ibid.*, 582–586.
180. *Ibid.*, 748.

FIVE

The Application of Peirce's Abductive Theory to Unraveling the Mystery of Hitler's Youth

The nine most crucial years in the life of Adolf Hitler—the years that set him on the road to becoming *Der Fuehrer*—occurred between 1897 and 1906. Although numerous scholars and investigations have pored over every fact of the young Hitler's life during this period and have reported that they found nothing that would explain or even shed light upon the spellbinding orator, political genius, charismatic leader, and "the greatest mass disturber in world history"[1] that Adolf Hitler was to become, I intend to show that there is a direct connection between three developments that began in the young Hitler's mind between 1897 and 1906 that set the young Adolf on the road to becoming *Der Führer*. These three developments are:

1. The distinct rejection of the idea of ordinary work and an ordinary life for himself that began to form in approximately 1897, at the age of eight;
2. The formation of a personal identification with an abstract idea of the German people that began to form in approximately 1898, at age nine; and
3. Hitler's discovery of Karl May, whose novels he began to read during this first year in *Realschule*, 1900–1901, at the age of eleven.

All three of these developments coalesced to have an immediate effect on the young Hitler in terms of a conflict with his father over his father's desire for his son to follow a career in the civil service, as well as a drastic effect on his high school education. Further, these three developments led naturally to the teenage Hitler's rapturous experience on the Freinberg at

the age of sixteen in which he had an ecstatic vision of himself as the future savior of the German people, a vision that became frighteningly real barely a quarter of a century later. It is my thesis that it was in these earliest years that one can clearly see, amidst the scattered facts recorded by his biographers, the genesis and clear outline of the path Hitler took to become *Der Fuehrer*. Before coming to this thesis, however, and to prepare for its way, I shall first recount some of the strange facts constituting the mystery that call out for an explanation.

THE UNDISPUTED FACTS OF HITLER'S TRANSFORMATION IN 1900, AT AGE ELEVEN

All scholars, biographers, and investigators agree that, up to the age of eleven, the young Adolf appeared to be an exceptionally intelligent, well-adjusted, and confident young boy. Because his parents had moved to different towns, he attended three different schools during his five years of elementary school (*Volksschule*). At all three schools, he received the highest marks in all his subjects and nothing but praise from his teachers, who considered him definitely above average.[2] He was described as a model student, "mentally very much alert, obedient and lively."[3] Hitler himself found his schoolwork "ridiculously easy."[4] Among his peers, he was popular and was invariably the leader in their games of Cowboys and Indians. At this time he also became conscious of his magnetic personality as well as his outstanding gift for oratory.[5] In a class picture taken in 1899, Hitler stands out as "patently the top boy" who was "breezing through school with little effort,"[6] wearing an "expression of calm self-assurance and conscious ease."[7] As he entered his last year of *Volkschule* in September 1899, he appeared to be well on his way to success in any field of endeavor he might choose.

However, at some point in the following year a profound change came over him that was manifested when he entered his first year of high school (*Realschule*). By the beginning of September 1900, he seemed to become an entirely different person. Where he had previously been the best student in his class, he suddenly became one of the worst. Where before he had been diligent, he suddenly lost interest. By the end of the year, he had performed so badly that he flunked the grade and had to repeat it. His attitude toward his teachers also changed drastically. Where before he had been popular with his teachers, obedient and respectful, a model student, he suddenly became a problem student. It was the same story with his peers. He lost interest in the games of Cowboys and Indians and no longer sought to be the leader. He appeared to become sullen and morose. Where before he had been one of the most popular students, he suddenly became withdrawn and solitary.

This profound change lasted, with minor variations, for his entire four years in the high school in Linz. In his second year, he briefly rejoined his schoolmates for their games of war and Cowboys and Indians, and was welcomed back as their leader. However, by his third year, he had withdrawn again. In his fourth year, Hitler again flunked; however, he was reexamined and allowed to pass, but only on the condition that he leave that school and complete his education elsewhere. Another school was found that would take him for his fifth year, but he did as poorly there, and finally dropped out of school in the fall of 1905 without graduating.

These facts are further complicated by a lengthy, though only partial, explanation of these changes given by Hitler himself in *Mein Kampf* where he describes a deep quarrel with his father as the reason for his failure in school. There is little or no independent verification that such a dispute with his father took place, and as a result many scholars have refused to credit his explanation on the basis that such an episode was unlikely to have occurred, and that, even if it did, its explanatory power seems inadequate. There appears to be, as Alan Bullock remarks, a significant "gap between the explanation and the event."[8]

THE BAFFLEMENT OF SCHOLARS AT THE TWO MYSTERIES ARISING FROM HITLER'S TRANSFORMATION

Scholars have long expressed bafflement at the drastic change in the young Hitler's character, personality, and behavior during this period. As Helm Stierlin has written, "Hitler's failure at the Realschule has puzzled his biographers."[9] This puzzlement has revolved around two mysteries occasioned by Hitler's failure in school. The first mystery is that scholars have not been able to offer any satisfactory explanation for the change itself. Second, scholars are generally agreed that the reasons Hitler advanced in *Mein Kampf* for his failure in school are neither convincing nor adequate. Third, they have not been able to identify any other cause for his failure or for the change in his personality and behavior. By everything that is known of the young Hitler, therefore, his failure in high school was unexpected and surprising.

The second mystery arising from the facts we know of Hitler's life at this time is an even greater one: How can this failure at school and this sea change in Hitler's personality—one that transformed a confident, popular leader and brilliant student into a shy, withdrawn dropout—be explained in terms of both the dutiful and highly decorated soldier of World War I,[10] and the indefatigable organizer, charismatic leader, and political genius who emerged after 1919? In other words, is this dramatic change in the young Hitler related to the equally dramatic changes he underwent either as a soldier or as a politician, or is his earlier transformation a third inexplicable anomaly? So far, scholars have achieved con-

sensus only in finding this earlier period of Hitler's life to be anomalous; they see nothing in this period that presages, augurs, explains, or accounts for what Hitler subsequently became. Alan Bullock stated the problem most succinctly in the introduction he wrote for Franz Jetzinger's study, *Hitler's Youth*:

> The more I learn about Adolf Hitler, the harder I find it to explain and accept what followed. Somehow the causes are inadequate to account for the size of the effects. It is offensive both to our reason and our experience to be asked to believe that the Hitler August Kubizek knew in Linz . . . was the stuff of which Hegel's "world historical individuals" are made. Yet the record is there to prove us wrong. It is here, in the gap between the explanation and the event, that the fascination of Hitler's career remains.[11]

Bradley F. Smith also reported that the results of his study of Hitler's family, childhood, and youth were offered "not so much to provide easy and palatable explanations for the adult Hitler as to expose the mysteries of his beginnings."[12] For, despite the most intense study of everything known about Hitler up to the age of twenty-four (the period covered by Smith's study), Smith could only conclude that "[t]here is little in this portrait which fits the perspective in which Hitler is now commonly viewed."[13]

THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH AND A NEW LOGIC TO UNRAVEL THE MYSTERY OF HITLER'S YOUTH

Numerous scholars have investigated this period of Hitler's life and presented various, often quite contradictory, theories to account for the facts. However, these theories, as noted above, have not solved either of the mysteries, and scholars have reached no consensus on any explanation. To merely add a new interpretation of these facts based upon my subjective evaluation of them would most likely contribute little other than to add another theory to an already long list. Therefore, it seems that some basis for presenting a new theory must first be offered.

There is a well thought-out, logical method for approaching historical events, and especially for evaluating testimony relating to those events, in order to arrive at a more satisfactory hypothesis to explain them. That method was set forth by Charles Sanders Peirce in a manuscript written in 1901 and entitled "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents, Especially from Testimonies."[14] In that work, Peirce offered both an entirely new logic—abductive logic—and a new method for analyzing historical testimony. I propose to apply this logic and that method to explain the two mysteries about Hitler's early life (i.e., the drastic change in his life that occurred in the year 1900–1901, and the conflict with his father) in terms that will relate it to his later life. In other words,

it is my thesis that, by the application of abductive logic and Peirce's method, the genesis of the *Der Führer* can be clearly discerned in Hitler's early life.

CRITIQUE OF THE ESTABLISHED METHOD OF HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION

Peirce begins with a critique of the method that historians generally use in evaluating historical testimony, which he calls "the theory of balancing likelihoods."[15] Peirce argues that the logic upon which the established method of historians is based is "as bad as logic can be."[16] What Peirce is criticizing is the way historians frequently dismiss or disregard historical testimony that seems to them strange or unlikely. This turning of a blind eye is exactly what historians have done regarding Hitler's quarrel with his father; most historians, when they find that they cannot make sense of Hitler's account of what occurred, simply dismiss it as never having occurred.

Peirce argues that in evaluating historical testimony there is usually no basis to disregard testimony merely because it appears "improbable" in the subjective judgment of a later historian. "If by 'probability' be meant the degree to which a hypothesis in regard to what happened in ancient Greece recommends itself to a professor in a German university town," he writes, then such a "probability" is meaningless; "A probability in that sense, is nothing but the degree to which a hypothesis accords with one's preconceived notions."[17] Thus, unless a historian has solid objective evidence that a given testimony is actually impossible, there is no logical basis for disregarding that testimony merely on the basis of probability.

Peirce's point here is the same as the commonsense rule applied by law in American jury cases. The jury is admonished to listen to all the testimony and to assume that each witness is telling the truth, and to attempt to reconcile all the testimony in order to arrive at a fair understanding of the facts. Only when the testimony is found to be in irreconcilable conflict should the jury resort to judging credibility. Thus, even if a witness is in general known to be untruthful, this does not logically mean that he is lying in regard to a particular statement. Logically, Peirce writes, "There is, therefore, no arguing from what his credibility was in one case, to what it will be in another."[18] Peirce, therefore, argues that the established method of "balancing the likelihoods" long followed by historians in evaluating historical testimony is illogical. In its place he presents what he calls a "new logical theory of the proper method of dealing with ancient testimonies."[19] Although Peirce refers only to "ancient" testimonies, his method is applicable to the analysis of all historical testimonies.

The only historical sources of explanation for the profound change that overcame the young Hitler at age eleven, besides his own testimony in *Mein Kampf*, consist of official records (e.g., his school reports) and recollections by his teachers and others who knew him in this period. The logic explicated by Peirce appears to be directly relevant to understanding these testimonies. However, before proceeding to describe the new logic that Peirce offers, let us apply Peirce's critique of that method to the historians of this period of Hitler's life.

First, Peirce criticizes the long-established method on the basis that, being purely subjective and relying solely on the preconceptions of the individual historian, the results of such "balancing" are unpredictable and erratic. The two scholars who made a special study of Hitler's youth, Franz Jetzinger, author of *Hitler's Youth*, and Bradley F. Smith, author of *Adolf Hitler: His Family, Childhood and Youth*, demonstrate Peirce's point. Each balances the likelihood of the exact same testimony and each arrives at diametrically opposite conclusions.

The major testimony about the cause of Hitler's failure in *Realschule* comes from Hitler himself and covers four pages of *Mein Kampf*.[20] There Hitler explains his failure in school as the result of a protracted disagreement with his father over his future career. His father wanted Hitler to become a civil servant like himself. However, Adolf despised the very thought of becoming a bureaucrat and decided that he wanted to become an artist. "Artist, no, never as long as I live!" was his father's response. The dispute escalated, and Hitler resolved to frustrate his father's wishes by simply ceasing to study. Young Adolf acted on his resolution, and his grades dropped accordingly.

On the one hand, Franz Jetzinger, based on his subjective experience as librarian of the Provincial Archives of Linz, Austria, balances the likelihood and completely dismisses Hitler's testimony: "The story in *Mein Kampf* about Alois Hitler's rigorous insistence on one career and one only for his son—that of [an] official—is quite clearly invented,"[21] writes Jetzinger. His explanation is that the young Hitler was simply lazy, and that he invented the story for political purposes to explain his poor school record. Bradley F. Smith, on the other hand, based on his personal experience as a professor at Stanford University in California, balances the likelihood and comes to the opposite conclusion. Examining the same evidence available to Jetzinger, Smith concludes that it was "probable that a struggle over Adolf's career did in fact occur."[22] In fact, the probability is so high, writes Smith, that it is "reasonably certain."[23] In brief, as Peirce predicted, the method of the "balancing of likelihoods" that are simply subjective and that reflect little more than a historian's own preconceptions is erratic.

Peirce also argues that historians have a strong tendency to pronounce testimony that recounts unusual facts to be false. This tendency arises from the fact that historical testimony is by its very nature uncertain. The

persons who gave the testimony are long dead, and one cannot easily know whether they told the truth, or what their reasons were for saying what they did. Thus, when faced with uncertainty about a given testimony, and especially when that testimony asserts something unusual or surprising, it is easier for a historian to conclude that the testimony is false and to dismiss it, since he cannot definitely prove it to be true. This reasoning, and this tendency, Peirce argues, results in a significant skewing of history. Historians prefer theories that seem to them "rational" (i.e., usual and normal), without any evidence on which to base them, rather than theories based on actual evidence that surprises them or that seems unlikely because it seems unusual. Peirce, therefore, predicts:

> Now since it happens ten times that [historians] can argue that that testimony *must* be false to every once that we can argue that it *must* be true, it naturally follows, and is a fact, that [historians] show far greater favor to views which reject all the historical evidence in [their] possession than they do to views which are based on some part of the evidence. "That, however, is not *proved*," is their usual comment upon any such hypothesis.[24]

Let us, therefore, review nine major historians, biographers, and scholars who have dealt with Hitler's testimony concerning his conflict with his father to see whether Peirce's prediction is accurate.

Alan Bullock, in *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny*, quotes that portion of *Mein Kampf* containing Hitler's account of the source of his conflict with his father and immediately rejects it: "There is no doubt that [Adolf] did not get along with his father, but it is unlikely that his ambition to become an artist . . . had much to do with it."[25] Having dismissed the historical explanation, Bullock then completely ignores the problem for which Hitler's testimony had been offered as an explanation, *viz*., explaining Hitler's failure in *Realschule* and the change in the young Hitler that occurred at this time.

Joachim Fest, in *Hitler*, "balances" the evidence and also concludes that Hitler's account of a dispute with his father over a civil service career simply did not occur. Fest writes that "the description of the allegedly prolonged conflict, which Hitler dramatized as a grim struggle between two men of iron will, has since been exposed as pure fantasy."[26] Here Fest apparently follows Jetzinger's analysis, but completely ignores Smith's conclusion that such a dispute between Hitler and his father certainly had occurred. Instead, Fest simply asserts, "in fact we *must* assume that his father paid little attention to his son's vocational future." Fest does not explain why Hitler's testimony in *Mein Kampf* "must" be assumed to be a fantasy, nor why Smith's conclusion should not be considered. He simply makes a personal judgment that he will disbelieve it, and absolves himself of the responsibility to investigate it further.

The psychologists who have studied this portion of Hitler's life have approached the evidence of Hitler's testimony in the same spirit. In *Hitler: Diagnosis of a Destructive Prophet*, Fritz Redlich, MD, also dismisses Hitler's explanation of a dispute with his father, on no more evidence than Redlich's subjective feeling that "[i]t is doubtful that Hitler's father insisted on such a career."[27]

In *Adolf Hitler: A Family Perspective*, psychologist Helm Stierlin similarly rejects Hitler's testimony with a dismissive "it is doubtful":

> Hitler attributed his school failure to his stubborn resistance to a father who tried to coerce him into the dull career of civil servant. But this explanation is unconvincing. Also, it is doubtful whether Alois ever took that much interest in his son's career.[28]

Neither Redlich nor Stierlin explain why, if Hitler's testimony is merely "doubtful," they do not also explore the possibility that it might be true. As Peirce predicted, merely declaring historical testimony to be "doubtful" is not logically sufficient for them to reject it as false; yet, that is precisely what they do.

Robert Payne also refuses to credit Hitler's explanation. He concludes, based on no evidence at all, that "probably the main cause, outweighing all the others," was the death of Hitler's younger brother, Edmund, on February 2, 1900. [29] While it is true that Hitler's younger brother died on that date, Payne offers no explanation as to why this event caused Hitler to do poorly in school for the next five years. Payne simply dismisses the historical testimony as improbable and offers another "explanation," without giving any reason why his "explanation" is better than his subject's explanation.

Biographer John Toland is much more creative; he "splits the difference" and goes on to invent a few more possible explanations of his own. Balancing the same evidence as the others, Toland finds Hitler's explanation in *Mein Kampf* to be "just as likely" as several other explanations, including Jetzinger's "inherent laziness" theory, some new conjectures (such as some unspecified emotional problem), and "simply [Hitler's] unwillingness to tackle uncongenial subjects."[30]

Thus it is easy to see in this sampling of Jetzinger, Smith, Bullock, Fest, Stierlin, Redlich, Payne, and Toland that the result produced by the tendency of historians and scholars to discredit or to downplay evidence that cannot be "proven" was accurately predicted and described by Peirce—namely, each scholar interprets the data according to an arbitrary rule, many prefer their own invented explanations, and no one can agree. Based on this sample of eight scholars, one accepted the testimony, six rejected it, and one "split the difference."

But, to round out the nine scholars I mentioned at the beginning, and to emphasize the erratic and entirely subjective nature of the "balancing of likelihoods" method, it is noteworthy that Ian Kershaw, in the more

recent biography *Hitler: 1889–1936: Hubris*, completely credits Hitler's explanation.[31] Kershaw, however, does not explain why he reaches a result so diametrically opposed to that of so many other previous biographers and scholars; he merely states in a footnote that he follows Smith.[32]

Thus, at least in the case of Hitler's conflict with his father, Peirce's critique of the usual and established historical method appears quite valid. This review of how historians have previously analyzed these facts in Hitler's life discloses three logical flaws. First, when faced with strange and unusual historical testimony, these scholars did little more than make a judgment of the truth or falsity of the testimony, often with little more basis for their judgment than their own personal experience and subjective judgment. Second, whether they accepted or rejected the testimony, they did little factual investigation to corroborate their judgment.[33] Third, they did little historical investigation to explain why the testimony existed. In other words, they did not attempt to research the significance of the testimony.

PART I: PEIRCE'S NEW METHOD

Peirce accuses historians of proceeding on a logical theory that is "as bad as logic can be."[34] He is not content, however, merely to criticize the established method. In its place he proposes an entirely new theory based on abductive logic. In doing so, he first set forth the two assumptions, or limiting conditions, on which the application of the logic rested.

Peirce's Conditions For The Application Of The New Logical Method

The first condition is that his new method is applicable only where a scientific (logical) explanation is appropriate, which he defines as a situation "in which a phenomenon presents itself which, without some special explanation, there would be reason to expect it would *not* present itself."[35] In other words, a *fact* necessitates a logical explanation only when what is to be investigated appears as unexpected or as a surprise, i.e., when "it has been connected with other facts which taken by themselves would justify an expectation of the *contrary* of this fact."[36] This condition is certainly met in the case of this portion of Adolf Hitler's life. Hitler's failure in school and his change in behavior occurred "to the utter amazement of all who knew him."[37] It is a fact that, when connected with what had gone before, was certainly unexpected.

Peirce's second condition is more in the nature of a belief—or hope—that the logical reasoner must have at the outset of the inquiry, *viz*., "that the facts in hand admit of rationalization, and of rationalization by us."[38] Though this was but a "belief" or a "hope," Peirce believes it to be essential to the application of his logical method. Scientific reasoners must

believe that the facts *can* be explained and that they can make sense of the facts:

> That we must hope they do, for the same reason that a general who has to capture a position, or see his country ruined, must go on the hypothesis that there is some way in which he can and shall capture it. We must be animated by that hope concerning the matter we have in hand.[39]

Though it may seem strange to import hopes or beliefs into a scientific method, Peirce insists that this is a logical necessity. Because abduction is applicable to the generation of a hypothesis to explain strange facts, the historian must believe at the beginning that an explanation is possible; otherwise, he would not look for one. This is the same belief expressed by Sherlock Holmes as he set out to solve the most difficult of mysteries: "And yet there should be no combination of events for which the wit of man cannot conceive an explanation," he explains to Dr. Watson.[40] If one does not believe an explanation exists, then one does not believe in a rational world.

In the case of Hitler, this belief is especially important because there are many who argue that "Hitler is not explicable even 'in theory,'" and who "despair" of ever being able to explain his history.[41] In this work, I take the position that even though Hitler may have been the most evil man in history, his conduct is as explainable as that of any other man. Therefore, this work begins in a hope and belief that accords with the second condition of Peirce's logic. The reader is invited to join me in that hope that Hitler's youth can be explained, so that we may proceed to the presentation—and then the application—of the rest of Peirce's logical method.

Presentation Of Peirce's Logic

The first step of Peirce's logic is to review the facts with special attention to those facts that are surprising and unexpected. In other words, if the facts were all regular and expected in the normal course, then there would be nothing to explain and no occasion for the application of abductive logic. Therefore, in accord with Peirce's first assumption, one proceeds to get the facts in focus, keeping in mind all of the facts known, but placing in perspective those facts that appear to be normal and expected, and allowing those facts that appear to be extraordinary, unexpected, and surprising to stand out.

The next step is to search for a hypothesis to explain the extraordinary facts. In other words, the purpose of the inquiry is to generate a hypothesis to explain those facts that need explanation. A hypothesis must be formulated that would account for those unexpected, surprising, and extraordinary facts that stand out against the background of those parts of

the story that are expected, normal, and ordinary. The form of the abductive syllogism, which is designed to generate such a hypothesis for this purpose, is:

> The surprising fact [or set of facts], *C*, is observed;
> But if *A* were true, *C* would be a matter of course.
> Hence, there is reason to suspect that *A* is true.[42]

In other words, in analyzing a set of historical facts, consisting of documents, records, testimony, and so on, that present some facts that appear to be surprising, one assumes that these surprising features had a cause. One, therefore, begins to imagine what type of cause might have produced such unexpected facts. If one can imagine a cause sufficient to produce such effects as the facts reveal, one has a hypothesis. Indeed, as soon as one confronts the facts squarely and focuses on those facts that are extraordinary, one can often imagine several hypotheses that might explain them. One then faces the need to narrow the number of possible choices and to select one of them to test. Peirce argues that this is neither a subjective issue, nor a matter of hit or miss; rather, it is a subject for logical method. Peirce sets out three considerations to help in logically choosing the proper hypothesis.

First, the hypothesis "must be capable of being subjected to experimental testing."[43] This does not mean that it must be capable of being tested in a laboratory. Many of the most important hypotheses in science, such as the theory of evolution, and the bases of the science of geology, involve events that happened millions of years ago, and are non-repeatable. This does not make them less scientific. The same is true in history. Most historical events are non-repeatable. However, the theories of evolution, natural selection, geology, and history are capable of being tested because they predict certain effects that would be unlikely to occur in the absence of the hypothesized cause. Each time the effects are found where the theory predicts them, this finding constitutes evidence that tends to confirm the hypothesis. This applies equally well to the investigation of historical events as it does to the theory of evolution. If one hypothesized that Hitler had formed a strongly negative attitude toward bureaucratic work prior to his father expressing his intention that his son would enter the civil service, one can reasonably predict a strong negative reaction from the son. Hitler's testimony would then be evidence of such a preexisting attitude as a cause of the dispute recorded in *Mein Kampf*.

The second consideration Peirce postulates is that "the hypothesis must be such that it will explain the surprising facts we have before us which is the whole motive of our inquiry to rationalize."[44] Simply put, the hypothesis must account for all of the facts (or at least more of the facts than any other explanation). This means essentially that the hypothesis must have explanatory value; it must "cover" the facts. This condition would exclude such hypotheses as, for example, that Hitler was

"preternaturally lazy," as Franz Jetzinger and Joachim Fest suggest. For such an explanation neither explains his previous good grades in *Volksschule*, nor his excellent war service, nor the tremendous energy he later displayed in his political activities. Nor would laziness explain the amount of reading that August Kubizek testified Hitler had done. Thus, while the explanation that Hitler was "lazy" might explain the one fact of his failure in *Realschule,* it would not be consistent with much else in his life. Therefore, the "laziness theory" can be dismissed according to Peirce's second consideration; it is not a hypothesis that explains and covers all the facts.

The third consideration is that the historian must humbly acknowledge at the beginning that "the true hypothesis is only one out of innumerable possible false ones."[45] This consideration implies that the number of possible hypotheses may be very large at the beginning of the application of the method. It also implies that some of them may be more likely to lead to a solution than others. Initially, therefore, a selection among possible hypotheses to test must be made. The most logical basis for such a selection is the need to consider the economy of research. For Peirce, this means that in constructing hypotheses, the historian should eschew complex and strange hypotheses in favor of a commonsense explanation. Hypotheses, according to Peirce, should be selected "such as naturally recommend themselves to the mind, and make upon us the impression of simplicity—which here means facility of comprehension by the human mind, i.e., aptness, reasonableness, and good sense."[46]

This is a particularly important consideration for historians; Peirce argues that "reasonableness," "aptness," and "simplicity" are natural to the human mind, indeed, "instinctual." "For the existence of a natural instinct for truth is, after all," writes Peirce, "the sheet anchor of science."[47] The best hypothesis conforms, therefore, to the "facility of comprehension of the human mind," he argues, because the human mind is itself "akin to the truth," and is *instinctively* attuned to the truth. In other words, the structure of our minds is similar to the structure of reality.

Peirce argued, therefore, that the hypothesis that recommends itself most naturally to the mind is most likely to be true. "From the instinctive," writes Peirce, "we pass to reasoned marks of truth in the hypothesis."[48] Thus, Peirce argues, the historian, as a logical reasoner, must trust to his natural instinct—as well as to that of his readers. The importance of this consideration will become more apparent in the rules that follow from these considerations.

Peirce's Rules For The Logical Analysis Of Historical Testimony

In place of the traditional "balancing of the likelihoods" test usually employed by historians in evaluating problematic historical testimony, which leads to erratic results, and which is declared by Peirce to be "as

bad as logic can be," Peirce proposes an abductive method comprised of six rules.

First Rule: Explain All *the Facts*

Peirce sets forth the first rule for the forming of a hypothesis succinctly: "Now the first rule which we should set up is that our hypothesis ought to explain *all* the related facts. It is not sufficient to say that testimony is not true; it is our business to explain how it came to be such as it is."[49] This rule derives both from the rejection of the "balance of likelihoods" test, as well as from the first and second considerations discussed above.

In the case of Hitler, any explanation regarding his failure in school, for example, should also explain other salient facts of his life. If there existed a cause sufficient to turn a model student into a failure, that cause would have to be a strong one and would likely produce other effects capable of being related to the same cause. Any explanation should connect many different facts.

Second Rule: Assume the Principal Testimonies Are True

Peirce's second rule for the formation of an explanatory hypothesis is that "our first hypothesis should be that the principal testimonies are true."[50] Peirce argues that this rule is simply based on common sense and sound instinct. In our daily affairs, writes Peirce, "the natural instinct is to believe anything that one may hear said, until it is found that the assumption leads to difficulties; and when it is found to lead to difficulties, the most natural impulse is to make further inquiries, to cross-examine, etc."[51] Therefore, historians should not *first* attempt to determine whether the principal testimony is true or false; rather, they should first assume that it is true, and follow it up to see where it leads. Peirce explains this rule as follows:

> An excellent method in the great majority of cases in which it is applicable and in which it leads to any unequivocal results is to give precedence to that hypothesis which reposes upon a deep and primary instinct to believe testimony, without which human society could not exist.[52]

Peirce then makes an observation, in further explication of this rule, that would be familiar to any American trial lawyer: "There is no surer mark of inexperience in dealing with witnesses than a tendency to believe that they are falsifying, without any definite, objective, and strong reason for the suspicion."[53]

This rule is sound and logical for the lawyer as well as for the historian for three reasons. First, the witness *may* be telling the truth; to reject the testimony as false at the beginning, without first investigating wheth-

er it may be true, may be to reject foolishly at the outset the true explanation. Second, if one assumes at the beginning that the witness is telling the truth and later discovers that it was false, one is logically led to ask *why* the witness told a false story. Discovering the *cause*, or the *reason why*, the witness gave false facts (whether he was misled, deceived, or deliberately lied to cover up something) may provide an important clue to uncovering the truth. Finally, it would be foolish in the highest degree not to investigate a hypothesis suggested by a principal witness and then simply to declare that there is no explanation. As Peirce wrote, "It is, however, no explanation of a fact at all to pronounce it *inexplicable*."[54]

Peirce's second logical rule for forming an explanatory hypothesis is to credit the testimony of the principal witnesses, investigate the possibility that it may be true, and follow it up.

Third Rule: Be Careful of Probabilities

Peirce's third rule for forming an explanatory hypothesis is to beware of reasoning based on probabilities. He warns that, although some very strong probabilities that appear to be strictly objective may influence our preference for one hypothesis over another, such probabilities can never be absolutely conclusive. *A fortiori*, he argued, "slight probabilities, even if objective, are not worth considering; and merely subjective likelihoods should be disregarded altogether."[55] In other words, in regard to the truth of a particular historical testimony, probabilities are only valid for generalization, not for a singular assertion. The most improbable fact may be the true fact in this instance. The fact asserted in the testimony may have been recorded simply because it was so unusual and improbable but nonetheless actually occurred.

Therefore, in generating and selecting hypotheses, one should follow the first two rules and generally ignore issues of probability. The corollary of this rule is to use one's imagination. Where one is investigating something unusual or unexpected, it is very likely that the cause of it will also be unusual and unexpected. Oftentimes, as any reader of detective stories knows, the solution to the mystery is surprising and unexpected.

Fourth Rule: Trace Out the Logical Consequences of the Hypothesis

Once one has begun to entertain a set of hypotheses according to the first three rules, the next step is to formulate clearly each of the hypotheses. The essence of abduction, the logical method that Peirce proposes, is the discovery of hypotheses that are capable of being tested. Once one has selected, based on the first three rules, a set of possible hypotheses, therefore, "the first thing that will be done . . . will be to trace out [the] necessary and probable experimental consequences"[56] of each. In other words, clearly formulate exactly what it is that each hypothesis is as a cause, and then deduce what effects such a cause would produce. This

approach is a deductive process. One deduces from each hypothetical cause the results that logically and naturally such a hypothetical cause would produce.

The whole purpose of such an operation is to arrive at a hypothesis that can be tested. If one has hypothesized a certain cause and has properly deduced from it its logical and predictable results, one will then be able to move to induction in order to examine the known facts in order to determine whether the predicted effects of the hypothesized cause occurred. For example, a neuropsychologist, Johann Recktenwald, hypothesized that the changes in Hitler's personality and behavior, including his failures in *Realschule*, may have been caused by Hitler having contracted measles encephalitis from his younger brother, Edmund, prior to Edmund's death on February 2, 1900.[57] While such a disease would possibly explain Hitler's failure in school, such a disease has other predictable effects. It is possible by this fourth rule to examine Hitler's life and to test whether the other known effects of this disease occurred. In this manner Recktenwald suggesed a testable hypothesis. No record of the other symptoms of the disease was found by Recktenwald. Since the disease is one whose symptoms could not have been ignored, the hypothesis was rejected.[58]

This rule contains the very essence of Peirce's logical method in analyzing historical testimony in order to explain historical events that have so far remained unexplained. It is a rule that provides for not only the generation of explanatory hypotheses, but also the logical explication of the hypotheses. The analysis of the hypothesis by deduction indicates those effects of the hypothesized cause that are capable of being tested by induction. Thus the fourth rule requires that, among all the possible hypotheses that one can imagine, one should select only those that can be broken down into constituent parts that have predictable outcomes. These can then be tested by induction against the record to determine whether the hypothesis is accurate.

Fifth Rule: Enlarging the Field

Applying the first four rules may, of course, yield more than one hypothesis. The fifth and sixth rules provide logical bases for selecting among these competing hypotheses:

> The fifth rule will be that when we are in doubt which of two hypotheses to have precedence, we should try whether, by enlarging the field of facts which they are to explain, a good reason will not appear for giving one of them a decided preference over the other.[59]

This rule may require some explaining. The facts set out to be explained by most biographers and scholars on this issue include only the facts involved with the change in Hitler's personality evidenced by his school

records for the years 1900–1905. Several different hypotheses have been offered by scholars to explain those facts. For example, a disease might explain Hitler's poor school record at this time. However, when one enlarges the scope of the facts to include, for example, Hitler's experiences as described by August Kubizek, the disease hypothesis offers nothing more. On the other hand, the hypothesis I intend to offer will not only explain Hitler's change in personality and his school record, but also help to explain and connect many of Kubizek's recollections, and later events in Hitler's life, back to the original hypothesized cause.

The fifth rule is this: in selecting among possible hypotheses, choose a hypothesis that appears to have the most explanatory value, as well as the greatest possibility of being tested against the largest field of facts that could either confirm or disprove it.

Sixth Rule: Economy

Peirce's sixth rule is a rule of practical utility. In selecting a hypothesis, resources are always limited. If one is faced with several possible hypotheses, each of which has met the first five rules, Peirce suggests examining how much work is involved in testing each of them. Many times the work involved in testing one hypothesis will overlap with the work to be done to test one of the other hypotheses. Peirce states the rule this way:

> The sixth rule will be that if the work of testing a particular hypothesis will have substantially or largely to be done in any case, in the process of testing another hypothesis, that circumstance should, other things being equal, give this hypothesis which thus involves little or no extra expense, a preference over another which would require special work of no value except for testing it.[60]

I found this rule very helpful in what follows. My initial hypothesis was that reading Karl May's novels affected Hitler's school record. However, it appeared that an enlargement of the field, i.e., explaining not only the effect of reading Karl May, but going back further to explain why the reading of Karl May's stories had such an effect on Hitler in the first place, covered essentially the same material. This led back to the reasons for Hitler's conflict with his father, which preceded his reading of Karl May. Discovering the reason for Hitler's conflict with his father furnished another hypothesis as to why the novels of Karl May affected Hitler so much. Therefore, I followed both this rule and the preceding one to link the two hypotheses.

Testing the Hypothesis Selected

Peirce's six rules guide one to the initial adoption of a hypothesis. They yield a logical method by which to reach a testable hypothesis. As

soon as one has adopted a hypothesis, one immediately leaves abduction and moves to deduction. The purpose of moving to deduction is to trace out the logical consequences one should expect from the hypothesis. These "tracing outs" will establish the testability of the hypothesis. One is then prepared to move to the actual testing phase, the inductive phase.

However, for the historian attempting to test a hypothesis inductively, there is still one more logical part of Peirce's method to consider. Peirce warned that when a historian proposes a new theory or interpretation to explain some phenomenon of history, there is a tendency to approach it more like a lawyer on retainer than a disinterested scientist. In other words, the historian scours the records trying to find any facts that support his theory, just as a lawyer tries to find all of the facts to support his client's theory of the case. Each treats his theory as an interest to protect, and concentrates all his attention on the facts that support it.

Nonetheless, Peirce recommends an opposite approach. The proper focus of attention should not primarily be on the facts, but on the predictive qualities of the theory or hypothesis itself. In other words, the logical approach would be to examine the hypothesis in order to determine what effects would occur logically if the hypothesis were true. This is the essence of rule three above. One would look for effects having two particular qualities: (1) those capable of direct verification; and (2) those that would *not have occurred* unless the hypothesis were false; in other words, if the theory predicts that certain facts will not occur—and will only not occur—if the theory were false, one especially looks for facts of that type. This is the exact opposite of what the lawyer or the usual historian does. In order to test the hypothesis, one's major effort should be to look for facts that would *disprove* the hypothesis one is testing.

For example, if a witness testifies that he was in town at the time of a certain event, one would want to make sure that no evidence exists that he was someplace else. Therefore, one would look for evidence that he was *not* in town at the time. Thus, the logical approach is not only to look for facts that support the theory, but also to look to the theory or hypothesis to identify those facts whose existence would *disprove* the theory. Thus the hypothesis or theory is verified not only if what it predicted came to pass, but also if what it predicted would not occur *did not occur*. Peirce states the logical method of historical research this way:

> A hypothesis having been adopted on probation, the process of testing it will consist, not in examining the facts, in order to see how well they accord with the hypothesis, but on the contrary in examining such of the consequences of the hypothesis as would be capable of direct verification, especially those consequences which would be very unlikely or surprising in case the hypothesis were not true.[61]

Thus Peirce has provided two basic assumptions for the application of his method, six rules for the generation and selection of a hypothesis, and

one logical path to follow in testing a historical hypothesis. Let us now proceed to generate hypotheses that explain the early period of Hitler's life based upon Peirce's six rules.

PART II: GENERATING A HYPOTHESIS

The testimony relating to an explanation of the change that came over Hitler and his failure at the *Realschule* comes from only three main sources. The first source is, of course, the direct testimony of the subject, Hitler himself. In *Mein Kampf* Hitler gives a lengthy explanation for his failure in *Realschule* in the first chapter.[62] In addition, several other explanations and details can be found in other places in *Mein Kampf* and in *Hitler's Table Talk*.[63] The second source of direct testimony concerning Hitler's failure comes from Dr. Eduard Huemer, the headmaster at the *Realschule* and Hitler's principal teacher, who wrote a letter to Hitler's attorney in 1923 at the time of Hitler's trial for his role in the Putsch. The third source is the memoirs of Hitler's only friend in his youth, August Kubizek,[64] plus some very minor recollections from Hitler's relatives, neighbors, classmates, and others.

The principal testimony concerning Adolf Hitler's failure at *Realschule* comes, of course, from the subject himself and is found on pages 7–10 of *Mein Kampf*. Many biographers and scholars have considered this testimony and found it difficult to credit. In many ways, I have to agree with them. When one simply looks at the explanation itself, as it appears in *Mein Kampf*, there are many difficulties. These difficulties consist not only of apparent improbabilities, but also of apparent inconsistencies. Further, the explanation seems "odd," as though something were missing. *Without more*, it does not seem to hang together. This has led many biographers and scholars to refuse to credit it, to dismiss it, or to accord it little weight.

However, if one accepts the logic of Peirce's method, the second rule requires one first to hypothesize that the principal testimonies, in this case Hitler's explanation in *Mein Kampf*, are true. One must, therefore, attempt to generate a hypothesis that would explain, or make sense of, Hitler's explanation. The key lies in the phrase *without more.* Hitler's explanation seems to have something missing; *without more* it just does not seem right. Following Peirce's rule that we assume the principal testimony is true, this immediately suggests the hypothesis that there *is* something more to Hitler's explanation. Is there some hypothesis one could discover to bring Hitler's explanation into focus, give it sense, clarify its apparent inconsistencies, and even bring to light matters that seem otherwise unimportant? Peirce's second rule suggests that, instead of simply dismissing Hitler's explanation as "inadequate," we seek to find a hypothesis in the light of which that "inadequacy" would be overcome.

Examining the First Principal Testimony: Adolf Hitler's Account in "Mein Kampf"

As soon as Hitler's explanation is examined as though it were true, several pregnant questions immediately arise. The first question arises from the nature of the dispute and the age of the child. Presumably the subject of the young Adolf's future would have arisen in the spring of 1900 when he was about to graduate from *Volkschule*. At that time, a choice would have to be made between two different educational paths: the *Gymnasium*, leading to the humanities and law; or the *Realschule*, leading to a technical or engineering career. Hitler's father indicated that he wanted Adolf to become a civil servant, like himself. That is hardly unusual; many fathers want their sons to follow the same career. What was unusual was young Adolf's reaction. He recalls:

> Then, barely eleven years old, I was forced into opposition for the first time in my life. Hard and determined as my father might be . . . his son was just as persistent and recalcitrant in rejecting an idea which appealed to him not at all. . . . I did not want to become a civil servant.[65]

Now the question is: What would cause a normal boy of eleven to care that much, or to take so seriously his father's desire that he follow in his father's footsteps? Such a desire is commonplace among fathers, and normal sons rarely, if ever, get much bothered by it at the age of eleven. Adolf would not have been reacting to any immediate effect of his father's "idea"—no consequences would occur for many years. Helm Stierlin makes the point that the boy "was not yet of an age to be under pressure to choose a career."[66] Why, then, was this such an important event in the young boy's life?

Additionally, Hitler seems to gloss over the question of whether or not there was any disagreement over his father's decision that he should attend the *Realschule* rather than the *Gymnasium*. Instinctively, therefore, we find no reason for his father's career hopes to affect him. Most boys at eleven simply do not think in terms of effects that are several years in the future. The earliest time that his father's wishes for his career would have any practical effect, or call for any decision, would not occur until he graduated from *Realschule*—several years later. Most boys of eleven (not to mention, most men of much older age) do not worry about dealing with a decision they do not have to face for several years. Therefore, the first question calling for an explanation is: Why would a normal boy of eleven react so strongly to the expression of a perfectly normal wish by his father about a future career that the boy would not have to deal with in any practical sense for many years?

In examining Hitler's testimony in *Mein Kampf*, there is another passage that gives rise to a further question. Hitler goes out of his way to explain that he did not consider his father's desire for his son to follow a

civil service career to be unreasonable. On the contrary, he introduces the dispute by describing the reasonableness of his father's position:

> It was his basic opinion and intention that, like himself, his son would and must become a civil servant. It was only natural that the hardships of his youth should enhance his subsequent achievement in his eyes, particularly since it resulted exclusively from his own energy and iron diligence. It was the pride of the self-made man which made him want his son to rise to the same position in life, or, of course, even higher if possible, especially since, by his own industrious life, he thought he would be able to facilitate his child's development so greatly.[67]

Here Hitler is recognizing that his father's request was not only reasonable, but also that it was a perfectly natural offer on the part of his father to help his son. Surely his father's experience would not only be of value to help his son prepare for such a career, but his father's good record and reputation would also be helpful in rising in that career. This observation merely reinforces the first question: Why would the young Adolf have such a strong, visceral reaction to the reasonable expectation of his father that he consider a career in the civil service? Why did he, at age eleven, "grow sick to his stomach" at the thought?

First Clue: The Unusual Nature of Hitler's Dispute with His Father at That Age

These two questions contain the germ of a first clue toward the creation of a hypothesis. If we accept Hitler's account as true, the first thing we note is that we are not dealing with a "normal" boy. The account suggests an "abnormality" in the form of a rather unusual ability of an eleven-year-old boy to conceive of such a career a long way off in the future. The boy at this point in his life appeared to be normal in other respects except that he was reported by all accounts to be above average in intelligence. He was also praised by his teachers and was popular with his fellow students. This suggests that the "abnormality" was not due to any Freudian or other type of psychological problem. Rather, it suggests an unusual mental ability.

One hypothesis might be that Hitler had an unusual mental ability that might be called that of a "genius"—in the popular meaning of that term. As soon as this is considered, one thinks of other geniuses. Einstein, for example, also had difficulties in high school; he hated it, and also, like Hitler, dropped out of high school without graduating. Perhaps, at age eleven, Hitler's mind had developed quite considerably, so that he could think about things in a way normal boys of eleven do not think.

Thus, he could have already formed ideas in his mind that would explain why his reaction to his father's idea of a civil service career was so vehement. Hitler has been recognized as a "genius"—though an evil one—by many contemporaries and later biographers and historians. Perhaps it would be a reasonable hypothesis that his mind had become

unusually active sometime before the age of eleven, in a way that would explain his very strong antipathy to his father's suggestion.

Let us employ this first clue as a building block in the generation of a hypothesis. If we credit Hitler's testimony in *Mein Kampf*, it suggests an unusual mental ability in a boy of eleven. Therefore, in the hypothesis to be eventually formed some estimate of the boy's unusual mental ability should be a constituent.

Second Clue: An Already Formed Attitude toward Work

Let us now try to imagine what type of unusual mental ability might have enabled Hitler to envision something so far in the future. Hitler writes that he was not reacting to any immediate consequence of his father's desires for his future, but to the *idea* of becoming a civil servant. The confrontation that took place was over an idea—some antecedent idea in the boy's mind that his father's suggestion of a civil service career contradicted. If this antecedent idea did in fact exist, young Adolf had already, by age eleven, done some thinking about the future, and had formed some idea about his own future—a rather strong one—for Hitler writes rather strongly about his reaction:

> Neither persuasion nor 'serious' arguments made any impression on my resistance. I did not want to be a civil servant, no, and again no. All attempts on my father's part to inspire me with love or pleasure in this profession by stories from his own life accomplished the exact opposite. I yawned and grew sick to my stomach at the thought of sitting in an office, deprived of my liberty; ceasing to be master of my own time and being compelled to force the content of my whole life into the blanks that had to be filled out.[68]

He presents a rather broad indictment, and it would seem to extend to most other occupations that require repetitive, boring work—which would include almost all jobs in business, government, agriculture, and industry. His remarks suggest either an attitude was already forming in his mind, or had already formed, about his relationship to the world, the meaning of life, and to the whole idea of earning a living. His father's idea for his career, admittedly reasonable and of no immediate consequence to his life as he entered his first year of *Realschule*, came into conflict with some other already formed idea. Whatever that idea was, the young boy was ready to act upon it: first by rejecting his father's idea, then by entering into opposition with his father over it, and later by undermining his own proven abilities in school.

The content of that idea obviously had something to do with his conception of future work or his vision of himself. The boy's visceral reaction to the *type* of work involved in a civil service job suggests this. He conceived his father's idea as one that would deprive him of his liberty by forcing him into a schedule of work ("ceasing to be master of my own

time"), and as petty ("compelled to force the content of a whole life into blanks to be filled out"). The boy must already have been thinking quite seriously about his future in a way unusual for an eleven-year-old. Otherwise, his father's plan would not have threatened him so.

Let us add this second clue to the generation of a hypothesis. If we credit Hitler's account in *Mein Kampf*, the final formulation of the hypothesis must include a very serious idea in the young boy's mind about what kind of career would be acceptable to him, and give an account of his reaction to the idea of "normal" work.

Third Clue: The Existence of an Antecedent Idea

Next, according to Hitler's account, his opposition to the idea of becoming a civil servant arose *before* he developed an alternative. He recounts that it was not until at least a year after the conflict with his father began that he formulated an idea of his own (i.e., to become an artist). For the first year after the initial conflict, his rejection of his father's idea for his future apparently did not continue in open conflict. Hitler writes that as long as he had mentally opposed his father's plans for him without a plan of his own, he had been able to keep his "private opinions" to himself. He goes on to describe the status of the disagreement with his father during that first year (1900–1901):

> As long as my father's intention of making me a civil servant encountered only my theoretical (*Prinzipielle*) distaste for the profession, the conflict was bearable. Thus far, I had to some extent been able to keep my private opinions to myself; I did not have to contradict him immediately. My own firm determination never to become a civil servant sufficed to give me complete inner peace. And this decision in me was immutable.[69]

Here it is suggested that the young Hitler had already formed some concept of the meaning of life, or at least the meaning of his own life, clear enough for his father's idea to be in contradiction to it. Whatever that idea was, it was not concrete, but purely conceptual; for he had no concrete plan of his own to oppose to his father's idea. His concept was at this time only "theoretical," but still strong enough to evoke in him a visceral reaction. It was not until a year later that he conceived of a plan of his own, at which point, he writes:

> The problem became more difficult when I developed a plan of my own in opposition to my father's. And this occurred at the age of twelve. How it happened, I do not know, but one day it became clear to me that I would become a painter, an artist.[70]

Thus for at least a year, the young Adolf was opposing his father's idea for a career only on "theoretical" grounds or "general principles" (*Prinzipielle*).[71] This detail raises the question: What were these theoretical

grounds, these general principles in the young Adolf's mind that caused him to oppose his father's plan so viscerally, even though he had no plan of his own?

Let this count as the third clue leading toward the generation of a hypothesis. Hitler's account suggests that some idea or concept in his mind preceded his father's suggestion of a civil service career. Hitler's account in *Mein Kampf* suggests that any hypothesis must look behind the events described to discover what was antecedently in his mind when the disagreement with his father arose.

Fourth Clue: The Decision about Which School to Attend

When the first three clues are considered together, they suggest a fourth clue. If it is true that Hitler had an unusual mental ability, an idea about his own future and the kind of work that would be proper to him, and that these had become strongly felt before the confrontation with his father, the question arises over whether or not his father's decision for Adolf to attend the *Realschule* rather than the *Gymnasium* may not also have been important. If we credit Hitler's testimony, it was, in fact, the decision about the choice of schools that brought the entire conflict about a future career into the open. This would bring into relief the fact that the decision about schools would to a large degree limit the kinds of future work and careers open to the boy. If the boy had been already thinking seriously about his future, the choice of schools could not fail to be an important consideration.

Let us bring the foregoing hypotheses together, and consider that the choice of the *Realschule* may have also reflected a judgment by the father about his son's mental abilities. If the son were aware of his own unusual mental abilities, such a judgment by his father, consigning him to a career far below his own estimation of himself, may have been a significant element adding to the rancor of the conflict. Therefore, although Hitler seems to gloss over this decision the first time it is mentioned in *Mein Kampf*, it may have been much more important than it appears at first glance.

Let us add this as a fourth clue to the generation of a hypothesis. If we are to credit all of Hitler's testimony, we cannot ignore the fundamental issue that gave rise to the conflict with his father. That issue was the choice of schools and the effect of that choice of limiting his future career. Hitler's subsequent performance in *Realschule* may have been determined by the limitation in future careers it entailed.

A First Hypothesis

There are two more sources of principal testimony to consider before arriving at a final hypothesis. But before those other sources are dis-

cussed, let us see what hypothesis can be extracted from the clues developed so far.

The first rule of thumb in attempting to unravel a mystery concerning specific actions is to form some idea of the character of the man who committed the actions. From the actions described in the testimony, it would seem that they are unusual for a boy of eleven. This naturally suggests that we are dealing with a boy of exceptional intelligence. Intelligence of a genius level sometimes begins to manifest itself at about this age. We know that Hitler was considered a genius later in life;[72] it would be a reasonable inference that this genius began to affect the young boy's mind at this earlier time. Let us take this as the first premise of our hypothesis: genius of some type was the nature of the boy.

Given that step, what inferences can we draw from Hitler's testimony? First, we can infer that the subject to which his attention was drawn, the substance of his thoughts, was his own future, and the type of work to which he would feel himself suited. Second, we can infer that he did not deign to do any "normal" kind of work—i.e., work that was repetitive, boring, and petty or not appropriate to his idea of himself—as acceptable. He valued his liberty and would not allow it to be forced into any straitjacket of normal work. Third, these thoughts were already strongly formed by the spring of 1900 when the discussion about his educational choices and career plans arose.

How can we test this hypothesis? First we should look for some evidence that Hitler had earlier formed some ideas about his future career and the type of work he would consider suitable to his mind and temperament. Second, we should look for some evidence that he was examining different careers. Third, we should look for some evidence indicating the flow or direction of his thoughts on this matter. In other words, we should be able to see a progression of the thought as he approached the confrontation with his father. Finally, we should find evidence of these developments later in his life.

The next step in Peirce's logic is to review all the evidence and to assemble all the facts into a coherent whole. What this essentially means is to tell the story based on the facts and the evidence brought to light by the hypothesis. The test of the hypothesis will lie in the coherence of the story. This involves three characteristics discussed at length by Peirce. First, whether the "cause" hypothesized is competent to explain the effects. In the vernacular, the test is how well the story "hangs together." Is it plausible? The second test is related to the first: does the story connect all the facts in question? The third test is whether it throws the facts into greater relief by tying together facts that previously seemed unrelated or insignificant. In the course of a valid abductive explanation, one would expect many facts and developments that previously seemed unrelated (and, in a certain sense, hidden) to come to light and to be related to each other. Such will be the case in the story I am about to tell. Therefore,

before proceeding to tell the story, I wish to alert the reader to a second mental development in the young Adolf's mind that, occurring simultaneously, came to interweave and strongly reinforce the first.

Second Hypothesis: The Source of the Young Hitler's Identification of His Own Fate with the German People

In the course of telling the story arising from the testing of the hypothesis stated above, a second development in the life of the young Hitler will come to light. This is the result of another characteristic of abductive logic; abduction is *ampliative*. Abductive inferences often uncover, in the course of investigation, other facts and developments not originally part of the initial hypothesis. In this case, the second development is Hitler's personal identification with an abstract idea of the German people. In the course of his thinking about his future, Hitler developed many concepts that he projected onto his idea of the German *Volk*. This development will become manifest in the course of the explanation (the story) that follows. The form of the "explanation" is a story because we are dealing with the life of a man. To tell his "story" is to portray an understanding of the man and an understanding of the man in action. This is the root of the word "history."

Examining the Second Principal Testimony: Hitler's Headmaster, Dr. Eduard Huemer

The precise question that we are investigating in this chapter is the change that Hitler underwent beginning in the fall of 1900 when he entered *Realschule*. Hitler gives one explanation for this change in *Mein Kampf* which, as I have shown, most scholars dismiss. However there is another testimony, and another explanation for Hitler's failure in *Realschule* and the change in him at this time in his life, that previous scholars have ignored. This is the testimony of Hitler's teacher of French and German, the headmaster of the Linz *Realschule*, Dr. Eduard Huemer. When asked why Hitler had done so poorly in school, Huemer explains: "Hitler seems to have been led astray by the stories of Karl May and tales of Red Indians, and no doubt an over-indulgence in such reading . . . was mainly responsible for his failure."[73]

While many scholars have commented on the influence of Karl May upon Hitler—as well as Hitler's lifelong infatuation with Karl May,[74] — no scholar has heretofore investigated the possibility that Karl May's novels may have had a direct effect on Hitler's schooling.

This lack of consideration by biographers and historians is especially strange in that Hitler himself furnished substantial corroboration for Dr. Huemer's explanation. In his *Table Talk* in the bunker in 1942, Hitler confirms that, when he was introduced to Karl May by a schoolmate,

Fritz Seidl, he was "carried away" by the first novel he read and "devoured at once all the others by the same author." Then he adds, significantly: "The immediate result was a falling off in my school reports."[75] Thus both the pupil and the headmaster agree that Karl May had a significant role to play in Hitler's failure in *Realschule*.

Let us admit that this explanation, once again, seems inadequate to explain the facts. There are at least two reasons for this inadequacy. First, millions of boys in Austria and Germany at this time also read Karl May's novels and became infatuated with them;[76] however, few of them flunked out of high school as a result. Second, this explanation, on the surface, does not seem to explain many other facts of Hitler's life at the time, such as his withdrawal from his friends, ceasing to play games of Cowboys and Indians, and the change in his personality and behavior.

These observations point to two other questions. First, how does this explanation relate to Hitler's conflict with his father over a civil service career? On the one hand, are these *two* explanations that are contradictory and mutually exclusive? Or are they, on the other hand, both part of a larger explanation in which they are related to each other and mutually reinforcing? Let us adopt Peirce's rule that the testimonies of the principal witnesses are to be credited. This would give rise to the latter alternative hypothesis, namely that these two explanations are connected to each other, with one perhaps growing out of the other so as to appear to the subject as one continuous explanation. This would give rise to another abductive question. How exactly were the novels of Karl May related to Hitler's conflict with his father over a civil service career and with the other changes in his life at this time?

Let me now relate this explanation and these questions to the previous hypotheses generated. The clues offered by Hitler's explanation in *Mein Kampf* suggest that Hitler was a very intelligent young boy—even a genius—who had begun thinking about the meaning of life and his future career in a way that few boys his age usually do. The clues also suggest the hypothesis that he had begun to form, antecedent to the conflict with his father, some very definite ideas about work and about his future place in the world. These ideas also may have affected his relationships with his classmates, his teachers, and school itself, in addition to his relationship with his father. If one accepts these hypotheses, then it would be a reasonable inference that Hitler found something in the novels of Karl May directly related to these developments. Since the novels of Karl May were set in faraway lands, the hypothesis suggests that it was not the substantive contents of the novels that he related to—they were remote. Rather, he may have found a method relevant to his schooling and to the predicament in which he found himself. Suppose Hitler found a method or a logic in the novels of Karl May that enabled him to strengthen the antecedently formed ideas contributing to the conflict with his father, and to the dramatic change in his relationship with his friends and class-

mates, his teachers, and his school. Let us further hypothesize that something in the novels of Karl May may have enabled him to justify, or at least to clarify to himself, his failure to apply himself in school, and further, may have provided him with an alternative approach to achieve his goals.

Summary of Hypotheses

One of the basic requirements of the abductive approach to historical interpretation is the belief that the facts under consideration admit of rational explanation; in other words, we must accept that the unusual, inexplicable, improbable, and seemingly unrelated facts that confront us can be connected to each other in a sensible way and thus explained. Assuming that the principal testimonies are true, we readily admitted that Hitler's testimony in *Mein Kampf* seems inadequate. We, therefore, hypothesized that the explosion of the conflict with his father was the result of antecedent causes—ideas previously formed in the mind of the young Hitler before the event. Analyzing Hitler's testimony and the situation he describes, we formed a hypothesis that these ideas were related to an attitude toward normal bourgeois life and to the idea of work. Next, considering other testimony in the first chapter of *Mein Kampf*, it appeared to us that these ideas were closely related to some idea of Germany and the German people. Finally, we considered other available testimony concerning Hitler's failure in *Realschule*: the testimony of Hitler's teacher and headmaster, Dr. Huemer, that Hitler's failure was the result of his reading Karl May's novels. We assumed that this effect, too, was related to, and sprang out of, the same antecedent causes in a continuous development.

Based on Peirce's method and logic, a hypothesis will be presented in the next chapter to account for the so far unexplained facts of Hitler's youth from the age of nine to seventeen. This will take the form of a story. Imagine that all of the witnesses to the mystery of Hitler's youth were called into a parlor to hear a detective's explanation of all the known facts. The remainder of this work comprises the story that the detective might tell about Hitler's youth. It is the story of how this particular young boy began dreaming of someday becoming the leader of the German people, and of how he began preparing himself for such a role—which astonishingly led him to become, first, leader of the largest mass movement in German history, and then *Der Fuehrer.*

NOTES

1. "*Der groesste Massenerschuetterer der Weltgeschichte*," Konrad Heiden, *Hitler:Das Zeitalter der Verantwortungslosigkeit: Eine Biographie* (Zurich: Europa Verlag, 1936), 6.

2. "Adolf's own attainments had earned him the praise of his school teachers at Fischlam and Lambach." Werner Maser, *Hitler: Legend, Myth and Reality,* trans. Peter Ross and Betty Ross (New York: Harper Torch Books, 1973), 26.
3. Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth,* 57.
4. Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* 8.
5. "There can be little doubt that even in those days Hitler was conscious of his magnetic personality. His allusions to his outstanding gift of oratory when still a schoolboy are corroborated without exception by his fellow pupils." Maser, *Hitler: Legend,* 28.
6. Toland, *Adolf,* 29.
7. Payne, *Life and Death,* 23.
8. Alan Bullock, introduction to Jetzinger's *Hitler's Youth,* 10.
9. Helm Stierlin, *Adolf Hitler: A Family Perspective* (New York: Psychohistory Press, 1976), 26.
10. Hitler was awarded the Iron Cross, First Class, the highest award possible, in August 1918, not for a valorous act, but for exceptionally dutiful and conscientious service.
11. Bullock, introduction to Jetzinger's *Hitler's Youth,* 10.
12. Bradley F. Smith, *Adolf Hitler: His Family, Childhood and Youth* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 9.
13. *Ibid*., 8.
14. Charles Sanders Peirce, "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents, Especially from Testimonies," *EP2., 75–114* The essay printed in *EP2* consists of only about half of the original manuscript. An additional portion of the original manuscript is printed in Volume VII of *The Collected Papers of Charles Sanders,* ed. Arthur W. Burks (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 89–164. The portion printed in *EP2* constitutes the statement of Peirce's theory, while the remainder consists primarily of examples of its application.
15. *Ibid*., 77.
16. *Ibid*., 75.
17. *Ibid*., 81.
18. *Ibid*., 82.
19. *Ibid*., 85.
20. Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* 7–10.
21. Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth*, 64.
22. Smith, *Adolf,* 72.
23. *Ibid*., 73.
24. *Ibid*., 77. (Emphasis in original.)
25. Bullock, *Hitler: A Study*, 26.
26. Fest, *Hitler*, 19.
27. Redlich, *Hitler: Diagnosis,* 258.
28. Stierlin, *Adolf,* 27.
29. Payne, *Life and Death,* 23.
30. Toland, *Adolf,* 15.
31. Kershaw, *Hubris*, 17–18.
32. *Ibid*., 608, fn. 98.
33. This flaw, however, cannot be credited to Bradley F. Smith, who did attempt to look through the record for corroborating evidence.
34. Peirce, "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents, Especially from Testimonies," *EP2*, 73
35. *Ibid*., 89.
36. *Ibid*., 92.
37. William C. Langer, *The Mind of Adolf Hitler* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), 113.
38. Peirce, "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents, " *EP2*, 107.
39. *Ibid*.
40. Doyle, VALL, 801.

41. Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler,* xvi–xvii, and part 6: "The War the Question Why," 239–276.
42. Peirce, "Pragmatism as the Logic of Abduction," *EP2*, 231.
43. Peirce, "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents," *EP2*, 107.
44. Ibid., 107.
45. *Ibid*.
46. *Ibid*., 108.
47. *Ibid*.
48. *Ibid*.
49. Peirce, "On the Logic of Drawing History form Ancient Documents," *EP2*, 113.
50. *Ibid*.
51. *Ibid*., 79.
52. *Ibid*., 113.
53. *Ibid*.
54. Peirce, "The First Rule of Logic," *EP2*, 49. (Emphasis in original.)
55. Peirce, "On the Method of Drawing History from Ancient Documents," *EP2*, 114.
56. *Ibid*., 95.
57. Johann Recktenwald, *Woran Hitler gelitten?* (Munich: Rheinhardt, 1963).
58. Redlich, *Hitler: Diagnosis,* 18.
59. Peirce, "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents," *EP2*, 114.
60. *Ibid*.
61. *Ibid*.
62. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 7-10.
63. Hitler's late-night soliloquies in the bunker during the period 1941–1944 are usually referred to as *Hitler's Table Talk*. These were translated by Norman Cameron and R. H. Stevens and published in England under the name, *Hitler's Table Talk* (London, 1953); and in the United States under the name, *Hitler's Secret Conversations* (New York, 1953). Unfortunately, although the text of both is the same, the pagination differs (except for the introduction, see note 1 above). However, each conversation is entered by date and the entries are numbered the same in each edition. I shall refer to them both as *Hitler's Table Talk* and note references to the date and entry number according to which they may be found in either edition. Thus future citations shall be to *Hitler's Table Talk*, followed by the entry number and date.
64. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler*.
65. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 8.
66. Stierlin, *Adolf,* 27.
67. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 7.
68. *Ibid*., 8.
69. *Ibid*., 9.
70. *Ibid*.,
71. Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (*Annotated),* 13.
72. "Among all of the prominent figures of the Weimar period, [Hitler] is the only one of whom it can be said that he possessed political genius . . . he was nonpareil in his own time." Gordon A Craig, *Germany: 1866–1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 544.
73. Quoted in Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth,* 69.
74. See Klaus Mann, "Cowboy Mentor of the Fuehrer," *Living Age*, vol. 370 (November 1940): 217–222; Joseph Wechsberg, "Winnetou of der Wild West," *The American West*, vol. 1, no. 3 (Summer 1964): 32–39; and Colleen Cook, "Nazism": 339–355.
75. *Hitler's Table Talk,* "Entry No. 149, 17th February 1942, evening."
76. Cook writes that Karl May "was heralded as a folk hero" ("Nazism," 40); and "Generations of Germans were addicted to Karl May's novels" (*Ibid.,* 37). See also Wechsberg, "Winnetou," 32.

SIX
The Genesis Of The Fuehrer

The Birth Of Hitler's Character

The background of Hitler's family and the scattered facts of his early youth have been ably recounted by Hitler's many biographers. But the story of the development of Hitler's young mind—the story of the growth of the genius that would later emerge—has never fully been told. It begins with a hypothesis.

HITLER WAS A BORN GENIUS

Hitler was born a genius. That is the most elementary fact acknowledged by almost all contemporaries who had close contact with him, and by nearly all subsequent historians and biographers.[1] What was the nature of Hitler's genius? Albert Einstein's definition of his own genius is one that I shall apply here. In his autobiography, Einstein credited his genius to his ability to "scent out that which was able to lead to fundamentals and to turn aside from everything else, from the multitude of things that clutter the mind and divert it from the essential."[2] On another occasion, when asked to what he would attribute his imaginative genius, Einstein replied, "I have no particular talent, I am merely extremely inquisitive."[3] It was Hitler's genius, too, to "scent out" the fundamentals of political power and to imagine and inquire in an extraordinary way, quite unlike what "normal" people do.

It is the nature of people of genius that for the first several years of their lives there is little indication of the power of the mind that will later emerge. They keep within themselves the vague stirrings of interest in the world about them and give little indication that they are exceptionally

brilliant.[4] Young Albert Einstein received only mediocre grades in high school and was told by his Greek teacher, "You will never amount to anything."[5] Eventually Einstein was asked to leave school and, like Hitler, dropped out of high school without graduating.[6]

In the case of many geniuses, however, there is often some story or anecdote, told later, that hints at the nature of the genius that will subsequently emerge. Albert Einstein, for example, often told the story, repeated by almost all of his biographers, that at the age of five his father showed him a pocket compass. This incident was his first recollection of his thinking differently from others. What impressed young Einstein on that occasion was that "since the iron needle always pointed north, no matter which way the case was turned," he made the inference, as a child, that it must have been "acted upon by something that existed in space—the space that had always been considered empty."[7] From this experience, Einstein derived this insight: "Something deeply hidden had to be behind things."[8] This experience that there were hidden forces in the universe, together with the experience of reading a book on Euclidean geometry a few years later, have been recounted as the first stirrings of the stupendous mind that would later dazzle the world with its scientific genius.[9]

HITLER'S ANECDOTE

In *Mein Kampf* Hitler tells a similar story, though few biographers have noted it. In Hitler's case, it did not arise from a toy or object of interest shown him by an elder, but from the games he played with his classmates. Though the story is not precisely dated, it appears that it must have taken place when the young Hitler was eight or nine years old.

Hitler entered the third grade at the monastery school attached to the cloister at Lambach in September 1897 when he was eight years old; he attended that school for three semesters, until his family moved to Leonding in February 1899, when he was still nine. It was during this time that the first stirrings of the genius that would later shake the world to its foundations appear.

Like most boys at that age, Hitler and his classmates filled their hours outside of class with games of Cowboys and Indians, cops and robbers, and soldiers at war. For most children these are only games, and few give any significance to the games beyond the fun they are having at the moment. But young Adolf was obviously different. From his earliest youth he was possessed of an "enormous seriousness." Perhaps he was remembered as the leader in all the games at this time because beneath the fun, he approached everything with a "deadly earnestness." This seriousness of purpose was recorded as Hitler's "most striking characteristic."[10]

It is clear from Hitler's later recollections that he had early begun to see that the games he was playing with the other children were not merely games to be soon outgrown. Rather, he began to see them as more significant: "Woods and meadows," he later writes, "were the battlefields on which the 'conflicts' which exist everywhere in life were decided."[11] While the other boys were merely playing, Hitler only appeared to be playing. For he had begun to take the games very seriously and to compare them with the adult world around him. He began to glance beyond the games themselves, as Einstein had glanced beyond the movement of a compass needle, to infer the existence of an invisible force that would pull him out of the world of his games. He began to glance at the adult world that lay beyond the games in a way far beyond his years.

What he saw he did not like. The world of adults, he began to notice, was both a nothingness and a sham. He realized that the very things that made the games so appealing—the sense of adventure and excitement, the camaraderie and purposefulness—were either no longer present, or were fast disappearing from the world of adults. What he saw was that adulthood was going to be a disappointment. He records his experience of that realization in a heretofore little-noted story at the beginning of chapter 5 of *Mein Kampf*:

> As a young scamp in my wild years, nothing had so grieved me as having been born at a time which obviously erected its Halls of Fame only to shopkeepers and government officials. The waves of historic events seemed to have grown so smooth that the future really seemed to belong only to the 'peaceful contest of nations'; in other words, a cozy mutual swindling match with the exclusion of vigorous[12] methods of defense. The various nations began to be more and more like private citizens who cut the ground out from one another's feet, stealing each other's customers and orders, trying in every way to get ahead of one another, and staging this whole act amid a hue and cry as loud as it is harmless. This development seemed not only to endure, but was expected in time (as was universally recommended) to remodel the whole world into one big department store in whose vestibules the busts of the shrewdest profiteers and the most lamblike administrative officials would be garnered for all eternity.[13]

Such a "department store" vision of the world and of his own future in it was appalling to the young Adolf. This future was not what the games were about. In the games and in the stories on which they were based, the "good guys" won, and the "bad guys" lost. The "good guys" were men of honor, who had contempt for "shopkeepers and government officials." He could not imagine playing games in which the "shrewdest profiteers and most lamblike administrative officials" were the heroes. As a "young scamp," Hitler recalls, he had deeply lamented the fact that he had been born in a "department store" age that left him nothing to look forward to: "Why couldn't I have been born a hundred years earlier?" he writes,

"Say, at the time of the Wars of Liberation when a man, even without a 'business,' was really worth something?"[14]

Hitler records that at this early age he had already begun to view his present life—his success in school, the praise of his teachers, his leadership among his classmates in the games—as headed for a "nowhere" of mediocrity, consisting of nothing more than a materialistic pursuit of money and physical comforts. The "conflicts" in the games were so different from the "conflicts" he saw around him in the adult world—and ahead of him in adulthood—that he experienced a bitterness and anger at the very thought of growing up. He writes of the deep feelings this inspired in him at that age:

> Thus I had often indulged in angry thoughts concerning my earthly pilgrimage, which, as it seemed to me, had begun too late, and regarded the period . . . ahead of me as a mean and undeserved trick of fate.[15]

Einstein, too, writes in his autobiography of becoming aware of this reality at a similar age: "Even when I was a fairly precocious young man the nothingness of the hopes and strivings which chases men restlessly through life came to my consciousness with considerable vitality."[16] In response, Einstein went through a period of deep religiosity. Hitler went through a similar period.

HITLER BEGINS THINKING ABOUT A FUTURE CAREER (1897)

By the age of nine, while he was still at Lambach, Hitler had already begun to consider his future and to look for alternatives to the "department store" world toward which he was headed. Although he had not yet formed any clear idea of the profession he would someday pursue,[17] he had begun to look for some escape from the world he was headed for. The first alternative that impressed him was the priesthood:

> At Lambach I had excellent opportunity to intoxicate myself with the splendor of the brilliant church festivals. As was only natural, the abbot seemed to me, as the village priest had once seemed to my father, the highest and most desirable idea.[18]

The young Adolf was impressed with the pageantry of the Roman Catholic liturgy. But he also seems to have been impressed with the possibility that here was a world that was not part of the "department store" mentality that he was already reacting so strongly against. Yet it was difficult to imagine games in which it would be fun playing the abbot or the village priest. Thus, this ideal did not long hold his attraction: "As it happened," Hitler recalls, "any temporary aspiration for this profession was soon to vanish, making place for hopes more suited to my temperament."[19]

HITLER DISCOVERS A BOOK ON WAR (1898)

Soon, however, he discovered a new ideal and a new possibility. This occurred probably in late 1898 while he was still at Lambach, or perhaps early in 1899 when his family moved to Leonding. He came across a book on the Franco-Prussian War consisting of two issues of a popular illustrated periodical from those years.[20] In that book he found something quite different and much more exciting to replace the solemn splendors of the church festivals and the ascetic ideals of the priesthood. He found the pageantry and glory of war. "It was not long," he reflects, "before the great historic struggle had become my greatest inner experience."[21]

Here was a world as far removed from the shabby ideals of the "department store" world as he could imagine. Here he found a future that perfectly matched the games he had been playing. He finally found the real point of the games, the real "battlefields in which the 'conflicts' that exist everywhere in life were decided." As a result, he became "more and more enthusiastic about anything that was in any way connected with war or, for that matter, soldiering."[22] In the history of that war, his young mind finally found all those things outside the "department store" world that gave the games their sense. Here was pageantry, splendor, and victory parades; adventure, excitement, honor, and glory—and everything out of the ordinary. Here was the battlefield on which the good guys fought the bad guys and received the acclaim of the masses—and the adulation of young boys—without having to descend to the workaday world. The heroes fight far-away battles and are loved and acclaimed by the people, who support them and shower them with honors. The nation treats its soldiers and heroes, as the Church treats its priests and saints, as the highest embodiment of its meaning and purpose.

However, the perceptive and inquisitive mind of the young Adolf quickly noticed a worm in the apple of his new ideal. There had been no war in Europe for almost three decades—an eternity in the mind of a nine-year-old. Further, in the optimism of the times, as he saw it, there seemed to be little likelihood of one in the future. Universal peace and progress seemed likely "not only to endure but was expected in time (as was universally recommended)," he writes, "to remodel the whole world into one big department store."[23] Thus, the young Hitler found a world that seemed to match his dreams, but that seemed to be disappearing from the world in which he was growing up.

GREATNESS REPRIEVED: THE BOER WAR BREAKS OUT (1899)

Then in 1899 a new war broke out in South Africa that immediately captured his imagination and recharged his spirits. "The Boer War was like summer lightning to me," he recalls. "Every day I waited impatiently

for the newspapers and devoured dispatches and news reports, happy at the privilege of witnessing this historic struggle, even at a distance."[24] Perhaps the "optimism" of the age was wrong; perhaps the age of heroes and extraordinary men had not disappeared after all. Here was confirmation that he could escape his fate by not having to resign himself to ordinary life in a department store world. He began to believe that the "peaceful contest of nations" would not necessarily dominate the future. It became realistic to believe in a future where "a man even without a 'business'" might be "really worth something."

It was at this time that Adolf began to ruminate about the meaning of war in relation to the department store world that he had previously seen as the only world ahead. The great place that war played in Hitler's subsequent life hardly needs mention. But it remains to be understood in its early genesis. Hitler had formed a hatred of ordinary life, which he saw as nothing but a "big department store." He was determined to avoid that kind of life at all costs. War offered him a way out of that life and into another one. War was the world of the extraordinary, where a man could be unique. A poem by Schiller, put to music as a popular Prussian song current at this time, expresses the uniqueness of the soldier in war and his aloneness as the standard of his self-worth:

> Wohlauf, Kameraden, aufs Pferd! aufs Pferd!
> Ins Feld, in die Freiheit gezogen.
> Im Felde, da ist der Mann noch was Wert,
> Da wird das Herz noch gewogen.
> Da tritt kein andere fur ihn ein,
> Auf sich selber steht, er da ganz allein.[25]
> (Let's go, comrades, to horse! To horse!
> Into the battlefield freedom draws us.
> On the battlefield a man is still worth something.
> There will his heart still be tested.
> There no one can go in his place;
> Relying on himself, he stands totally alone.)

This ideal of the soldier provides a paradigm for the individual to realize his uniqueness, to stand out in bold relief—entirely alone—against the ordinary world. The ordinary people provide the applause, the praise, and the rewards. The ordinary people provide the support; they provide the ordinary things of life out of their petty and ordinary needs. But there was no meaning in this. The soldier, the hero, the great man, does not "produce" anything in the economic sense of the "department store," but he gives the people meaning.[26] The soldier, the hero, the great man arises *from* the people; he is not one of "them." Though the soldier is "their" hero—the "people's" hero—the hero stands out in bold relief from "them," and against their background, as the black letters impressed on a page stand out; it is the impression of the letters—the great men—that alone gives the page its meaning. The blank page—the people—only ex-

ists to await the impression to be put upon it. Hitler did not yet speak of "races," but he had already begun to realize that there were two kinds of people in the world: the exceptional people who give meaning to the world, and those who live for the ordinary, material things in life.

THE GREATNESS OF WAR REFLECTS ON HITLER'S FATHER

The Boer War takes us to 1899. But let us go back once again to 1898, when Hitler first read that book on the Franco-Prussian War. For that book had two other lessons for the young boy that he records in a significant passage of *Mein Kampf*. The full passage is as follows:

> But in another respect as well, this [reading of the book on the Franco-Prussian War] was to assume importance for me. For the first time, though in as yet a confused form, the question was forced upon my consciousness: Was there a difference—and if so what difference—between the Germans who fought in these battles and the other Germans? Why hadn't Austria taken part in this war; *why hadn't my father and all the others fought?* Are we not the same as all other Germans?
> Do we not all belong together? This problem began to gnaw at my little brain for the first time. I raised *cautious* questions and with *secret envy* received the answer that not every German belonged to Bismarck's Reich.
> This was more than I could understand.[27] (Emphases added.)

This passage is pregnant with meaning. It raised two questions in the small boy's mind with important and far-ranging consequences for the development of Hitler's genius and the direction that his young mind would take.

The first question is the issue of "lamblike administrative officials" in relation to his ideas of heroes and the nobility of war. In the enthusiasm for war that the book had inspired, he began to wonder why Austria and, more importantly, his father had not fought in that war. He writes that "this problem had begun to gnaw at my little brain for the first time," prompting him to ask *"cautious"* questions. Why *"cautious"* questions? The questions seem to be straightforward: "Are we not the same as all other Germans? Do we not all belong together?" But in the nine-year-old's mind there was an implication to these questions that he had every reason to be very cautious about when raising them to his father. That implication: the Germans were noble and heroic; why, therefore, had not both Austria and his father been noble and heroic?

Although his father may not have recognized it, this was the most damning question the small boy could have asked. In the nationality-conscious Austria of the late 1890s, there can be no doubt that the young Adolf knew that he and his family were ethnically German. In the mind of the young boy, therefore, there was a connection between the great-

ness of the Germans who fought in that war and the "lamblike" failure of both his father and Austria to be part of it. The young boy's infatuation with greatness cast doubt both on his father and on Austria.

In answer to his questions, Hitler's father told him that "not every German was fortunate enough to belong to Bismarck's Reich." When he heard that, the young Adolf began to nurture a *"secret envy"* for everything German. Here was a nation and a people, he felt, who still thought as he did, still admired heroes and the exceptional, and was still willing to assert itself against the "department store" mentality ruling the other nations of the world. The young boy now had his own special reason for admiring everything German. It reflected on his father, on Austria, on the very idea of his father's civil service career, and on everything he hated about the department store world around him. He began to project all of his dreams of greatness onto the Germans. He began to dream of being part of a nation that still fought wars and still appreciated exceptional men who wanted to be more than shopkeepers or "shrewd profiteers and lamblike administrative officials."

Thus, the foundations were laid as early as 1898 for the confrontation with Hitler's father over a career of civil service to the Austrian state, as well as for Hitler's dream of greatness for the German people. In this period, we see the first seeds of Hitler's worldview begin to take root.

SCHOOL AS REINFORCEMENT (1897–1900)

At this time in his life, these developments in the young boy's mind were powerfully reinforced by what was happening around him at school. The Badeni language decrees were promulgated in April 1897, causing unrest and heightened nationalist feelings throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[28] Hitler entered the school at Lambach in September of 1897, just as the language struggles were beginning. He recalls that he felt the effect of those larger struggles even as a young boy. In *Mein Kampf* he writes:

> For the remarkable fact about the language struggle is that its waves strike the hardest perhaps in the school, since it is the seed-bed of the coming generation. It is a struggle for the soul of the child, and to the child its first appeal is addressed: 'German boy, do not forget you are a German,' and 'Little girl, remember that you are to become a German mother.'[29]

Thus Hitler's experiences in school powerfully reinforced his own private idealization of the noble Germans of the Franco-Prussian War and the War of Liberation. In *Mein Kampf* he describes the emotions that the German nationalism of that period aroused in him. In the following description, one can also see the virtue of "German heroic grandeur" and the themes of battle, struggle, and resistance that the young Hitler had seen

as opposed to the "peaceful contest of nations" and the "department store world" that he so disliked:

> Anyone who knows the soul of youth will be able to understand that it is they who lend ear most joyfully to such a battle cry. They carry on this struggle in hundreds of forms, in their own way and with their own weapons. They refuse to sing un-German songs. The more anyone tries to alienate them from German heroic grandeur, the wilder becomes their enthusiasm: they go hungry to save pennies for the grown-ups' battle fund; their ears are amazingly sensitive to un-German teachers and at the same time they are incredibly resistant; they wear the forbidden insignia of their own nationality and are happy to be beaten or even punished for it.[30]

This struggle over Germanness not only occurred in the school, but in Hitler's struggle with his father, who was deeply loyal to the ruling house of Hapsburg and the Austrian Empire. Referring to the last line of the above quotation from *Mein Kampf*, Konrad Heiden asks: "Beaten by whom? By political adversaries? Only by them? It seems that he was beaten by his father, too. He himself hints that this occurred in the struggle over his future profession."[31]

Hitler's fear of a department store world, his desire for greatness (which meant to him everything outside the ordinary world), and his disdain for his father's career of service to the Austrian monarchy all came together in his idolization of the Germans. Whatever nationalism meant to the other students, in the young Adolf's mind, it acquired a host of other meanings very personal to him. If we accept Hitler's testimony, all of this had come together in his mind by the end of 1899. The results would be felt in the following year in the confrontation with his father.

DISTINGUISHING THE NATURE AND LOGIC OF HITLER'S EARLY GENIUS

The discovery of the book on the Franco-Prussian War, coupled with the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899, affected Hitler much like the gift of the pocket compass and the book on Euclidean geometry affected Einstein. In both cases two young and extraordinary minds found the materials that sparked their geniuses and set them on their courses. But it was at this point that a peculiar difference in logic occurred. Einstein's mind was sparked with a sense of wonder and awe at the nature of the physical world around him. In his autobiography Einstein writes,

> Out yonder there was this huge world, which exists *independently of us human beings* and which stands before us like a great, eternal riddle. . . . The contemplation of *this* world beckoned to me like a liberation.[32] (Emphases added.)

Einstein focused his genius on the world outside of and beyond human beings. Thus he gravitated more and more toward physics as the substantive study of the external world, and toward mathematics as the method to understand it. Einstein's inquisitiveness and curiosity led him to seek general laws—the laws of universal validity—that would explain the physical universe. Einstein accepted *himself* as part of the "everyday," ordinary world, but wanted to understand the extraordinary laws of the larger world—the physical universe—in which he lived his ordinary life. Therefore, he was directed to those forms of logic—deduction and induction—that focus outward, and that either begin with or result in the general laws of nature and of the universe.

Hitler's mind, however, went in another direction and followed a different form of logic. His mind did not concentrate on explaining or understanding the world that existed "independently of human beings." He was not looking for the universal laws that explained general phenomena. Rather, he concentrated on understanding and explaining the exceptional and the unique within the world of human beings. The reality to which he put his mind was the unique, the exceptional, the unrepeatable, and the specific.

Thus, it might be said that Einstein was looking through one end of the telescope while Hitler was looking through the other. While Einstein was looking for universals, Hitler was looking for the particular. Hitler viewed *himself* as exceptional and unique. For Hitler, therefore, what had to be explained were not the general laws of the universe, but the uniqueness of the individual within the universe. Einstein took human beings for granted, and looked outward toward the universe. Hitler took the universe for granted and looked inward, which called for a different form of logic.

Think of Socrates' bag of beans and the pile of beans beside it that we spoke about in relation to Peirce's abductive syllogism in chapter 2, *supra.* The bag of beans is ordinary reality. The pile of beans is Hitler. Socrates asks the strange questions that, following the logic of Peirce, were based on the particular: Where did *this* pile of beans come from? What is *this* pile of beans doing here? What is the purpose of *this* pile of beans? No answer about the nature of beans in general could answer these questions.

In the same manner, Hitler's questioning dealt with the uniqueness of the individual; therefore, it began with his own uniqueness. It was not he who had to understand the external laws of the universe. After all, the universe was only ordinary reality. Rather, it was the universe that had to account for the individual. For the individual found himself here on earth quite unaccountably. To Hitler, the ordinary individual accepted this; the unique individual demanded an explanation from the universe.

Thus, the young Adolf set out not to discover, like Einstein, the universe, but to discover himself. What needed to be explained was not his

lack of interest in the universe—his studies, for example—but the lack of interest of the universe in him. Why did his teachers not recognize his genius? Why did his father see in him only a future bureaucrat? Why did his father send him to *Realschule* to prepare for an "ordinary" career, instead of sending him to the *Gymnasium*, where his mind might have been recognized? The answers to these questions are not susceptible to ordinary logic; they call for an entirely different form of logic—the logic of abduction.

Abduction is the logic that begins with the specific—the unusual, the unexpected and the surprising, i.e., that which stands out from the ordinary. Therefore, Hitler concentrated all of the force and energy of his genius on cultivating and understanding the exceptional and the unique. In other words, he concentrated on himself—his future, his career, his meaning, and his purpose in the world. From his youth, Einstein directed his genius to exploring what sense could be made of the universe. Hitler, from his youth, directed his genius to exploring what sense the universe would make of him. Therefore, Hitler's genius was not to bequeath to us, like Einstein's genius, a deeper understanding of the world in which we live. Rather, the direction of his logic was to stamp his uniqueness, his extraordinariness, upon the world—to impress his specific stamp upon his time in an unforgettable way. Each of them was a stupendous genius following a different logic. As Ian Kershaw puts the question: "Has this been Hitler's century?" "Certainly," Kershaw responds, "no other individual has stamped a more profound imprint on it than Adolf Hitler. . . . He is one of the few individuals of whom it can be said with absolute certainty: without him, the course of history would have been different."[33] Joachim Fest similarly writes, "In him an individual once again demonstrated the stupendous power of a solitary individual over the historical process."[34]

Both Einstein and Hitler were astonishing geniuses, but the first looked outward to the stars, while the second looked inward to his self. They both had an astounding effect on the world, but due to a slight difference—a different form of logic—those effects were quite different. Let us now see how Hitler's logic begins to take substantive form in his life.

HITLER'S FIRST IDEALS

Referring to the period 1898–99, Hitler later writes, "It was at this time that the first ideals took shape in my breast."[35] What kind of ideals? They were not ordinary ideals. Having rejected the ordinariness of everyday life—the mediocrity of the department store world—he was looking for a world in which greatness was possible and, in particular, a world in which he could be great. The first "great ideal" that formed in his mind,

therefore, was that he himself was great, and that he would never allow himself to be demeaned or degraded into accepting ordinary life. The corollary of his first "great ideal" was, therefore, a decision to have nothing to do with the everyday, workaday world. He would refuse to become a part of the ordinary world—the world of "shopkeepers and government officials."

THE GREAT MAN DOES NOT WORK

Konrad Heiden writes that the deepest trait in Hitler's character was his hatred of ordinary work. Formed by the age of ten, this was a character trait that followed him throughout his life, from the time he stopped studying in his first year in *Realschule*, to the years from 1905–07 after he left school and lived with his widowed mother as a dandy without a job, and then through his years in Vienna where he lived in a home for destitute men rather than work at a regular job.

Heiden explains that what Hitler hated most about work (but only for himself—not for others) was the idea of purchasing life by any form of regular activity. He looked upon "economic society as his enemy"; he came to regard the need to work as a disgrace; and he saw his own rebellion against it as "proof of a higher calling."[36] He came to despise the very thought that he—a higher man—would ever be "possessed by the economic idea." For he had formed a higher ideal of himself, and he would not allow himself to be pulled down to the same level as the others. Heiden observes that:

> He hated the whole sphere of human existence which is devoted to the regular transference of energy into product; and he hated the men who let themselves be caught and crushed in this process of production.[37]

Heiden goes on to compare Hitler's ideal with that of Richard Wagner:

> The purchase of life by regular activity—this is what Richard Wagner had hated in the society possessed by the economic ideal; for this hatred and pride he had forgotten duties, led a vagabond's life, and at last achieved a noble triumph. Every great creator has once ventured this risk, but it seems to have been the example of the venerated Wagner which particularly strengthened Hitler in his decision to look on economic society as his enemy, to regard the need of working as a disgrace, and to see his strong inclination for doing nothing as a proof of a higher calling.[38]

Although Hitler did not acquire an acquaintance with Wagner's writings until a few years later,[39] the "strong inclination" that Wagner's ideas and ideals later strengthened was already being formed in Hitler in grade school. This was the idea that Hitler had already formed in his mind even before the famous conflict with his father over a civil service career. Hit-

ler had already made an "immutable" decision never to be pulled into that crushing world of ordinary work and never to become part of the 'department store' world. Heiden describes the state of Hitler's mind as he approached that conflict:

> His youthful failure is a stubborn and frightened protest against the whole normal world of toil and sweat which breaks the man and cuts him up for its purposes, disfigures the body and paralyzes the spirit. In this world young Adolf became an idler, and this had deep significance.[40]

This was the most decisive realization of Hitler's entire life, and it was the logic by which he dealt with this issue that set him on the course—that, as Ron Rosenbaum phrased it, "made Hitler *Hitler*."[41] Hitler absolutely rejected the ordinary world of work.

There are, however, two logical approaches with which to pursue such a rejection. The first approach is to decide that the ordinary world of work is bad, and to logically come to the conclusion that it is bad for everybody. This approach would lead one to assume that everyone is equal, and that all men face the same problem. One's thinking, from that assumption, would logically lead one to begin to imagine how to change the world for everyone, so that no one would have to work. Thus the normal logic would look like this:

Major Premise	I am like everybody else.
Minor Premise	The ordinary world of work is bad for me.
Conclusion	Therefore, the ordinary world of work is bad for everyone.
Inference	The problem is to change the ordinary world of work for everyone.

This logic follows the normal course of deductive and inductive logic, which either begins with, or seeks to arrive at, general propositions of universal validity. Politically, this is the logic of Marxism and Socialism, of the Enlightenment, Liberalism, and Christianity.

Hitler's mind, however, did not follow either deductive or inductive logic. He reasoned abductively. Abductive logic begins with the extraordinary, the unique, the unusual, the unexpected, and the surprising. It begins with that which calls out for an explanation. Hitler regarded himself as extraordinary; he was the unique, the unusual, the unexpected, and the surprising. His whole life became a search to assert that extraordinariness. His mother used to say, "He is different from us."[42] His best friend wondered, "What were God's intentions when he created this man?"[43]

Therefore, Adolf Hitler's logic did not begin with the assumption that because the ordinary world of work was bad for him, it was, therefore, bad for everyone. This would have been the logic that begins with laws of universal validity (deductive logic), or the logic that seeks to find laws of universal validity (inductive logic). Hitler, on the contrary, began with the recognition that *he* was unique and unrepeatable, not to be subsumed under either of those forms of logic. No law, rule, or proposition of universal validity encompassed him. He would, by act of will alone, assert himself, and it would be the world's problem to attempt to understand *him*. This was Hitler's earliest ideal.[44]

For him, the whole world would exist only as a backdrop for the play in which he would act. Like King Lear he dreamed: "I shall do great things. What they are yet I know not. But they shall be the terrors of the earth."[45] August Kubizek writes that when Hitler heard the following words from Wagner's *Der Meistersinger*, Hitler made them his favorite description of himself:

> And still I don't succeed.
> I feel it and yet I cannot understand it.
> I can't retain it, nor forget it,
> And if I grasp it, I cannot measure it.[46]

Kubizek also goes on to explain what the young Hitler understood about the import of these lines:

> In this, my friend saw the unique, eternal formula with which Richard Wagner castigated the want of comprehension of his contemporaries and which, so to speak, applied to his own fate; for his father, his family, his teachers, although they certainly had "felt" that there was something outstanding about him, for the love of God could not understand it. And when people had, at long last, grasped what he wanted, they still remained incapable of measuring the extent of his will.[47]

Thus the genius in Hitler's mind—the type of genius that Edgar Allan Poe once called the "imp of the perverse"—had already begun to form and set its course.[48]

By the age of ten he had begun to believe that there was greatness in the world in the form of higher men, and that he was one of those higher men. Such men did not work. They looked with contempt upon the workaday world, the world of "shopkeepers and government officials." Although at the age of ten there was no way that he could do great things, he realized that he could live his ideal of being a higher man by withdrawing both from the economic struggle for life and from the preparation for that economic struggle that began in school. While all his other classmates went about their lives cheerfully following the course set out for them by home and school and leading to a business or career in the "department store world," Hitler had already begun to withdraw

into another world where he would be secure in the knowledge of his greatness and could cultivate it in himself.

In this early realization, several of the most fundamental traits of Hitler's character come into focus and alignment. First, he began to believe that he understood the world better and more deeply than his classmates. While to all the other students schoolwork was real, and the games they played were just games, Hitler made a mental determination that the opposite was true. "All the world is but a stage," he might have thought. For to him it was the games that were real, and schoolwork that was the means that society used to trick and pull the students away from the games and into a life of sham and mediocrity in the department store world.[49] The young boy resolved not to be fooled. He would cling to the real world—the world pointed to by the games, the world of the extraordinary. For he knew that it was the games—not school—that were the battlefields on which the real "conflicts which exist everywhere in life were decided." He therefore had resolved, by the age of ten, not to be caught up in the struggle of daily work.

These three themes—Hitler's uniqueness, his rejection of the department store world, and his search for greatness—set the stage for the conflict with Hitler's father that erupted in the late winter and spring of the year 1900, just before his eleventh birthday.

HITLER'S CONFLICT WITH HIS FATHER (SPRING 1900)

If one judges by the prominence given to it by Hitler in his account of his early life, the most important and formative event in his youth was the conflict with his father. In *Mein Kampf*, chapter 1—consisting of seventeen pages—is devoted to covering the first eighteen years of his life. Of these seventeen pages, four full pages—almost one fourth of the entire chapter—is devoted to that conflict.[50]

The conflict appears to have arisen as Adolf was about to graduate from elementary school, in the late winter or early spring of 1900. In the Austrian education system, this was a very important time in a young person's life; a decision would have to be made that would determine the course of his life. Two different educational paths were possible; a child—or his parents—would make a choice that would determine the child's entire future life. The choice lay between enrolling in the *Gymnasium*, the school that prepared a student for higher education and the higher professions, or in the *Realschule*, a school similar to our vocational-technical schools of today, which leads to more practical courses of instruction preparing a student for "lower" types of careers in business or technical fields. For a boy who had apparently been giving much thought to his future place in the world and to his future career, this was a critical time. It would forever foreclose him from certain careers. It was also a

time when he would be judged by his elders for his potential, and his future life aspirations would in large measure be set.

In this regard, it was one of the most crucial and disappointing times in his young life. Here was a burgeoning genius who had done exceptionally well in school. He had received the highest grades in all three of the elementary schools he had attended—in Fischlam, Lambach, and Leondig. He had been praised by his teachers and was the leader among his peers in all their games. He was already thinking of himself as one who was well above average and intended for higher things. However, at this crucial time in his life, his father completely failed to appreciate his son's intelligence or even to be aware of his aspirations.

HITLER'S FATHER MISJUDGES HIM

"From my whole nature, and to an ever greater degree from my temperament, my father believed he could draw the inference that the humanistic Gymnasium would represent a conflict with my talents."[51] Although Hitler does not explicitly say so, he implies that his was an incredible misjudgment. At the time Hitler wrote this, in 1924, he was already called *Der Fuehrer* and acclaimed by many as the future savior of Germany. The judgment by Hitler's father is recorded in the first chapter of a book in which Hitler proclaims an entirely new *Weltanschauung* for the German nation, and in which he speaks of genius in passage after passage obviously referring to himself. In it, he sets out not only his theory of race, but also an entire worldview applicable to all facets of life. The contrast between the pretensions of *Mein Kampf* and his father's misjudgment is obvious. His father was simply unaware that his son was a genius.

In another passage of *Mein Kampf,* in which Hitler discusses his decision to become an artist (which shall be addressed more fully in a later section), he makes an even stronger point about his father's misjudgment of his son. When Hitler recounts his thoughts at the time he told his father of his decision to become an artist, he writes, "There was no doubt as to my talent for drawing; it was one of my father's reasons for sending me to *Realschule*, but never in all the world would it have occurred to him to give me any professional training in this direction." Hitler goes on to recount that when he told his father of his decision to become an artist, his father "opposed it with all the determination of his nature." He then adds: "His decision was extremely simple, for any consideration of what abilities I might really have was simply out of the question."[52]

These two passages are especially significant because in them Hitler twice refers to his father's refusal or inability to recognize his son's talents and abilities. When his father referred to his talent for painting, Adolf noted that this had been one of the reasons his father had earlier given for sending him to *Realschule*. But this was now exposed as a sham and a

rationalization. Adolf realized that he had been duped by his father in being told that he was being sent to the *Realschule* because of his talent for drawing. His father was exposed in the eyes of the twelve-year-old as never having had the slightest interest in his talent for painting.

In addition, Hitler's father's decision to send him to the practical and technical *Realschule* instead of the *Gymnasium* was a blow to Hitler's idea of himself as a higher type of man. The young Adolf had already decided that he would have no part in a department store world. Yet his father had imperiously decided on an educational track that led to a career of drudgery as a clerk, businessman, or bureaucrat in precisely that world. This was an insult to the young boy. His father was dooming him to be "caught and crushed in the process of production."

Throughout his life Hitler was bitter over the advantage of those who had education and degrees behind their names.[53] One can step back and imagine how different Hitler—and the world—might have been if his genius had been recognized by his father, and he had been sent to the *Gymnasium* to study the classical humanities as preparatory to a higher calling, instead of to the *Realschule*.

HITLER'S FATHER WANTS HIS SON TO BE A CIVIL SERVANT

The elder Hitler's decision was made all the worse by joining it with a second decision—that his son should become a civil servant. In the young Hitler's mind, this was an even greater insult to his already formed ideas than the decision to attend the *Realschule*. In his mind, the lowest careers he could imagine were those of "shopkeepers and government officials." Yet this was precisely the future for which the *Realschule* prepared a student. His father now added insult to injury by insisting that his ten-year-old son[54] should follow in his footsteps and become a civil servant.

In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler explains that his father's decision was based upon a "whole lifetime spent in the bitter struggle for existence."[55] Thus, the objections of the son to such an educational track and to such a career were abruptly dismissed without any consideration of the son's ideas on the subject. His father, Hitler explains, was proud that he had risen by "his own energy and iron diligence" from the "hardships of his youth"[56] to become a minor civil servant in the Customs Office. His father viewed himself as a "self-made man," and he could conceive of no higher goal than to help his son achieve the same position, or perhaps a higher one in the civil service. However, as we have seen, the young Adolf already viewed such a goal with abhorrence. He was thus faced with a father who had absolutely no appreciation of his genius and with a decision about his education leading to a future career path that he had already decided to avoid at all costs. We now have a much better picture of what sparked the violent conflict with his father over a civil service career.

The young Adolf had little opportunity to disagree with his father or to explain his own dreams for the future, though he apparently tried. His father, he explained, had a "domineering nature, and it would have seemed intolerable to him to leave the final decision in such matters to an inexperienced boy, having as yet no sense of responsibility." Hitler acknowledges that any argument was further foreclosed by his father's belief that listening to his son's ideas about his future "would have seemed a sinful and reprehensible weakness in the exercise of his proper parental authority and responsibility for the future life of his child, and, as such, absolutely incompatible with his concept of duty."[57] Thus, the decision about attending the *Realschule* rather than the *Gymnasium* was apparently foreclosed without any possibility of discussion. The young Hitler received no acknowledgement from his father for the excellent grades he had obtained through five years of elementary school, for the praise of his teachers, or for the burgeoning mind that was growing within him.

It is against these disappointments that his testimony in *Mein Kampf* begins to make sense.

FURIOUS ARGUMENTS

Adolf's back was to the wall. His father's two decisions—first, that he attend the vocational school instead of the school preparatory to a higher calling, and second, that he would become a civil servant—called up every bit of hardness, determination, and stubbornness that the boy could muster.[58] Though he could not, at his age, do anything about his father's decision that he attend the *Realschule* (since his father's decision would be accepted by the school), the young Adolf could yet oppose him on the idea of becoming a civil servant. It is in this light that the statement cited earlier in Chapter 5 comes into focus, where Hitler describes the strength and recalcitrance with which he opposed his father:

> Then barely eleven years old, I was forced into opposition for the first time in my life. Hard and determined as my father might be in putting through plans and purposes once conceived, his son was just as persistent and recalcitrant in rejecting an idea which appealed to him not at all, or in any case very little. I did not want to become a civil servant.[59]

It is interesting to speculate on the arguments that young Adolf might have engaged in with his father at this time. Did he explain his aversion to being caught in the "struggle for existence" as his father had been? Did he explain that he dreamed of something better for himself? Did he explain that he believed in a higher calling, above the department store world? Hitler gives little account of the substance of what was said. He only makes it clear that a furious argument ensued:

> Neither persuasion nor 'serious' arguments made any impression on my resistance. I did not want to be a civil servant, no and again no. All attempts on my father's past to inspire me with love or pleasure in this profession by stories from his own life accomplished the exact opposite. I yawned and grew sick in my stomach at the thought of sitting in an office, deprived of my liberty; ceasing to be master of my own time and being compelled to force the content of a whole life into blanks that had to be filled out.[60]

Thus the arguments commencing in the late winter or early spring of 1900 grew in intensity—his father stubbornly insisting on his plans for his son, and the son deciding all the more firmly that things would "turn out differently."[61] August Kubizek records the significance of this struggle of the young Adolf against his father. Declaring it to be "the great decision of his life," Kubizek writes:

> With his refusal to enter the Civil Service, Adolf Hitler's path diverges sharply from that of his father's; it takes a different course, final and irrevocable. It was indeed, the great decision of his life. The years that followed it I spent at his side. I could observe how earnestly he tried to find the right path for his future.[62]

By the age of eleven the young Adolf had accomplished the astonishing mental feat of breaking completely with the bourgeois life against which he had developed such an animus years earlier. He had broken with his father's view of life. The young genius had already realized that the bourgeois world offered him no outlet. He had learned the hard way that neither his father, nor his school, nor his classmates had any recognition or appreciation of what was going on in his mind. He had matched his stubbornness against his father and had held his own. His will was strengthened in a way that set the course of his life.

ADOLF ENTERS *REALSCHULE* (SEPTEMBER 1900)

What followed Adolf's disappointment and the furious arguments with his father was the longest, most difficult summer of Hitler's young life. At the end of it, he was a completely different person than he had been previously. For the cold reality of a future he did not want was bearing down on him. John Toland, who visited every place of Hitler's childhood and retraced every step of the youthful Hitler, describes Adolf's school in this way:

> The nearest *Realschule* was in Linz and on September 17, 1900, he set out for the first time, green rucksack on his back. It was a long trip, more than three miles, and halfway there he could see the city lying below him flanked by the Danube River. It must have been a magic yet formidable sight to a boy raised in villages and small towns. There, on a rise, jutted the famous Kuernberg Castle where the "Niebelungen-

> lieder" were said to have been composed; below stretched a forest of church spires and clusters of impressive buildings. His road wound down a steep hill into the heart of the city and the Realschule, a gloomy, four-story building on a narrow street. Utilitarian and forbidding, it looked more like an office building than a school.[63]

Imagine what thoughts might have been in the young boy's mind. To the young Adolf, the school was uninspiring and must have appeared much like a governmental building in which civil service employees worked. It represented the frustration of all his dreams for himself. Imagine how he must have hated every footstep as he walked down the hill toward Linz with foreboding in his heart, toward a fate he despised. As he walked through the school doors, he must have been deep in thought, for he had four acute dilemmas on his mind.

HITLER'S FOUR DILEMMAS

At the base of all his dilemmas was the non-recognition of his genius. Hitler believed by this time that he was an exceptional person. He believed that he was meant to be recognized as a special kind of person, intended for a non-ordinary life. Yet his father had utterly failed to recognize anything special about him. Nor is there any record of any comment or advice from any other person who knew him or his father that recognizes the son's genius; there is not a word in the recollections of his teachers that any one of them spoke up for the boy or encouraged him. Thus, Adolf's feeling of his own differentness failed to be recognized by any of the adults in his life. By the time Adolf began *Realschule* in the fall of 1900, he could take their non-recognition as a given.

However, this posed a different problem in regard to his peers. He was to attend school with students whose highest ambitions were to be shopkeepers, businessmen, technicians, or clerks. If the adults in his life did not understand, he could not possibly expect his classmates to appreciate that he was different. His first dilemma, therefore, was: How was he going to relate to his fellow classmates? Should he pretend that he was one of them, or should he distance himself from them?

Second, he faced a sullen but continuing war with his father at home. His father was demanding that Adolf seek a civil service career, while Adolf was stubbornly refusing to even consider it. The arguments had been furious and his father often beat him. Alois Hitler "believed in corporal punishment" and had "a very violent temper."[64] On one occasion his father administered 230 blows with a cane.[65] Adolf had to find some way to deal with this furious argument and this struggle with his father. This was the second dilemma: What should he do about the continuing struggle with his father that he had begun the previous spring?

Third, the young Adolf had already formed a strong reaction against ordinary life. He viewed it as a life of mediocrity in a department store. He did not ever want to have an ordinary job. Yet his father had chosen an educational track that led to lower kinds of jobs in business or technical fields. This was exactly the life he was already desperate to avoid. This presented Hitler with his third dilemma: Should he acquiesce in following this track by striving for good grades as before? Or should he reject it? If so, how?

Fourth, what was he to do with his life? He had been thinking about a future career for at least three years and still had no idea of what it might be. He was now enrolled in a school curriculum leading to no career he would accept. Further, we may imagine the taunts that his father might have thrown at him: "Well, if not a civil service career, what then?" To this question he had no answer, neither to himself nor to his father. This was his fourth dilemma: What was he to do with his life?

Each of these dilemmas called for a decision. In response, the young Adolf began to form that "ice cold" logic and willpower for which he became so well known later on. This led to four results.

How Hitler Resolves the First Dilemma: What to do about his Classmates?

Hitler resolved the first dilemma by deciding to distance himself from his classmates at the *Realschule*. To Adolf, they were all going along with the system and cheerfully preparing themselves for the department store world he rejected. They could not possibly understand what was going on in his mind. Thus, when Adolf entered *Realschule*, his whole attitude toward his peers changed. Whereas in *Volksschule* he had always been the leader in the games of cops and robbers, Cowboys and Indians, and soldiers at war, he no longer actively participated and no longer sought to be their leader. To Adolf, "school with its routine appeared gray and monotonous," and he "despised those young men who did not think likewise." As he entered *Realschule*, Kubizek recalls, Hitler "made no friends and did not want any."[66]

Kubizek also mentions an anecdote about Hitler and one of his former classmates that well conveys the attitude Hitler formed toward them. Sometime after Hitler left school, he and Kubizek were strolling down one of the main streets of Linz when a young man came around the corner. Kubizek recalls that the young man "recognized Adolf as a former classmate, stopped, grinning all over his face, [and] called out 'Hello, Hitler!' The young man took Adolf familiarly by the arm and asked him quite sincerely how he was getting on." But, instead of responding in a friendly manner, as Kubizek expected, Hitler "went red with rage," pushed the young man away, and said furiously, "What the devil has that to do with you?" The young man's face was flushed and baffled,

according to Kubizek. Hitler turned his back on the young man, took Kubizek's arm and, as the two walked away, Hitler explained his attitude toward his former classmates: "All future civil servants," he said, still furious, "and with this I had to sit in the same class."[67]

Thus Hitler resolved the first dilemma of deciding how to relate to his classmates by utterly rejecting them. He knew he was different, and that he could not talk to them about what was going on in his mind. He resolved to "go it alone." He would think through his problems and face his dilemmas without the company or help of anyone. As Kubizek noted, "It is significant that not one of his many classmates could claim any close relationship or friendship with him."[68] The significance is that the young Adolf had already so distanced himself from the department store world that he no longer wanted anything to do with those who did not think likewise.

Hitler Resolves the Second Dilemma: What to Do about the Argument with His Father

The young Hitler's second dilemma was what to do about the furious argument with his father over a civil service career. As he had decided in regard to his fellow students, he also resolved in regard to the argument with his father: he withdrew. He would reduce the heat of the furious arguments from the boiling point to a slow and sullen simmer. Hitler records in *Mein Kampf* exactly how he did this:

> As long as my father's intention of making me a civil servant encountered only my theoretical [*prinzipielle*] distaste for the profession, the conflict was bearable. Thus far, I had to some extent been able to keep my private opinions to myself; I did not always have to contradict him immediately. My own firm determination never to become a civil servant sufficed to give me complete inner peace. And this decision in me was immutable.[69]

He recognized that his father had no understanding of his thoughts and no appreciation of his son as a burgeoning genius. There was no further point in arguing with him. So he resolved that he would ignore his father's continuing efforts to convince him to be a civil servant. He would simply stop contradicting him; it no longer made any difference what he said. Thus Hitler resolved his second dilemma.

Hitler Resolves the Third Dilemma: What to Do about School?

The young Adolf's solutions to the first and second dilemmas are understandable in terms of his previous thinking and in terms of the situation he faced regarding each one. However, his solutions to the third and fourth dilemmas involved an entirely new factor: the influence of Karl May. Neither his classmates nor his father had much further influ-

ence on his life,[70] while his solution to the next two dilemmas involve decisions and influences that were among the most formative and continuing in his life.

Hitler's third dilemma as he entered *Realschule* in the fall of 1900 was what to do about school. He believed he was "different" from the other students. But there were two ways of being different: (1) he could be different from all the others by being the "best"; or (2) he could be different by refusing to be part of the process of education. In other words, he had to decide whether he was going to, in today's terms, "hunker down," swallow his pride, "stay cool," and make the best of a bad situation; or whether he was going be the Austrian equivalent of James Dean—a "rebel without a cause."

Hitler decided on the latter. To make a long story very short: From the very first day he showed no interest in school, treated his teachers and classmates with disdain, and flunked his first year in school. Why did he do this? He had other alternatives that would have been consistent with what was going on in his mind up to this point. This suggests a further question: Did something new enter the picture?

A New Factor Enters the Picture: Hitler Discovers Karl May

What Hitler was reading at the time may have been the inspiration for this decision. Hitler discovered the novels of Karl May at just about the time he enters *Realschule*. He had begun reading the novels of James Fenimore Cooper in *Volksschule*. Cooper's works on wild Indians were translated and immensely popular in Europe,[71] and furnished much of the imaginative materials for the games of Cowboys and Indians played by Hitler and his friends.[72] Then he heard about Karl May. Hitler recounted that discovery in this *Table Talk*:

> I've just been reading a very fine article on Karl May. . . . I owe him my first notions on geography, and the fact that *he opened my eyes on the world.* I used to read him by candle-light, or by moonlight with the help of a huge magnifying-glass. The first thing I read of that kind was *The Last of the Mohicans*. But Fritz Seidl told me at once: "Fenimore Cooper is nothing; you must read Karl May." The first book of his I read was *The Ride through the Desert*. I was carried away by it. And I went on to devour at once the other books by the same author. *The immediate result was a falling off in my school reports*.[73]

This entire passage is significant and I shall refer to it again. But for our purpose here in discussing Hitler's third dilemma regarding how to deal with his entry into *Realschule*, the last line is of major significance: *"The immediate result was a falling off of my school reports."* Hitler's first and only major "falling off" of his school reports occurred in his first year in *Realschule*. In that year he went from the top of his class in *Volksschule* to the bottom of the class. Thereafter his grades remained fairly constant. He

failed his first, fourth, and fifth years of *Realschule* and barely passed his second (repeat) and third years.[74] Hitler's testimony, therefore, suggests that the solution to his dilemma regarding school was directly influenced by his reading of Karl May.

This may seem a strong inference to rest upon a single sentence spoken by Hitler forty-two years after the event. However, this conclusion is amply supported by the testimony of the principal of the Linz *Realschule*, Dr. Eduard Huemer. Dr. Huemer's testimony came about in an interesting way that lends it credence. In December 1923, while Hitler was in prison for his part in the Beer Hall Putsch, a story appeared in the *Münchner Post* alleging that he had been expelled from *Realschule* because of an act of religious desecration: He was accused of having spit on the Host at a school communion service. Because of Hitler's upcoming trial, his attorney wrote to Huemer to inquire whether this story were true, and, if it were not, to request Huemer to explain Hitler's poor grades and failures in *Realschule*. Huemer reported that he recalled Hitler as a student, and that no such event had occurred. In response to the question of why Hitler's grades had been so poor, and why he had failed, Huemer gave the following answer:

> Hitler seems to have been led astray by the stories of Karl May and tales of Red Indians, and no doubt an over-indulgence in such reading combined with the time wasted on drifting back and forth from home and school which was some distance apart, was mostly responsible for his failure.[75]

Thus both the pupil and the principal agree—in independent testimony given nineteen years apart and under very different circumstances—on the same fact: Adolf Hitler's poor performance in *Realschule* was directly influenced by his reading of Karl May's novels. During this time the young Adolf was "devouring" all of Karl May's novels.

Now, to understand the full significance of this, let us go back and analyze the young Adolf's third dilemma more closely. Upon entering his first year of *Realschule*, Adolf had good reason to be unhappy. As we have seen, he had been placed in an educational track that led only to careers in the department store world he abhorred. He was in a sullen war with his father over a civil service career. He had little regard for his classmates whom he saw as no more than "future civil servants." Thus, it is certainly understandable for him to have been upset and wondering just what to do about his situation in regard to school.

From all that is known about Adolf Hitler at this age, however, it is clear that he had at least two reasonable alternatives. He could have, for example, resolved to stay at the top of his class, thereby proving to his father that he was exceptional. He might have won the favor of his teachers (and perhaps even his father) for an extraordinary transfer to a *Gymnasium* or to an art school where his exceptional mind and talents might

have been recognized. Even as far back as his years at Lambach (July 1897–February 1899), Hitler had become aware of his oratorical talents and his ability to convince.[76] He could have decided to establish himself as the outstanding student and "potential genius" he believed himself to be. He could have set out to "wrap around his little finger" the authorities who held him back. Normally, the most effective way to rise to the position one deserves is to work one's way to it and to prove by accomplishment that one deserves it. Hitler eschewed this alternative.

But there was another alternative. It would have taken little effort on his part to have performed "adequately" in *Realschule*. In *Volksschule* Hitler had found his studies "ridiculously easy."[77] Dr. Huemer reported that, "He had definite talent. . . with his gifts he would have done very much better."[78] Thus Hitler could have skimmed by easily doing little more than getting passing grades. This would have been the easiest alternative, and would not have been inconsistent with his previously formed conceptions.

Either of these two alternatives would have been reasonable under the circumstances and would have been understandable responses to the third dilemma he faced. But Hitler chose neither. Instead he lost all interest in school. Instead of "inclining mighty institutions in his favor" (a tactic he later extolled)[79], he chose to offend his teachers. Dr. Huemer, in his 1923 report to Hitler's attorney, described the young Adolf in *Realschule* as "notoriously cantankerous, willful (*sic*) arrogant and irascible."[80] He made no effort to study—even though he later bragged that he could get better grades without studying than the students who studied.[81] Nonetheless, he allowed himself to fail three out of his five years in *Realschule*.[82]

The question, therefore, is: What was there about the novels of Karl May that caused both Hitler and Dr. Huemer to agree that Adolf's failure in *Realschule* was the result of his reading those novels? Two possible answers to this question come immediately to mind. First, that there was nothing in particular in the novels; Hitler simply spent too much time reading them. Second, that there was something in the novels that "led him astray." If so, what was it?

A good initial argument can be made for the first answer. Karl May was an exceptionally prolific writer who published more than seventy novels during his lifetime (1842–1912). At least fifty of these had been published by the time Adolf entered *Realschule* and several more were published while he attended *Realschule*. If Adolf had obtained and read an average of one every month, he would have been reading Karl May novels throughout his entire high school career. Thus the sheer volume of Karl May's works would have entailed a substantial amount of time for him to read them all. This expenditure of time could have detracted from the time he would have had for studies. However, this argument is unconvincing for four reasons.

First, Adolf was not only reading Karl May novels. He had already read James Fenimore Cooper and presumably read the rest of *The Leatherstocking Tales*. There is evidence that he read the prose works of Richard Wagner.[83] When Hitler discussed the works of Karl May in the bunker, he also discussed *Don Quixote, Robinson Crusoe, Uncle Tom's Cabin,* and *Gulliver's Travels*.[84] He recounted also that he had "read a lot of the works by freethinkers" while in *Realschule*.[85] By the time Kubizek met him in 1904, Adolf was reading Goethe's *Faust*, Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Lessing, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Stifter, Otto Ernst, and Frank Wedekind, among others.[86] This suggests that Hitler was a voracious reader in *Realschule*. Therefore, it was unusual for both Hitler and Huemer to have singled out Karl May as the reason for Hitler's fall in grades.

Second, it is noteworthy that Huemer did not say that Adolf had spent too much time reading Karl May novels. Rather, he said that he had been "led astray" by them. This suggests that there was something in the novels that influenced him. Similarly, when Hitler spoke of his discovery of Karl May's novels he did not mention their entertaining qualities, but rather wrote that Karl May "opened my eyes on the world." This suggests that Karl May's novels had an influence on Hitler beyond being merely entertaining and enjoyable tales.

If, following Peirce's method, we broaden the scope of the inquiry beyond Hitler's *Realschule* years, it becomes immediately clear that Karl May's novels were much more than merely adolescent adventure stories or light entertainment to Hitler. They became one of the bedrocks of his life. He found something in them that guided him and to which he constantly returned.

Karl May's Lifelong Influence on Hitler

From the time he encountered his first novel by Karl May at about the age of eleven, Hitler was influenced by something in these stories. Bradley F. Smith describes the evidence for this phenomenon in Hitler's later life:

> Hitler never gave up on Karl May. He read him in adolescence, and as a young man in his twenties. Even as Reich Chancellor, he continued to be fascinated by him, re-reading the whole series on the American West.[87] Furthermore, he never attempted to disguise or hide his enjoyment of, or admiration for May's books. In the *Table Talk* he extolls (*sic*) May and describes how he enjoyed his work. He talked about him with nearly everyone—his press chief, his secretary, his servant and his old party comrades.[88]

May became the one author throughout Adolf Hitler's life whom he unreservedly acknowledged as having had an influence upon him and upon his decisions. Albert Speer writes, "Any account of Hitler as commander of troops should not omit references to Karl May."[89] For exam-

ple, Hitler credited the amazing victory over France in 1940 to Karl May. Of those generals who had opposed the plan that resulted in the victory, Hitler said, "They should have read Karl May."[90] As chancellor, Hitler gave copies of May's works out as special gifts to friends and built a special shelf in this library to hold May's works in a place of honor.[91] May's novels were his favorite bedside reading.[92] According to Speer, "Hitler would lean on Karl May for everything imaginable." Speer recalls Hitler even confiding to him that

> during his reading hours at night, when faced by seemingly hopeless situations, he would still reach for those stories, that they gave him courage like works of philosophy for others or the Bible for elderly people.[93]

Thus Hitler found something very important in Karl May's novels to which he returned again and again through his life.

Nor should this be seen as simply a symptom of infantilism or a failure to mature. Albert Einstein also expressed the same feeling toward the novels of Karl May: "My whole adolescence was lived under his sign. Indeed, even today he has been dear to me in many a desperate hour."[94] Karl May's novels were read and deeply admired by Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, Albert Schweitzer, and Karl Zuckmayer, who are only a few of the many lifelong admirers of May.[95] In 1962, May was recognized in *Der Spiegel*, the German newsmagazine, as the *"Preceptor Germaniae"*; his influence, without doubt, was greater than any other German author between Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Thomas Mann.[96] Indeed, Karl May may be the most widely published German author in the world. By 1996, more than one hundred million copies of his works had been sold worldwide—"far more than any other single German author, including Goethe, Hesse and Mann."[97] It is estimated that more than one hundred million more have been sold worldwide in the thirty-nine languages into which they have been translated. The Karl May Literary Society is today one of the largest literary societies in the world, and his works are taught as classic works in many German universities.[98] Thus Adolf Hitler is not unique in finding something of great, personal, and enduring value in the novels of Karl May.

Karl May's Influence on What to Do about School

In light of the profound influence that Karl May had in the remainder of Hitler's life it is, therefore, not surprising that May would have had an influence on Hitler from the earliest time that Hitler first read him. The evidence is clear that from his very first introduction to May's novels Hitler was "carried away with them," and saw the world—the world Hitler wanted for himself—somehow prefigured in them. This settled the decision he would make about school. We know what that decision was:

the young Adolf lost all interest in school. But how did this decision relate to Karl May's novels?

In chapter 4 of this dissertation, I reviewed the presence of abductive logic in literature, and devoted a lengthy section to demonstrating its presence in May's most famous novel, *Winnetou*. In that novel, the hero-narrator, Charlie, emigrates from Germany to St. Louis, which was then located on the edge of a new and strange frontier, the Wild West. Charlie is ensconced quite comfortably as a tutor to a wealthy family. But his goal is to leave this comfortable world and experience the strange world of the prairies, to learn its ways, master them, and become a "Man of the West." Once he enters that frontier land, little of the knowledge he had previously learned in school or university is of any value until he first learns a new way to use it. Life in the Wild West makes a mockery of "book learning." He has to learn to "read the world" differently than anything he had learned in school. To do that, he discovers, he has to learn a new way of reasoning—a new way of logical thinking unlike any he had previously been taught—in order to have any chance of survival, let alone of being successful. *Winnetou* is the story of how he learns that new reasoning.

The young Adolf may have identified with the narrator in the novel. For all practical purposes, Adolf left the comfortable world of his family by the age of ten, by which time he already knew he was different. After that, the familiar world of home, school, and community were as strange as foreign lands to him. He had to learn, like Charlie, a new way to survive. He did not want what any of the "natives" wanted; he did not feel himself to be one of *them*; he was the exceptional, the unique, the different. He would have to find an entirely new way to learn and think.

The beauty of *Winnetou* is the absolute simplicity of the method embedded in its story. It is a method of logic applicable to any strange situation, a method that teaches one to ignore all of the surface aspects of life and to search for the unique, the extraordinary. Hitler had long before recognized that the unique and the extraordinary were not taught in the schools. The schools had become nothing but mills for the production of future shopkeepers and lamblike administrative officials in the department store world. He wanted no part of it. In *Winnetou*, he found his way out. He would learn only what helped him get out of that world and across the frontier to the world of the exceptional people, like himself.

Unlike Charlie, the young Hitler had no one to teach him; but Charlie had written his book and shown him the way to do it. He could now learn to apply the same logic to his own situation. He would learn to read all the signs that led him to his own uniqueness, just as Charlie had learned to read broken twigs, bent leaves, and the smallest imprint on the ground. The young Adolf knew he was off on a harrowing adventure—he already faced furious fights and whippings from his father. But it was the only way to his goal. Just as Charlie had earned the title "Old Shatter-

hand" and had reached his goal of becoming a famous "Man of the West," so too would young Adolf become "the exceptional" in his own "new world,"[99] eventually becoming, at least in his own mind, the "savior" of the German nation and *Der Fuehrer.*

Thus Hitler found a way, in the novels of Karl May, to deal with his third dilemma: what to do about school. He would follow his instincts and set out for the *terra incognita* of the world he dreamed of; he had found a method not only to escape the department store world, but even to give him hope of someday overcoming it. In mentally dropping out of school, even though he was physically in attendance, Hitler had no resource to rely on but his mind and his will. He would begin honing these to become his sole instruments.

There is an excellent vignette of how he applied the lessons of Karl May to train his will and his mind. Hitler was often beaten by his father. He had read in Karl May how the Indians had proved their courage by accepting the most painful tortures in silence. The next time his father beat him, Adolf refused to cry out. His father beat him even harder with his cane and continued to beat him; but Adolf remained silent. He counted the blows silently to himself as his father struck him. He counted 230 blows. But he never cried out. Finally, his father gave up. Adolf had proved his courage and his will. After that, his father never beat him again.[100] The lesson he learned in *Winnetou* had worked. Nothing could ever make him give in to his father or to the school.

Hitler Resolves the Fourth Dilemma: What to Do about a Career

As Hitler entered *Realschule* in September 1900, his fourth dilemma also weighed heavily on his mind. He had been thinking about his future career ever since he considered joining the priesthood as early as 1897 or 1898. But this dilemma was not as easily solved as the first three dilemmas. It would take him another year and a half to find the answer.

During that year and a half, Hitler made no friends at school. His relations with his father simmered; there was a constant air of tension as his father continued to try to force his will upon his recalcitrant son. Adolf had no interest in his classes. He went from one failing examination to another. By the spring of 1901, he had failed the grade and was told he would be held back and have to repeat it. For all practical purposes, he was alone with nothing to keep him company but his thoughts. He had a lot of time for these during his three-mile walk to school each morning and again on his way home after school. He did little or no studying and thus had his evenings to think also. He still had no idea what to do with his life—and his failure in his first year seemed to be narrowing his options even more. As he began his second year of *Realschule* in September 1901, he was faced with two overwhelming questions: What was he to do with himself? What was he to become?

Then, sometime in the school year 1901–1902, something happened. He suddenly found the answer to his fourth dilemma: He decided to become an artist. When he recounts this event in *Mein Kampf*, however, he does not state how it came about: "How it happened I do not know, but one day it became clear to me that I would become an artist, a painter."[101] Hitler seems to gloss over this decision, and most historians and biographers have simply accepted it at face value, not inquiring further into it. It has generally been accepted as a "bare fact": young Adolf got it into his head suddenly, as if "out of the blue," to become an artist.

But if we apply abductive logic to this fact, we might reason thus: there is no *uncaused* event. Adolf's eventful decision to become an artist was logically the *effect* of something—the result of an antecedent cause. We might, therefore, inquire whether there was a "cause" that might have sparked him to suddenly think of becoming an artist. As soon as we apply abductive logic to the facts of Hitler's life at this time, a very interesting fact comes into view that might have sparked that decision.

Karl May Comes to Linz

During Hitler's school year 1901–1902, Karl May came to Linz. We know that this was important to Hitler, because he still remembered the event forty-two years later. In *Spandau*: *The Prison Diaries*, Albert Speer records that in April 1943 he accompanied Hitler on a tour of the Linz Steelworks. Linz at that time was the home of the largest assembly plant for super heavy tanks in Germany. The tour finished early, Speer recalls, and "since we had some time left, Hitler drove us through the Linz of his youth." Speer then notes a significant fact. Hitler *"showed us a hotel near the Danube where Karl May, he still remembered, had lived for almost a year in 1901."*[102]

The factual background for this recollection by Hitler is as follows. In 1896–97, Karl May had had a number of photographs taken of himself dressed in costume as Old Shatterhand and Kara Ben Nemsi ("Karl the German"—the hero of May's adventure novels in the Middle East). For the development of these photographs, May employed a photographer by the name of Nunward who resided in Linz. May likely visited Linz several times in 1901 for this purpose, but it is known for certain that he did come to Linz for a lengthy stay in 1902. While he was in Linz, May stayed in room no. 10 at the Hotel *Roter Krebs* along the Danube.[103] The facts are clear, therefore, that Karl May was present in Linz at about the time that Hitler made his decision to become an artist. It is also clear that young Adolf was aware of Karl May's presence in Linz, and not only May's presence, but exactly where he resided while there. Further, the fact that he still recalled these facts in 1943—more than four decades after the event—suggests that May's presence in Linz was significant to Hitler.

I have no evidence, other than what I have already presented, to establish absolutely that Karl May's visit to Linz precipitated Hitler's decision to be an artist. But it would be illogical to ignore such a coincidence. The circumstances surrounding May's visit to Linz are such that they would have appealed to the young Adolf in his own particular predicament. Karl May's life and the controversy surrounding him at that time were in the newspapers. May's life would have been an inspiration to the young Hitler, for it vividly showed how a young man with everything against him could overcome the most difficult obstacles—even imprisonment—and rise by art to the heights of success, wealth, and acclaim.

The facts of Karl May's life that gave rise to the controversy surrounding him at the time Adolf was in *Realschule* are as follows. Karl May was born in 1842 in Saxony to a poor family. As a child, he was blind for several years, but recovered his eyesight. He became a teacher, but quickly lost his job for stealing in 1859. He obtained another position, but in 1862 was again caught stealing. This time he was convicted of the crime, sentenced to four months in jail, and forever barred from teaching again. In 1865 he was arrested for petty crimes and served three years in prison from 1865 to 1868. Upon his release, he was once again arrested—this time for impersonating doctors, teachers, and government officials—and was sent back to prison for six years, until 1874.[104]

It was while he was in prison that Karl May began reading and researching for the stories that were to make him famous. Upon his release, at the age of thirty-two, he began writing and publishing. The stories were immediate successes. May wrote and published several more, and soon began publishing novels. His popularity skyrocketed. By the 1880s, he became a wealthy man, and by the 1890s he was heralded as a folk hero.

At exactly the time Hitler was entering *Realschule*, in 1900, however, Karl May became extremely controversial. Most of May's stories were adventure stories written in the first person. When May began to achieve personal popularity, he represented to the public that the stories were true accounts of his own exploits. Karl May fan clubs formed, and May convinced his fans that he was identical with Old Shatterhand and Kara Ben Nemsi (his name in the Near and Middle Eastern novels). In late 1899 and 1900—at the same time Hitler was reading the newspapers for news of the Boer War—a series of inflammatory newspaper articles appeared exposing his claims as fraudulent. These articles also exposed his criminal record and accused him of pornographic passages in some of the anonymously published pulp novels of his earlier career. Karl May had also gone through a difficult divorce, the details of which became public. The "folk hero" was now shown to be an ex-convict and a fake. All of this was covered in the newspapers. Further, the controversy gave rise to several libel suits and other litigation that stretched over years and kept Karl May in the news. In fact, it was partly for this reason that May had

come to Linz. The photographs he was developing were part of his ongoing public relations and legal campaigns. Thus at the time Karl May came to Linz, he would have been known both as a celebrity and as the center of a scandal.

May's novels were originally seen as presenting the motifs of "constant travel, capture, spying, escape, intrigue, crime, and the restoration of justice . . . repeated with hypnotic compulsiveness." In his "Wild West" stories, "deception is the rule, the prairie hides rather than reveals, the good characters are not easily distinguished from the bad, and the hero does not have to soil his hands with lethal violence, for providence provides the proper punishment." After the exposures of 1899–1900, however, May promoted a reinterpretation of his earlier works. He now presented them as "allegories of humanity's progress from the lowlands of deception and error to the heights of spirituality—a progress he saw reflected in his personal journey from confidence man and convict to thinker and teacher." [105]

This was the state of controversy surrounding Karl May at the time of his visits to Linz in 1901–1902. The young Hitler may have seen in Karl May an example of how a unique individual was able to overcome all obstacles—even blindness, criminality, and prison—and to rise by means of art to success, wealth, and acclaim. May's life would have provided a vivid example to Hitler of how he, too, could overcome his aloneness, his failure in *Realschule*, and the non-recognition of his genius; he would eventually succeed by art alone. The transference from May to the young Adolf was easy: May had done it by writing, the young Adolf, who had shown some talent for drawing, could do it by art. Therefore, he would become an artist too—a painter.

How Hitler's Decision to Become an Artist Fits in with His Previous Ideas

If Karl May were the inspiration for Hitler's decision to become an artist, it was a decision that closely accorded with the ideas and concepts of himself that he had already formed. Hitler's ideas imposed three requirements on his future career. The first was that the career constitute an extraordinary life; in other words, it had to offer an escape from the department store world of shopkeepers, businessmen, and government clerks. Konrad Heiden explains the allure of the life of a painter or artist to the young Hitler:

> Why a painter? Was Hitler a visual mind? At the end of the nineteenth century, the painter or the poet was a kind of king; the Renaissance figures of the poet-prince and the royal artist dominated society. Makart in Vienna, and Lembach in Munich—two painters little known abroad and by now half forgotten in their own country—were in their time more impressive rulers than the true princes, giving laws to society and form to human lives, and in return receiving fame and earthly

> goods in abundance. Young Adolf Hitler wanted to become something of this sort.[106]

Thus the career of an artist was his ticket out of the department store world and out of both the future insisted upon by his father and the future that seemed to be awaiting him after *Realschule*. He had found a dream for his future that answered the first requirement: to escape the department store world. He also had found at least two models of how to do it: (1) Karl May's life; and (2) May's stories of adventure. Both fitted perfectly the logic of his mind. Hitler, too, dreamed of an escape from the ordinary.

The path of becoming an artist also satisfied his second goal: his refusal to work, to engage in the economic struggle of life, to earn his bread. Artists were free. They did not work—they created. When August Kubizek met young Adolf in 1904, he was most impressed both with the fact that Adolf wanted to be an artist as well as the fact that he considered himself exempt from work. Kubizek recalls that after first meeting him, he was surprised that Adolf had so much spare time. Kubizek then asked "innocently asked whether he had a job":

> "Of course not," was his gruff reply.
>
> This answer, which I thought very peculiar, he elaborated at some length. He did not consider that any particular work, a "bread and butter job" as he called it, was necessary for him.[107]

As Kubizek came to know young Hitler better, he came to understand the significance of that resolve. Adolf wrote poetry, showed his young friend the pictures he sketched, and told him that he "was determined to devote his whole life to art." Kubizek then understood:

> Then it dawned on me what kind of person my friend really was. He belonged to that particular species of people of which I had dreamed myself in my more expressive moments; an artist, who despised the mere bread-and-butter job and devoted himself to writing poetry, to drawing, painting and to going to the theatre. This impressed me enormously. I was thrilled with the grandeur that I saw here.[108]

It is easy to see here why Kubizek was drawn to the young Adolf, and also why Hitler was drawn to Kubizek as the only friend he had during his teenage years.

The young Adolf's decision to become an artist also met the third goal at which he was aiming: to establish that he was different, that he was out of the ordinary and special, not to be judged by ordinary rules. Kubizek recorded how all of these came together in his new friend. Hitler, he wrote, "just did not fit any bourgeois order."[109] Instead, he aimed for an

imaginative greatness outside of the ordinary world. Kubizek recalls how this very difference attracted him to the young Adolf:

> However much his ideas differed from bourgeois conceptions it did not worry me at all—on the contrary! It was this very fact, that he was out of the ordinary that attracted me even more. To devote his life to art was, in my opinion, the greatest resolution a young man could take; for secretly I, too, played with the idea of exchanging the dusty and noisy upholsterer's shop for the pure and lofty fields of art.[110]

In choosing to become an artist, Adolf fulfilled the requirements of the lines of thought that he had begun in elementary school. He had found an escape from the workaday world, a path to greatness, and a goal that set him apart, one that made him special, and one that justified his rebellion against his father. Konrad Heiden summarizes it this way: "Hitler regarded himself as an artistic genius, far above ordinary work."[111] This was the decision—to become an artist—that Hitler had made in 1901 or 1902 when he chose his goal in life.

THE SON'S REBELLION

The young Adolf's decision to become an artist also had another important dimension. It was an act of rebellion by a stubborn son against his stubborn father. He had to prove himself against a father who was unappreciative of his son's mind. He had to prove his "theoretical" ideas against his father's demands for a practical career. Kubizek records this aspect of Hitler's decision. His father's purpose, Kubizek writes, had been to "direct his son into a position which necessitated submission to authority."[112] Young Hitler was determined to be free of all authority, either economic or personal, except his own over himself. Therefore, Kubizek explains, "with equal determination, Adolf refused to comply with his father's wishes, although he himself [at first] had only very hazy ideas about his future."[113] But in choosing to announce that he would be an artist, a painter, he had found a way to complete his rebellion. Kubizek notes, "To become a painter would have been the worst possible insult to his father, for it would have meant just that aimless wandering to which he [the father] was so much opposed."[114]

In choosing to become an artist, a painter, therefore, Adolf found the "clincher" to his theoretical arguments against the civil service career his father was demanding of him. For a year, as implied in *Mein Kampf*, he had endured his father's taunt: "Well, if you do not want to become a civil servant, what *do* you want to become?" For a year, the boy had no answer to that. But when he came across the idea of becoming an artist, he found the perfect answer to set his father sputtering. With this decision, he "won" the argument—and the contest of wills. Hitler records the

course of this argument in *Mein Kampf*. When he first told his father of his desire to be an artist, his father responded:

> "Artist, no, never as long as I live!" But since his son, among other qualities, had apparently inherited his father's stubbornness, the same answer came back at him. Except, of course, that it was in the opposite sense. And thus the situation remained on both sides. My father did not depart from his "Never!" And I intensified my "Oh, yes!"[115]

This struggle spilled over into every aspect of his life at the time, changing his relationship with his friends, his classmates, school, and, of course, his family. The young Hitler had already decided that *Realschule* was a ticket to "nowhere." He had already separated himself from his classmates and had given up interest in school. But now his rebellion had acquired purpose, though, he wrote, "The consequences, indeed, were none too pleasant":

> The old man grew embittered, and, much as I loved him, so did I. My father forbade me to nourish the slightest hope of ever being allowed to study art. I went one step further and declared that if that was the case, I would stop studying altogether. As a result of such "pronouncements," of course, I drew the short end; the old man began the relentless enforcement of his authority. In the future, therefore, I was silent, but transformed my threat into reality.[116]

What is impressive about the mind that is recording this, is that by the age of twelve[117] he had completed in reality what had merely been a theoretical rejection of bourgeois thinking and life.

This episode, however, should be put in perspective. At the age of ten, when he began his argument with his father over a civil service career, there was no immediate significance to his father's desire. The boy would not graduate from school for several more years. He could have easily agreed with his father, putting off any real thought of a career for several years. It would have cost the normal child nothing to agree with his father. But the young Hitler was not normal. When his father suggested a civil service career, the entire mental resources of the boy were called into opposition. He had already determined that he would not live an ordinary life and was prepared to sacrifice his home life, friends, and school record to his determination to avoid that fate. In the next chapter we explore what such determination on the part of the young Hitler entails.

NOTES

1. Contemporaries: "Hitler was a genius," he was "a genius in the matter of will power," he had "a genius for invention," and he was "a genius in the art of organization" [Hjalmar Schacht, *Account Settled*, trans. Edward Fitzgerald (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1948), 218–220]. Hitler was an "unpredictable genius," an "irreplaceable genius," and an "orator of genius" (Ernst Hanfstaengl, *Hitler, The Missing Years*,

127, 171, and 249, respectively). Historians: Bullock writes of "Hitler's genius as a politician" in *Hitler: A Study*, 68.

2. Albert Einstein, "Autobiographical Notes," in vol. 1 of *Albert Einstein: Philosopher Scientist*, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 17.

3. Ronald W. *Clark, Einstein: The Life and Times* (New York: Avon Books, 1972), 23.

4. *Ibid*., 30.

5. Banesh Hoffman, *Albert Einstein: Creator and Rebel* (New York: Penguin, 1973), 20.

6. *Ibid*., 25–26. In Einstein's case, it was because, he was told, "your mere presence undermines the respect of the class" (*Ibid*.). In Hitler's case, it was not only because of his poor grades but because he "lacked self discipline, being notoriously cantankerous, wilful (*sic*), arrogant and irascible" Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth*, 68. Both refused to study anything that did not interest them (for Einstein, *Ibid*., 28; for Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 10).

7. Clark, *Einstein*, 28–29. See also Hoffman, *Albert Einstein*, 8–10; B. Kuznetsov, *Einstein*, trans. V. Talmy (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965), 51.

8. Einstein, "Autobiographical Notes," 9.

9. "The incident, so redolent of 'famous childhoods,' is reported persistently in the accounts of Einstein's youth. . . . Whether it always had its later significance is another matter. Einstein himself, answering questions in 1953 at the time of his seventy-fourth birthday, gave it perspective by his assessment of how it had—or might have—affected him. Did the compass, and the book on Euclidean geometry, which he read a few years later, really influence him, he was asked. 'I myself think so; and I believe these outside influences had a considerable influence on my development.'" (Clark, *Einstein*, 29).

10. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler*, 26–27.

11. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 9.

12. I have translated the word "gewaltsamer" as "vigorous" rather than as "violent" as in the Mannheim translation.

13. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 157.

14. *Ibid*.,

15. *Ibid*.

16. Einstein, "Autobiographical Notes," 3.

17. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 5–6.

18. *Ibid*., 6.

19. *Ibid*.

20. Franz Jetzinger described these books: "I can remember these books myself. Large numbers were sold in Austria about that time and before I was twelve years old I had pored over them and pestered my grandfather with questions. The illustrations, I remember, were swarming with German spiked helmets and littered with dead Frenchmen." Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth*, 60.

21. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, p. 6.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., p. 157.

24. Ibid., p. 158.

25. The words to this song consist of a few of the lines of the poem entitled *Wallensteins Lager*, written by Freidrich Schiller in 1797. (The English translation is by the author.)

26. The significance of this point was made by Konrad Heiden in the postscript to *Der Fuehrer: "Hitler was able to enslave his own people because he seemed to give them something that even the traditional religions could no longer provide: the belief in a meaning to existence beyond the narrowest self-interest. The real degradation began when people realized that they were in league with the Devil, but felt that even the Devil was preferable to the emptiness of an existence which lacked a larger significance"* (*Der Fuehrer*, 773–774). (Emphasis in original.)

27. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 6–7. (Emphasis added.)

28. The Badeni language decrees authorized Czech as a third official language of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
29. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 12.
30. *Ibid*.
31. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 46.
32. Einstein, "Autobiographical Notes," 5. (Emphasis in original.)
33. Kershaw, *Hubris,* xix–xx.
34. Fest, *Hitler*, 7.
35. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 5.
36. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 94.
37. *Ibid*., 61.
38. *Ibid*., 57–58.
39. *Ibid*., 51: "In Linz he was often in the house of a comrade who was a high governmental official. Here he found a well-equipped library, [and] discovered Richard Wagner's prose writings."
40. *Ibid*., 57–58.
41. Rosenbaum, *Explaining Hitler,* xiv.
42. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 108.
43. *Ibid*., 27.
44. Sebastian Haffner suggested a similar approach to understanding Hitler. "To tabulate Hitler," he wrote, "in the History of Ideas and degrade him to an historical episode is a hopeless undertaking and can only lead to perilous miscalculations. Much more progress can be made if one takes the opposite course and considers German and European history as a part of Hitler's private life" (Germany: *Jekyll and Hyde,* 16).
45. William Shakespeare, *King Lear,* Act II, scene 4.
46. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 189.
47. *Ibid*.
48. "This Imp, it will be recalled, is that principle which compels us to 'act' for the reason that we should not" (Hoffman, *Poe, Poe,* 211).
49. Einstein recorded that at about the age of twelve he reached a similar realization. He described it as "a positively fanatic [orgy of] freethinking coupled with the impression that youth is intentionally deceived by the state through lies; it was a crushing impression. Suspicion against every kind of authority grew out of this experience, a skeptical attitude towards the convictions which were alive in any specific social environment—an attitude that has never again left me. . . ." Einstein, "Autobiographical Notes," 5.
50. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 7–10 (inclusive).
51. *Ibid*., 7.
52. *Ibid*., 9.
53. The most constant, bedrock theme of Hitler's definition of National Socialism was that no young genius ever be ignored in the Third Reich: "The sole interest of a people must be that this voice of inherited talent should be given a hearing" ("Victory Parteitag, September 4, 1933," in Baynes, *The Speeches,* 470).
54. Adolf was still ten when the dispute presumably began in the late winter or early spring of 1900; he turned eleven on April 20, 1900.
55. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 8.
56. *Ibid*., 7.
57. *Ibid*., 8.
58. Adolf recognized that his stubbornness came from his father. He wrote, referring to himself: "His son, among other various qualities, had apparently inherited his father's stubbornness." *Ibid.,* p. 9.
59. *Ibid*., 8.
60. *Ibid*.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 44.
63. Toland, *Adolf*, 14–15.

64. Waite, *Psychopathic God,* 134.
65. *Ibid*., 137; citing Albert Zoller, ed., *Hitler Privat: Erlebnissbericht seiner Geheimsekretuerin* (Dusseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1949), 46.
66. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 48.
67. *Ibid*., 15.
68. *Ibid*., 48.
69. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 9.
70. Hitler's father died on January 3, 1903.
71. See Richard H. Cracroft, "World Westerns: The European Writer and the American West," in *A Literary History of the American West* (Fort Worth: Western Literature Association, 1987), 159; and Diane Cumarat, "American Indians in the Great War: Real and Imagined," PhD diss., Institut Charles V of the University of Paris (1994), chapter III, section 2.1.3.
72. Toland, *Adolf*, 14.
73. *Hitler's Table Talk,* "Entry No. 149, February 17th, 1942, evening." (Emphases added.)
74. See Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth,* 63–68, for the details of Hitler's grades in each year of *Realschule.*
75. *Ibid*., 69.
76. Referring to the period 1897–1899, when he was at Lambach, Hitler wrote: "I believed even then that my oratorical talent was being developed." (*Mein Kampf,* 6).
77. *Ibid.,* 8.
78. Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth*, 68.
79. Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* 100.
80. Jetzinger, *Hitler's Youth*, 68.
81. *Hitler's Table Talk,* "Entry No. 179, March 3rd, 1942, midday": "I remember that on the average I spent a tenth of the time my comrades spent on doing my prep. My selected branch was history. I felt sorry for those of my comrades who never had a minute to play . . . So what a surprise it is for them when they see a comrade succeeding who is cleverer than they are, but whom they used to regard as a dunce."
82. Hitler failed his first year of *Realschule* and had to repeat it. He failed his fourth year and was given a pass only on condition that he transfer to another school. He failed his fifth year and decided to drop out of school.
83. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 51.
84. *Hitler's Table Talk*, "Entry No. 149, February 17th, 1942, evening."
85. *I bid*., "Entry No. 100, Night of January 8th–9th, 1942."
86. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 182–183.
87. Smith cites G. Ward Price, *I Know These Dictators* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1938), 18; Wilfried Daim, *Der Mann, der Hitler die Ideen Gab. Von den religioesen Verirrungen eines Sektierers zum Rassenwahn des Diktators* (Munich: Isar Verlag, 1958), 248; Walter Goerlitz, *Adolf Hitler* (Goettingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1960), 23.
88. Smith, *Adolf,* 67; citing Otto Dietrich, *Hitler,* trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1955), 149; Zoller, *Hitler Privat,* 46; Hans Zeigler, *Adolf Hitler Aus Dem Erleben Dargestellt* (Goettingen: K. W. Shutz, 1964), 76; Karl Wilhelm Krause, *Zehn Jahre Kammardiener bei Hitler* (Hamburg: Hermann Laatzen, n.d.), 51.
89. Albert Speer, *Spandau: The Secret Diaries*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Pocket Books, 1977), entry for May 6, 1960.
90. Toland, *Adolf,* 698.
91. Waite, *Psychopathic God,* 12.
92. Toland, *Adolf*, 333; citing Egon Hanfstaengl, Memoirs (Unpublished), 216–229.
93. Speer, *Spandau,* entry for May 6, 1960.
94. Diane Cumarat, "The American Indians," chapter 3, section 2.1.3.
95. Wechsberg, "Winnetou of der Wild West," 32–39.
96. *Ibid*., 32.; citing "Karl der Deutsche," *Der Spiegel* (September 12, 1962), 73.
97. Langley, "A Fistful of Dreams," 33–35.

98. *Ibid*.
99. Hitler stated this precise attitude in *Mein Kampf*. After he had failed his second attempt to gain admission to the Academy of Art, Hitler wrote: "I adopted the attitude of all those who shake the dust from their feet with the irrevocable intention of founding a new existence in the New World and conquering a new home" (*Mein Kampf,* 25).
100. Waite, *Psychopathic God,* 137; citing Albert Zoller, *Hitler Privat*, 46.
101. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 9.
102. Speer, *Spandau,* Entry for January 14, 1951. (Emphasis added.)
103. Joseph M. Hermayer, "Karl Mays Bezeihungen zu Linz," in *Karl May und Oestereich,* ed. Wilhelm Brauneder (Husum: Hansa, 1996), 74–87.
104. The following facts of May's life and the controversy that began in 1899–1900 are a composite taken from: Doerry, "Karl May," 244–251; Cook, "Nazism," 339–355; and Wechsberg, "Winnetou of der Wild West," 32–39.
105. Doerry, "Karl May," 248.
106. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 46–47.
107. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 9.
108. *Ibid*., 11.
109. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 20.
110. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 12.
111. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer,* 53.
112. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 43.
113. *Ibid*.
114. *Ibid*., 43–44.
115. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 10.
116. *Ibid*.
117. Hitler was age twelve until his thirteenth birthday on April 20, 1902.

SEVEN
In That Hour it Began

By the spring of 1902, though he had failed his first year and was barely passing his second year in the same grade, the young Adolf Hitler had many reasons to be proud of himself. Though he had only just turned thirteen, he had already successfully stood up to the four strongest forces in a preteen-ager's life: (1) the authority of the family; (2) the demands of school and society; (3) the pressure of his peers; and (4) his own inner fears and insecurities. Further, he had, by this young age, not only found but already set out on his own unique course, alone and unsupported in his choice by anyone.

Let us consider these four forces more specifically in order to grasp their importance for a boy at this age. He had stood up against his father's demands as to a career despite the most intense pressures and most severe canings, and he had not once given in. Let us further note that, according to August Kubizek, Adolf's mother supported the father in his goals for the boy, if not his methods.[1] Thus Adolf had no support within the home for his ambitions. In regard to the demands of society that he must obtain an education, Adolf deliberately changed from being one of the best students to one of the worst. He did this based on his firm belief—unusual by any standard for a boy so young—that he did not want what school and society had to offer him. It undoubtedly took exceptional courage for him to set himself against all the pressures that school and society can exert on a boy to conform to expectations. He himself knew the cost of making such a choice, yet he never wavered from the course he had set for himself of non-acquiescence and non-cooperation.

The third force he successfully rebuffed was peer pressure. Though failing a grade in school marked a boy in the eyes of his peers, Adolf never complained to his classmates that he was being treated unfairly or

unjustly. He coolly decided that he did not care what his peers thought. They were nothing but "future civil servants." He sought neither their friendship nor approval. He behaved the same way toward his teachers. In any normally constituted boy of his age, such isolation would have elicited the deepest insecurities and fears for his future. But Adolf endured without support from any quarter, and he persisted in his course without crying or complaining and without asking for sympathy or help from anyone.

Adolf decided to become an artist, a painter. No one in his home or school environment suggested this to him or encouraged him in it. Though he may have had only the haziest idea of what being an artist might entail, he molded not only his hopes and dreams but also his daily life around this goal.

What could have been the resources upon which the young Adolf might have drawn to give him the strength to stand against all of these forces, and the stamina to pursue his lonely course? Almost all historians, biographers, and psychologists who have examined this period of Hitler's life have sought to explain it in terms of weakness—some illness, trauma, or psychological maladjustment that would have caused him to fail, to isolate himself, and to drop out of school. But if the picture I have drawn is a fair representation of the facts and situation he faced at this time, then what needs to be explained is not his weakness but his strength.

The facts suggest that Adolf Hitler was an extraordinary boy. Let us, therefore, attempt to analyze the facts logically. Abductive logic suggests that the facts, by which I mean the will power, strength, and stamina displayed by Hitler in the face of all the forces arrayed against him, are the "effects" of an antecedent cause or causes. Based upon an examination of these effects, the task that presents itself is to form a hypothesis that would be competent to explain them.

I offer the hypothesis that the young Adolf's strength and determination to pursue his lonely course in the face of all the forces and pressures ranged against him were derived from three ideas held together by a very different logic. These three ideas were: (1) Adolf's idea of "greatness" that had been growing in his mind ever since his rejection of the department store world; (2) the idea of history that in *Mein Kampf* he attributed to his teacher, Leopold Poetsch; and (3) the example of Old Shatterhand in the novels of Karl May, from whom he learned a method of survival in a strange and hostile world.

No single one of these ideas, nor even the three in combination, would have been sufficient. Indeed, it may be argued that these three ideas are not related to one another—by which I mean that they are not logically derived from nor logically dependent on one another according to normal deductive and inductive reasoning. But there is a strange and singular logic—a third form of logic—by which each of these ideas was fused

with the other. In Hitler's mind, this strange logic permeated these ideas so that they mutually reinforced one another, despite the conflict at home, his isolation from friends, and his rebellious failure at school, to give him complete inner peace—"immutable" confidence in the rightness of his course[2] —and the strength and determination to pursue it.

The underlying logic to which I refer was called, when it initially appeared, "The Method of Zadig" by Voltaire and Thomas Henry Huxley. It led Zadig to leave home and city so that he might study in an entirely new way never taught in the schools, but which nonetheless gave him powers that astonished the king of Babylon and caused the magi to want to have him burned as a sorcerer. Edgar Allan Poe had called it the "faculty of analysis" and the "abstractly logical"—a form of reasoning that conferred upon Dupin seemingly "praeternatural" powers. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle called it a form of "backward reasoning," which gave Sherlock Holmes astonishing abilities. Today, thanks to Charles Saunders Peirce, we know the powers described in each of these cases as the logic of abduction.

In none of these authors—Voltaire, Poe, Huxley, Doyle, or May—was the logic taught in schools. This third form of logic was left for isolated individuals to find on their own. When it was found and grasped by the mind of an isolated individual, it had the power to form a unique character, e.g., Zadig, Dupin, Holmes, and Old Shatterhand. Hitler was one of those who discovered its power. Let us now explore how the three ideas of the young Adolf Hitler were tied together by abductive logic.

ADOLF'S IDEA OF GREATNESS

When Konrad Heiden reviewed Adolf Hitler's entire life, he said it was the working out of a single ideal. That ideal held that there was greatness in the world. In the vast panorama of everyday life—what the young Adolf called the "department store world"—Hitler struggled against all that was "ordinary" and "everyday" in order to seek the "extraordinary." He made the search for greatness the goal and purpose of everything he thought and did. Konrad Heiden saw this quest for greatness as the most deep-seated and essential element in Hitler's character, which he describes as Hitler's "flight into greatness":

> Hitler's whole career was designed according to a principle that has carried him high and far, which in the most impossible and difficult situations sometimes opened up to him escapes which ordinary men would not have found; but which sometimes, without a firm brake, would have smashed him to bits. That life principle might be designated as "flight into greatness." . . . [This] was Hitler's decisive realization.[3]

Thus Adolf Hitler's first idea arose from his rejection of ordinary life. It prepared him for the conflict with his father and undergirded his opposition to a civil service career. It furnished the basis for his refusal to study in *Realschule*, and it was why he decided to become an artist. Hitler had early "conceived a picture of himself," writes Heiden, and his whole life consisted in "constantly mixing the colors for this picture."[4] But though the colors changed, the picture always remained the same. "The image of the great man always hovers like a model and catchword before his inner eye. He always tries to act as in his opinion the image would act."[5] From his earliest youth, this image became his "way out of the difficulties, defeats [and] insignificance of his private life."[6] Thus, "flight into greatness" became the bedrock of his life. "Flight into the great image has from early youth been this man's answer to all of life's enmity," writes Heiden.[7]

THE LOGIC OF GREATNESS

The logic that connects this idea of greatness with his life at this time is the logic that distinguishes between the ordinary and the extraordinary. In deduction, the fundamental distinction for the operation of the logic is between universals and particulars. In induction, it is between the generalizable and the testable. In abductive logic, the distinction is between the ordinary and the extraordinary. The ordinary is what is normal and expected. There is no need to form a new hypothesis to explain what is normal and expected; it is normal because one already has reason to expect it. Abduction only operates when something occurs that is not normal and not expected, when something surprising and out of the ordinary takes place. In other words, the only proper object and distinction relevant to abduction is the extraordinary.[8]

Let us now explore the distinction between the ordinary and the extraordinary. The ordinary may be defined as that which is: (1) expected and unsurprising when it occurs; (2) normal, usual, routine, and "everyday"; and (3) undistinguished, mediocre, unimpressive, unimaginative, uninteresting, dull, inconsequential, insignificant, trivial, or vulgar. The extraordinary, on the other hand, may be defined as that which is: (1) unexpected and surprising when it occurs; (2) exceptional, rare, and singular; and (3) great, superior, impressive, imaginative, important, consequential, or significant.

The distinctions that I have provided so far are primarily definitional. There is little logical content to them except the opposition of their terms. However, definition becomes a matter of logical analysis as soon as one goes behind the terms to inquire into the causes of the distinction. What is it, logically, that causes one thing to appear to be ordinary and another to be extraordinary? This is really a one-sided question; what is ordinary

is taken for granted, what is extra-ordinary stands out. Only the appearance of the extraordinary is subject to abductively logical inquiry.

By the age of nine, the young Adolf's mind had divided the world into these two categories: the ordinary and the extraordinary. This is the first prerequisite to becoming an abductive reasoner, i.e., turning away from or disregarding what is ordinary and looking for the extraordinary. This is not yet abductive reasoning; it is only a prerequisite to it. But by age eleven it was sufficient for the young Adolf to differentiate himself from the goals and aspirations of his father, his classmates, his teachers, school, and society. From the time he entered *Realschule,* he was determined to be and to do that which was not expected of him. By definition, he became extraordinary.

Over a period of five years, however, from the time he first reacted against the dullness and ordinariness of the department store world in 1897, until he decided to become an artist in 1902, the young Adolf was being led by the inevitable logic of his position to ask certain questions. He wanted to escape the ordinary, everyday world and wanted to find an exceptional one. This engaged his logical faculty. It was not enough merely to define himself as different. Abductively, he had to form a hypothesis to explain what causes the extraordinary to occur. This was essential to understand himself, what he had done, and where he was going. If he wanted to be outside of the ordinary world, he had to find a way to make greatness happen. For, logically, greatness is not a quality that inheres in a person or object; rather, it is an event that unexpectedly happens, something that breaks through ordinary reality. What is the cause of great events, and how can the great man cause them to happen?

In order to answer that question, the mind of the young Adolf moved "backward." He was in the ordinary world, and he did not like it. He began backing away from it by age eight or nine. This direction is important logically. For he did not move "forward" in his situation by accepting it. He moved backward in order to explain it. This raised the question: Where was he? When he moved back, away from the ordinary world, where did he find himself? Logically, he again looked backward to try to find some basis on which to exist outside of the ordinary, everyday world. The question that he asked could be phrased like this: looking away from the ordinary world that was offering him a future, he wanted to find something that was not part of that proffered future.

He had first found it in the childhood games of which he was so fond. These were the real "battlefields on which the 'conflicts' which exist everywhere in life were decided." The games were his earliest insight into rebellion against the ordinary, everyday, workaday world, and he formed his character around them. As Joachim Fest writes, "He always saw everything as child's play."[9] But when, at the age of ten, he faced the question about the rest of his life—the choice of schools, and his father's

demand that he become a civil servant—he had to find a more substantial place outside of ordinary life.

Hitler's answer was art. Konrad Heiden correctly identifies the logic that led Hitler to want to become an artist. For, Heiden writes, Hitler saw art as the "struggle of the great man against the dull resistance of the world."[10] Rejection of the ordinary world leads to the extraordinary. The extraordinary man creates his own world, and that is a work of art and a form of greatness. Thus, he was led to the recognition that his act of rejecting the department store world was an event that caused him to be both an artist and a great man. It was, as both August Kubizek and Konrad Heiden observed, the "great decision" of his life. In other words, he reasoned backward from the evidence of his mental act of rejecting the ordinary world to infer that he was great. His act of rejecting the ordinary world was in itself art. It is art, Hitler said, "that distinguishes the noble men from the common herd."[11] Therefore, it was only logical that he, in his rejection of the department store world, was both a great man and an artist.

Adolf had found the source of greatness. Greatness consisted in the desire—and the decision—to escape the ordinary, department store world. Thus art confirmed who he was. But this led to the next logical question. Greatness is not simply being. Great men cause the unexpected to occur; great men cause great things to happen. What is great, therefore, is not what exists in a person, but what he causes to happen outside of himself, i.e., the effects he causes. This logically led the young Adolf to the ideas about history that he was learning at this time.

THE MEANING OF HISTORY

Hitler was once asked to identify the most revealing statement that he made about himself in *Mein Kampf*. Without hesitation he replied: "A short sentence at the beginning of the book in which I say that as a youth I learned the meaning of history."[12] The statement to which Hitler refers is found on page 10 of *Mein Kampf*, and reads: "If now, after so many years, I examine the results of this period [i.e., his years in *Realschule*], I regard two outstanding facts as particularly significant." One of these was: *"I learned to understand and to grasp the meaning of history."*[13]

If we accept Hitler at his word, this statement can be viewed, according to ordinary logic, as pretentious. History has many meanings, and Hitler surely had not read them all.[14] But if the statement is looked at abductively, it points to what Hitler had learned the meaning of history to be *for him*. As soon as his statement is analyzed this way, it becomes very revealing, because four pages later in *Mein Kampf*, Hitler defines precisely what it means for him: "To 'learn' history means to seek and

find the forces which are the causes leading to the effects which we subsequently perceive as historical events." [15]

Like his statement that he had learned the meaning of history, his definition of what that meaning is, is also one of his most personally revealing statements. The key word in this statement is "effects." Hitler saw history as the record of the creation of extraordinary effects. History is not the recording of everything; that which is "ordinary" is insignificant. History is only the recording of what occurred that was not ordinary. Peirce once defined ancient history as "simply the narrative of all the unlikely events that happened." [16] Thus, to understand history abductively is to be able to identify "the forces which are the causes" of extraordinary events. To Hitler, therefore, the "learning of history" meant to understand how great men, by rejecting the ordinary world, found the forces to make extraordinary things happen. That was the young Hitler's understanding of history—and the most personally revealing statement about himself.

Note, too, the last clause of Hitler's definition of learning history: "which are *subsequently perceived* as historical events." Events are historical only to the extent that they are "perceived" as extraordinary. The learning of history, therefore, meant for Hitler an insight into how to cause events to happen that *will be* "perceived" as extraordinary, and, therefore, *will be* recorded as history. For Hitler, perception was reality, and to enter history meant to create effects.

Thus for Hitler history did not mean the establishment of the historical record of the facts about the past. Rather, understanding history for him was an exercise in abduction, i.e., in forming hypotheses about how "great men" utilized the forces of their time in order to cause extraordinary effects.

Looking at history this way, Hitler saw history not as facts, nor even as story, but as revealing the secrets of power. History was to him instruction in what "great men" did in order to cause extraordinary effects. Learning history was, therefore, not about the past, but about the present and future. What he meant was that if one understood how history had been made in the past, then one could "make" history in the present and future. In practical terms, Hitler's understanding of history meant that he had found a way to make a future that was an alternative to the future offered by school and ordinary society. Two pages later in *Mein Kampf*, he explains that this was precisely what he meant:

> The habit of historical thinking which I thus learned in school never left me in the intervening years. To an ever-increasing extent world history *became for me an inexhaustible source of understanding for the historical events of the present;* in other words, for politics. *I do not want to 'learn' it, I want it to instruct me.* [17] (Emphases added.)

This is a theme repeated throughout *Mein Kampf*: "The purpose of studying history," he writes in book 1, chapter 3, "is precisely its lesson for the present."[18] Again, in book 2, chapter 3, he writes, "For we do not learn history just in order to know the past, we learn history in order to find an instructor for the future."[19] Thus, for Hitler, the understanding of history in no way meant an understanding of the nature of Man, nor even an understanding of humanity as a story. It meant finding the method that would enable him to do extraordinary things. History was the means to learn the technique of greatness. "For," as Joachim Fest observes, "Hitler's rationality was always limited to methodology."[20]

Hitler once said of himself, "All I say or do belongs to history."[21] This followed logically from the view of himself he had formed by the age of sixteen, when he left school. He had rebelled against the ordinary world. This proved him to be a great man. Everything he said or did was the action of a great man. Therefore, everything he said or did was intended to be extraordinary. He intended that everything he said or did to be "subsequently perceived as an historical event."

In this light, it is significant that the first close friend Hitler made at the time he entered politics, the only man who used the familiar "*du*" in speaking to him long after Hitler had became *Der Fuehrer*, was Ernst Roehm. Ernst Roehm had a philosophy of politics and history nearly identical to Hitler's. "I divide people," Roehm once said, "into two classes—those who raise revolts and those who don't raise revolts."[22]

Hitler's idea of "greatness" and his idea of history were not two separate ideas, but melded into one idea. "History" was the record of the happening of extraordinary events, and "greatness" was conferred on those who made them happen. Thus all of Hitler's thinking begins with his movement backward and away from the ordinary world and with his determination to create "history," which he perceived as the creation of extraordinary events.

THE BACKWARD NATURE OF HITLER'S THOUGHT

Let us now review the backward nature of Hitler's thought process. At an early age he had looked at the adult world and at the future he was headed for. He did not like it, and backed away from it. He then found himself outside the ordinary world, cut off from family, friends, school, and society. He once again looked back, to see what was behind the strange world in which he now found himself. He found that those who struggled against the ordinary world were artists and great men. He then logically moved back farther and asked: What is the source of (in other words, what is behind) the art of great men? He discovered that it is their ability to create extraordinary effects.

Ernst Nolte observes that "[t]he dominant trait in Hitler's personality was infantilism."[23] I believe that Nolte is correct. Hitler made a conscious decision that he would not grow up and become a responsible adult in an ordinary world. He backed away from it. He further developed an alternative path: creating a dream world of special effects. This, too, has a childish element to it. But, whatever the psychological basis of this infantile trait, the importance of it for his future was its logical basis. Many people never grow up—but few childish men ever acquire the power Hitler subsequently did. The difference was the logic that the young Hitler discovered. As Joachim Fest points out, one of the major sources of Hitler's strength "lay in his ability to build castles in the air with acute rationality."[24]

In this analysis, I have characterized each step of Hitler's logic as a "backward" step. This is because Hitler's logic was abductive logic. If I were speaking of deductive or inductive logic, I would have characterized each stage as going more "deeply" into the question. But abductive logic, while it leads backward, does not lead deeper. As Dupin notes in regard to the logic he employs: "There is such a thing as being too profound. Truth is not always in a well. In fact, as regards the more important knowledge, she is invariably superficial."[25]

This is an essential characteristic of Hitler's thinking. It was a profound understanding of abductive logic, which is often, paradoxically, profound knowledge of the superficial. For, abductive logic does not necessarily lead to depth of understanding. Peirce insists that pragmatism, which he equates with abductive logic,[26] "does not bestow a single smile upon beauty, upon moral virtue, or upon abstract truth—the three things that alone raise Humanity above Animality."[27] Hitler's logic, too, did not confer a single smile on beauty, virtue, or truth. His logic is solely the logic for contriving to create extraordinary effects.

Hitler's logic, therefore, always led him backward from his hatred of the ordinary world to history as manipulation and the creation of effects. This eventually affected his concept of art. Once touched by Hitler's abductive mind, art lost any sense of the beautiful or the sublime. With his starting point, his logic inevitably led him to see art as no more than contriving to create effects. The greatest artist was the one who had the greatest effect. This led him inevitably to see art as nothing more than politics. Viewing all of life with the logic of abduction, he came to believe that "art and politics belong together as nothing else on this earth,"[28] and to insist that "[a]rt has been in all ages the expression . . . of a political will to power."[29]

But this is getting ahead of our story. For we are still with Hitler as a teenager, when he was still enthralled with becoming an artist. He was soon to make the connection between art and politics, for it was dictated by his logic. But before he did, there was one other influence in his life that pushed him in that direction.

THE INFLUENCE OF KARL MAY

In chapter 4, I presented at length the logic in Karl May's novel *Winnetou* and referred to that work as a "learner's textbook" on abductive logic. The young Adolf took the logic exemplified in Karl May's stories very seriously, as was discussed in the previous chapter. But there is another dimension of that work that reflects on Hitler's character.

Charlie—Old Shatterhand—was Hitler's exemplar. Charlie left ordinary life for the same reason that the young Adolf rejected it. Charlie wanted to become something great. To him, that meant becoming a "Man of the West." This, of course, is every boy's dream, and boys throughout Europe still thrill to Karl May's stories of adventure. But just as the young Adolf Hitler took the games of Cowboys and Indians that he was playing at the age of nine extremely seriously, in a way few other boys of his age do, so too did he take Old Shatterhand seriously in a way almost no one else has ever done. Hitler's ideal, observed Joachim Fest, was "essentially a literary one . . . Hitler was always prone to translate literature into reality."[30] In *Winnetou*, he found the logic with which to translate his dreams into reality.

Winnetou is the story of how a boy makes a childhood dream come true. But it is more than a story. It also contains a lesson in the kind of logic that can make dreams happen. Just as the stories of Sherlock Holmes were eventually taken seriously by police forces everywhere to revolutionize the science of crime detection,[31] Hitler took Old Shatterhand seriously as a revolutionary new way to become a "great man."

"A man's will is his kingdom" is a recurring theme in *Winnetou*.[32] The meaning of it is that a man can do anything he wants to do, become anything he wants to be, if only he can change from the way society teaches him to think, and learns to understand the natives better than they understand themselves.[33] This is the key to creating any effect on them that he desires. Old Shatterhand learns how to judge a man's character on first sight, read the minds of people he has never met, follow tracks even when they disappear, and read every sign as a clue to the intentions of others. He outguesses and outwits his opponents, and amazes his friends. Through the use of cunning and deception, and waiting for the right moment, he can defeat anyone. And all of this serves no purpose but his own ambition:

> Old Shatterhand was . . . a charismatic leader, a redeemer, avenger, executioner, judge, jury, teacher and protector, rolled into one superhuman cowboy. He had supernatural powers; there was an aura about him from which his inner power beamed. . . . Old Shatterhand led his groups of cowboys with a heavy hand and demanded total obedience from his followers. When his companions were in trouble, Old Shatterhand was instantly on the scene. . . . His cowboy followers obeyed him willingly, but only at the price of their freedom as individuals. Woe to

> the *Westmann* who foreswore his total allegiance to Old Shatterhand; he was ostracized from the group, and was ultimately destroyed. Old Shatterhand put it succinctly: "I don't have anything to do with anyone who doesn't obey me."[34]

Old Shatterhand's character is, in almost all respects, similar to that of Auguste Dupin and Sherlock Holmes—and Hitler. They were all "Ratiocinative Men." Old Shatterhand's desire to become a "Man of the West" serves no purpose other than his desire to live outside of, and to prove himself superior to, ordinary society.[35] There is no meaning or cause in most of his many fights. In all respects he meets Daniel Hoffman's description of the new type of hero quoted earlier in this work:

> A romantic genius. He has all the powers of a man of the Renaissance . . . save that in no way does he show any interest toward man in society. He cares not a whistle for the knowledge that benefits mankind.[36]

Old Shatterhand is a hero with no wife, no family, and no fixed home, living and becoming famous in a country that is not his own. His goal is to learn how to survive, overcome, and dominate strange people in an alien land. Hitler first made himself a stranger among his own people, and then went to another country not his own to survive, overcome, and dominate. Hitler used precisely the same methods as Old Shatterhand. Old Shatterhand became the "Man of the West" who always won and got his way. Hitler would become *Der Fuehrer* whose will always triumphed. Though I disagree with Klaus Mann on many of his characterizations of Karl May's novels, there is more than a little truth in his observations that Adolf Hitler, "nourished in his youth by Old Shatterhand, is now attempting to rebuild the world," and that "[t]he Third Reich is Karl May's ultimate triumph."[37]

IN THAT HOUR IT BEGAN

All of the ideas and decisions that followed, according to Hitler's "peculiar form of logic,"[38] after his first rejection of the department store world, dramatically came together five to seven years later, in 1905, and set him on the path to becoming *Der Fuehrer.* The dramatic moment is recorded by August Kubizek as one of his most unforgettable experiences.[39] He devotes a special chapter of his memoirs to "the most impressive hour that I ever spent with my friend."[40]

Gustl and Adolf originally met in November 1904 while attending an opera, and soon became the closest of friends based on their mutual love of art—especially music. Thereafter they were inseparable, and they attended every opera together, especially Wagner's operas.

On a cold night in January 1905 they met excitedly to go to see Wagner's *Rienzi,* an opera neither had seen before.[41] They hurried to the theater to secure their accustomed places and watched the performance with "burning enthusiasm." But when this particular opera was over, Kubizek recalls, Adolf was strangely different. "Usually, after an artistic experience that had moved him, he would start talking right away, sharply criticizing the performance, but after *Rienzi* he remained quiet a long time."[42] Obviously, something had touched young Adolf personally.

Instead of their usual banter, the two boys walked silently through the streets of Linz. Adolf's silence about the performance "surprised me," recalls Kubizek, "and I asked him what he thought of it." Hitler did not answer his friend but instead threw Kubizek "a strange, almost hostile glance."[43] So they walked along toward home in silence as Adolf brooded. Suddenly Adolf turned off their normal course to take the road to the Freinberg, a mountain near Linz. Kubizek wanted to ask him where he was going, but "his face looked so forbidding" that Kubizek suppressed the question and followed him up the mountain road.

When they reached the mountaintop it was after midnight, and the stars shone brilliantly in the vault of sky above them. Suddenly Adolf turned to face his friend, reaching out to grasp both of his hands. "He had never made such a gesture before," recalls Kubizek. "I felt from the grasp of his hands how deeply moved he was. His eyes were feverish with excitement." Whatever he had seen or identified with in that opera, Kubizek felt, "had shaken him."[44]

Then Hitler began speaking. "The words did not come smoothly from his mouth as they usually did, but rather erupted, hoarse and raucous." Kubizek recalls, "Never before and never again have I heard Adolf Hitler speak as he did in that hour, as we stood there alone under the stars, as though we were the only creatures in the world."[45] As the words erupted from Adolf, Kubizek was astonished, feeling that not only he, but even Hitler himself "listened with astonishment and emotion to what burst forth from him with elementary force." What erupted from Hitler was "a state of complete ecstasy and rapture, in which he transferred the character of Rienzi . . . with visionary power to the plane of his own ambitions."[46]

What was it that Hitler had seen in that opera that so touched him? *Rienzi* is the story of a medieval youth of Rome who, at a time of Rome's degradation—with the pope at Avignon and Rome despoiled by its ruling families (the Colonna and the Orsini)—dreamed that "he might become the chosen instrument to revivify the dominion of the proud Republic, might live to become the tribune of her people and the appointed symbol of her resurrection to life."[47]

By some accounts, Rienzi is nothing but "a demagogue and a charlatan." According to others, he was a "visionary and dreamer [who] held the torch of idealism high in an age when a realism of boundless baseness

dominated."[48] By mingling with the common people, and by outstanding oratory, Rienzi won the crowds of Rome to his side and, with the support of the Church, became the dictator of Rome in 1347.

Edward Bulwer Lytton wrote a stirring novel about Rienzi that was published in 1835. It was his most popular novel, was translated into many languages, and served as one of the sources of inspiration for Wagner's opera of the same name. Wagner presented Rienzi as a "messianic redeemer of the people" who strove to create an ideal state. Rienzi is cast as "the charismatic leader of a republic, the Tribune who was above the ordinary politics of class." It is an opera about "the mystic unity between ruler and people."[49] It was this with which Hitler had identified, and it revealed to him a role which he could dream of someday reaching. *Here was the perfect artist turning an entire people into the materials of his dream to transform ordinary life into something extraordinary.*

In Hitler's identification of himself with this role, Kubizek recalls: "Like flood waters breaking their dykes (*sic*) his words burst from him. He conjured up in grandiose, inspiring pictures his own future and that of his people."[50] Kubizek was astonished at the outpouring triggered by the opera. It was a different friend he saw that night:

> Hitherto I had been convinced that my friend wanted to become an artist, a painter or perhaps an architect. Now this was no longer the case. Now he aspired to something higher, which I could not yet fully grasp. It rather surprised me, as I thought that the vocation of the artist was for him the highest, most desirable goal.[51]

But at this moment that goal was forgotten or, perhaps, transmuted. Hitler was dreaming of something far grander: "Now he was talking of a *mandate* which, one day, he would receive from the people, to lead them out of servitude to the heights of freedom."[52] In this hour on the Freinberg, all the ideas that the young Adolf had been forming over the past six or seven years—his rejection of the ordinary world, his belief that he was exceptional, his search for the extraordinary, and his ideas of art and greatness—suddenly came together. "He spoke of a special mission which would one day be entrusted to him."[53]

Neither Adolf nor Gustl ever mentioned that evening again until thirty-three years later, when Hitler invited Kubizek to be his guest for the 1939 Wagner Festival in Bayreuth. On that visit, Hitler twice confirmed the importance of that night on the Freinberg as the beginning of his political career. The first occurred when Kubizek mentioned that night to Hitler in a private conversation. Hitler listened to Kubizek retell the story and confirmed Kubizek's recollection, adding, "In that hour it began."[54] Later, on the same visit, Kubizek heard Hitler recount the same story to Frau Winifred Wagner, again concluding solemnly, "In that hour it began."[55]

NOTE ON THE CREDIBILITY OF KUBIZEK'S MEMOIRS

For more than half a century, the credibility of August Kubizek's memoirs[56] has been in doubt in two regards: first, as to Kubizek's general credibility; and second, as to the specific facts relating to Kubizek's account of Hitler's *Rienzi* experience.

The issue of Kubizek's general credibility historically arose due to a vituperative attack by Franz Jetzinger in *Hitler's Youth* (1955), in which Kubizek was accused of dozens of misstatements of fact. In addition, Jetzinger was incensed at the tone and what he believed to be the Kubizek's purpose, accusing the latter of attempting to "rehabilitate his friend" by "obscuring the true features of the abominable criminal, Hitler, with a mist of myth and flattering fairy tales."

Jetzinger's attack tainted almost all subsequent scholars' estimation of Kubizek's credibility. Frederic Spotts in *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* (2002) gives the most recent summary of the case against Kubizek's general credibility.[57] However, Spotts fails to take into account Brigitta Hamann's *Hitler's Vienna: A Dictator's Apprenticeship* (1998), in which she reports of her specific investigation of the witnesses who claimed to know Hitler in Linz and Vienna. Regarding Jetzinger's claims against Kubizek, Hamann finds Kubizek to be more accurate, concluding that although he sometimes gets dates wrong, "Yet, altogether, Kubizek is reliable. His book is a rich and unique source for Hitler's early years."[58]

Ian Kershaw appears to bless Kubizek's general credibility by contributing the introduction to the latest translation of Kubizek's memoirs by Geoffrey Brooks, also entitled *The Young Hitler I Knew* (2006). While recognizing that Kubizek's memoirs may have many flaws relating to any set of recollections recorded decades after the events recorded, nevertheless, Kershaw concludes that "Kubizek's book rings true in the portrait of Hitler's personality and mentality."[59]

As to the second issue, Kubizek's specific account of Hitler's experience on the Freinberg after attending a performance of Wagner's *Rienzi* opera, I have addressed this issue at length in "Hitler's Rienzi Experience: Factuality." There I present extensive evidence that Kubizek's uncontradicted eyewitness account of Hitler's conduct on that occasion is strongly corroborated by multiple independent sources, justifying the conclusion that it meets the normal common law standard for primary evidence worthy of *prima facie* acceptance.[60]

NOTES

1. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler*, 52–54.
2. "My own firm determination . . . sufficed to give me complete inner peace. And this decision in me was immutable" (Hitler, *Mein Kampf,* 9).
3. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 357.

4. *Ibid*., 360.
5. *Ibid*., 361.
6. *Ibid*., 359.
7. *Ibid*., 361.
8. Peirce devotes an extensive discussion to this distinction as the basis of abduction in his essay, "On the Logic of Drawing History from Ancient Documents," *EP2*, 75–114 (see especially 86–95).
9. Fest, *Hitler*, 531.
10. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 362.
11. *Ibid*.
12. Quoted in Waite, *Psychopathic God,* 46.
13. Emphasis in original. The other "fact" he mentions, not of immediate relevance here, is: "I became a nationalist."
14. See, for example, Fritz Stern, ed., *The Varieties of History: From Voltaire to the Present* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1956).
15. *Mein Kampf*, 14.
16. Peirce, "On the Method of Drawing History from Ancient Documents," in *EP2*, 80.
17. *Mein Kampf*, 14. (Emphasis added.)
18. *Ibid*., 118.
19. *Ibid*., 421.
20. Fest, *Hitler*, 532.
21. Quoted in Konrad Heiden, *Hitler: A Biography*, trans. Winifred Ray (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976), 97.
22. *Ibid*., 49.
23. Nolte, *Three Faces,* 289.
24. Fest, *Hitler*, 4
25. Poe, RUE, 154.
26. "Pragmatism whatever else it may be is nothing else than the true Logic of Abduction" (Peirce, "The Nature of Meaning," *EP2,* 224). See, also, Peirce's essay on "Pragmatism as the Logic of Abduction," *EP2,* 227–241.
27. Peirce, "An Essay on Reasoning in Security and Uberty," *EP2*, 465.
28. "Speech of April 5, 1929," in *Hitler's Words,* ed. Gordon W. Prange (Washington, DC: American Council on Public Affairs, 1944), 142.
29. "Speech of November 26, 1929," *Hitler's Words,* 157.
30. Fest, *Hitler*, 534.
31. Stanton A. Berg, "Sherlock Holmes: Father of Scientific Crime Detection," *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology and Police Science,* vol. 61, no. 3 (September, 1960): 446–452.
32. See, for example, May's *Winnetou,* 33 and 675.
33. Albert Speer recorded, for example, that Hitler believed "a people could be wholly foreign to you, as foreign as the Bedouins or the American Indians were to Karl May, and yet, with some imagination and empathy, you could nevertheless know more about them, their soul, their customs and circumstances, than some anthropologists or geographers who had studied them in the field" (*Spandau,* 384–385).
34. Cook, "Nazism," 343.
35. As Hitler Youth Leader Fritz Helkes wrote, "The youth book we want is not an insipid moral-soaked thing—the youth would disdain such literature—Karl May is the type of author we want." *Ibid*., 347.
36. Quoted earlier in Ch. 4, at p. 79, and cited to: Daniel Hoffman, *Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe, Poe* (New York, Doubleday, 1972), p. 127.
37. Mann, "Cowboy Mentor," 222.
38. Heiden characterized Hitler's logic as *"eine eigentuemliche Art von Logik,"* in *Eine Biographie*, 111.

39. The corroborating evidence to establish the actual happening of this event is set forth in Ben Novak, "Hitler's Rienzi Experience: Factuality," *Revista de Historia Actual*, no. 5 (Invierno, 2007), 105–116.
40. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler,* 98.
41. There has been considerable debate as to the date when Adolf and Gustl attended this opera, as well as Hitler's age at the time. The dates when the opera was actually performed have been ascertained from the local Linz newspapers by Herr Friedrich Ortner of the Oberösterreichische Landesbibliothek, Linz. These dates are: Tuesday, January 3 and 10; Thursday, January 5 and 19; and Sunday, February 12, 1905; it was not performed on any other dates. Hitler's age at the time was variously said by Kubizek to be seventeen (*The Young Hitler,* 118); and at another point sixteen (*Ibid.,* 272). He was fifteen; his sixteenth birthday would not have been until a few months later, April 20, 1905. Here it is assumed that Hitler and Kubizek attended one of the first performances in January while Hitler was still on Christmas vacation from his school in Steyr.
42. *Ibid*., 99.
43. *Ibid*.
44. *Ibid*.
45. *Ibid*.
46. *Ibid*., 100.
47. E. H. Blackeney, introduction to *Rienzi: The Last of the Tribunes,* by Edward Bulwer Lytton (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1911), vii.
48. *Ibid*., ix.
49. Paul Lawrence Rose*, Wagner: Race and Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 25.
50. Kubizek, *The Young Hitler*, 100.
51. *Ibid*.
52. *Ibid*. (Emphasis in original.)
53. *Ibid*.
54. *Ibid*., 101. (Kubizek recounts the same story again at 290.)
55. *Ibid*.
56. August Kubizek, *Adolf Hitler: mein jugendfreund* (Graz: Leopold Stocker, 1953), translated by E. V. Anderson and published in England as *Young Hitler: The Story of Our Friendship* (London: Paul Popper, 1953), and in the United States as *The Young Hitler I Knew* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1954).
57. Spotts*, Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics* (London: Hutchinson, 2002), xv–xviii.
58. Hamann, *Hitler's Vienna*, 56.
59. August Kubizek, *The Young Hitler I Knew*, trans. Geoffrey Brooks (London: Greenhill Books, 2006), 14.
60. Ben Novak, "Hitler's Rienzi Experience: Factuality," *Revista de Historia Actual*, vol. 5, no. 5 (2007): 105–116.

EIGHT

Closing Argument

How Did He Do It?

Scholars and attorneys often take different approaches to concluding their presentations. Scholars normally conclude books in which they present a new idea with a summary or recapitulation of their arguments, a more formal statement of the conclusions drawn from them, and often discussion of their wider significance. Attorneys, however, in addressing their closing arguments to a judge or jury often save their best arguments—by which I mean addressing those facts in the record[1] that best clinch their case—for last. Since I was a practicing trial attorney for most of my adult life, please allow me to conclude this work—which has simply presented my "theory of the case" regarding the mystery of Hitler's rise to power—as though I were making my closing argument to a jury.

This investigation began with the question: Why was Hitler politically successful? Specifically, we were seeking to identify what particular "personality or character trait: talent, skill, or ability (natural or acquired); genius, or method, did Hitler possess," that *enabled him* to be successful. The answer proffered is that it was his use of, facility with, and permeation of his character by the method of abductive logic. So far, I have presented general arguments about how this particular trait helped Hitler to form both his political *persona* and his *Weltanshauung*, as well as to craft his speeches for maximum effectiveness.

I have also endeavored to show how Hitler may have been introduced to this method through Karl May's novels, as well as somehow having grown into it quite naturally. If I may risk a broad generalization: it should come as no surprise that Hitler was born within a few years of both Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories (1887) and Karl May's *Winnetou* (1893) bursting into print, and that he rose to power in

the 1920s and 1930s, known as the "Golden Age of the Detective Novel." For, as I have argued, the detective novel was an entirely new form of literature developed to showcase the abductive reasoner. In other words, it was a time when abductive reasoning burst out popularly in the culture. Hitler appears to be an almost perfect fit, I have argued, for the model of the "Ratiocinative Man" (identified with the genre of detective novels so popular in this period) transferred to the political arena.

But, my readers may be thinking: all this is very interesting, and perhaps quite insightful, but could you, the author, be a little more specific? Would you please give us some examples of how Hitler applied this so-called abductive logic in concrete, practical ways, such that we can see how and why it made him so much more effective, formidable, and successful than other politicians in his rise to power?

As a trial attorney, I assume that questions like these are what most juries are thinking at the conclusion of a case: show us exactly how the burglar got into the house. At this point, therefore, what I invite juries to do, and will now ask the reader to do, is to cock your head to the side in order to view the facts from a slightly different angle.

In our previous discussion of abduction, the emphasis was primarily on seeing facts existing in the present, not simply as bare or naked facts, but as clues or signs pointing to something else. For example, a simple indentation on the ground can be seen not only as a footprint, but also as a clue, sign, or signal pointing to the movement or presence of an enemy. Similarly, a detective comes upon a crime scene to examine it for any existing clues that may be found, which will point to the identity or method of the criminal. In each case, the abductive reasoner begins the logical process by examining facts presently before him or her, and thinking backward to determine their significance, i.e., what they point to.

However—and this is the new facet that I am asking you to consider—one may also reason from facts that do not exist in the present, but only in an imagined future. If one's imagined conception of a desired future state of affairs is sufficiently complete, one may reason backward from a future that does not yet exist—and will not exist unless one imagines it—in order to determine what must be put in place in the present to make what is imagined come to pass. In a certain sense, this is what criminals do when they create false alibis, or deliberately plant facts at the scene of a crime to mislead the police. In a more positive light, while it may have involved primarily forward reasoning to put a man on the moon, it required an immense amount of backward thinking to imagine all that will have to be prepared in advance and packed into the spaceship before it takes off, in order to enable the astronauts to get back to earth. Consider, therefore, that there are two ways to think abductively: one is by thinking backward from existing facts, while a second is thinking backward from imagined facts.

Throughout this work so far, we have focused on how Hitler dealt with the existing facts constituting Germany's political situation after the First World War. While other politicians accepted these facts, Hitler refused to accept them, insisting instead, not only that they were strange and unusual—fairly calling out for explanation—but that they ought not exist. Therefore, he set out first to imagine a completely different society and government for Germany, then thought backward from this imagined state of affairs to put the steps in place to achieve it. Therefore, let us recreate some of the steps he set in place to achieve what he imagined.

In order to discover and reveal these steps, however, we shall first have to employ abduction to find them. The first requirement of abduction is the element of surprise. The rule we shall apply is best enunciated by the Chevalier C. Auguste Dupin in the first detective story by Edgar Allan Poe, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Dupin maintains that it is by "deviations from the plane of the ordinary, that reason feels its way." In solving a mystery, he insists, one should always look, not for what one expects to find, but for what is strange, unusual, and unexpected. Dupin, therefore, offers the following principle that we shall adopt in searching for examples of Hitler's use of abductive logic: "In investigations such as we are now pursuing, it should not be so much asked 'what has occurred,' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before.'"[2]

FIRST EXAMPLE: CHARGING ATTENDANCE FEES AT PUBLIC RALLIES

As soon as one peruses the record of Hitler's first few months after his entry into the tiny German Workers' Party (DAP) on October 3, 1919 (which one can easily do by reading a few pages of almost any of the major histories or scholarly biographies of Hitler), one will immediately be struck by a singular fact that precisely meets Dupin's criterion for something that "has never occurred before."

For example, regarding a public meeting Hitler scheduled to be held November 13, 1919, Joachim Fest's account in *Hitler* contains this uncommented-upon sentence: "He [Hitler] ventured something totally unusual—he began charging admission to the public meetings of this tiny, unknown party."[3] Similarly, Charles Bracelen Flood in *Hitler: The Path to Power* reports, "Hitler introduced an idea that was entirely new on the Bavarian political scene. They would charge admission to the next meeting: 50 pfennigs; half a mark."[4] John Toland in *Adolf Hitler* also notes: "On November 13 a second mass meeting was held. . . . More than 130 men . . . paid an admission fee of fifty pfennigs, something new in local politics."[5]

None of these authors/bioigraphers/historians—nor any of the other hundreds of scholars who have studied Hitler's early political career and

also noted this unusual act—have ever written or said, nor apparently thought, anything more about it. Yet, as I hope to show, as soon as one considers both its background and consequences, this decision to charge attendance fees at public political rallies can be seen as a simple abduction (thinking backward) from a vision of what he hopes to create in the future. Rather than thinking things forward from start to finish as his opponents attempt to do, Hitler thinks backward from finish to start, putting elements in place for the final result even before they are strictly necessary.

Most biographers and historians present Hitler as a fanciful dreamer and impassioned demagogue, operating solely on feeling and emotion, but utterly fail to see the cool, logical method in his madness. So as not to keep the reader on tenterhooks, let me jump ahead to explain that, with this "entirely new" idea of charging admission, Hitler in one stroke created the first self-financing political movement in history. To achieve such an effect was in itself a remarkable political accomplishment. With this in mind, let us now step back to put it into context. First, we shall consider the background, and then the consequences.

Background of Hitler's Decision to Charge Admission

Hitler attended his first meeting of the German Workers' Party (DAP) on September 12, 1919. He is thoroughly unimpressed. A few days later, however, he receives a postcard in the mail informing him that he has been accepted as a member of the party. Incensed at the presumption, he resolves to go to the next meeting to deliver his rejection in person. There he learns a little more about the party, such as that: its total funding consists of 7.5 marks carried around in an old cigar box; its actual membership is barely over half a dozen members who regularly attend its meetings; and when it has a speaker it can attract three or four dozen more people by handwriting invitations and personally delivering them to friends and acquaintances. Hitler's first indignant reaction to all this is: "Terrible, terrible! This was club life of the worst manner or sort. Was I to join this organization?"[6]

Hitler leaves the meeting, but then reflects on what he has seen. "What was this," he asks himself, "if not a typical sign of the complete hopelessness and total despair of all existing parties . . .?[7] But, then, he later recalls, "Fate itself now seemed to give me a hint," which was:

> This absurd little organization with its few members seemed to me to possess the one advantage that it had not frozen into an 'organization,' but left the individual an opportunity for real personal activity. Here the content, the goal, and the road could still be determined. . . . For it was a new philosophy and not a new election slogan that had to be proclaimed.[8]

Here is where Hitler begins thinking abductively. If one accepts his judgment about the "complete helplessness and total despair of all existing parties,"[9] then it follows that he must begin imagining what different kind of political party or movement could replace them. Hitler clearly has one in mind, which he describes as not a party of election slogans, but one with a "new political philosophy" to be proclaimed. Now, the idea of proclaiming a "new political philosophy"[10] may seem abstruse (vague, obscure, difficult to understand) at this point, but let us avoid what Dupin calls the "gross but common error of confounding the unusual with the abstruse." Rather, let us ignore the vagueness, in order to focus on the unusual. Hitler 's professed goal is that he is envisioning a political party unlike any other.

The result is that within a few days, Hitler decides to throw in his lot and join this *Stammtisch* group on October 3, 1919. He is placed in charge of propaganda (i.e., getting people to come to the party's meetings), which he takes advantage of by proceeding to establish a new goal, content, and road for this party. His first task, however, is to get the party known and to increase its size. For, he writes, "in the first period of our movement's development we suffered from nothing so much as from the insignificance, the unknownness of our names."[11]

To accomplish this, he comes up with his first idea: mimeographing the invitations instead of handwriting them, which allows many more to be made and more time to deliver them. The results are minimal. His second idea is to publicly advertise the meetings in the newspaper. Since the party has no funds to speak of, its members take up a collection among themselves to pay for the advertising for their next scheduled "mass meeting." The results are gratifying: on October 16, 1919, 111 people fill the hall.[12] (Note that so small is the party at this time that an audience of 111 out of a city population of 700,000 constitutes a "mass meeting.")

Hitler speaks for the first time, the effect of which he describes in *Mein Kampf*: "After thirty minutes the people in the small room were electrified and the enthusiasm was first expressed by the fact that my appeal to the self-sacrifice of those present led to the donation of 300 marks."[13]

Now, dear reader, keep your eye on the money. When Hitler joined the party, its total funds consisted of 7.5 marks. Hitler finds a way to attract more people to hear the party's message, and measures his success by how much in the way of donations he brings in. Much is made by both Hitler and his biographers and historians of his success at attracting these 300 marks. Charles Bracelen Flood, for example, notes that Hitler "had just brought in forty times the amount of money that the party's treasury had possessed when he attended its executive meeting less than a month earlier."[14] Hitler himself explains that the receipt of these funds:

> relieved us of a great worry. For at this time the financial stringency was so great that we were not even in a position to have slogans printed for the movement, or even distribute leaflets. Now the foundation was laid for a little fund from which our barest needs and most urgent necessities could be defrayed.[15]

After this successful "mass meeting" of October 16, therefore, it can fairly be said that Hitler is thinking of money, for he knows it costs a lot to create a genuine mass movement, and that party members cannot continually be asked to personally cough up money for advertisements for all the meetings Hitler wants. Indeed, at this time Hitler is arguing to the party that a "city of seven hundred thousand inhabitants could stand not one meeting every two weeks, but ten every week."[16]

With this background, let us now consider the significance—i.e., the consequences—of Hitler's idea of charging admission to meetings.

Consequences of Charging Admission to Meetings

The idea of charging admission fees was decided to be put into effect at the next public meeting of the DAP, which was scheduled for November 13, 1919. That meeting was attended by129 persons grossing, we may estimate, at 50 pfennigs each, a total of 64.5 marks. Thereafter, at least four more meetings were held prior to the end of 1919, attended by 170, 140, "over 200", and 270 persons, for a total of at least 909 for all five meetings.[17] At one-half mark each, these five meetings would have brought in a total of 454.5 marks—more than fifty percent more than the highly touted 300 marks donated at the October 16 meeting.

Hitler nowhere in *Mein Kampf* mentions the sums brought in by this method, but nevertheless, the significance of Hitler's idea of charging admission cannot be underestimated. For if the donation of the 300 marks of October 16 allowed the party to defray its "barest needs and most urgent necessities," it was this additional source of income that enabled Hitler to pay for the advertising of these and subsequent meetings, as well as to extend both the organization of the party and his personal control over it. By Christmas 1919, Hitler had rented an office for 50 marks a month and hired a business manager, the party's first paid employee. This was possible only because of the attendance charges already earned, as well as the regularity of income that admission fees to future meetings and rallies would assure.

If, however, raising 454.5 marks in 1919 seems like "small potatoes," consider what it means in the following year. Contemporary attendance estimates have been compiled by Donald M. Douglas for about 64.5 percent (thirty-one of forty-eight) of the public meetings held by the DAP/NSDAP in 1920.[18] These estimates show approximately 53,150 attendees which, at one-half mark each, yields 26,575 marks. If we extrapolate for the remaining seventeen meetings for which estimates from contempo-

rary sources are not available, we may surmise a total attendance at public meetings in 1920 of 82,403, yielding gross income from admission charges of 41,201.5 marks. Such amounts, whether before or after extrapolation, are definitely not "small potatoes." Indeed, the total income from Nazi attendance fees alone may equal or exceed the total sums made available to the Munich or Bavarian sections of the large national parties, such as the Social Democrat, Communist, Centre, or the various nationalist parties.[19]

Records are not easily available for many subsequent years, due in part to the destruction of party records after the seizure of offices and the outlawing of the Nazi Party resulting from the 1923 Putsch. Also, Hitler was in prison from November 1924 until December 1925, and then, except for one meeting, under a ban on public speaking in Bavaria from February 1925 to 1927, and in other parts of Germany until 1928. However, we do have studies of Nazi Party financing from the late 1920s and early 1930s. Chief among these is Henry Ashby Turner, Jr's., study of *German Big Business and the Rise of Hitler*. In regard to income from attendance fees at public rallies, Turner reports:

> Virtually all contemporary observers expressed amazement at the large number of rallies held by the Nazis. Beginning in the late 1920s they had *departed from normal practice* by scheduling frequent rallies even when no election was pending; in effect, the Nazis launched a permanent campaign. . . . Prussian police estimated that the NSDAP had held an average of 100 rallies a day throughout Germany . . . [and that] an average attendance of 500 persons at each rally would, even if one assumed a profit after expenses of only ten pfennig per head, produce an annual [net] income of 1.75 million marks.[20]

Obviously, Hitler's new idea (in 1919) for raising money by charging admission fees produced income in the millions of marks for party activities by the end of the 1920s.

Focusing on this otherwise unremarked innovation of Hitler, however, also offers another kind of insight into Hitler's appeal. Many observers of Hitler's meetings and rallies noted, often with puzzlement and amazement, the amount of "hoopla" surrounding his speeches, in the form of parades, bands, songs, and spectacle. When one takes into account how much Hitler from the beginning considered his speechmaking events just as important for their moneymaking potential as for whatever political effects they may have, this begins to make more sense. If people are paying to get in, one has to give them a show; if they enjoy the show, they are more open to the political message. Over the years, Hitler perfected the combination of these twin aims. Turner describes the final effect:

> The typical Nazi rally combined elements of a religious revival meeting, a carnival, and a military review. Especially in small backwater

> cities and towns, this formula added entertainment value to the political appeals of Nazism. Rallies in such a setting were normally preceded by a parade of brown-shirted SA troopers through the streets to the hall or tent in which the meeting was to be held, where a band concert entertained the audience as it awaited the arrival of the speakers. As an added enticement the Nazis frequently included in their rallies various forms of entertainment, such as plays, movies, and songs.[21]

Recognizing Hitler's innovation in relation to admission charges also offers another insight into Hitler's method. The focus of Henry Ashby Turner's work was researching the question of whether German big business actually financed the Nazi Party and the rise of Hitler. Based on the facts unearthed, Turner specifically refutes the "false assumption that the NSDAP, like the bourgeois parties of the Weimar Republic, depended on contributions from large contributors." Rather, Turner insists, "That simply was not the case."[22] Where, then, does Turner find their sources of funding? Regarding attendance fees, he reports that the "Nazis had come close to perfecting the fine art of separating people from their money while subjecting them to torrents of propagandistic rhetoric."[23]

Charging attendance fees, however, was not the only source of funding instituted by Hitler in the first few months after joining the tiny German Worker's Party (which became the National Socialist German Worker's Party—NSDAP—in February 1920). Another large source of party funding reported by Turner was membership dues, which—though not original; other parties also charged membership dues—Hitler instituted in early 1920. But the part that dues played in financing the party came later. In the early years, Hitler boasted, "The party was financed almost exclusively by my meetings. The membership dues stood in no relation to the money brought in by my speeches."[24]

The main point, however, is that Hitler did not just enter politics as a fanatical beer hall orator simply salivating to harangue an audience with a torrent of words. Rather, from the very beginning, even when he was struggling to get a mere 111 people to watch him stand on a beer hall table to orate, he was thinking ahead to the financing of the kind of party and movement he envisioned. Charging attendance fees to the public was his entirely new idea for how to finance a political party, and with it he created the first self-financing political movement in history. As a result, contrary to the myth that Hitler was financed by big business, Turner repeatedly stresses that "just as the Nazi leaders proudly proclaimed at the time, their party financed itself quite handsomely through its own efforts," and "the Nazis themselves, not Germany's capitalists, provided the financing for Hitler's rise to power."[25] In fact, one of the ironies of Hitler's early rise to power is that, while his opponents were constantly aware that the Nazis had access to rather large funding, they were simply blind to the fact that, when they went to see what was going on, they had to pay admission fees!

Finally, let me quote a very astute American observer of German political developments of this period, George N. Shuster, who sees many parallels to the American political scene.

> From the very beginning it was apparent that Hitler was a politician of quite unusual ability—fully equal to Boss Murphy,[26] though his methods were more akin to those typical of the [American] Middle West . . . He [Hitler] must not be defined as a person who went around haranguing crowds and persuading them to accept his doctrines. Of course he did these things. But he wasn't foolish enough to waste time on them until he built up a party as dependent on him for political favors as ever Brooklyn Democrats were on the late Mr. McCooey.[27]

Thus, by applying abductive logic, we have discovered a remarkable idea that Hitler came up with by applying a logic that none of his competitors understood. With it he not only found a new way to finance his movement, he also found a way to create patronage and build a political machine that rivaled Tammany Hall!

One final note is Hitler's description of where his financial planning led. "By 1922," he writes,

> there existed, by and large, firm directives for the business as well as the organizational development of the movement. . . . Current expenses had to be covered by current receipts; extraordinary receipts were used only for extraordinary expenses. Despite the hard times, the movement thereby remained, apart from small running accounts, almost free of debt, and even succeeded in steadily increasing its resources. We worked as in a private business."[28]

Contrary to the modern image of Hitler as a raving fanatic completely out of touch with reality, our experiment of applying abductive logic reveals instead a very sober, innovative, and successful businessman.

SECOND EXAMPLE: HITLER'S IDEA OF THE FUNCTION OF A PARTY PROGRAM

After raising attendance at party meetings by the end of 1919—and solving the problem of financing—Hitler's next project is to draft a party program, more commonly referred to in the United States as a party platform. Over Christmas and into January 1920, he and Anton Drexler spend many late nights hammering out the points or planks into language and ideas that would serve their purpose. But what was their purpose?

Most biographers and historians of Hitler simply assume that his and Drexler's purpose in drafting the program's twenty-five points was to serve the normal function for which party programs or platforms are usually promulgated. Here we can rely on a Wikipedia stub for the most

common understanding. It defines the term *party platform* as a "list of the actions which a political party, individual candidate, or other organization supports to appeal to the general public for the purpose of having said peoples' candidates voted into political office."[29] Therefore, the usual and normal reason for adopting a *party program* is to get people to join the party, support it, and vote for its candidates at election time.

William L. Shirer, for example, views the adoption of the Nazi Party program in exactly this light. He describes its twenty-five points as a "hodge-podge, a catchall for the workers, the lower middle class and the peasants."[30] John Toland does the same, writing that "there was something in it for almost everyone but Jews," and goes on, like Shirer, to list the specific appeals to different groups: "For the patiotic . . . For the workers . . . For the middle class . . . For the völkish-minded . . ."[31]

But did Hitler and Drexler see the function of a party program in this way? Applying Dupin's method of searching for "deviations from the plain of the ordinary," let us examine what Hitler says about it in *Mein Kampf*. First, however, let us note a strong clue about what we should be looking for. About three-quarters of the way through the work, Hitler writes, "How often we shook with laughter at these simple bourgeois scare-cats, at their ingenious, witty guessing games about our origin, our intentions, and our goal."[32] Although this sentence appears on the fourth page of a chapter entitled "The Struggle with the Red Front," Hitler begins that chapter by discussing the insipid boorishness of meetings of bourgeois nationalists. He also refers to his "Red friends" who "poured into" Nazi meetings "to smash up the whole show." In contrast to both, he writes, "From the very beginning . . . what we said in our speeches was . . . in content and form always suited to *provoke*." (Emphasis added.) Immediately after the sentence about "shaking with laughter" Hitler writes, "We chose the red color of our posters after careful and thorough reflection in order *to provoke* the Left, *to drive them to indignation*. . .."

Considering all of these actions of Hitler at the beginning, which were taken with the aim of provoking enemies and repelling groups whom one would expect he would be appealing to for support; and further considering how he shook with laughter at their "guessing games about our origin, our intentions, and our goal," might we not abductively form a hypothesis that the framing of the party's program—its purposes and function—will not fit the normal mode either?

As soon as one begins perusing Hitler's various accounts in *Mein Kampf* of the purpose and function of the party platform, one comes upon something quite different from what most biographers and historians assume. Rather, as Hitler explains at the beginning of volume 2, which sets out the purposes and organization of the movement: "In the founding period of our movement, our first concern had always to be directed toward *preventing* [the party] from becoming a mere club for the advancement of parliamentary interests"—in other words, from becoming a nor-

mal political party. For this purpose, Hitler writes, "the first precautionary measure was the creation of a program which . . . seemed apt to *scare away* . . . small and feeble spirits."[33] Now, this—the adoption of a party program intended to frighten potential members—may indeed meet Dupin's conception of something "that has never occurred before."

This, of course, is exactly what Hitler desired, as he explains in the chapter on "Propaganda and Organization," where he writes: "As director of the party's propaganda I took much pains . . . by an extremely radical conception that the party should obtain only the best material." By the best material Hitler means the most dedicated, committed, and radicalized persons, who are ready to work and fight for the party. His reasoning, therefore, is far different from party platforms designed to appeal merely for votes.

> For the more radical and inflammatory my propaganda was, the more this frightened weaklings and hesitant characters…. How many thousands assured me at that time that they were essentially in agreement with everything we said, but that under no circumstances could they become members. The movement, they said, was so radical that membership in it would expose the individual to the gravest difficulties, nay, dangers, and we shouldn't take it amiss if the honest, peaceable citizen should stand aside.[34]

To which Hitler immediately adds: "And this was good." His basic idea of a party program, therefore, is: "The battle-cry which scares away the small spirits at the very start, or soon makes them despair, will be the signal for the assemblage of real fighting natures."[35] In 1928, Hitler explained what Konrad Heiden calls this "noteworthy theory" of organization:

> It does not require much courage to do silent service in an existing organization. It requires more courage to fight against an existing political regime. As soon as a man engages in offensive opposition to an existing regime, he will have to summon up more courage than the man who defends it. The movement requires more courage than naked tenacity. Attack attracts the personalities which possess more courage. Thus a condition containing danger within itself becomes a magnet for men who seek danger. A program with radical ideas will attract radical men, a program with cowardly ideas will attract cowardly men. . . . What remains is a minority of hard, determined men.[36]

This was Hitler's goal throughout the early development of his party: to assemble a membership "swift as greyhounds, as tough as leather, as hard as Krupp steel."[37] For he was thinking ahead to the time when the state and the public would eventually realize how radical his intentions really were, at which point, he foresees: "And now, finally, comes the active resistance of the existing state. All parties, public opinion, take a

position against us." This was not something to be avoided, but to be anticipated and welcomed, he writes, because

> therein lies the unconditional, I might say the mathematical, reason for the future success of the movement. As long as we are the radical movement, as long as public opinion shuns us, as long as the existing factors of the state oppose us—we shall continue to assemble the most valuable human material around us, even at times when, as they say, all factors of human reason are against it![38]

This is certainly a strange logic, which Hitler himself admits is against "all factors of human reason." Let us consider this an example of what Dupin was speaking of when he advised, "In investigations such as we are now pursuing, it should not be so much asked 'what has occurred,' as 'what has occurred that has never occurred before.'" For, surely, what Hitler expresses upon completing the draft of the party program—"These points of ours are going to rival Luther's placard on the doors of Wittenberg"[39]—is not a normal reaction to the adoption of a party program or platform.

How did this strategy work out? Hitler later judged that it worked exactly as he imagined. In *Mein Kampf*, he writes:

> The live and aggressive form that I gave to our propaganda reinforced and guaranteed the radical tendency of our movement, since now only radical people—with some exceptions—were ready for membership. At the same time, this propaganda had the effect that hundreds of thousands not only believed us to be right but desired our victory, even if personally they were too cowardly to make sacrifices for it, let alone fight for it.[40]

Thus Hitler felt justified in his imagining of how the future would turn out. This is what I consider an abductive result. He imagined a certain future, aimed his party program and propaganda toward recruiting a very limited type of membership and scaring off all others. Eventually, the tough fighters he attracted earned the grudging admiration of weaker spirits, until he could count on the support of hundreds of thousands who, though they would not fight for his cause, nevertheless desired its victory.

THIRD EXAMPLE: HITLER BUILDS A PARTY MACHINE

While all historians credit Hitler's rise to power to his unique and powerful speechmaking ability, Donald M. Douglas did a meticulous study of Nazi Party statistics for the period January 1920 to July 1921 for the purpose of actually gauging Hitler's effectiveness as a public speaker. Specifically, Douglas sought to determine whether there is a "demonstrable statistical correlation between the efforts of [Hitler] and the num-

ber of conversions as recorded on the party's membership roster?"[41] Douglas divides his data into six-month increments. For the first six months, January–June 1920, he finds that the data "reveals no consistent relationship between public meetings and the number of new members joining the party on the day of, or on the day following these public meetings."[42] Since other members of the party were sometimes main speakers at events, Douglas separately looks at those meetings where Hitler was the principal speaker and concludes that "Hitler's record as a proselytizer during this six-month period was spotty."[43] For example, for four meetings held in the spring after the adoption of the party program, a total of only one person joined the party. For the second period, July–December 1920, Douglas reports while Hitler's speaking activities nearly doubled, nevertheless the results were, as in the first six months, "mixed."[44]

Thus we seem to have a conundrum. Hitler's oratory appears not to have been driving new recruits into the party, and the party platform seems to have been deliberately designed to drive people away from joining it. What then was the secret of the party's growth in this nascent period?

Let us revisit the words of George N. Shuster quoted above, that Hitler

> must not be defined as a person who went around haranguing crowds and persuading them to accept his doctrines. Of course he did these things. But he wasn't foolish enough to waste time on them until he built up a party as dependent on him for political favors as ever Brooklyn Democrats were on the late Mr. McCooey."[45]

Consider these together with Konrad Heiden's observation that "it was above all, the material and financial organization of the new party that kept Hitler busy in the first months."[46] Let us now inquire about how his plan of financing meetings through admission fees and his program designed to keep out the weak and lukewarm were actually being put into effect.

Background

When Hitler joined the German Worker's Party in October 1919, he was only the fifty-fifth member to join it in the nine months since it was founded the previous January. But thanks to his efforts, the party was now growing. His first convert appears to have been made in June 1919, even before he heard of the DAP, at an army educational camp where he met with "like-minded comrades" and a new type of political party was discussed, whose basic ideas turned out to be "the same as those later realized in the 'German Workers Party.'"[47] This convert was Captain Ernst Roehm, one of the most astute and politicized officers in the Ger-

man army, as well as one of the most well-connected operators with all elements of the Right in Bavaria. In November 1919, a few days after Hitler joined the DAP, Roehm also joined, bringing with him a contingent of soldiers and officers.[48] By the end of the year, the party had picked up 135 members, growing to 190.[49] After a meeting on February 5, forty new members were brought in; the meeting of February 20 when the party program was presented bought in forty-seven more.

Hitler Organizes the Membership

A few days later, on February 24, Hitler sets out organizing the membership, dividing Munich into four districts, and placing responsibility on the members for propaganda and organization in their areas.[50] Hitler, of course, appointed the leaders of each district. Membership dues were instituted at one-half mark per month.

But more importantly, Hitler began even at this very early date to build the basis of a party machine every bit as devoted to a "boss" as Tammany Hall had ever achieved. Every week Hitler travelled to each district by trolley to personally meet with new members. The party office rented over Christmas now assumed a function beyond bookkeeping and recordkeeping. Every Monday the leaders of each district came to the office where they spent evenings being trained and educated by Hitler. Hitler became the sole leader whom the rank and file personally knew, and the sole contact with the party for most members between meetings.[51]

We may now discern how the party was growing. At each of the public meetings and rallies, the members were prowling the crowds looking for suitable material—young, strong men with a desperate look in their eyes, who were looking for something to believe in. These men were then invited to become members of an "elite" organization whose members believed that they were planting the ground for a new Germany. This method was obviously different from that of all other parties. The extreme radicalism of the party platform and Hitler's speeches guaranteed that the meetings would be interesting; the "hoopla" of parades and flags and bands and songs made them entertaining. But prospective members saw that this was no slick deal, but a real revolutionary party.

While Tammany Hall and many of the major political machines in the United States took several decades to develop, Hitler set up all of this in six months. By the end of April 1920, he had 353 members. By August Munich's four districts had been subdivided into ten, and ten more districts were recognized outside Munich. The party grew to 725 members, plus perhaps 2000 more outside Munich. By the end of the year, membership was 1,512. By 1923 at the time of the Putsch, Hitler had more than 55,000 party members.[52] By the summer of 1921, Hitler achieved complete personal control of the party; every officer was appointed by him,

and every member was personally responsible to him. This became his normal procedure all the way to the death of President Hindenburg, when Hitler combined the chancellorship and presidency, and demanded a personal oath of the entire armed forces to himself.

What is astonishing in retrospect is the strength and resilience of the organization Hitler put in place in the period 1920–1921. For example, after the Putsch of November 1923, Hitler and other party leaders were either arrested or fled into exile, and the party was declared illegal and banned. Yet, fifteen months later when the ban was lifted the party quickly reconstituted itself; by the end of 1925, it grew to 26,000 members, to 49,000 in 1926, and to 78,000 members in 1928. Keep in mind that this growth may in no way be credited to Hitler's oratory because, except for one speech given on February 24, 1925, he was either in prison or personally under a ban on public speaking from November 1923 to April 1927 in Bavaria, and until 1928 throughout most of the rest of Germany.

From the earliest period of the party, therefore, it can be truly said that Hitler "built up a party as dependent on him for political favors as ever Brooklyn Democrats were on the late Mr. McCooey."

Like the party's financial independence, this organizational strength and resiliency did not just happen; it was planned. Hitler reasoned backward from his vision of the powerful political machine Germany needed. He began putting them into place from the very first moment he began organizing his party.

FOURTH EXAMPLE: HITLER FORBIDS ANY PHOTOGRAPHS OF HIMSELF

Keeping in mind Hitler's concern upon joining the tiny German Workers Party—"in the first period of our movement's development we suffered from nothing so much as from the insignificance, the unknownness of our names"[53] —one of the best examples of Hitler's abductive reasoning is his decision about photographs of himself. Normally one expects a demagogue to want to have his name and face plastered everywhere. (Think of the old proverb: "Fools' names and fools' faces are often seen in public places.") From the very beginning of Hitler's political activity, however, he refused permission to have any photograph of himself taken or published.

While this story is ignored by most biographers,[54] one can find it in *Hitler Was My Friend*,[55] the memoirs of Heinrich Hoffmann, who subsequently became Hitler's official photographer. Hoffmann was born into a family that had long been the official court photographers for royalty, including the kaiser. Young Hoffmann eventually built his own reputation for photographing the rich and famous—including Enrique Caruso, the great opera star of the time—as well as a press and later war photog-

rapher. After the war, his book of photographs of the revolutionary turmoil in Bavaria 1919–1920 was a great success.

As an internationally known photographer, he was sought out by an American photographic agency for a picture of Hitler. On October 3, 1922, he received a telegram: "Send immediately photo adolf hitler offer hundred dollars"[56]—which was quite a sum at that time. Elated, Hoffmann, who had had joined the Nazi Party as early as the summer of 1920, went to see his friend Dietrich Eckart, editor of Hitler's newspaper, the *Völkischer Beobachter*.

Eckart explained to him that getting a picture of Hitler was impossible. When Hoffmann asked why, Eckart gave two reasons. First, Eckart explained, it was one of Hitler's "many moves in the game of political chess he was playing." From the beginning, Hitler had imagined that, when his fame as the most radical politician in Munich was established, with thousands of people attending his frequent rallies, it would be his "camera-shyness" not his picture, that would become, in Eckart's word, "sensational."[57]

Here, one is reminded of Albert Einstein's "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious."[58] Indeed, it came to pass just as Hitler imagined. The absence of any picture of Hitler became a topic of public discussion. Eckart pointed to a recent issue of the famous Munich magazine of Karl Kraus, *Simplicisimus*, which, Eckart said, rendered Hitler "a valuable service from a propaganda point of view" by running an article titled "What Does Hitler Look Like?" over a series of hand-drawn caricatures.

The second reason for Hitler's refusal to let his picture be taken was that he was thinking of financing for his party. He was holding out to sell the exclusive rights to his image in order to raise money for expanding the SA. Thus Eckart's response to Hoffmann's request was: "If anyone wants a photo of Hitler, he'll have to pay not a hundred or a thousand dollars, but thirty thousand dollars."[59]

Hoffmann was incredulous. It was the first time he had ever faced a situation where a public figure had asked to be paid for his picture. "I've taken photos of Emperors and Kings and famous people all over the world, and never have I been asked to pay anything. On the contrary, it is I who am always paid."[60] To which Eckart replied that Hitler had already turned down an offer of 20,000 dollars.

Hoffmann quickly grasped Hitler's reasoning and understood that the longer Hitler keeps his image off a photographic plate—and provided he continues his meteoric rise in politics—the more valuable it becomes. But, he also realized that anyone may snap a photo in public. When Hoffmann expressed the latter thought, Eckart agreed but with a knowing smile, suggesting that Hitler knows that, too.

Hoffmann learned what Eckart meant when he set up to photograph Hitler in public. Every member of Hitler's party knew how to deal with

anyone attempting to take their leader's picture. The moment Hoffmann clicked the photograph, his camera was seized and the photographic plate removed and destroyed.

The points I wish to make are two: logic and financing. First, Hitler imagines his future fame, and then imagines the possibilities; he imagines how doing the opposite of what any normal demagogue would do can add to his fame—and, more relevantly, further the aim of his propaganda. Seeing the advantage of people talking about the fact that his photo is not seen anywhere, he also thinks backward to instruct his security guards, long before he actually is famous, to seize the camera of anyone attempting to take his picture.

Second, Hitler keeps his eye on the money, and this in three ways. First, some people came to his rallies just to see what he looks like, since everyone was talking about this man, which of course increased the take on admissions. Second, his ban on photos does not protect him; anyone who wants to harm him can come to any of his public meetings and rallies to see his face—provided they are willing to pay the entrance fee. Third, by banning anyone from taking his photo, he is creating a property—the exclusive right to photographs of him—that will become of great economic value. He is already planning how to spend the money to further his political goals.

CONCLUSION

Now, the point of all these examples is to illustrate that Hitler was no ordinary demagogue who merely flattered the crowds, played on their emotions, and told them what they wanted to hear. Rather, he acted on a plan he created in advance completely in his mind, and then, in a very short period of time, methodically put each element of what he had only imagined into place. Perhaps, what is most astonishing is that he did it, as he himself admits, "against all factors of human reason," by doing the opposite of what both his opponents and contemporary observers expected him to do, and by being prepared to take advantage of the opportunities he imagined would result.

But even more astonishing is that even today few of his biographers or historians grasp what he was really doing. As I documented in chapter 1 of this work, they still find Hitler's rise to power to be an inexplicable mystery, and the man behind it an "unperson" and a "black hole." Attempting to make sense of the first abductive reasoner in politics, Hitler's biographers and historians, just like his contemporaries and opponents, are confused and misled by the false clues he laid.

But, my reader may be thinking: Is this really abductive logic? Is it not simply good planning—or what every *good* politician or wise leader does in seeing what will be needed? Indeed, I believe my reader is right. But

what I am suggesting is that there is a logic to good planning as well as wise leadership; the more farseeing a leader's vision, the more it depends, not on deduction or induction, but on that form of logic known as abduction. While not wanting to imply that Hitler was either good or wise, I am arguing that Hitler was extremely astute at planning for his party's future, and that the examples I have described above are merely four concrete instances of how Hitler employed this logic.

In summary, the first requirement of abductive logic is surprise. Throughout his career, but especially at the beginning when he laid the foundations of his success, Hitler was the master at this. Counting on his opponents to always think forward according to normal deductive and inductive logic, he preferred to think backward from current facts, as well as from imagined future situations, enabling him to envision more possibilities that he could prepare for in the present. Thus by the power of abductive logic, Hitler's imaginings paradoxically allowed him to keep one step closer to practical reality.

As galling as it may be to admit, it seems that Hermann Goering long ago provided the key to explaining Hitler's rise to power, as well as unwrapping the mystery of Hitler's character. He once boasted: "In later times, the historians will not know how to depict it. For the first time in world history the historians will conclude: that did not happen by the normal process."[61]

Abductive logic, as I have argued throughout this work, is the means by which some people are enabled to successfully navigate through non-normal situations and turn them to advantage. It is also the conceptual means by which to make sense of, and to unravel, that which does not happen according to normal processes. As soon as we acknowledge what I earlier described as Hitler's "facility with, use of, and the permeation of his character by abductive logic," Hitler's life and career will no longer present the mysteries they do today.

NOTES

1. By "facts in the record," I mean the facts found in the major biographies and histories of Hitler's rise to power, the published records of Hitler's words and actions, and the testimony (memoirs) of those who knew Hitler directly.
2. Poe, RUE, 293.
3. Fest, *Hitler*, 121.
4. Charles Bracelen Flood, *Hitler: The Path to Power* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), 77.
5. Toland, *Adolf*, 98.
6. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 222.
7. *Ibid*.
8. *Ibid.*, 223.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Ibid.*, 353.

12. *Ibid.*, 355.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Flood, *Hitler: The Path*, 76.
15. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 355–56.
16. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 358.
17. *Ibid.*, 358.
18. The figures for total attendance are computed from data appearing in Donald M. Douglas, "The Evangelist's Apprenticeship: Hitler's Effectiveness as a Public Speaker, 1919–1921," *Wichita State University Bulletin*, vol. 50, no. 1 (February 1974), University Studies no. 98, 3–18, by counting the asterisks (denoting public meeting dates) for 1920 in Table 1, (*Ibid.*, 4-5); and by totaling the estimated number of attendees listed for each such date in 1920 as shown in Tables 2 and 3 (*Ibid.*, 8-9).
19. For example, Henry Ashby Turner, Jr. reports that in the mid-1920s, "the annual budget of the national headquarters of a major party such as the DNVP came to only about half a million marks, and . . . a bourgeois party could mount an election campaign in some of the thirty-five electoral districts of the Republic for as little as 20,000 to 30,000 marks" (*German Big Business*, 24).
20. *Ibid.*, 119.
21. *Ibid.*, 118.
22. *Ibid.*, 347.
23. *Ibid.*, 118.
24. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 113.
25. Turner, *German Big Business*, 347.
26. Charles F. "Silent" Murphy (1858–1924) was said to be the most powerful boss in the history of Tammany Hall—New York's famous Democratic political machine. In *Citizen Kane*, the character of Jim Gettys, the political boss in the book and film, is based on Boss Murphy.
27. Shuster, George N., *String Man Rules*: *An Interpretation of Germany Today* (New York, D. Appleton-Century, 1934), p.271. John J. McCooey (1864–1934) was the longtime boss of the Brooklyn Democratic political machine.
28. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 593.
29. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party_platform (accessed November 10, 2013).
30. William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1960), 41.
31. Toland, *Adolf*, 101–102.
32. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 483.
33. *Ibid.*, 378 (Emphases added.)
34. *Ibid.*, 586.
35. *Ibid.*, 399.
36. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 314.
37. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 356.
38. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 314.
39. Toland, *Adolf*, 100.
40. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 586.
41. Douglas, "The Evangelist's," 3.
42. *Ibid.*, 6.
43. *Ibid.*, 7
44. *Ibid.*, 9.
45. Shuser, *op. cit.*
46. Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 96.
47. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 208.
48. "Roehm became a member of his new friend's party. But what was more important, he herded into it his soldiers and officers" (Konrad Heiden, *Hitler: A Biography*, 71). See also, Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 31.
49. Flood, *Hitler: The Path*, 86.
50. *Ibid.*, 113.

51. *Ibid*., 114; Heiden, *Der Fuehrer*, 97.
52. Flood, *Hitler: The Path*, 463.
53. Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 353.
54. E.g., Bullock, Shirer, Fest, Toland, Kershaw. Flood, however, does briefly mention it (*Hitler: The Path*, 354).
55. Heinrich Hoffmann, *Hitler Was My Friend,* trans. R. H. Stevens (London: Unknown, 1955).
56. *Ibid*, 41.
57. *Ibid*, 42.
58. Albert Einstein, "The World as I See It," originally published in "Forum and Century," vol. 84, 193–194, the thirteenth in the Forum series, *Living Philosophies*. It is also included in *Living Philosophies* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1931): 3–7; and *Ideas and Opinions, based on Mein Weltbild*, ed. Carl Seelig (New York: Bonanza Books, 1954): 8–11.
59. Hoffmann, *Hitler Was,* 42.
60. *Ibid*.
61. Quoted by Cecil Robert, *The Myth of the Master Race: Alfred Rosenberg and Nazi Ideology* (New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1972), 96; citing K. Heyer, *Wenn die Götter den Tempel verlassen* (Freiburg: Novalis Verlag, 1947), 105.

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BLUE	The Blue Carbuncle
CARD	The Cardboard Box
CHAS	Charles Augustus Milverton
COPP	The Copper Beeches
FINA	The Final Problem
FIVE	The Five Orange Pips
GREE	The Greek Interpreter
HOUN	The Hound of Baskervilles
MAZA	The Mazarin Stone
MUSG	The Musgrave Ritual
REDH	The Red-Headed League
RESI	The Resident Patient
SCAN	A Scandal in Bohemia
SCAR	The Scarlet Letter
SECO	The Second Stain
SIGN	The Sign of Four

STUD A Study in Scarlet

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Ben Novak is a retired attorney and teacher who resides in Ave Maria, FL. Born in Johnstown, PA, he received his BA from Penn State University in 1965, and his JD from Georgetown University in 1968, after which he served as an Army Captain in Vietnam. From 1970 to 2001, he practiced law in State College, PA, where he also earned an interdisciplinary PhD in history, philosophy, and political science from Penn State University in 1999. From 2001 to 2008, he taught philosophy and law in Europe.