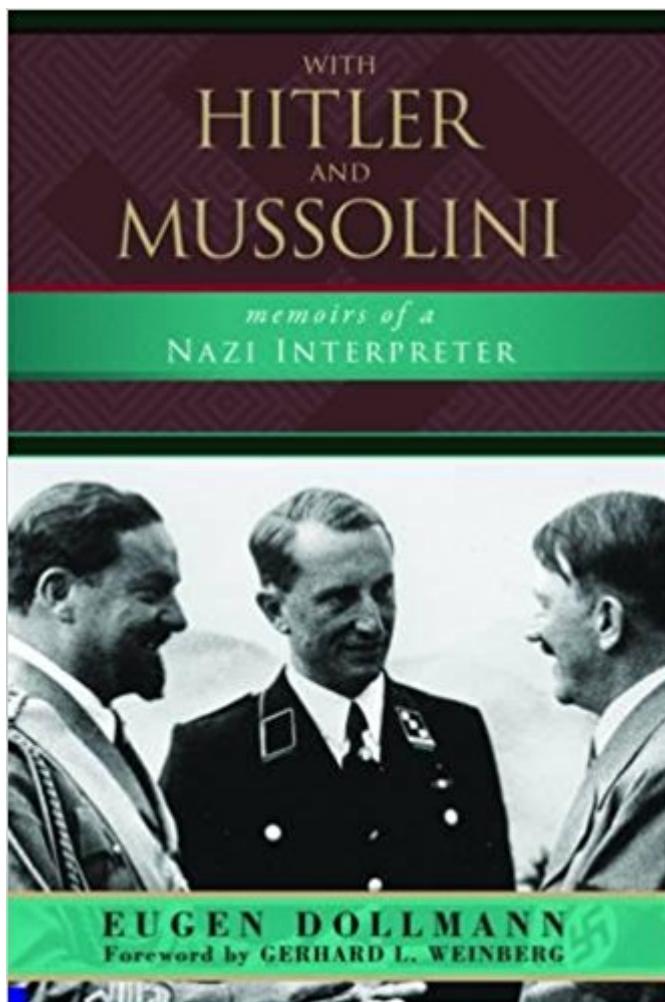


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With Hitler And Mussolini: Memoirs Of A Nazi Interpreter



Synopsis

An insider's view of Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich, and Mussolini. In the years before World War II, Eugen Dollmann arrived in Rome on a scholarship, intending to write a history of the Catholic Church. Instead he joined the Nazi Party and became an interpreter to various members of the German and Italian Fascist hierarchy. In this capacity Dollmann attended the Munich Conference of 1938 and was present at most of the important meetings between Hitler and Mussolini, also witnessing many of the endless squabbles between Mussolini's son-in-law Galeazzo Ciano and Hitler's foreign secretary, Joachim von Ribbentrop. He interpreted for Heinrich Himmler during his visits to Rome and was, curiously for one of his temperament, appointed Obersturmführer in the Allgemeine SS. He played a considerable role in the surrender of the German Army in Italy, helping to prevent the execution of Hitler's scorched-earth orders. The book is full of piquant anecdotes; Himmler's excavations for the legendary treasure of King Alaric; the visit of Reinhard Heydrich to the House of the Provinces, a brothel frequented by officers and men of means; Hitler's dread and annoyance at being piloted into his newly conquered Ukraine by Mussolini; to mention only a few. Throughout, Dollmann makes no attempt to conceal or exonerate his association with the Nazis. With Hitler and Mussolini is a fascinating memoir filled with political intrigue, undercover activity, and insights into the biggest personalities connected to the Second World War.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Eugen Dollmann gave a unique literary picture of what it was like to be a young German

historian of Italian art, roped into World War II in *With Hitler and Mussolini: Memoirs of a Nazi Interpreter*. The book is, in some ways, a comic masterpiece. Like many a German admirer of the Nazis, Dr. Dollmann relished the chance to shed his academic gown and don the uniform of an S.S. Colonel as the curtain rose. Yet for all the excitement of interpreting for the great powers at the very top, from the Wolf's Lair to the Eagle's Nest or the Renaissance villa of Achilles Gaggia at Feltre, he never forgot his training. His descriptions of the cultural contrast between senior Italian and German officials such as Ciano and Ribbentrop capture the grotesque clash of the Pact of Steel civilizations dragging Europe into the apocalypse; with the summits of Hitler and Mussolini like opera bouffe. Memorable and strangely arresting, in our very different yet often disturbingly similar cultural times.

Nigel Hamilton, author of the *FDR at War* trilogy, Eugen Dollman was more than a fly on the wall as a top Nazi interpreter and mediator in Italy and Germany during World War II. A classical scholar, art historian, bon vivant, and polished writer, he vividly portrays the Machiavellian intrigues of Hitler, Mussolini, Ciano, Himmler and other notable fascists. What emerges is a riveting inside look at the outcasts of history as they bamboozle, rage, intrigue, and defy in their years of despotic rule.

Anthony S. Pitch, author of *Our Crime Was Being Jewish*; Dollman was an SS man whose manner and elegance enabled him to move in Fascist Italy's highest circles as a diplomat and interpreter. He was also an inveterate intriguer and an accomplished storyteller, with a knack for being present at crucial moments and a nose for scandal. His insider perspective may be embellished, but is never tedious.

Dennis Showalter, author of *Patton* and *Rommel*; Having earned a PhD in history from a Munich university, Eugen Dollmann spent 1927 to 1930 in Rome, writing a history of the Farneses, one of the great families of Renaissance Italy. A man of enormous charm and erudition, Dollmann eagerly joined the Nazi Party and accepted a commission in the SS. He served during the 1930s and World War II as Italian interpreter to Heinrich Himmler, Reinhard Heydrich, and Adolf Hitler, and was present at the major meetings between Hitler and Mussolini. This memoir provides a one-of-a-kind insider view of the evolution of the fatal connection between fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. This alone would make it valuable as history. But it is the self-portrait of Dollmann; an acerbic and effete charmer who was also an icy political nihilist; makes this one of the strangest, most fascinating, and most disturbing books you are likely to read about World War II.

Alan Axelrod, author of *Lost Destiny: Joe Kennedy Jr. and the Doomed WW II Mission to Save London* and *Patton: A Biography* "There are very few German memoirs of the German presence in Italy, the Axis ally. Dollmann's account of his

life as an interpreter and translator between the German and Italian leaderships brings vividly to life the bizarre world of Axis diplomacy and Axis ambitions. It is a reminder that alongside the brutality and fanaticism of the regime, cultured Germans tried to retain more traditional values, blind to the harsh reality around them. —Richard Overy, author of *Why the Allies Won*
—SS Colonel Eugen Dollmann was not one of the most central figures in Hitler’s inner circle, but he certainly was the most dishy. As the Rome-based interpreter who linked together the German-Italian axis during World War II, he had unique access to the Führer and his top henchmen, as well as the decadent milieu surrounding Mussolini. . . . Precisely because he did not drink fully from Hitler’s poisoned chalice, Dollmann was able to observe his masters from a droll distance like the world-weary characters played by George Sanders. This perspective—intimate, but detached—makes his memoirs an utterly fascinating and disturbing reading experience. —David Talbot, from the foreword

David Talbot is the New York Times bestselling author of *The Devil’s Chessboard: Allen Dulles, the CIA and the Rise of America’s Secret Government* and founder of *Salon*.

This book gives an unusual and intimate insight into the times and personalities involved. Told by a man who besides being a talented observer of people is also very acute in his insights into the follies of the egotistical people he had to deal with. Well worth a read and it is good that this book has been republished. Very valuable text.

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