



Picasso's Left Ear

Issue 9



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Of the student of History (who is blessed to know nothing, so that he might thirst to know all)

History in the plainest terms, is a recording subject to refinement, and the student of History, as Montgomery might say, a painter with an eye for the aesthetic. The title of this essay is somewhat misleading, for indeed a truer heading might read, of the student of History, the lover of History, and of all those who are not so droll as to take their passions seriously. For this is concerned with those who enjoy the subject, rather than labour for it. Which from this point on shall be synonymous, for the sake of convenience, with the term student. The student of History desires to know History intimately. Here I must interrupt myself with a little philosophic distinction, which one may come across in any book concerning epistemology. The notion of *knowing something*, is a completely disparate concept from the idea of *knowing of something*. When we know of something, we are little more than aware of its existence, we may be able to recant facts concerning it, but we do not understand it. For example the average Irish youth may claim to know of reading for pleasure, in that he/she is aware that it is a furtive practice which like real politics, takes place in dens of inequity and places of general moral degeneration, but that said Irish youth might, as one would expect, not understand the concept of reading a book for pleasure, just as a politician may know of honesty, but might misinterpret it as a fanciful limitation. Thus, the distinction is a simple one, that of awareness and understanding, and of facts and interpretation.

To know History, to understand it, is to be able to conjure (at least for one who thinks in metaphors) in the recesses of the mind's eye, an image of a History, let us take that of man, as it is complete. That is as each event flows into every other event, as each moment tumbles unto the present, and as the very future itself unfurls. To know of History, is to know of events and dates, to understand History is to see how each relates to the other. The student wishes that he might know History as one being, that he might see Ancient Greece melt into, and meld with Ancient Rome, that he might have the capacity to trace each thread as it weaves itself inseparably into the great tapestry that is the History of Man. The lover of History begins with the barest rudimentary images, and slowly as he collects knowledge of the different epochs of mankind, drawing them as dissonant elements to his welder-spirit, he begins to build them upon one another to form one entire picture of that History. Thus Monty is correct in his analysis when he says, that the student paints a portrait of mankind subjectively across the cluttered canvass of his mind. Truly the student, in his endeavour to study History really attempts to, starting from nothing, paint, however inaccurately the brush may fall, a Sistine chapel of Historic imagery, which filling the heavens of his inner mind, formulates his own unique understanding of how every individual event relates to History as a whole. The student for *himself* recreates the History of Man as it unfolds, and continues to do so for as long as he studies, which if any accuracy is intended, is the rest of his life.

On the other hand, the objective Historian, a thing removed from myself, is a devotee, an initiate of his subject. A student eternally knows History as a passionate youth knows his lover, whereas the objective Historian knows History as an elderly man knows his wife of fifty years, in that he first thinks he knows her, and the second regrets that he has lived long enough to know her. The task of the objective Historian is one most sombre, for he must present an accurate and altogether exact account, he must train his soul to be impartial in the extremes, and his mind to be the most scrupulous of balances. His is the ravenous analytic temperament, which rummages through texts and sources as a hunter of discrepancies. He knows History best, who has been married to it many years. Thankfully, the student, is forever romantically infatuated, and besides small disagreements, is always happy to have his understanding of History, remain just that, his. Remembering of course that a marriage is a joint venture, whereas more often than not a budding romance is a meeting of two very distinct and mislead individuals.

History, as described for the student, is important for all. Very few can survive being wed to the subject, growing use to its modulations, its moods, its violent temper, but anyone can love foolishly. Thus it is imperative that all adopt that poetic temperament in respect to History, that one which allows a man to fall madly in love with everything and anything. For the subject should be a flirtatious passion to every man, seducing him from devotion to his art briefly, but regularly. Why? Well to understand History is to understand the world as it is, and the world as it could be. It is to know the origin, the genesis of this modern age, it is to understand the present not as an event in isolation, but as the past-present-future flowing. The moment of the present contains all of that of the past, and all that which is the future. History is the study of man, as the being who plods through time and carries, the legacy of his origins in the backwater of his mind, and his schemes for what is to come in his breast-pocket. What is the Mathematician, the Philosopher, the Poet who does not know the History of his subject? Redundant. What is the man who does not know the History of his kind and his person? One who does not know himself.

By Peter Kiernan

Adolf Hitler

I wanted to write about one of the most interesting people of all time... but I wasn't allowed write about myself.

- Born: 20 April 1889
- Birthplace: Brannau, Austria
- Death: 30 April 1945
- Known as: Germany's Nazi dictator, TIME magazine's "Man of the Year" 1938
- Nickname: Hitler-o

Adolphus Hitler was born in an inn in Brannau, a small town in the Austro- Hungarian Empire. Even worse, he was born without a middle name, although according to Uncyclopedia (a highly reliable historical source), it's "Chuckles". His father, Alois Schickelgruber, changed his name to Hitler when Adolf's grandfather, Johann Heidler, admitted paternity in 1876. A pupil alongside Ludwig "It's a picture of a dog!" Wittgenstein (who would later go on to write the "Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus" which claimed to answer every philosophical question ever asked- unfortunate for him because he was then out of a job) in the Realschule in Linz, he failed the current day equivalent of first year and was forced to repeat. Alois beat him and his mother often, which explains a lot. Hitler dropped out of school aged 16 without graduating, which also explains a lot.

The origin of Hitler's surname comes from the word "Hutte" and means "one who lives in a hut." He would later be insulted by the Allied forces for his father's peculiar name- they airdropped pamphlets over Berlin with the slogan "Heil Schickelgruber!"

In 1905 Hitler moved to Vienna to become, of all things, an artist. The more educated among you may know that Oscar Wilde once said, "All art is useless." As an artist, Hitler was useless and after being rejected by the Viennese Academy Of Fine Arts *twice* he found himself living on the streets of Vienna. The young artist had a liking for Viennese chocolate cake and often found himself out of pocket after spending all his money on it. Hitler's loathing of the



Jews began in Vienna. Unfortunately for our young hobo, Jewish merchants made up the majority of his customers. He blamed the Jews for the economic downturn and claimed that they were enemies of the

Hitler took part on the German side in the Great War from 1914 to 1918, and was decorated twice for bravery. He was never promoted past the German equivalent of Lance Corporal because, ironically, his commanding officers felt that he didn't have the necessary leadership qualities.



After World War 1, Hitler remained in the army and became a spy whose job it was to infiltrate the DAP (German Worker's Party) in Munich. Once he joined, however, he found that he actually agreed with their anti-semitic, anti-capitalist policies and their idea of a strong government that would be in charge of the economy. It was with this party that he discovered his talent for public speaking.

The DAP changed its name to something ridiculously long in German which translates to the "Nationalist Socialist German Worker's Party." Meanwhile, Hitler left the army in 1920 and threw himself into politics. He seized control of the Party by threatening to leave unless he was given full command. A vote was taken to decide who should be leader. Hitler received 543 votes and his rival received 1. On the 29 of July 1921, Hitler became the leader of the National Socialist Party, or Nazi party for short.

The Nazi Party had copied Italy's fascists in appearance, and in 1923 Hitler wanted to emulate Mussolini's March on Rome by staging his own "Campaign in Berlin". He was promptly arrested for high treason and sentenced to 5 years in jail, of which he served less than 9 months.

While in jail, Hitler wrote "Mein Kampf," an autobiography of sorts which explained his stances and policies. When he got out, he spent years dodging tax on the income he received from book sales, amassing a huge bill, the equivalent of 6 million euros today.

Support waned for the Nazi Party in the period between 1924 and 1928 when the German economy was stable. When the Great Depression hit in 1929 and 1930, the Americans called in their loans to Germany and the German economy went down the toilet. In 1928 Hitler's party held 2.6% of the vote; by 1930 they held 16%. Slowly, Hitler's party became more and more popular. By 1932 Hitler himself had become so popular that he decided to run for president against Paul Von Hindenburg. He lost the election but proved himself to be a viable alternative in German politics. After that things get a bit complicated, but after a few months of double-crossing and subterfuge, Hitler was sworn in as Chancellor.

Hitler didn't have a majority in parliament, so it was dissolved and elections were called for March 1933. The Reichstag was set on fire in February of the same year by a Dutch communist and Hitler used this as an excuse

for suspending rights and persecuting communists. After the election, Hitler introduced the "Enabling Act," which was passed by a two thirds majority-communist party members and certain members of the opposition were barred from attending. Hitler's government had become a legal dictatorship, and Hitler went about securing his position by isolating anyone who stood in his way in a process known as "Gleichschaltung" which translates to "co-ordination."

When Hitler seized control he set about re-arming the German war machine, rusty after the years of restriction imposed by the Treaty of Versailles. He attempted to instil patriotic feelings in the German people via a huge public works scheme, with a special emphasis on architecture, his secret passion.

In Hitler's Germany, men were seen as the breadwinners and women as the homemakers. He wasn't all good, however. Under his rule, Jews were at first persecuted, and then later sent to their deaths in concentration camps such as Auschwitz. Around 6 million Jews were killed under his "Final Solution."

His foreign policy wasn't that great either. His plan was to invade Russia and the other Slavic countries and enslave the local populace. In 1938, he forced Austria into an Anschluss or unification with Germany. He then seized the Sudetenland region in Czechoslovakia. The rest of Czechoslovakia soon fell when an intervening Neville Chamberlain settled

on a policy of appeasement, or giving Hitler whatever the hell he wanted. Poland was Hitler's next target in his lebensraum policy. His plan was to give living space to the Aryan race. (According to Uncyclopedia, World War Two broke out because the Polish were eating German children.)

Britain went to war with Germany following Hitler's decision to invade Poland on the 1st of September 1939. This war became known as World War 2, or the second "war to end all wars." Thanks in no small part to his tactical and military nous Germany lost the war. On the 30th of April 1945, the Red Army had reached a couple of buildings away from the bunker where Hitler had based himself. He committed suicide by biting into a cyanide capsule and then shooting himself in the mouth.

Adolf Hitler: an unfortunately moustachioed, tax-evading, chocolate cake-addicted dictator.



By the increasingly historically inaccurate
Niall J. Brehon

Why I Hate My Deputy-Editor

Unfortunately I am forced to write another article for the paper by my unprincipled deputy editor. If anybody has noticed, I only produce an article for the paper whenever the issue number is an even number. Now my androgynous deputy editor has intentionally ruined my karma and the balance of the earth. Anyway, back to the article's contents. If any of you still have vague memories of your fading childhood, then you may remember ubiquitous characters that pop up now and then in badly directed cartoons or movies. For example, the idea of a swash buckling, ill-mannered and repugnant pirate appears in plenty of cartoons while the nefarious magical advisor has also had its fair share of appearances. But where do they get these personalities? Only history can come charging in with an answer. Here I present to you three historical figures who were the template for some of your favourite characters.

Edward Teach: Edward Teach, better known as 'Blackbeard' is often regarded as the archetypal image of the seafaring pirate. To say the least, he possessed every quality imaginable to fulfil the role of 'the pirate'. Those who have served or encountered the man describe him as unpleasant and very unhygienic. He owned between fourteen and sixteen women, a majority of them just a bit older than Saoirse Ronan. He was well known to hide hemp in his beard and burn it whenever he was in the heat of the battle. This was done to intimidate enemies, as it looked like he was breathing fire. He would occasionally murder a friend closest to him, just to maintain an atmosphere of paranoia on his ship. What really shot him to fame were his rather unusual circumstances surrounding his death. Before his last years, sources say that Blackbeard had reportedly entered retirement, retreating to North Carolina. The Governor of North Carolina became concerned that the notorious pirate inhabited the place nearby. He then decided to eliminate him, dispatching two ships after him, commanded by Robert Maynard. Instead of fleeing ensemble, Blackbeard boarded Maynard's ship. Without going into too much detail, a swordfight ensued between the two commanders, with the result that Blackbeard had been stabbed twenty times and suffered at least five gunshot wounds, before bleeding to death while attempting to reload his pistol. Relishing the sweet taste of victory, Maynard severed Blackbeard's head and displayed it from his bowsprit, as a warning to those contemplating of taking up a life of piracy. Maynard received a meagre 100 pounds for his endeavours.

Rasputin: Grigori Rasputin helped define the role of the 'faith healer' or 'prophet', or as I prefer it, 'fraudulent fellow'. He lived with Tsar Nicholas II in the early 20th century. The tsar and his wife were of the belief that Rasputin's magical powers could be the remedy to their haemophiliac son. Rasputin's influence was so extensive that those requesting a meeting with the royal family must consult with the mystic beforehand. Rasputin, by all historical accounts, preached on a throne of lies. He was an inebriate and a lecher, while also regularly accepting payments from people seeking his counsel. It can be said that he was one of the many factors responsible for the fall of the tsars. While he possessed no magic whatsoever, there is an element of the unexplainable with regards to his assassination. A group of Russian nobles conspired to poison him with tainted wine and cake. To the surprise and indignation of his conspirators, Rasputin functioned normally after consuming his wine and cake. One of the Russian nobles could not bear to see him living, so he went to Rasputin and released a bullet into his backside. One member of the gang forgot to strip Rasputin of his possessions so when he returned to 'retrieve' his coat, Rasputin sprang up and proceeded to strangle him. The rest of the band arrived at the scene to shoot Rasputin three more times in the back. However, Rasputin did not answer Death's call yet (he was merely struggling to stand). The conspirators had no choice but to batter him to death. Later on, the group draped his body in a sheet and dumped his body into the freezing Neva River. When the Russian authorities discovered his corpse later, they concluded he had died from *hypothermia*.

Teddy Roosevelt: There is no need of an introduction for this great man. Researching about Theodore Roosevelt was almost like reading several historical figures at once. In his lifetime he was a cowboy, a police commissioner, a naval secretary, a Rough Rider, the Governor of New York, Vice President, Commander-in-Chief, the author of 35 books and an avid hunter. He was the first US president to call for national health insurance and universal healthcare. Perhaps his crowning achievement was his negotiation for the US to take control of the Panama Canal (A man-made canal which happens to be one of the largest and most difficult engineering projects ever undertaken) and its construction in 1904. Roosevelt was also the first US president to receive the first Nobel Peace Prize, winning it in 1906 for negotiating the peace in the Russo-Japanese War. His greatest display of machismo was his assassination attempt on 14th October 1912. While campaigning in Milwaukee, a bullet lodged right into his chest after piercing through his steel eye glass case and a 50 page copy of his speech he carried in his jacket. Roosevelt, with the experience of being a hunter and anatomist, accurately concluded that since he wasn't coughing blood the bullet had not totally penetrated the chest wall to his lung, and so declined suggestions to receive medical attention immediately. Instead, he delivered his scheduled speech with blood seeping into his shirt. He spoke for the full ninety minutes. His opening comments to the gathered crowd were, "Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot; but it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose."

By Eamon Yeung

