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In summary, Professor Orlow has provided a superb English language primer in the intricacies of the Reich-Prussian dualism. More, unlike previous students of this subject, Professor Orlow had sources in the former GDR. By the very paucity of their citation in his footnotes he has indicated that those do not materially change the story.

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Beginning with the startling leap in Nazi support in 1930 and ending with the elections of March 1933, when the NSDAP collected 17 million votes, *Hitlers Wähler* combines the fascinations of detective work with the virtues of exemplary pedagogy. In simple, readable prose, spiced with revealing quotations from contemporaries, Falter’s search for the statistical characteristics of those Germans who voted for Hitler makes unfailingly absorbing reading.

Falter discusses separately each of the categories (sex, class, age, urbanization, previous party preference, unemployment, levels of Nazi party organization, etc.) that have traditionally been coupled with Nazi election successes. Beginning each time with a hypothesis and two variables, he moves from the simple to the complex, explaining the process of elimination with exacting clarity and pointing out logical pitfalls. Graphs and tables are put into everyday language, multiple regression analyses are confined to the appendix. The great value of *Hitlers Wähler*, not only for courses in German history, but also for introductory courses on historical reasoning and methodology, makes one hope for an early English translation.

Social categories turn out not to produce dramatic correlation with Nazi votes. Older people, men, civil servants, and the employed were somewhat more likely to vote Nazi than were the young, women, white-collar employees, and the unemployed — at least until March 1933. Census categories such as “Worker” and “Self-Employed” prove too leaky to tell us much. The only really strong independent variable — all but ignored by the first four decades of commentators — was religion. “Protestants were on average twice as vulnerable to the NSDAP as Catholics,” who eschewed Hitler’s party even when they did not vote Center or BVP (177, 187–88). When one controls for religion, most of the other factors — class, agricultural employment, whether or not the voter had a job — tend to disappear (181). Falter’s findings confirm the social picture offered by Thomas Childers of the Nazis as a broad-based catchall party.

Helmut Nicolai war bis 1935 einer der einflußreichsten Mitarbeiter des nationalsozialistischen Innenministers Wilhelm Frick. Er war verantwortlich für zahlreiche Gesetzesvorhaben, die wie das "Neuaufbaugesetz" zur normativen Fundierung der Ideologie des NS-Systems und damit nachhaltig zu dessen Stabilisierung beitrugen. Im Mittelpunkt der nun vorliegenden Studie von Martyn Housden steht jedoch nicht die gesetzgeberische Tätigkeit, sondern die geistige Entwicklung eines hochrangigen Ministerialbeamten. Für den Verfasser trägt die Vita Nicolais gewissermaßen exemplarischen Charakter, um sich der Motivation der NS-Täter zu nähern und damit eine Erklärung für das Funktionieren der braunen Diktatur zu liefern. Ein besonderes Merkmal ist daher die breitangelegte theoretische Fundierung der Studie. Nicht neu ist dabei die Kritik, die der Verfasser beispielsweise an der marxistisch geprägten Geschichtsschreibung oder an den neueren Theorien der Funktionalisten übt. Deren Erklärungsversuche für den Nationalsozialismus bezeichnet Housden als unzureichend, weil nach seiner Ansicht beide die Bedeutung der Ideologie