Hitler's Hangman - The Life of Heydrich

A chilling biography of the head of Nazi Germany's terror apparatus, a key player in the Third Reich whose full story has never before been told. Reinhard Heydrich is widely recognized as one of the great iconic villains of the twentieth century, an appalling figure even within the context of the Nazi leadership. Chief of the Nazi Criminal Police, the SS Security Service, and the Gestapo, ruthless overlord of Nazi-occupied Bohemia and Moravia, and leading planner of the "Final Solution," Heydrich played a central role in Hitler's Germany. He shouldered a major share of responsibility for some of the worst Nazi atrocities, and up to his assassination in Prague in 1942, he was widely seen as one of the most dangerous men in Nazi Germany. Yet Heydrich has received remarkably modest attention in the extensive literature of the Third Reich. Robert Gerwarth weaves together little-known stories of Heydrich's private life with his deeds as head of the Nazi Reich Security Main Office. Fully exploring Heydrich's progression from a privileged middle-class youth to a rapacious mass murderer, Gerwarth sheds new light on the complexity of Heydrich's adult character, his motivations, the incremental steps that led to unimaginable atrocities, and the consequences of his murderous efforts toward re-creating the entire ethnic makeup of Europe. "This admirable biography makes plausible what actually happened and makes human what we might prefer to dismiss as monstrous."—Timothy Snyder, Wall Street Journal "[A] probing biography.... Gerwarth's fine study shows in chilling detail how genocide emerged from the practicalities of implementing a demented belief system."—Publishers Weekly "A thoroughly documented, scholarly, and eminently readable account of this mass murderer."—The New Republic

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Heinrich Himmler - A Life
Chronicles the life of the Nazi leader, including his childhood and youth, his transformation of the SS from a small bodyguard unit into a powerful organization within the Nazi Party, and how his political maneuvering and rise in power set the tone for the party's goals.

**Goebbels - A Biography**

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE TELEGRAPH • From renowned German Holocaust historian Peter Longerich comes the definitive one-volume biography of Adolf Hitler’s malevolent minister of propaganda. In life, and in the grisly manner of his death, Joseph Goebbels was one of Adolf Hitler’s most loyal acolytes. By the end, no one in the Berlin bunker was closer to the Führer than his devoted Reich minister for public enlightenment and propaganda. But how did this clubfooted son of a factory worker rise from obscurity to become Hitler’s most trusted lieutenant and personally anointed successor? In this ground-breaking biography, Peter Longerich sifts through the historical record—and thirty thousand pages of Goebbels’s own diary entries—to provide the answer to that question. Longerich, the first historian to make use of the Goebbels diaries in a biographical work, engages and challenges the self-serving portrait the propaganda chief left behind. Spanning thirty years, the diaries paint a chilling picture of a man driven by a narcissistic desire for recognition who found the personal affirmation he craved within the virulently racist National Socialist movement. Delving into the mind of his subject, Longerich reveals how Goebbels’s lifelong search for a charismatic father figure inexorably led him to Hitler, to whom he ascribed almost godlike powers. This comprehensive biography documents Goebbels’s ascent through the ranks of the Nazi Party, where he became a member of the Führer’s inner circle and launched a brutal campaign of anti-Semitic propaganda. Though endowed with near-dictatorial control of the media—film, radio, press, and the fine arts—Longerich’s Goebbels is a man dogged by insecurities and beset by bureaucratic infighting. He feuds with his bitter rivals Hermann Göring and Alfred Rosenberg, unsuccessfully advocates for a more radical line of “total war,” and is thwarted in his attempt to pursue a separate peace with the Allies during the waning days of World War II. This book also reveals, as never before, Goebbels’s twisted personal life—his mawkish sentimentality, manipulative nature, and voracious sexual appetite. A harrowing look at the life of one of history’s greatest monsters, Goebbels delivers fresh insight into how the Nazi message of hate was conceived, nurtured, and disseminated. This complete portrait of the man behind that message is sure to become a standard for historians and students of the Holocaust for decades to come. Praise for Goebbels “Peter Longerich . . . has delved into rarely accessed material from his subject’s diaries, which span thirty years, to paint a remarkable portrait of the man who became one of Hitler’s most trusted lieutenants.”—The Daily Telegraph Praise for Heinrich Himmler “There have been several studies of this enigmatic man, but Peter Longerich’s massive biography, grounded in exhaustive study of the primary sources, is now the standard work and must stand alongside Ian Kershaw’s Hitler, Ulrich Herbert’s Best and Robert Gerwarth’s Hitler’s Hangman: The Life of Heydrich as one of the landmark Nazi biographies. As the author of a celebrated study of the Holocaust, Longerich is better able than his predecessors to situate Himmler within the vast machinery of genocide. And he brings to his task a gift for capturing those mannerisms that are the intimate markers of personality.”—London Review of Books “[An] excellent and comprehensive biography.”—The New York Review of Books
Heydrich - The Face of Evil

This meticulously researched biography creates a complete and balanced picture of Reinhard Heydrich. A leading figure within the Nazi Party, he was responsible more than Himmler for the planning and execution of the Holocaust. Having joined the Nazi Party in 1931, Heydrich rose quickly through the ranks of the SS. By the age of twenty-nine he had become an SS Brigadier General, and his ruthless ambition led many senior Nazis to believe that he was the natural successor to Hitler. It was Heydrich’s initiative to create the Einsatzgruppen, paramilitary units which were established before Operation Barbarossa to murder Jews and political operatives of the Communist party. In 1941 Heydrich was made Protector of Bohemia and Moravia. Supremely confident of his authority within the province, he would often drive alone in an open-top car. British-trained Czech partisans took advantage of this gesture, and in 1942 carried out a daring assassination attempt. Heydrich was mortally wounded in the ambush and died a week later in hospital. The reprisals that followed were brutal: more than 15,000 Czechs were murdered and the town of Lidice was razed to the ground. This book examines Heydrich’s meteoric rise to power, his complex personality, and the aftermath of his death: Hitler’s vengeance and the postwar fortunes of Heydrich’s widow and descendants.

Goering - The Rise and Fall of the Notorious Nazi Leader


The Bismarck Myth - Weimar Germany and the Legacy of the Iron Chancellor

Few statesmen in history have inspired the imagination of generations of Germans more than the founder of the Kaiserreich, Otto von Bismarck. The archetype of charismatic leadership, the Iron Chancellor maintained his pre-eminent position in the pantheon of Germany’s political iconography for much of the twentieth century. Based on a large selection of primary sources, this book provides an insightful analysis of the Bismarck myth’s profound impact on Germany’s political culture. In particular, it investigates the ways in which that myth was used to undermine parliamentary democracy in Germany after the Great War, paving the way for its replacement by authoritarian rule under an allegedly ‘Bismarckian’ charismatic leader, Adolf Hitler. As one of the most powerful weapons of nationalist agitation against the Weimar Republic, the Bismarck myth was never contested. The nationalists’ ideologically charged interpretation of Bismarck as the father of the German nation-state and model for future political decision-making clashed with rivaling - and thoroughly critical - democratic and communist perceptions of the Iron Chancellor. The quarrel over Bismarck’s legacy demonstrates how the clash of ideologies, particularly between 1918 and 1933, resulted in a highly political fight for the ‘correct’ and universal interpretation of the German past. Essential reading for anyone interested in modern German history, this book sheds new light on the Weimar Republic’s struggle for survival and the reasons for its failure.

The Vanquished - Why the First World War Failed to End
A Times Literary Supplement Best Book of 2016 An epic, groundbreaking account of the ethnic and state violence that followed the end of World War I—conflicts that would shape the course of the twentieth century. For the Western Allies, November 11, 1918, has always been a solemn date—the end of fighting that had destroyed a generation, but also a vindication of a terrible sacrifice with the total collapse of the principal enemies: the German Empire, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire. But for much of the rest of Europe this was a day with no meaning, as a continuing, nightmarish series of conflicts engulfed country after country. In The Vanquished, a highly original and gripping work of history, Robert Gerwarth asks us to think again about the true legacy of the First World War. In large part it was not the fighting on the Western Front that proved so ruinous to Europe’s future, but the devastating aftermath, as countries on both sides of the original conflict were savaged by revolutions, pogroms, mass expulsions, and further major military clashes. In the years immediately after the armistice, millions would die across central, eastern, and southeastern Europe before the Soviet Union and a series of rickety and exhausted small new states would come into being. It was here, in the ruins of Europe, that extreme ideologies such as fascism would take shape and ultimately emerge triumphant. As absorbing in its drama as it is unsettling in its analysis, The Vanquished is destined to transform our understanding of not just the First World War but the twentieth century as a whole.

**The Killing of Reinhard Heydrich - The SS ""Butcher of Prague""**

The extraordinary account of one of the most daring World War II missions, as told in the movie Anthropoid If anyone warranted assassination during World War II, the man to know was Reinhard Heydrich (1904–1942)—chief of the security police, rabid anti-Semite, architect of the Final Solution, ruthless overlord of Nazi-occupied Czechoslovakia, and Hitler’s most likely successor. In 1941, at the height of the Nazis’ seeming invincibility, the Czech government-in-exile launched a desperate operation to kill Heydrich. From the assassins’ training in England to their Thermopylae-like last stand in the flooded crypt of a Prague church, and the Nazis’ savage reprisals (including the obliteration of two villages), The Killing of Reinhard Heydrich brilliantly recounts one of World War II’s most daring and tragic missions.

**The Devil's Disciples - Hitler's Inner Circle**

Explores the struggles for power within the Nazi regime among Hitler’s lieutenants—struggles that resulted in millions of deaths throughout Europe—charting the jealousies and insanity of Goebbels, Himmler, Boring, Bormann, Speer, and Ribbentrop.

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What made him so evil? As a new film about Reinhard Heydrich is released, the compelling tale of how a married musician with loving parents and a brilliant mind became an... Reinhard Heydrich was in the prime of his life and career... According to Robert Gerwarth, author of a magisterial biography of Heydrich called Hitler’s Hangman, there is no evidence Heydrich...