

## Charisma and Radicalism in the Nazi Regime

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The Nazi regime, from its inception, has evoked lively debate about its structure and nature. Although most contemporary observers have held it to be the dictatorship of one man, others, especially on the Left, have judged as fallacious the image that the Third Reich projected, above all through the annual congress of the Nazi Party in Nuremberg, that is, the image of a regime dominated solely by one man who inspires and directs it at will like some well-regulated machine. Some of these critics have pointed to stage managers in the wings: the Junkers, high finance, and the German elite. Others have spoken about conflicts between “hard liners” and “moderates” and of an eventual settling of scores between the army and the Party, with Hitler being led in every possible direction.<sup>1</sup>

The discussion has never truly ended since then, even if, for the public, the absolute power of Hitler has remained a basic truth, nurtured by so many biographies, documentaries, and films. Yet among historians, the question has enjoyed a formidable comeback since the 1970s, the starting point for the debate between the “Intentionalist” and “Functionalist” schools of thought. The debate has dealt with Hitler’s role: did he decide about everything, was he even the principal actor? And regarding the running of the regime, did it follow a dynamic that was driven and controlled from above, or the dynamic that was uncontrollable and unpredictable? Although the debate is not presently as intense as it has been in the past, it has continued to nurture the approaches of historians and to restore complexity to the analysis of a regime that one should remember was slowly constructed and did evolve over time.<sup>2</sup>

The first part of this chapter thus examines the place and role of Hitler at the heart of the Nazi regime, with an analysis of his formal powers, the basis for his authority, and the manner in which he used it. It also discusses the running of the regime, with its enthusiastic supporters and administrative structure. It then deals with the question of the regime’s dynamic and, necessarily, of its radicalization.

The centrality of Hitler is not just an artifice of Goebbels’s propaganda, and rare are those historians who would question that he occupied an essential place in the regime. Thus this analysis deals less with his power than with its very limits. How can one in effect deny its reality? Although Hitler was not the founder of the National Socialist Party, he did take it over in the early

1920s and rather easily succeeded in getting rid of recurring opposition. It was he who crystallized the doctrine of the movement in *Mein Kampf*, with elements, of course, that were the bread and butter of the extreme Right in Germany ever since the end of the nineteenth century, but he brought them together within a synthesis that he intended to be ideological, political, and strategic. It was Hitler, finally, who led the Nazi Party to power by ably exploiting the crisis of the Weimar Republic.

After 1933 his authority became immense on both the formal and informal levels. The stages that marked the accumulation of formal powers are well known. Named chancellor in January 1933, Hitler seized the office of head of state the day following the death of Hindenburg in August 1934. And he had the armed forces publicly swear their support for him, an oath that was addressed to his person, as Führer, and not only as the bearer of constitutional authority. In 1938 he became de facto minister of war and then, at the end of 1941, commander in chief of the army. To these powers we should add the informal authority he derived from the popularity he enjoyed that, with time, became nothing short of amazing, reaching its peak in the summer of 1940 with the victory over France.

However one may see it, the person of Hitler is identified with the Nazi regime and the National Socialist Party. One can rightly state that Nazism cannot be dissociated from Hitlerism, something that is difficult to affirm for Bolshevism and Stalinism. Hitler never had to present himself as the dauphin and successor of some grand personage nor claim for himself a doctrine considered to be a tradition, with its own founding fathers and epigones. Rather he presented himself as someone sent by Providence, a Messiah whom the German people had been expecting for centuries, even for two thousand years, as Heinrich Himmler enjoyed saying.<sup>3</sup>

So here we have a man who holds immense power, but how does he use it? This is a legitimate question, and historians who are not satisfied with the interpretation of an all-powerful Hitler have explored it in two different directions, which do not exclude each other. One questions Hitler's aptitude for decision making and effective political power. The other looks at the constraints of a system that limited his sphere of control and even reduced it.

We begin with the limits of a power that came from the very nature of the regime. A first interpretation of a structural type was formulated by a contemporary of the time, the German Franz Neumann, who had sought refuge in England. This jurist and political analyst of Marxist inspiration set forth in his book *Behemoth*, finished in 1941 and published the following year,

the strongest criticism of the unitary image projected by the Third Reich.<sup>4</sup> What he observed was the fundamental pluralism of a regime that was torn between forces that, behind a façade so polished through propaganda, ferociously struggled to take over the traditional prerogatives of the state. As a result of this, the classic state, Prussia, disappeared to the advantage of “four centralized and compact groups, each functioning according to the principle of authority and each enjoying its own administrative, judiciary and legislative powers.”<sup>5</sup> Despite their rivalries, Neumann added, these groups of divergent interests and increasing powers—the Party, the army, the bureaucracy, and heavy industry—knew how to make peace and compromises, and Hitler limited himself to their recognition. That is what the concept of polyarchy refers to, though here with an ironic twist. Used by Carl Schmitt in the 1920s to denounce the evolution of the democratic regime toward a juxtaposition of institutions that would remove themselves from a single power that would control and decide,<sup>6</sup> it is used by Neumann against a dictatorship that claimed to have restored this unity of power, a government to which Schmitt brought, moreover, his zealous support. The biblical figure of Behemoth, borrowed from Thomas Hobbes, symbolizes the chaos engendered by the disappearance of the state and the total absence of laws, the opposite figure to the “Leviathan,” which Hobbes preferred.

Neumann’s interpretation, which was to influence decisively the entire functionalist school, is on target in underlining the plurality of the Nazi regime, which comes from the fact that the latter did not intend to bring about a social revolution, as did Bolshevism, but rather a political revolution through stages, and whose aim was power and expansion. To do this Hitler needed the cooperation of high-level administrators, industrialists, and the army. In fact it was the alliance with the conservative elites that allowed him to become the head of a government at the heart of which he was a minority. Then he was able to consolidate his power before gradually increasing it, thanks to his popularity and to his party of the masses, once he had eliminated the plurality that came from free association, labor unions, and political parties. This cooperation of the conservative elites marks the structuring of the regime in a manner that has no equivalent in dictatorships of the Bolshevik type.

Thus, different from Lenin and his comrades, Hitler came to power in a country that was provided with an experienced, developed, and structured administration and that enjoyed a strong esprit de corps. His problem was not that of reconstructing a state and of replacing an administration that was

socially suspect and, in any case, quite inferior to the new tasks that the Bolshevik regime was to assign to it. His goal was to guarantee the cooperation of an effective bureaucracy, without becoming its hostage, by having it serve his politics. It was the same for the economic world, whose professional associations were politically aligned and administratively supervised but at the same time retained a degree of autonomy.

Neumann's analysis is nevertheless somewhat schematic (not to mention the excessive importance it gives to "big money" and to its own underestimation of Nazi anti-Semitism). On the one hand, Neumann endows the four forces that he favored with a cohesion and homogeneity that nothing proves they ever truly had. He transfers the unity that he deconstructs at the state level to a lower level, and he does so without any further analysis. Yet he does not take into account the different churches, the principal element of pluralism that continued to exist and that the Nazi regime had to tolerate, grudgingly, until the end. The other forces were far from having such cohesiveness. The unity of the industrialists suffered from dispersion, even from the contradiction of the interests of its members. The unity of the armed forces was weakened after the reestablishment of the universal military draft in 1935 by the influx of new leaders who were younger and more devoted to the regime. The bureaucracy, including the higher administration, no longer acted as a bloc, moving between zeal and reticence according to the policies that it had to implement. As for the Nazi Party, which had become the only legal political organization, its role remained limited, not only because of the few areas of influence that were handed over to it (Rudolf Hess, Hitler's replacement as head of the Party, was named minister without portfolio with a right of control over the naming of higher functionaries and legislative work) but also, and especially, on account of its structure. Quite different from the parties of the Bolshevik type, the Nazi Party was neither centralized nor even seriously coordinated. After 1933 its sections, beginning with the *ss* (*Schutzstaffel*, the Nazi special police), continued to jockey in order to get away from the control of the weak administration in Munich, and they easily succeeded with Hitler's support.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, this interpretation, if it is somewhat valid for the first years of the regime, when the alliance with the conservative forces established a semblance of polyarchy, hardly accounts for the displacement of the balance of power that only increased with time. Hitler rather easily succeeded in controlling his allies, thanks to the use he made of Nazi Party organizations: the Labor Front replaced labor unions and worked against employers; the *SA* (*Sturmabteilung*, the Nazi storm troopers) and then the *ss* competed

against the army; and everywhere regional directors of the Party imposed themselves at administrative levels. Then there was a progressive alignment of the conservative forces, gradually disillusioned that the regime would ever respond to their desire for a tempered restoration of order and authority. It is true that German elitist groups suffered from a weakness that made them relatively unstable. The abolition of the monarchy, the imposition of a rump army by the Treaty of Versailles, and the leveling of the landed classes through hyperinflation and then through the depression of the 1930s all undermined the Weimar Republic and worked to weaken the conservative elites after 1933. Because they remained under his yoke, although not without some rebellion (thus was seen the attempt on the Führer's life in July 1944), Hitler used them all the more willingly as the war imposed its own priorities. But he never lost sight of the objective he had of forming new elites that would assure the continuity of his regime.

A second interpretation, presented particularly by Martin Broszat,<sup>8</sup> continues the line of thought outlined by Neumann, but as it takes some distance from an analysis in terms of social forces, it gets much closer to the administrative organization. Attentive to the evolution of the regime, Broszat places a break in 1938 that separates, broadly speaking, an authoritarian phase from a totalitarian one. Before 1938, mainly because of the importance of the conservatives, the regime opted for continuity: there was a collegial context for decisions and a coordinated operation of the administration. With the elimination of the last representatives of the conservative elites (the removal of Hjalmar Schacht in 1937 and the departure of Werner von Blomberg and Konstantin von Neurath from the government in 1938), the turning point was the suspension of cabinet meetings and the resulting disappearance of all governmental coordination (the ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich created for this at the beginning of the war soon sunk into insignificance because of Hitler's lack of interest).

The end of governmental collegiality formed the logical end to an evolution whose main characteristic was a growing recourse to the delegation of powers that Hitler had practiced without regard for the administrative unity of the state. From this there resulted a situation characterized by the multiplication of special bodies, the hybridization of administrative machinery, the autonomization of policies, and the exacerbation of institutional and personal rivalries.

The delegation of powers ended up effectively multiplying some special administrative organizations, to which Hitler assigned the implementation

of a particular mission by granting, with this end in view, all the necessary powers. Some of these arrangements were of a functional nature—the construction of highways, the Four Year Plan, the recruitment of a work force throughout occupied Europe, and others. Their appearance evidently meant an encroachment on the powers of public authority, but it often also took on the form of a predation or of an administrative hybridization. When the Gauleiter Fritz Sauckel was given the mission of finding workers throughout Europe essential to the war economy, he constructed his apparatus by taking the Department of Manual Labor away from the Ministry of the Economy. Hybridization was produced between state organisms and some organizations of the Party, as when Himmler amalgamated the security services of the ss with the state police, or it occurred between state organisms and professional associations, as in the Four Year Plan and Albert Speer's machinery.

Other special measures had a territorial framework. After the outbreak of war, Hitler confided the administration of conquered territories to some of his lieutenants, to Gauleiter like Arthur Greiser or to *Reichsleiter* such as Alfred Rosenberg, by granting them extended powers. In the annexed territories, particularly in the Polish "corridor," the result was a quasi-removal of the regional administration from the control of the central ministries.<sup>9</sup>

The multiplication of special organizations could only exacerbate institutional and personal quarrels. Free rein was given to the politics of "to each his own," even for the traditional ministries, for such was henceforth the rules of a game in which much was to be gained and much lost. To become a pure executive instrument of the Führer was the objective that the logic of the regime imposed, and Himmler strongly pursued it, freeing himself successfully both from the state—as head of the police he was formally placed under the authority of the Ministry of the Interior—and from the Party—as ss chief he had to report to Nazi authorities in Munich.

By the effect of such a dynamic, the structure of the regime became mobile, reconfiguring itself according to certain priorities. One only has to compare the situation in 1935 with that of 1943 in economic matters, for example, to appreciate the extent of this plasticity. In the mid-1930s the Ministry of Economy controlled the conduct of business; by the mid-1940s its role had become minor. Three centers of power had emerged whose relations mixed rivalry and cooperation, the former winning out over the latter: the Ministry of Armament and Munitions directed by Speer, which functioned closely with heavy industry; the office of Sauckel, which controlled the contribution of the foreign workforce that had become crucial to the economy

of the Reich; and Himmler's police organization, which developed a small economical empire, notably by capitalizing on the miserable workforce of prisoners in concentration camps.<sup>10</sup>

With the multiplication of these special groups cutting into the power and organization of the state, the structure of the Third Reich resembled a patchwork quilt fashioned out of traditional administrations and hybrid agencies between the state, the Party and private interests. This evokes what another exile, Ernst Fraenkel, had called the duality of the Nazi state (remember that Neumann questioned whether one could talk of a state), which was more the entanglement than the juxtaposition of a state of law and a special regime, the first existing only through the tolerance of the second, which sought to expand as much as possible to the former's detriment.<sup>11</sup>

To this malleability of the administrative organization of the Third Reich, complicated by the fact that its organisms, which had become superfluous, had never been done away with (thus the Four Year Plan), one should add an element that has often been neglected, a growing juridical informality. The making of laws respected forms less and less. The boundary between decree, edict, and law became blurred, and jurists themselves came to accept that an oral declaration of Hitler had the force of law (as when he designated Hermann Göring and Hess as his successors in a speech at the beginning of the war).<sup>12</sup> Still more serious and rather significant, legislation was less and less submitted to the principle of publicity, an indispensable condition of an efficient administration. Out of 650 orders, decrees, and written directives by Hitler that have been recorded for the 1939–45 period, 494 were not published in the *Journal officiel*.<sup>13</sup> One can imagine the confusion and litigation that resulted from this. Thus, through an unpublished decree, Himmler was charged in 1939 with the "strengthening of the German race," which gave him the power to seize the lands of any nonnative peoples residing in the annexed territories. Opposition was then voiced in the courts, which did not know about (for good reason) the decree in question. "Euthanasia," the putting to death of the mentally ill, beginning in autumn of 1939, also gave way to judiciary cases that obliged the Ministry of Justice to inform the judges of the existence of the secret order by which Hitler had authorized the process.

There can be no doubt that, with the Nazi regime, one is dealing with a structure *sui generis*, and functionalist historians willingly speak of disorder, even chaos. But if one can admit that it became difficult for the leaders of the Third Reich to have a general view and that it was necessary for them to expend ever more energy to maintain some kind of coherence, the regime

remained (as I understand it) perfectly manageable. Bodies of coordination continued to exist, such as the Chancellery of the Reich and the Chancellery of the Party, and the most complicated dossiers were regularly the object of interministerial meetings that brought secretaries of state together. This was the case in Wannsee in January 1942, when the extermination of European Jews was organized.

The coordination was also assured, especially so, by Hitler himself. The disintegration of administrative unity in no way interfered with the concentration of all the different strands of authority in Hitler's hands. Instead of and in place of some kind of collegial body for deliberation and decision making, a *modus operandi* was set up by which about one hundred people became responsible and individually accountable to him alone.<sup>14</sup> Some directed traditional organizations, ministries, or the three defense services; others were in charge of special functions such as the administration of occupied and annexed territories; others still were regional directors of the Party—the Gauleiter—who traditionally enjoyed, by right, to call upon Hitler directly. If the immediate relationship with the Führer was the source of all power, this bilateral framework reinforced in return the authority of Hitler, who was quite conscious of it, as demonstrated in his prohibition to let his ministers meet during the war, even if simply to have a beer together.<sup>15</sup>

One must emphasize that this personalized power—in the double meaning of the term, centered around the person of Hitler and founded upon direct person-to-person relationships<sup>16</sup>—did not mean the substitution of a Party logic for a bureaucratic one. The Nazi regime was not a party-state as in the USSR, where the primacy of the Party left no doubt. In its own case the duality of both the Party and the state kept up a permanent tension between two bureaucracies, with each having its own identity. Controlling both, Hitler followed but one logic, that of personal confidence. As proof he confided considerable powers, and even his succession, to a man like Göring, who had no position in the Party, and he promoted to the top of the regime unknown men such as Joachim von Ribbentrop and Albert Speer.

What we see here in the end was no surprise. Hitler had extended to the state the method of direction that he exercised in the Nazi Party before 1933: a refusal of all unitary structure that would result in a juxtaposition of services and organizations; a direct link with the functional or regional directors of the Party; and a delegation of powers as needed, without worrying about any form of reasonable control. After 1933 and as the regime evolved, this way of doing things produced its effects on the entire country.



Hitler therefore controlled the regime, but to what extent did he actually decide policy? Functionalist historians have given considerable importance to this question, although their answer has not attracted much adherence. Certainly Hitler had a style of direction that was much his own. We know about the disorderliness of his work schedule, his reluctance to organize his time in a structured manner, the little time he gave to preparing his dossiers, and his way of acting suddenly, of intervening abruptly, and in detail, often after his attention had been gotten by one close to him or by the press.<sup>17</sup>

Hans Mommsen judges, because of this, that Hitler was a “weak” dictator who ordinarily preferred not to make any decisions, preoccupied as he was with maintaining his prestige and his authority, or if he did take a position, he did so under the influence of those close to him.<sup>18</sup> This difficulty of controlling affairs in a sustained manner would have been reinforced by the vague character of his ideology, better equipped as it was to designate broad ambitions and directions than to trace practical paths.<sup>19</sup> In sum, what this approach insists upon is the declining influence of Hitler’s intentions and calculations, even in major undertakings such as the extermination of the Jews, which is presented as the result of a process rather than a deliberate decision, the product of a combination of unforeseen circumstances, the local initiatives by zealous lieutenants, and of a kind of ideological ambience created by the tirades of the supreme commander.<sup>20</sup>

Regarding Hitler’s ability to decide, it is important not to interpret every hesitation on his part as indecisiveness. And we should not underestimate his decisiveness in important areas. We have sufficient sources for us to have little doubt regarding his detailed, precise, and continuous action in areas such as external politics, military affairs (no other leader during the Second World War followed as closely and took such an important part in the conduct of the war), and the war economy (a historian of the former GDR has noted that the Nazi regime was characterized during the war by an “extremely concentrated” power).<sup>21</sup>

The dilatory behavior of Hitler can be seen above all in the area of civil affairs, particularly in administrative affairs. Again we should consider how far-reaching this was.<sup>22</sup> In his anti-Semitic politics, if it is true that Hitler demonstrated, particularly during the first years, a certain reserve and seemed to act intermittently rather than continuously in setting politics of the regime, he nevertheless maintained a certain direction. While his actions seemed to comprise periodic impulses and successive adjustments, there was never any going back or unexpected detours. Everything went in the direction of the removal of the Jews from Germany.<sup>23</sup>

Likewise, regarding the influence of his lieutenants, Hitler had a marked concern for his prestige, and he liked to persuade rather than impose. Hence long “discussions”—in reality monologues—were typical of the relationship that he had with his paladins. One should note that he willingly left subordinates on their own, indicating a long-term objective and letting them choose the methods. But of course this does not prove that they influenced him. If he granted some leeway for action, it was always under the condition of obedience and conformity to his policy. He never hesitated to separate himself from those who bore him umbrage or whose behavior might harm him. The very fact that he was assailed with requests for a decision, even on points of detail, by his closest associates, Goebbels or Himmler, proves the constant need they felt to lean on his authority and to sound out his thoughts.<sup>24</sup>

Certain historians have held that he decided even less easily because his ideology did not have the consistency that it is usually said to have. For Broszat this ideology was, so to speak, of a utopian nature. It pointed toward a future where everything would be changed. The German people, forming a racially purified *Volksgemeinschaft* (“popular community”), would dispose of a “living-space” from which the Jews would have disappeared. But the means for succeeding in this were by no means clearly indicated. Since the “positive” objective of the “popular community” showed itself to be in fact out of reach because it would have called into question what had been concretely gained, the “negative” elements of the ideology, especially the anti-Semitic persecution, would have been selected, so to speak, through default.<sup>25</sup> The disappearance of the Jews, which would have had a “metaphorical” value in the beginning, would have become a reality through the effect of an evolution that no one had foreseen or wanted.<sup>26</sup> But this is to make light, it seems, of the central role anti-Semitism had in the Hitlerian ideology. Inscribed within a logic of hate, the disappearance of the Jews represented a concrete objective, even if the choice of the method—emigration, expulsion, concentration within a “reservation,” or extermination—remained open for a certain time.

If there were an example of the way by which ideology directed the politics of the regime and contributed to the institutional deformation discussed earlier, the administration of annexed territories would provide us with one. Here it can be seen that the space for maneuvering granted by Hitler made sense, and doubly so. On the one hand, the organization of an administration largely removed from the directives of the ministries in Berlin allowed one to implement a radical politics, especially regarding the expulsion of nonna-

tive peoples, without the obstacles of what remained both legitimately and effectively in the juridical order of the Reich. On the other hand, it served as a test case for a more ample Nazification of society than what the balance of power authorized in the Reich—for example, vis-à-vis the different churches. Whereas Stalinism duplicated its structures in annexed territories, the Nazi regime made them the field of experimentation for policies that would later be adopted in the Reich itself. Expansion was the necessary condition for changing society.<sup>27</sup>

In the final analysis the evolution of the Nazi regime must be taken seriously. One would underestimate its importance by viewing it only as a result of Hitler's tactic *divide ut impera*, as though this evolution did not have some effects in return on the politics of the regime. And it is important to take just as seriously Hitler's ability to decide rather than merely to give occasional directions and a legitimacy post hoc,<sup>28</sup> even if all of his initiatives were apparently not calculated. The strict alternative between monarchy and polyarchy thus appears to have only a limited validity. Neither concept allows one to account for the evolution of structures and of Hitler's decisive role.

The concept of charisma that Max Weber elaborated is, in this regard, more satisfactory. Charism is an extraordinary quality attributed by a group of the faithful to a person who presents himself as though invested with a mission.<sup>29</sup> This charismatic domination, taken in its ideal as well as typical form, thus distinguishes itself from both traditional domination, founded upon the principle of heredity and the prestige of the past, and a legal-rational domination based upon laws and exercised with the help of a bureaucracy. Charismatic domination distinguishes itself from these in that it is a mode of exceptional power and rests on the leader's giving individual commands, the legitimacy of which derives from the fact that such orders are invested with a part of his charisma and that by their nature they dismiss traditional procedures, precedents, and economic logic.<sup>30</sup>

The Nazi regime provides numerous illustrations of each of these points.<sup>31</sup> This does not mean, however, that the two other types of domination do not shed some light on the Nazi phenomenon as well. Hitler's power was partly founded upon traditional motives. Named chancellor by President Hindenburg and invoking the great figures of Germany's past, the Nazi leader found support in an entire segment of the population that missed the monarchy and wanted a substitute for it. What the conservative forces that had put Hitler in power aimed at was precisely the "traditionalization" of Nazism.

As for legal-rational domination, it accounts for a large part of the regime's operation. The government and the population valued the maintenance of a system of norms, which Hitler realized, at least in the early years, as can be seen in the promulgation of the Nuremberg laws in 1935.

In sum, the Nazi regime can be seen as the coming together of these three types of domination, more precisely, as the imposition of a charismatic domination upon a legal-rational one. In institutional terms the latter is more visible in Himmler's operation and in the administrations of annexed territories. But it is important not to limit oneself to it. One of the constitutive characteristics of charismatic domination is a certain kind of attitude and disposition. Ian Kershaw has shown how emblematic was the formula of one high Nazi functionary who called for "working toward the Führer."<sup>32</sup> Obedience was not enough; one had to fully adopt, and even anticipate through action, the policies of Hitler. This attitude infiltrated most of the institutions, quite beyond the charismatic cenacle, and it contributed to the realization of objectives that were literally illegal and that were sometimes even presented as a simple "wish" of the Führer. Thus do we better understand the participation of so many state services in the criminal undertakings of the Nazis.

The concept of charisma also allows one to understand the evolution of the regime. There is little doubt that the personalized structuring of power produced a dynamic effect, the best illustration of which is probably found in the astonishing increase of armament productions realized by Speer from 1942 on. But it also had a radicalizing effect. The existence of special bodies that depended directly on Hitler and the diffusion throughout the regime of an attitude of mind that was propitious to the realization of his orders made possible the explosion of violence fermenting in Nazi ideology.

*Translated by Peter S. Rogers*

## Notes

1. See Gerhard Schreiber, *Hitler, Interpretationen, 1923–1983: Ergebnisse, Methoden, und Probleme der Forschung* (Hitler, interpretations, 1923–1983: Results, methods, and problems of research). Darmstadt, 1984; Günter Scholdt, *Autoren über Hitler: Deutschsprachige Schriftsteller, 1919–1945, und ihr Bild vom "Führer"* (Authors on Hitler: German-speaking writers, 1919–1945, and their image of the "Führer"). Bonn: Bouvier, 1993.

2. See the work of Ian Kershaw, who has organized his study of the Nazi regime around this debate: *Qu'est-ce que le nazisme? Problèmes et perspectives d'interprétation* (*What is nazism? Problems and interpretive perspectives*). Paris: Gallimard, 1992.
3. Heinrich Himmler, *Discours secrets* (Secret speeches). Paris: Gallimard, 1978, p. 168.
4. Franz Neumann, *Béhémot: Structure et pratique du national-socialisme, 1933–1944*. Paris: Payot, 1987. Originally published as *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism*. London: 1942.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 437.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58. Neumann refers to the work of Carl Schmitt, originally published in 1923 and translated into French under the title *Parlementarisme et démocratie* (Parliamentary government and democracy). Paris: Seuil, 1988.
7. See Dietrich Orlow, *The History of the Nazi Party 1933–1945*, 2 vols. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1969–1972.
8. See Martin Broszat, *L'État hitlérien: L'Origine et l'évolution des structures du Troisième Reich* (The Hitlerian state: The Origin and evolution of the structures of the Third Reich). Paris: Fayard, 1985 (1st ed., Munich: DTV, 1970).
9. See Dieter Rebenstisch, *Führerstaat und Verwaltung im Zweiten Weltkrieg* (The Führer state and administration in the Second World War). Stuttgart, 1989.
10. See Walter Naasner, *Neue Machtzentren in der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft, 1942–1945* (New centers of power in the German war economy, 1942–1945). Boppard am Rhein, Boldt, 1994.
11. Ernst Fraenkel, *The Dual State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1941.
12. Martin Moll, “Führer-Erlasse,” 1939–1945 (“Führer-decrees,” 1939–1945). Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997, p. 20.
13. See *ibid.*
14. In 1941 a jurist of the Crown, Ernst Rudolf Huber, recorded no less than forty-two state executive organisms immediately submitted to Hitler. Ernst Rudolf Huber, “Reichsgewalt und Reichsführung im Kriege” (Executive authority and governmental leadership in the war), *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft*, no. 101, 1941, p. 561.
15. Moll, “Führer-Erlasse,” pp. 31–32.
16. During the war, access to Hitler was placed more and more under the control of those close to him, especially Martin Bormann, to such an extent that Martin Broszat talks of a “despotism of the court.” Broszat, *L'État hitlérien*, p. 461.
17. One may find numerous examples of this in Beatrice, Helmut Heiber, ed., *Die rückseite des Hakenkreuzes. Absonderliches aus den Akten des Dritten Reiches* (The reverse side of the swastika: Unusual facts from the documents of the Third Reich). Munich: DTV, 1933.
18. Hans Mommsen, “Nationalsozialismus,” in *Sowjetsystem und demokratische Gesellschaft. Eine vergleichende Enzyklopädie* (Soviet and democratic society. A com-

parative encyclopaedia), ed. C. D. Hernig. Fribourg en Brisgau, Herder, vol. 4, p. 702.

19. Hans Mommsen, "Hitlers Stellung im nationalsozialistischen Herrschaftssystem" (Hitler's position in the National Socialist leadership), in *Der Führerstaat: Mythos und Realität* (The Führer state: Myth and reality), ed. G. Rischfeld and L. Kette-nacker. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981, p. 70. (French translation in Hans Mommsen, *Le National-socialisme et la société allemande. Dix essais d'histoire sociale et politique* [National socialism and German society: Ten essays of political and social history]. Paris: Éditions de la MSH, 1997, pp. 67–99.)

20. See Christopher Browning, *The Path to Genocide: Essays on Launching the Final Solution*. Cambridge University Press, 1992.

21. Dietrich Eichholtz, "Daten und Fakten zur Kriegswirtschaft und Kriegstechnik, 1940–1945" (Dates and facts of the wartime economy and technology, 1940–1945), *Bulletin des Arbeitskreises "Zweiter Weltkrieg,"* nos. 1–4, 1984, p. 102.

22. We can easily document situations where Hitler's lack of action was founded on his refusal to follow up on directives that already had the approval of the appropriate ministers. But Hitler would have the bureaucracy look over a dossier again until it conformed to his own wishes.

23. See Saul Friedländer, *L'Allemagne nazie et les Juifs. 1. Les Années de persécution (1933–1939)*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1997.

24. See Hermann Weiss, "Der 'schwache Diktator': Hitler und der Führerstaat" (The "weak dictator": Hitler and the Führer state), in *Der Nationalsozialismus: Studien zur Ideologie und Herrschaft* (National Socialism: Studies in ideology and mastery), ed. Wolfgang Benz, Hans Buchheim, Hans Mommsen. Frankfurt: Fischer, 1993, pp. 64–77.

25. Martin Broszat, "Zur Struktur der NS-Sassenbewegung" (Concerning the structure of the National Socialist racist movement), *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, no. 1, 1983, pp. 52–76.

26. Martin Broszat, "Hitler und die Genesis der 'Endlösung': Aus Anlass der Thesen von David Irving" (Hitler and the genesis of the "final solution": On the basis of the thesis of David Irving), *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, no. 4, 1944, pp. 739–775. See also the similar interpretation of Hans Mommsen, "Die Realisierung des Utopischen: Die 'Endlösung der Judenfrage' im 'Dritten Reich'" (The realization of utopia: The "final solution of 'the Jewish question' in "the Third Reich"), *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, no. 3, 1983, pp. 381–420 (French translation in Mommsen, *Le National-socialisme*, pp. 179–223).

27. See MacGregor Knox, "Conquest, Foreign and Domestic, in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany," *Journal of Modern History*, no. 1, March 1984, pp. 1–57.

28. Ian Kershaw, for example, presents the role of Hitler in terms of functions that he fulfills (he unifies, he encourages, he permits): the words "decision" and "decider" are not used. "Working towards the Führer" Reflections on the Nature of the Hitler

Dictatorship,” in *Stalinism and Nazism. Dictatorships in Comparison*, ed. Ian Kershaw and Moshe Lewin. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 110.

29. Charism in Hitler’s case is of a personal nature. In the case of Stalin, an analysis in terms of charismatic domination probably requires that one begin with the charism of the Communist Party, Stalin’s charism being usurped and derived from it.

30. See Max Weber, *Economie et société* (Economy and society). Paris, Pocket, 1995, vol. 1, pp. 320ff.

31. See Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: Essai sur le charisme en politique*. Paris: Gallimard, 1995.

32. See Kershaw, “Working towards the Führer.”