



# The Coming of the Third Reich

By Richard J. Evans

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**"The clearest and most gripping account I've read of German life before and during the rise of the Nazis." —A. S. Byatt, *Times Literary Supplement***

There is no story in twentieth-century history more important to understand than Hitler's rise to power and the collapse of civilization in Nazi Germany. With *The Coming of the Third Reich*, Richard Evans, one of the world's most distinguished historians, has written the definitive account for our time. A masterful synthesis of a vast body of scholarly work integrated with important new research and interpretations, Evans's history restores drama and contingency to the rise to power of Hitler and the Nazis, even as it shows how ready Germany was by the early 1930s for such a takeover to occur. *The Coming of the Third Reich* is a masterwork of the historian's art and the book by which all others on the subject will be judged.

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## The Coming of the Third Reich By Richard J. Evans Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

On March 30, 1933, two months after Hitler achieved power, Paul Nikolaus, a Berlin cabaret comedian, wrote disconsolately, "For once, no joke. I am taking my own life.... [U]nfortunately I have fallen in love with my Fatherland. I cannot live in these times." How Germans could remain in love with their fatherland under Nazism and even contribute willingly to its horrific extremism is the subject of Cambridge historian Evans's gripping if overwhelmingly detailed study, the first of three projected volumes. Readers watch a great and historic culture grow grotesquely warped from within, until, in 1933, a dictatorial state was imposed upon the ruins of the Weimar republic. A host of shrill demagogues had, in the preceding decades, become missionaries to an uneasy coalition of the discontented, eager to subvert Germany's democratic institutions. This account contrasts with oversimplified diagnoses of how Nazism succeeded in taking possession of the German psyche. Evans asserts that Hitler's manipulative charisma required massive dissatisfaction and resentment available to be exploited. Nazism found convenient scapegoats in historic anti-Semitism, the shame of an imposed peace after WWI and the weakness of an unstable government alien to the disciplined German past. Although there have been significant recent studies of Hitler and his regime, like Ian Kershaw's brilliant two volumes, Evans (*In Hitler's Shadow*, etc.) broadens the historic perspective to demythologize how morbidly fertile the years before WWI were as an incubator for Hitler. 31 illus., 18 maps.

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From [Booklist](#)

This is the first volume in a projected three-volume history of Nazi Germany. Cambridge history professor Evans states clearly that this is a work aimed at general readers who hope to gain a fuller and deeper understanding of the course and causes of the Nazi rise to power. Although he breaks no new ground, Evans has written a highly readable and comprehensive account. Thankfully, he does not fall into the trap of looking for proto-Nazis as far back as Luther; however, Evans credibly asserts that the roots of National Socialism can be uncovered in the Germany of Bismarck, which had all of the stresses and tensions of a rapidly modernizing society. While acknowledging that strains of virulent nationalism and anti-Semitism were prevalent in other European nations, Evans shows that these tendencies combined with other vulnerabilities in Germany in an especially volatile mix. This is a first-rate narrative history that informs and educates and may inspire readers to delve even deeper into the subject. *Jay Freeman*

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Review

"Richard J. Evans's *The Coming of the Third Reich*...gives the clearest and most gripping account I've read of German life before and during the rise of the Nazis." —**A. S Byatt**, *Times Literary Supplement*

"Richard J. Evans's *The Coming of the Third Reich* is an enormous work of synthesis—knowledgable and reliable." —**Mark Mazower**, *New York Times Book Review*

"[A] first-rate narrative history that informs and educates and may inspire readers to delve even deeper into the subject." —*Booklist*

"Brilliant."—*Washington Post*

"The generalist reader, it should be emphasized, is well served. ...The book reads briskly, covers all

important areas—social and cultural—and succeeds in its aim of giving “voice to the people who lived through the years with which it deals.” —*Denver Post*

“One finally puts down this magnificent volume thirsty, on the one hand, for the next installment in the Nazi saga yet still haunted by the questions Evan poses and so masterfully grapples with.” ?**Abraham Brumberg**, *The Nation*

“This first part of what will be Evans’ three-volume history of Hitler’s regime is the most comprehensive and convincing work so far on the gall of Weimar and Hitler’s rise to power.” ?*Foreign Affairs*

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