

Nazi Germany's Propaganda Machine: *The Rise*

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Abstract

Peculiarities in German history led to the emergence of a 'special path' (Sonderweg), which was represented by the rise and rise of Adolf Hitler. Because Hitler's 'shadow' was so large, and stretched in technique, approach, ascension, and plan, it shaped the diversity of interpretations of this phenomenon. Nazism was the product of unique features of German history and culture, of political developments different from the rest of the states on the European continent. The character of Adolf Hitler cannot be understood if we use an isolated reflection on what the demagogue, the mob agitator, and the dictator of the Third Reich meant. However, those who follow this path isolated by other means will reach a conclusion that will be false, and will lead to the "isolation" of this phenomenon from what the sphere of everyday life and unimportant elements means, such as the banal, thus losing it the meaning. Hitler's dictatorship is shaped by premises related to his life, the environment from which he came, education, aspirations, and dreams that dominated the character of the young man, then the soldier, and, finally, the leader Adolf Hitler. This paper is a guide that provides a vision that brings together the opinions and arguments of

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both specialists and a reflection built from articles, and documents on one of the abnormally and historically interesting characters of the personality that in 1938 was declared by TIME magazine, Man of the Year, who was at the same time dictator, "demon" and demagogue. It is an attempt to understand the one who excited a nation and gradually came into conflict with an entire world. The creation of powerful myths, which, together with the propaganda carefully orchestrated by Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda in the Reich, led to the animation of crowds numbering millions of Germans who were fascinated by him and the Nazi movement.

If weren't for Adolf Hitler, perhaps the collapse of the castle from playing cards that represented the international order in this great, changing, and dynamic scene of the interwar period, established by the Versailles system, would have occurred in another way - maybe a peaceful one or maybe not at the intensity that Hitler dictated, and not as catastrophic.¹

The interwar period produced a change in values. This also means a culture of personality that requires that individual to possess a magnetic influence, the ability to capture, attractiveness, domination, use of force, aggression in the way the message was communicated to the other, and special energy to mobilize the masses. These combined elements, immediately after the end of the First World War, were put in the service of a demagogue who became the leader of Germany in 1933, without restraint and with a special vocal timbre.² He didn't need to resort to sophisticated things, because power and performance, his art of

¹ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomația*, Bucharest, ALL, 2018, p. 25.

² Konrad Heiden, *Hitler: A Biography*, London, Constable & Co Publishers, 1938, p. 18.

convincing those he spoke to, was natural. It could create a wide sound, rich in unusual shades and vibrations.

Thus, the First World War generated a monstrous logic that most could not accept, and as a result appeared characters like Hitler who deceived these masses with an explanation built on lies, deception, vain promises, and terror, which caught the audience.

The rise of Adolf Hitler to power is one of the most interesting and remarkable ascents that a personality in history has been able to go through. It was a unique career in history, for the oratorical talent cultivated with an iron will represent the political capital with which Hitler set out. He wandered through Vienna with simple baggage made up of shattered dreams and a talent for which he did nothing to possess - oratory - given an accessible language, speaking in simple terms, which was understandable to all: from comrades on the front, then the people and political leaders.

He "hunted" his opponents to the point where he brought them into their weakest and most disadvantaged position. He had this characteristic of being able to feel fear and weak character, so where he could easily manipulate, and get what he wanted, using his theatrical and oratorical talent. He wanted power and did everything he could to have it.³

A brief history of the Führer's private life

Between 1928-1930 it represents the failure, the electoral disaster for the Nazi movement and, especially, for Adolf Hitler. Despite the Nazi Party's campaign and the increasingly influential figure of Adolf Hitler, the first election of 1928,

³ Karina Urbach, *Go-betweens for Hitler*, Oxford, OUP Oxford, 2015, p. 165

which took place on May 30, displeased him. They were the result of the economic recovery that the Weimar government has tried to materialize through the measures taken. The National Socialists, who had their own list of candidates, remained, however, an insignificant electoral force, with a share of only 2.6% of the total votes.⁴

After the election and this failure, Hitler spoke in front of party members, telling them that their struggle must continue, and defeat communism. In 1928, Germany was still recovering from the defeat of World War I, but dissatisfaction with the situation in the German state had arisen among the German people, with Hitler relying heavily on what he sought to exploit.

In October 1929, the Wall Street crash occurred, which gave him the opportunity to strengthen his image as the savior, the hero of the German nation. Soon after this event, which affected Germany, citizens began to lose confidence in the Weimar Republic's political system and attempts at economic recovery. Under these conditions, Hitler expected people to find him as the only way to salvation, and not the other way around. Thus, thanks to the power of a vision based on the size of information that shaped his policy in *Mein Kampf* and a speech in which the language is simplistic, but in which used a special verbal rage, he managed to gain attention and, finally, the support of millions of followers. The vote given to him by the Germans was a form of protest against the system of democracy condemned from the beginning, and so uncertain. This

⁴ Deutscher Bundestag, 'Elections in the Weimar Republic', *The Weimar Republic (1918 - 1933)*, https://www.bundestag.de/resource/blob/189774/7c6dd629f4aff7bf4f962a45c110b5f/elections_weimar_republic-data.pdf, p. 2.

crisis was, in fact, the factor that brought the success of the Nazi movement and, implicitly, to Hitler.⁵

Public demonstrations, and rallies had Hitler at the center, and he used these meetings to tell his listeners what they wanted to hear - that there was a political party that could solve all their problems. He has shown his constituents that he is an energetic political figure who is passionate about his cause. Despite the failure of the *Munich Putsch* in 1923, after publishing his ideas in his autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, Hitler tried to capture the political scene, becoming a national figure.

As soon as he was released from prison, Hitler realized that he could trust the trained audience with whom he had made a connection through the routine of his speeches and the sense of security they generated at the end.⁶ Depending on the audience, Hitler adapted his oratorical style, and appearance, that was, everything related to visual and sound detail: he moderated his opinion, and his speech was a little more settled in terms of the harsh message to those who had punished the German nation after the war. The speech was also moderated in the anti-Semitic direction, not emphasizing these hostilities of his crystallizing in Munich, because he was still not sure how the German people would react to this idea of his. It has become very popular.

His image, thanks to well-orchestrated propaganda techniques, came to a surprising extent at that time. This is the beginning of a cult of personality that reaches colossal dimensions. At that moment, the international scene would see an unprecedented 'spectacle' offered by the Führer of the German people: a single

⁵ Vladislav B. Sotirović, „The great economic depression in the weimar republic”, *Economics*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2014, [file:///C:/Users/g50/Downloads/10.11648.j.eco.20140301.11%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/g50/Downloads/10.11648.j.eco.20140301.11%20(1).pdf), pp. 1-8.

⁶ Anna Maria Sigmund, *Dictator, demon și demagog - Întrebări și răspunsuri despre Adolf Hitler*, Bucharest, RAO, 2011, p. 31.

spotlight, a single light only for the speaker who spoke using timid tones, then firm, wild, vibrant, the crowd was delighted both by him and by the careful artistic arrangement made to highlight his characteristics.

The elections held on September 14, 1930 represented the effects of the Great Depression. As a result, due to poverty and the radicalization of large sections of the population, as well as the increase in political violence, the Nazi Party get a substantial number of votes, 6.5 million votes. This is because Adolf Hitler managed to draw people's attention to Nazi demagoguery and movement.⁷

This was a unique moment in Hitler's career, as it was the first time that he was truly respected as a politician. Through a biblical devotion to the "Messiah" who had come to save them, enchanted by him, the Germans began to believe in his ideological fantasy. The audience thus becomes the "ornamental" they needed. The German nation gave the floor to a certain, unknown speaker, Adolf Hitler, finally reaching to discover the savior, the "Messiah" who seemed to promise them a glorious future, coming to submit unconditionally to him.

In 1932, Hitler became the most important political figure in Germany, a success due to the interest his supporters had in his public words. To Hitler's astonishing power and influence as a speaker was added the enthusiasm sustained by his speeches, which were confined not only to the audiences of the German people, but also to those belonging to high circles in Germany. Hitler had very convincing arguments both for the German nation and for the

⁷ Deutscher Bundestag, 'Elections in the Weimar Republic', *The Weimar Republic (1918 - 1933)*, https://www.bundestag.de/resource/blob/189774/7c6dd629f4aff7bf4f962a45c110b5f/elections_weimar_republic-data.pdf, pp. 2-3.

neighboring countries or for those who had anything to do with the German mentality and culture.⁸

There is a big difference between the activity of the 'minor' party leader and the failed revolution of the *Munich Putsch*, to the status of Führer, being an ascent with many parts of this narrative to be questioned. He did not become a major factor in German political life until he began to gain the influence he claimed and gained access to the tools to exercise power, first as leader of Germany's largest party, then chancellor, and finally, the head of state and supreme commander of the Wehrmacht.⁹

There were a number of occasions in Adolf Hitler's career when, faced with a difficult decision, he seemed unable to think, and these elections were one of those moments. The question he faced in January 1932 was: should he run for president or not? Hindenburg looked unbeatable. The "legendary hero" Hindenburg was supported not only by many elements of the right, but also by the democratic parties that were against him in the 1925 elections, but which now saw him as the savior of the Republic. Being put in this situation, Hitler wondered whether to risk the reputation of invincibility that the Nazis had built in the 1930 elections when the Nazi Party triumphed spectacularly. At that time, there was another problem: Hitler was not eligible to run because he was not a German citizen.¹⁰

⁸ Max Domarus, *The Complete Hitler: A Digital Desktop Reference to His Speeches & Proclamations, 1932-1945*, „Volume I: 1932-1934“, Mundelein, Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2007, pp. 9-10.

⁹ Betty Glad, „Why Tyrants Go Too Far: Malignant Narcissism and Absolute Power“, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 2002, pp. 8-9.

¹⁰ William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2011, p. 138.

Joseph Goebbels, however, urged him to announce his candidacy. On January 19, they left for Munich together, and that evening Goebbels noted in his diary: *'I discussed the presidency with the Fuhrer. No decision has been made yet. I strongly advocated for his own candidacy'*. Next month's notes in Goebbels's diary reflected the pros and cons of Hitler's campaign. On February 2, 1932, the future Reich propaganda minister noted that Hitler had decided to run for office, but would not make any public statement *'until it was clear what the Social Democrats would do'*. One night in Munich, Hitler and Goebbels had a long discussion about their role in the Third Reich. The future leader had in mind, as Goebbels stated in his diary, the creation of a ministry of radio, culture, art, film, and propaganda. Then he talks about plans for a "grand change of capital." "The Fuehrer had all his plans completed, he spoke, acted, and felt as if we were already in power". However, he omitted only one thing: how he would defeat Hindenburg."

Hitler solved the problem of his citizenship. On February 25, Adolf Hitler obtained German citizenship by naturalization. Brunswick's Home Secretary announced that he had appointed Herr Hitler an attachment to the Brunswick legacy in Berlin. The Nazi leader automatically became a citizen of Brunswick and therefore of Germany, thus being eligible to run for president of the German Reich.¹¹ Overcoming this obstacle, Hitler pursued his ambition to become the leader of Germany. His opponent, Hindenburg, was part of the 'old guard', and Hitler was at the opposite pole, representing modern politics. Like Mussolini, Hitler believed in futuristic technologies again. He gave speeches continuously, with a strong dynamic force, and Goebbels painted his image even more pronounced, becoming a complement and indispensable for his image and the

¹¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 138-140.

Nazi movement. During this campaign, he made a gesture that no leader had dared to do before: he flew through Germany. It carried a modern campaign, abundant in innovation and nuances. This, as well as the speed and continuity with which he gave speeches, led to the transformation of the Nazi movement into a real political force that attracted millions of supporters. Goebbels's propaganda apparatus provided maximum impact on the 'Hitler' brand. And as a result, using manipulation and propaganda, public opinion eventually sided with Hitler.

Hitler became the starter of a new era with new trends, following his dramatic struggle for control of the government in 1932 which ended with the outbreak of war in 1939. His campaign in 1932 to get the votes he needed was full, of defects and weaknesses, but it has been managed in such a way that it has hidden or diverted attention from these defects. A great deal of effort has been put into this.

The effort was even greater because, in his private life as in that of a politician, those around him had to obey him. This aspect was a complicated one, shrouded in mystery because his private life became scandalous, full of all kinds of rumors. In the first phase, his niece, Angela Maria Raubal, 'Geli', with whom he appeared in public since 1925 (this to show an image of 'family man'), causes Hitler to wave a wave of suspicion: she apparently committed suicide, no one knowing the reason behind the young woman's action.

Then, in the middle of the 1932 election, a strange event took place. Eva Braun, as shocking as Geli's case, shot herself in the neck, but unlike Hitler's niece, she survived.¹²

¹² *Ibidem*, pp. 134-135.

Thus, in the spring of 1932, the Nazis found salvation from these 'accusations' in Hitler's vision of himself. In the middle of this year's elections, the National Socialists discovered the value of publicizing Adolf Hitler's private life. This new approach to advertising campaigning prompted Hitler to become the leader of Germany's second-largest political party, which wanted to defeat his political opponents, Paul von Hindenburg, and Communist leader Ernst Thalmann.¹³ But why this decision? Because the elections in the first part of 1932 were difficult.

On March 13, German voters gave Hindenburg seven million votes, but it was still not enough to get a majority. The National Socialists expected the "Hindenburg era" to end. Because a majority was not obtained, a second-round was organized the following month. Here, the Nazis adopted another strategy: they combined the campaign with the deepening economic crisis, and the vote that will be given to Hitler will amount to two million votes, a third of the electorate¹⁴. After his appeal to the German crowd paid off, Führer's image of privacy became a staple of propaganda until 1939.

The National Socialist advertising focused on Hitler's role as a mass agitator, a leader of a political movement. In this election, the need to capture as much public opinion and support as possible, the propaganda of the Nazi Party was aimed at celebrating the personal duties of the candidate: the young spirit and dynamism of Hitler, as well as the fact that he gave many speeches due to innovative air travel, the Nazis knowing how to sell to the public a leader image through propaganda. This contradicted the aristocratic aura of 84-year-old

¹³ Despina Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home*, London, Yale University Press, 2015, pp. 1-2.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

Hindenburg. The Nazis offered the modernity and splendor of a candidate who flew over Germany to meet his people.

Moreover, the Nazi propaganda brought Hitler's privacy into the spotlight to emphasize his moral and human character and to win the sympathy of voters, especially women (who had previously supported Hindenburg in overwhelming numbers). However, given the circumstances of Hitler's private life, it was a bold move: a middle-aged bachelor, with little family ties, with unknown romantic relationships.¹⁵ Rumors of his private life had surfaced since 1931, after, as I mentioned before, his niece, Geli Raubel, committed suicide in the uncle's apartment in Munich, and by the 1932 election, retaliation had fallen on his image. The public's attention should, therefore, be diverted from these aspects of privacy. However, rumors continued to circulate, and the Nazis were forced to build their own version of the Führer's private life for 'public consumption'.

The image of *Hitler as a Private Man* was the leitmotif of the title of a 1932 photo album by Heinrich Hoffmann, Hitler's personal photographer, who would announce the change. The album was titled *The Hitler Nobody Knows*, which became a bestseller. The book was an element of propaganda, meant to rehabilitate his image and political life. It appeared in mid-March, shortly after the first elections in 1932. Although conceived earlier, it was an effective tool in its campaign, appealing to the general public who discovered part of the Nazi leader's privacy. The idea of the album started from the fact that Hitler decided that for his speeches to be successful, he had to build his number in time, trying different positions to capture attention, and Hoffman photographed him for this.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

On the album cover is a picture of Adolf Hitler wearing a Bavarian-style jacket and wearing a floppy-brimmed hat surrounded by grass, the landscape of the mountains behind him, and one of his dogs, Blondi, sitting next to him. The image, along with the title of the book, signals to the reader from the beginning that the camera would reveal a different Hitler, fulfilling the wishes of his millions of followers who longed for more information about their leader's privacy, but also about his 'interests and abilities'.¹⁶

The text of Hoffmann's album is a 'documented truth', a statement meant to inspire confidence, but also to reject criticism and news that should not reach the public. It is an extremely distorted and narrow view of Adolf Hitler's life. The book also served as a visual supplement, thus becoming a visual addition to Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (it was like a family album, except that in this case the 'family' was represented by the German people that the leader Nazi wanted to be supported unconditionally). Hoffmann's work opens with photographs from Hitler's personal archive when he was a child, then a soldier, as well as his rise as a speaker and politician.¹⁷

Hoffmann also included photographs depicting Hitler in vulnerable poses. For example, Hitler at lunch, having lunch. There are a few that show how the Führer prepares before a speech or in which he has a simple discussion with the mechanic who checks his car. The album shows that few images have the urban landscape as a background. But why? Because Heinrich Hoffmann wanted to present this 'private life' of the Führer to the public surrounded by a picturesque landscape. This highlighted the fact that the refuge for Adolf Hitler was the

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 2-3.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 3-4.

mountain area, where his carefully thought-out image would be delivered to those who saw the album and knew the story of 'his struggle', a leader dressed in light clothes, enjoying the free time, the pleasure of taking a walk with his pets, reading outdoors, adding his gentle character towards children. All this is meant to show how Hitler delimited his political career and the rest of his activities: relaxation and recovery after the stress caused by the political struggle.¹⁸

However, the photos are not apolitical, because they contain stories about Jews, Westerners, and the French. But the real political goal is well masked by the distribution of the material in the album. It is a reformulation of Adolf Hitler's personality in such a way that he looks like a 'good man' with whom you could even talk and negotiate. This also comes from the fact that the German people wanted their leaders to have the same values in private life as those they claimed to have during their political work. Hoffmann did one more thing with this album: he used the passion that Hitler developed as a child for the history of the great emperors and conquerors, to enhance his image. Thus, it elevated him to the same rank as Frederick the Great. At the same time, Hoffmann's carefully planned image format in the book highlighted two characteristics of the Nazi leader: kindness and power.¹⁹

Baldur von Schirach, Hoffmann's son-in-law, hoped that the images depicting, in fact, Hitler's 'personal experiences' would reach an audience beyond the National Socialist circles, that those with access to the book would learn to love and adore the Führer. By learning this, the audience could discover the secret behind the images: that Hitler revealed himself not only as a politician, but

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

also as a friend, an understanding, charismatic man who, when seated at the negotiating table could resonate with feelings such as empathy, diplomacy, and good intentions.²⁰

The Germans knew from the reconstruction of Hitler's past in *Mein Kampf* that he had become systemically an extreme anti-semite, the leader of a violent street paramilitary force.²¹ Schirach and Hoffmann managed this side of Hitler, reinterpreting it cleverly: they appealed to values, not ideology. To mask this, Hitler was portrayed as an individual with 'spartan' habits and great discipline: no drinking alcohol, no smoke, and a vegetarian style of life. He respected his own rules of life, having self-discipline learned from his experiences.

Hitler is the perfect host during parties held at his residence. Some photographs reconstruct, to some extent, his tour in which he gave speeches in Königsberg, Berlin, and Munich, highlighting the speaker and the agitator of the crowds. This reconstitution ended with Hitler and his relatives, exhausted from efforts to organize large-scale rallies.²² These are meant to arouse admiration for his ethics and work, compassion, but also admiration for leading a modern campaign, in which he used the latest technologies to be able to reach his people, to speak to them.²³

The photographs also gave a 'tour' of his hobbies: for example, reading, in one of the images, the audience can see Hitler and his library of more than 6,000 volumes, the dominant ones being those related to history and architecture, then

²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 3-5.

²¹ Richard Breitman, *Nazi Germany (1933-1945)*, „Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, Volume 1 (1925)”, GHDI, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=1874&language=english

²² Despina Stratigakos, *Hitler at Home*, London, Yale University Press, 2015, pp. 3-4.

²³ Richard Breitman, *op. cit.*, 'Berlin *Gauleiter* Joseph Goebbels Greets Adolf Hitler at a Campaign Event in Berlin (January 20, 1933)', GHDI, http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=2085

art, music which, as he once said, was 'a necessity for life'. Although he left school at the age of 16, the 'rehabilitation' made by the book exposes him as an educated and cultured man. In this section, a portrait of A. Hitler in a medieval castle, entitled *Hitler, the Architect*, draws attention. Here, he demonstrated his knowledge of architectural expertise in front of an army corps. Then, as an extension of this posture, it is an image painted in watercolors dating back to when he was a soldier in World War I.²⁴

The components of the 'nice Hitler' were artistically assembled to present the best to the electorate: ethics, hard work, modesty, and middle-class values. The association with the natural landscapes made it seem vibrant and popular among mountain sports lovers. As well as the images in which he appeared with his dogs, which highlighted the love for pets, the exposure had, however, another purpose, hiding a subtle distinction between two terms: master and creature.²⁵ The image in which he is with the children was introduced to win the hearts (votes, in fact) of the voters, making the aggressive image of his party less visible.²⁶

On April 4, 1932, when the campaign officially began, Joseph Goebbels (who would soon become the minister of the institution Hitler had told him he intended to establish) published an article in the National Socialist newspaper *Der Angriff* ('The Attack'), in which he resumed the themes introduced by Hoffmann's book.²⁷ Goebbels stated that his leader was artistically talented, he gave up architecture and painting to lead the Germans on the right path: '*Adolf*

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

²⁵ Karina Urbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-166.

²⁶ Despina Stratigakos, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

*Hitler is, by nature, a good man. «The special love» that Hitler has for children, to whom he is always their best friend and that 'uncle', their father's companion, is well known.*²⁸

Hitler was concerned about their welfare. Hoffmann also highlighted his relationship with his colleagues, his simple lifestyle, his modesty, his work ethic: 'he enjoys the love and devotion of all those who know him as a politician'.²⁹

Despite criticism, the book sold hundreds of thousands of copies (400,000). Until the mid-1930s, according to the German Press Association, the most sought-after images of Hitler depicted not the powerful leader of the Reich, but rather a simple-minded, animal-loving, child-loving gentleman. *The Common Man Hitler*, invented for the 1932 election, had become a global celebrity. *Hitler as a Private Man* provided a consumer image of the main features of the Führer's private life. This scenario, however, will change after 1933.

Adolf Hitler's Messianic Complex

Adolf Hitler was not just a politician. His nature as an artist had as its main purpose the materialization of his supreme art: the search for supremacy, deification, which would offer him a single guarantee, namely the deception of time, the redefinition of everything that had existed until that moment.³⁰

In July 1932, following his victory in the April elections, he became the strongest man in the state. This is when the messianic complex he had been suffering from since the 1920s intensified. Following this, Hindenburg appointed

²⁸ Joseph Goebbels, 'We are Voting for Hitler!', *Der Angriff*, Randall Bytwerk in German Propaganda Archive – Calvin University, <https://research.calvin.edu/german-propaganda-archive/angrif12.htm>

²⁹ Despina Stratigakos, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

³⁰ Colin Jordon, *National Socialism: Vanguard of the Future*, Uckfield, The Historical Review Press, 2011, pp. 18-19.

Hitler vice-chancellor, the second most important position in the state, but that was not what he wanted. He wanted nothing more than absolute, discretionary power. He believed that Paul von Hindenburg's time had passed and his time had come, which is a confirmation of his complex, in which the Messiah of the German people could be seen.

He was absolutely convinced that his political destiny was to become chancellor, to have absolute power.³¹ But he had to overcome an obstacle that prevented him from fully implementing his plans. The impediment was Hindenburg. He did not want to be chancellor, saying: *'I cannot justify to God, to conscience and to the fatherland the transfer of authority to the government of a single party that disregards those who have other opinions'*.³² But Hitler ignored these statements by Hindenburg and continued on his path to political success.

The image of the Führer acquired special significance, becoming more than a public leader, and the cult of one's own personality receiving colossal dimensions. *The Führer* gained in the almost eight years since he set out on the road to political success, gradual meanings, which systematically built the 'Hitler' brand. Thus, the *Führer* was an effect that tried to make, through the equivalent of a *guide*, a connection with the past, with German history, but only with that part which Hitler perceived to be the correct one. Then, using his modest, ordinary origins, the guides become a *prophet*, who was meant to perform deeds beyond his scope. Hence the fact that Hitler perceived himself as a heroic

³¹ Guy Walters, *Hunting Evil: The dramatic true story of the Nazi war criminals who escaped and the hunt to bring them to justice*, New York, Bantam Books, 2010, p. 7.

³² Emil Georg Sold, Paul Friedhoff, *That Time Cannot Be Forgotten: A Correspondence on the Holocaust*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2002, pp. 98-99.

personality, despite the fact that those who came into contact with him during the war unanimously described him as a reserved, awkward, lonely man.

However, the two combined meanings eventually led to Hitler's ability to seize power, becoming a feared, powerful leader who, through lies, persuasion, and terror, became the most contested dictator of the twentieth century. The significance of the *Führer* is complemented by his ambition to perfect his technique and oratory, which became more and more intense, emanating a pathological enthusiasm, turning into rhetoric for the crowd. But the question is how to keep this crowd attracted to this speech which, in the end, no matter how it will display the words to the public, will become a cliché. But Hitler knew that in order to keep the interest of the Germans alive, burning in the sense of supporting the National Socialist movement, he had to attract them with something.³³

But Hitler followed his own propaganda scheme, which began with the banal, then the phantasmagoric, and the cosmeticization that meant building a strong image based on institutions, a ministry, and an indispensable personality – Joseph Goebbels – who had the necessary communication and propaganda skills for his campaigns.

His success was also due to the fact that in the 1932 campaign he exerted an influence on the women voters, who reoriented themselves to the leader of the Nazi movement. *'It was the women's vote'*, remarked Hermann Rauschning in 1939, who brought him success. This significant contribution of women in political life is due to the emancipation that took place with the establishment of

³³ A. E. Samaan, *From a 'Race of Masters' to a 'Master Race': 1948 to 1848*, „A.E. Samaan - History of Eugenics (Volume 1)”, New York, A.E. Samaan, 2013, pp. 143-144.

the Weimar Republic. Many social groups had good reason to be uneasy and resentful of the domestic situation in Germany between 1918 and 1933, but the female half of the population, newly 'equipped' with the vote and the sole eligibility of the institution enshrined in the Constitution, was certainly not among them.

However, it is a paradox why women have given in such a large number to the Nazi movement when it represented the opposite in terms of the ideal and role of women in society. The Nazi party was undoubtedly an opponent of women's emancipation, firmly committed to the vision of women as inferior beings whose main task in life was to bear children and take care of the home.³⁴

However, at least until now, this paradox has not attracted much attention from historians. Many works have paid special attention to the economic and political factors that contributed to Hitler's success during the period 1923 to 1933, neglecting the role of women.

There are many reasons for this neglected issue: one of the most important is that German society has long been dominated by men over most other industrialized societies. There was not yet a strong movement for the liberation of women in Germany that would be such an influential stimulus for rethinking the attitudes of historians towards women in German society during the aforementioned period.³⁵

Of the few attempts that have been made to explain why German women voted for Hitler in 1932-1933, the most popular, most repeated, and (probably)

³⁴ Richard J. Evans, „German Women and the Triumph of Hitler“, *The Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 48, No. 1, p. 123.

³⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 124.

most generally accepted is that this was a moment of irrationality, being carried away by sentiment and not by judgment.

The first to advance this interpretation was Nazi sympathizer Hermann Rauschning. Rauschning's remarks on Hitler's emotional effect on women are that: *'We must see from above, from the tribune of the speaker, the wet and veiled eyes of the listeners, so that there is no doubt about this enthusiasm'*³⁶. According to Joachim Fest, for example, the "overly emotional, distinct, and hysterical tone" that Hitler used in his encounters with the ladies stemmed primarily from the over-emotionalism of a certain type of woman in a particular setting. An age group that sought to expose its impulses in the form of strong political demonstrations before the ecstatic figure of Hitler.

Hitler had a strange fascination with women. In the National Socialist rallies organized specially for women, he was a wanted man and an admired speaker. The speeches here were not followed by the usual political discussions. But, the dictator, starting from his conception of the ideal 'German Woman and Mother', strictly rejects this. The women of the Nazi Party obeyed the will of their Führer. Those who made up Adolf Hitler's entourage accepted this wish. They were only allowed to approach quotes from National Socialist ideology and culture or to have a 'conversation of complacency'. If they did not go beyond these, say, strictly delimited sectors, the Führer addressed them in a very polite, kind, and charming tone. Hitler even said, *'the more gallantly you approach a woman, the more she will refrain from getting involved in matters that do not concern her'*.³⁷

³⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 125-126

³⁷ Anna Maria Sigmund, *op. cit.* pp. 45-46

He allowed the ladies nearby to criticize his clothes, give him advice on a medical matter, or suggest different diets. But Hitler systematically adapted to the demands of the women around him, probably due to the lack of a normal relationship with the so-called partners in his arms. The secret of Hitler's success as a speaker lay in the use of speech, so Hitler himself considered it to be the root of his success as a speaker, capturing the entire audience, both men and women³⁸.

In fact, Hitler considered that among the crowds that acclaimed him, there was a feminine component, with which, he discovered, he could juggle according to his purpose: *'in their overwhelming majority there is such a feminine characteristic by nature, and attitude, so that [...] their thoughts and actions are nothing but emotion and feeling'*³⁹. Among the female audience, the appeal to the emotional and sentimental level that Hitler makes stands out more than the use of oratory and propaganda techniques used in general. Even the harshest critics agree on this. Indeed, it is remarkable that of all the vast autobiographies, *Mein Kampf*, the passages in which he speaks of propaganda and oratory are practically the only ones that historians have considered, capitalizing on them in this regard.

Hitler was one of the most successful orators, and demagogues of all time. However, this does not mean that we should accept his words as an objective statement of the truth about the art of gaining the masses, but as a simple interesting indication of how Hitler thought he could succeed. After all, Hitler did a lot in the *Mein Kampf*, including the Treaty of Versailles, which he aimed to destroy, which he did.⁴⁰

³⁸ Richard J. Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-127.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 127-128.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 129.

Hitler was convinced that his oratorical talent was a natural thing, strong enough and that he did not need other artifices, such as a coach or courses in rhetoric and oratory. So he did not take oratory classes because he thought that the politicians who have such an adviser, as he said, on this issue are ridiculous and weak. But soon the Führer came to express himself with difficulty, and his words were sharp. But he hid the fact that, in his effort to speak, his skin was getting hoarse, his veins were swollen, his face was swollen and his face was congested. The ENT doctor cost a degradation of his untrained vocal cords for such an effort. As 'vocal coach' and opera singer Paul Devrient told him: *'An untrained voice will permanently violate the laws of physiology. Rare successes will more and more often lead to failure and destruction of the voice'*⁴¹.

Hitler did not believe these words until one evening when one of his speeches was scheduled to take place, a power outage occurred, and the amplifiers gave way - Hitler's voice failed to reach the entire audience. Thus, he recalled Devrient, who told him that the greatest and most skilled orators had ruled since antiquity (Demostade), the huge arenas, to the farthest corners, without technical and technological devices. Hitler reacted immediately, wanting to be independent of these fireworks. So, he studied in detail the breathing techniques and the stage play. Each appearance was orchestrated and rehearsed before the event, then analyzed down to the smallest detail. Hitler's appearances, as he liked them with pomp, were authentic theater, in its most elementary form, in which he was a talented actor, but for political purposes.⁴²

⁴¹ Anna Maria Sigmund, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

⁴² *Ibidem*.

His speech came in 1932 to produce in the crowd a hard-to-understand fascination, hypnosis, and a strong and striking psychological impression for the listener. An unusual phenomenon, unheard of before him, took place in the congregations in order to 'accompany' Adolf Hitler with applause and cheers. The perception of the suggestive power of his demagogic words seized all those present, few being able to evade the effect produced by them.

In order to increase the power and persuasion on the "targets", Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels sought to frequently modernize the act of giving a speech and using the word spoken with the image to help the leader of the Nazi movement to achieve the goals and, ultimately, the ultimate goal of having unconditional authority and discretionary powers.

Unlike the other revolutionary leaders, he was a lonely political adventurer who did not represent or show any inclination to represent any important school of political thought. Hitler owed his rise to power to his oratorical style and demagoguery, the essence of which was evidenced by the ability to distill and melt into a single stream the emotions and frustrations of the German nation.⁴³ Hitler became increasingly dependent on public acclaim and applause, as these factors were the vehicle that not only facilitated his ascension, but depending on how skillfully he and his Reich Propaganda Minister showed, his speech would be ordered and his words they would gain the passion needed to gain public appreciation.⁴⁴

⁴³ Victor J. Vitanza, *Negation, Subjectivity, and the History of Rhetoric (Haworth Popular Culture)*, New York, SUNY Press, 1996, pp. 328-329.

⁴⁴ Eric D. Weitz, Eric S. Roubinek, *op. cit.*, „Ernst Bloch, "Hitler's Force" (April 1924)", GHID, http://germanhistorydocs.gwi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=3914, pp. 1-2.

His philosophy in *Mein Kampf* ranged from the banal to the fantastic and consisted in the cosmetic popularization of the radical and conventional discourse of the right-wing political chessboard. When he saw that he could not have a successful career as a revolutionary in Munich in 1923, Adolf Hitler sought to increase his power in others, doing so in a clever way. In 1932, Adolf Hitler became well acquainted with his audience so that he would know when he emanated emotions generated by suspicions and worries about the Nazi movement and what he promised them in his speeches. In those moments when there was this feeling of tension, Hitler acted modestly and carefully. In time, this gesture that he made in such moments will become a reflex. Namely, when he noticed a distance between him and his audience, cautious and easy, in the first phase, he smiled courteously at them, then raised his hands, crossing them slowly, adding a few phrases with a humorous effect, meant to arouse laughter.

He wanted the people, his constituents, to perceive him as a leader, a leader politically, strategically, diplomatically capable, as a hero who appeared on the streets of Vienna to save them. Thus, thanks to well-orchestrated Nazi propaganda, they led the people to believe that Germany would once again be at the height of its success in the new world order it was planning.

The Image of Adolf Hitler in the International Press

Until 1933, when he took power, Adolf Hitler developed an obsession with his own image. From the Bavarian countryside gentleman to the leader of a movement that soon took over the German political scene, he became the source for numerous articles and discussions in the free press represented by famous tabloids such as *Vanity Fair* or *TIME*. In these articles, Nazi propaganda made

sure that the Führer's reputation was carefully modeled. The vain illusion that Adolf Hitler wanted to systematically deliver to different audiences (first, the German people, then the internal elite, and, finally, the leaders of the most important powers), is composed of several hypostases and sequences: Hitler along with his dogs, his entourage, the orator, the leader.⁴⁵

As a complement to his image in the international press, Adolf Hitler appeared twice on the cover of *TIME* magazine, issues on December 21, 1931, and March 13, 1933, respectively.

In the December 1931 issue on the cover of Adolf Hitler, an article entitled *GERMANY: Three against Hitler* appears, setting out the predictions for the 1932 election. The article mentions three important statesmen of Germany, who were fighting together against the aversion of the fascist Nazi movement. These were Chancellor Heinrich Brüning, President Paul von Hindenburg, and their loyal lieutenant, Minister of the Interior and War, Wilhelm Groener.⁴⁶

Every morning, foreign correspondents in Berlin expected the Brüning government to overthrow the fascist Adolf Hitler, who just eight years ago created in a brewery a platform for his ideas and shouted like Mussolini: '*Justice goes hand in hand with power!*'. But Hitler and his movement failed to achieve a satisfactory result in the 1932 elections, but he managed to use his oratory and persuasive technique in an ingenious way that built him an image that would not be overlooked in domestic policy as well in international relations.

The American magazine *Vanity Fair* added him to the list of the best speakers of the time. In March 1932, this magazine published a very interesting issue in

⁴⁵ Detlef Müheberger, *Hitler's Voice: The Völkischer Beobachter, 1920-1933*, Vol. I, New York, Peter Lang AG, 2004, pp. 125-127.

⁴⁶ *TIME*, 'GERMANY: Three Against Hitler', December, 1931, *TIME* Archives, p. 18

terms of topics covered. If we sit for a while and analyze the architecture of the skeleton of the contents of this issue, we can see the following: the audiences who have access to the magazine can assemble from the articles that make up *Vanity Fair* from March 1932, a puzzle of elements such as - art, books, stage, theater (show), people, humor, leader, innovation, communism, revolutionary.⁴⁷ All these elements are listed, if the audience that has access to the magazine, is a careful observer will realize that these elements compose a part of the ideas, experiences, objectives, and, especially, of the character to whom the last article is dedicated, Adolf Hitler.

The article is entitled *Adolf Hitler, Revolutionary*, signed by journalist George Slocombe. This was a study about the future leader of Germany who exerted such force, guiding his desperate compatriots back to the idea of restoring the German state to the title of great power he had, before the 1914-1918 war.

Adolf Hitler, Revolutionist opened with the presentation of the Führer attending a meeting of the Representatives of the Council of War, listening to the information of the lieutenants. But Hitler's attention was caught on something completely different. Behind the wall of a series of technical information, there was a tablet with all the achievements of the Nazi Party so far, as well as a series of "future achievements", the list being concluded by the construction of a new block in the Reichstag building.⁴⁸

The event also coincides with the commemoration of soldiers who fell to the front on duty in World War I and those who lost their lives in the *revolution* launched by Hitler in 1923. The names of all these "heroes" that Hitler after 1933,

⁴⁷ *Vanity Fair*, 1932, Vanity Fair Archives, <https://archive.vanityfair.com/issue/19320301>

⁴⁸ George Slocombe, 'Adolf Hitler, Revolutionist', in *Vanity Fair*, March, 1932, Vanity Fair Archives, <https://archive.vanityfair.com/article/1932/3/adolf-hitler-revolutionist>, p. 41.

used in his propaganda to arouse the feeling of compassion and revolt against the powers that humiliated Germany in 1918, were on a table.⁴⁹ At the end of this council, the lieutenants greet Hitler (the scene is reminiscent of Caesar and his legions).

Hitler, left alone, moves a few inches closer to a painting near the window. Here, the light will expose two images: that of an old oil portrait, depicting Frederick the Great, and the second image is a battle scene on the Western Front in which he gave Adolf Hitler realized, it was blurry, and harder to analyze.⁵⁰

At the same time, George Slocombe described Adolf Hitler in a parallel with the famous actor, Charlie Chaplin. The white, tormented face, the eyes framed by eggplant circles, the black clothes that accentuate the pallor of the skin, a short black mustache, the hands that move convulsively.⁵¹ This idea of comparing the two comes from the fact that over time there have been parallels between the two personalities who, however, represent totally opposite poles: *'There was something unusual about the resemblance between «Little Tramp» and Adolf Hitler representing two opposite poles of humanity'*.⁵²

Providence was ironic about this, the two being born four days apart. But Adolf Hitler was, unlike Charlie Chaplin, who hid his sadness in humor, the individual who would always cast that shadow of a contemptuous smile that threatened to break away from those white, always tense, unhappy features.⁵³ However, each of them expressed their ideas, feelings, and aspirations to millions

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 42.

⁵¹ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

⁵² *The Spectator*, „Two Birthdays“, 1939.

⁵³ *The final speech from The Great Dictator* in <https://www.charliechaplin.com/en/films/7-The-Great-Dictator/articles/29-The-Final-Speech-from-The-Great-Dictator->

of citizens, both upper and lower classes, in different ways. But they lived a common reality, experiencing the situation of the poor young man in modern society (but experienced differently). Each was a distorted mirror, but one made people laugh and another provoked a fierce war. Therefore, Charlie Chaplin was a small man, a clown, shy, clumsy, full of imagination and creativity, with a lot of humor, but always wearing a cane that gave him a certain dignity. Instead, Hitler was an image composed of authority with a few "remnants" of gentleness used only to manipulate and attract people to his side, get a side position that could be justified.⁵⁴

Adolf Hitler was a man chased by the shadows of the past, impulsive, not having the sardonic and deadly calm that his model, Mussolini, had in times of crisis. That's because he was a different figure from the Italian dictator: a sad one, dreaming of revenge.

Journalist Slocombe notes some important details about Hitler as the leader of the Nazi movement tries to question him. His gaze was fiery and dark, with a hint of suspicion, and his voice quickened with emotion, rising steadily to a shrill crescendo. The article highlights the obscurity in which he partially hides from those he speaks to. He was sweating, happening at any discussion Adolf Hitler had. His eyes are always searching for the audience in front of him, those people who have the same values as him (in this case, the "shadow" of Frederick the Great).⁵⁵ His voice, although hoarse, has a certain quality noted by G. Slocombe: its strength arouses emotion and admiration.

⁵⁴ *The Spectator*, *op. cit.*

⁵⁵ George Slocombe, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

It should be noted in the article that Hitler constantly referred to Britain and America. At one point, he even stated, with the same hoarseness and passion for his cause, but with a kind of 'boring nuance', that: *'England, instead of Germany, would not have suffered without protesting the humiliation that Germany has experienced. America would not bear the burden of defeat. Do you think that we can continue generation after generation in the slavery that the debt of repairs generates on us? Would the British or the Americans be under pressure?'*⁵⁶. Here he referred to the collapsing Weimar Republic system, but also to the *November criminals* ('*Novemberverbrecher*') who had agreed to defeat Germany.

He did not believe in violence, despite the daily number of individuals killed and wounded in street fights between supporters of the Nazi and Communist groups (which ended with the burning of the Reichstag). He also denied the military organization of the party (although it was quite obvious) - the council, the posters, the party uniform - all these, as himself suggests, in an extremely polite tone, are just the beginning of a discipline of 'rebellious spirits'. He claimed that he wanted to conquer 'opinion', to transform Germany according to his idea of national rebirth. According to Adolf Hitler, the next elections in Germany would bring the Nazi Party to power, as the previous ones brought it a place in the Reichstag.

From all this pleading, we can see that the powerful Germany that Adolf Hitler talking about it would vehemently reject the Treaty of Versailles, would include in its composition Upper Silesia, the Polish Corridor, Danzig, and other lost provinces, the banned arms at Versailles, the subjugation the great bankers who became rich after the war in 1918, the nationalization of banks, the discipline

⁵⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 45.

of socialists and trade unions. Slocombe also notes that although Hitler tried to be 'decent' in this regard, he was in fact a fanatical anti-Semite.⁵⁷

When George Slocombe looks at the portrait questioningly, and Hitler, who was suffering from an immediate emotional reaction, awakens from his disappointment, becoming animated again - he speaks of war and on behalf of the generation of young Germans who suffered and died most painful way possible. According to Hitler, they alone have the right to dictate the future of Germany (because he was among them, he had this right), and the others are, in his opinion, exploiters, profiteers, pacifists, and Jews. At that moment, his voice became harsh, fast, methodical, and incorrigible. Behind this statement in the article hides an Adolf Hitler who plays well the role of a leader who does not give up, ironically, denouncing, without mercy.

Vanity Fair also showed the image that Hitler wanted to build for the new generation, the latter having to be under the hypnotic spell of their leader: brave young men, blue-eyed, serious, emanating the style of modernity and creativity. The Führer was to give them the task of becoming the saviors of Germany.

Very well exposed is the victorious march that Hitler described in such detail in *Mein Kampf*, and that the Nazi Party achieved, not because of the waving flags and applause. The success was due to the internal disputes that Hitler himself will create and due to the fact that they have come to disrupt him, he had to do something to stop them. These were hostile views born of internal ferocity, nationalist leaders who were at odds with Hitler and difficult to reconcile, the party's resources and the privacy of its leaders, and accusations of receiving undeclared subsidies from Mussolini. As for these privacy disputes, Hitler was

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*.

not the target of these scandals, as his life from this point of view was not very revealing. In fact, he had his accounts open for inspection.

Nazism, as the article shows, became a response of young people to the despair that had gripped interwar Germany politically. German politics was 'defeated' in the Great War, and the Weimar regime only exacerbated this. And where the strategy and policies of the decision-makers in the Weimar Republic failed, Hitler, due to his oratorical talent, came out victorious⁵⁸. Hitler's force was not the flag waved as a revolutionary since 1923, but his "poem" which he exposed to the public through fiery rhetoric. For him, as a self-justification, the initiative in politics and strategy is born of instinct, not of training. The moment, he says, brings his own inspiration⁵⁹.

Like the album by Heinrich Hoffmann, this article exposes part of the Führer's privacy to the public. Namely, when he was not in front of the masses or at official meetings, Hitler locked himself in the office planning the construction of new headquarters, the change of formulas and the flag, appearances as extravagant and spectacular as possible.

Adolf Hitler was listed by *Vanity Fair* in the list of the best speakers, because he knew only one instrument, rejecting any other. The subtle music of his political oratory was a sublime and strange, strange hint, visible in 1933 when Joseph Goebbels took over as Reich's Propaganda minister and paid close attention to every detail. Hitler's power consisted of a brutally sincere discussion and his passion for his cause. Thus, through a mixture of curiosity, rhetoric, and idealism, and contempt, he incited public opinion in his favor, in his Aryan ideal.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 68.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

After the July 1932 elections, the German nation, disappointed by the policies of the Weimar Republic and seduced by Hitler's fiery and energizing rhetoric, decided that the leader of the Nazi movement should take power in the state. Six months later, Hindenburg accepted the impossible, and despite his beliefs, on January 30, 1933, he appointed him chancellor. But Hindenburg and his relatives did not understand the mechanism of Hitler's populist policy, he could not be tempered or controlled.⁶⁰

After the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor at the Berlin Sportpalast, the biggest speech of his career is taking place, preparing to address an overwhelming crowd.⁶¹ This is the time when his speech is no longer as typical as it used to be. On the political scene both internally and externally, the feeling was that a new actor had appeared. This was the moment that Adolf Hitler always dreamed of.

In this speech, the order in which things are going is interesting, which announces from the beginning that the new chancellor will change the political arrangement that was until then and after which things worked. Unlike other statesmen who do their training in front, Adolf Hitler chose to appear in front of the German nation, coming from behind, thus creating a wave of enthusiasm as he passed the crowd. Those present were waiting for him, excited and eager to hear his words. But Adolf Hitler took a break, however, emphasizing that silence was a sign of force, because those who made up the audience in that room no longer had to be convinced, and attracted. This mission had long since been accomplished. This is the moment when he presented himself as the "Messiah" of

⁶⁰ William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2011, pp. 1933-1936.

⁶¹ *Adolf Hitler – Collection of Speeches*, p. 102.

the German people, his person is deified. Hitler did nothing but absorb the applause, cheers, and adoration from the audience.

Then, in a special way, he began his plea slowly, using a low voice, slightly non-existent, with a hint of shyness, to establish a connection, the relationship with his audience (more precisely, he set a rhythm). Then he spoke, increases the cadence, and raised his voice to be clearly heard, enchanting the audience. Here we have the proof of new tendencies: Hitler did not start his speech according to the classical pattern but tried (and he succeeded) to combine various structures. And so he conquered the crowd. From his carefully directed speech, a sincere, courageous leader emerged, but who was also vulnerable to the limit. Then any trace of shyness or hesitation he had shown at first disappeared. It became more and more lively, the tone increased in intensity, and it began to gesture. He was fluent in ideas and arguments, delivering a special emotion to the audience.⁶²

The scene that Hitler presents here demonstrates that he was the kind of leader who was constantly working on his image. In addition to the natural charisma, the character hid many hours spent behind the scenes in order to correct those gestures that would arouse inappropriate reactions and perfect the right ones to be delivered to the public. The gestures and mimics of the Berlin Sportpalast illustrated the process that Adolf Hitler went through until 1933 to come to power and have the influence he had on his followers.

Despite this success and his function, Hitler still faced opposition from Hindenburg and the politicians over whom the old politician still had influence. Although his appointment as German Chancellor on January 30, 1933, was

⁶² „Hitler's First Speech As Chancellor 30 January 1933“, *Hitler's First Speech As Chancellor Aka Nazi Mass Rally - Hitler Speaking (1933)*, British Pathé, interval 0' - 1'28"

greeted by grand processions, the reality was that the Nazi Party had come to power with minority support following the failed election to form a majority government. Germany was still facing inflation and a high unemployment rate in the wake of the Great Depression, which Hitler would solve by starting an extensive program of highway construction, civilian buildings, and rearmament. Financial resources were secured through huge loans, asset confiscation, and money printing.

But Hitler needed more power, and for that, he had to eliminate his opponents. Thus, on February 27, 1933, the Reichstag building, the symbol of German democracy, was set on fire, and a Dutch communist, van der Lubbe, was arrested in incriminating circumstances. This event was a carefully planned staging to bring down the communists who wanted to take power through a coup. Hitler now had the pretext of persuading Hindenburg to make use of Article 48 of the Constitution of the Weimar Republic and signed an emergency decree, marking the birth of new political construction, namely the Third Reich. This was an extraordinary act of the Nazi movement and of Hitler's, a manipulation to get what the Nazi leader wanted, namely the freedom to act.⁶³

In handing over power, Hitler and Reich propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels 'sold' a detailed picture to those present at the event. Hitler gave the impression that power does not hurt, and that he took over this position only because he had to, that it was his duty to do so as the savior of the German nation. This image can be seen from the expression on Hitler's face, which was serious, his eyes shadowed by the 'burden' that had fallen on him, and even his clothing had something to support this. He only wore a simple black suit, with

⁶³ Geoff Layton, *Germania: Al Treilea Reich, 1933-1945*, Bucharest, ALL, 2011, pp. 46-49.

no other decorations. Let Hindenburg be in the forefront. However, everything was just a simple role that Hitler played extremely well.

On March 13, 1933, Adolf Hitler was again in the spotlight of the international press. On the cover of *TIME* magazine appeared an article on the recent events in Germany, *Germany: National Revolution*, which captured the fact that the Weimar Republic era had 'passed away' and the political scene was preparing for Adolf Hitler's grand plans. It is noted that the international opinion also took over some of the carefully written headlines from the National Socialist press, namely that Germany has been reborn, its new flag proving this. The swastika was been a cleverly chosen symbol, reminiscent of the period of the Teutonic Knights and the traditions of the race. Colors were also an important part of the history of the German state: black, white, and red. These are the imperial colors of Hohenzollern's house, which fluttered on every street corner, as well as on government buildings.⁶⁴

On March 21, 1933, the newly elected Reichstag was celebrated in front of the Potsdam Garrison Church. Hitler wanted to show the German people and the government that the threat had been removed. The public image here was extremely well constructed, but in reality, everything was part of the propaganda apparatus aimed at destroying any threats to his new dictatorship. By 1933, Germany was systematically and quietly becoming a veritable dictatorship. But even though he had gained the power he needed, he still could not express himself to the public as he wished because of Hindenburg. The same goes for his anti-Semitic ideas, which will be translated from the simple ideas presented in

⁶⁴ *TIME*, „Germany: National Revolution“, March 13, Vol. XXI, No. 11, 1933.

Mein Kampf into actual reality. In March 1933, he had increased powers in an emergency.⁶⁵

Conclusions

Adolf Hitler created a regime that was a cult of terror, lies, and demagoguery in which the emphasis is on loyalty to an ideal that belongs to a distorted reality and a leader who had a distorted vision. Hitler had a special magnetism and energy, which came to "shake" millions of people, who became his loyal supporters.

Examining the chronology of events that led to the rise of Adolf Hitler from the status of a simple Viennese street wanderer, then to the patriotic soldier enlisted in Germany and the feared and challenged the leader of the whole world, is one of the most extensive historical debates that continue in the 21st century. Research into the facts of the regime led by Adolf Hitler is vital to understanding the role that propaganda has played in the perpetuation of such a career.

Regardless of how he took power or how he painted his image and the means he used to achieve this, Hitler produced a change that no one else has been able to do. The change has been so far-reaching that it has no equivalent in history.

Adolf Hitler was a leader who was formed unusually, with a mentality based on a philosophy difficult to explain and argue in the sense of motivating his actions, and his gestures. His popularity and the propaganda that was created

⁶⁵ Richard Breitman, *op. cit.*, „Building the Nazi Regime”, GHID, http://ghdi.ghi-dc.org/chapter.cfm?subsection_id=94, pp. 3-6.

around his image were something special that helped him erase any doubt from the minds of his followers. Propaganda, conceived as a system that develops in stages, has traveled a path from the inside out. As his image as a hero, as a savior of the people, internally showed signs of becoming a strong structure, the international scene followed. Using oratorical talent, rhetoric that instills a passion for the German cause, the manipulation of the truth, the decision-makers put their armor aside and believed that they had before them a capable, honest statesman, a good strategist and diplomat, calculated in terms of risk.