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As director of this Senior Thesis, I recommend that it be accepted in fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with honors.

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THEMES OF RESIGNATION AND PESSIMISM IN ALBRECHT HAUSHOFER'S MOABITER SONETTE
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DANKE SCHOEN

an Herrn Sears, who took the blame for many of my failures, and also Drs. Rippy and MacGibbon for "fachliche Hilfe."

NOTES:

where material was duplicated in several sources, it is footnoted as having come from one book, generally the one in which the best, most detailed, and most comprehensive coverage of the material was found, which sometimes results in what appears to be a preponderance of footnotes from only one source.

due to the sonnets having been reprinted in fragments in various articles, all sonnets quoted are documented as though their source were the book MOABITER SONETTE and not the individual article in which they appeared. Spelling however has been Anglicized due to the difficulty in reproducing German diacritical markings.

although criticism was translated from the German when quoted, the sonnets were left intact to preserve the effect that would have been lost by an inadequate rendering into English.
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I. INTRODUCTION

Fourteen people walked out of Berlin’s Moabit prison into the night. The Allies were close enough that gunfire was heard in the city itself, and the SS guards were presumably setting free some of the prisoners before they could be freed by the "liberators." They had gone only a few steps when they were all shot from behind. When the bodies were found, one had a sheaf of papers clutched in the hand. It was in this way that the Moabit Sonette were discovered by the brother of their author, Albrecht Haushofer.¹

The name of Albrecht Haushofer, unlike that of, say, Claus von Stauffenberg or Erwin Rommel, is known to Germany as that of a geopolitician, a university professor, a figure in the Foreign Office, and an author of political dramas, as well as that of a member of the resistance against Hitler, although outside his country Haushofer is most famous for having written the Sonette.² Although Ribbentrop saw to his dismissal from his Foreign Office position in 1938, he evidently had some influence on Hitler for a while. When his veiled warnings and suggestions began to cause suspicion, he and his friends fell under Gestapo surveillance. During this

¹Albrecht Haushofer, Moabit Sonette, commentary by Rainer Hildebrandt (not numbered).
²Charles W. Hoffmann, Opposition Poetry in Nazi Germany, p. 56.
time Haushofer tried, through Hess, to establish contact with England and was also in contact with the active resistance in Germany. Haushofer was imprisoned twice, first after Hess's flight to England, and second after the July 20 plot against Hitler's life. His connections with the conservative resistance which engineered this attempt cost him his life, although he was not a central figure in the group.\(^1\) The Sonette were written, as their name implies, during his final imprisonment and in the last months of his life.\(^2\)

This collection has a sort of middle position in its relationship to other oppositional writings of the period. It was written in prison, where writing tools were forbidden possessions, quite difficult to find and hard to keep once obtained because of the constant searches and poor facilities for hiding anything in a prison cell. And if a piece of writing containing any sort of oppositional thought or a description of prison life were discovered, it might have meant an addition to the author's sentence or worse at the hands of the brutal SS.\(^3\) Although poetry was "the\(^4\) predominant genre" in anti-Nazi literature, the Sonette took this form for only a few of the usual reasons: because of the ease of recopying and distribution (or in this case, hiding); because poetry is a more subjective art form and a good

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 56-7.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 56.
\(^3\)Ibid., p. 103.
\(^4\)Ibid., p. 1.
vehicle for expression for one who cannot maintain sufficient
detachment from his subject; and since open opposition is
often found behind rather than in the main images and themes
of the sonnets, perhaps because poetry deals so much in
symbolism rather than ordinary language, thus allowing a poet
to mean more than he says and still assume that his readers,
being used to such poetic devices, will find the hidden
meanings in his work. Still some of the poems are openly
defeatist, a form of opposition not to be tolerated, since
the Weltanschauung of one writing for official approval had
to be heroic, never passive. The Sonette differ from much
of the other poetry written by imprisoned poets in that they
do not merely describe as much as they question - why did
Nazism come about? what part did I, did we all, play in its
rise? what will its fate be? And obviously, although its
author was not a professional, the collection is of much
better quality artistically than the bulk of the literature
coming from the prisons.

These 79 sonnets, which are sometimes autobiographical
and sometimes seemingly unrelated, are unified by the strong
personal element in them and by what several commentators
refer to as their element of passive resignation, which is
the subject of this study.

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1Ibid., p. 3. 2Ibid., p. 59. 3Ibid., p. 2. 4Ibid., p. 59.
5Frank Mankiewicz, "German Literature 1933-1938," German
6Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 107. 7Ibid., p. 111. 8Ibid., p. 58.
II. THE SONNETS--INFLUENCE OF
HEGEL AND MODERN HISTORY

A. "Die Tragoedie eines Denkers"

Felix Wassermann finds the entire collection to be "permeated by a basic note of pessimism and resignation," which he considers to be "characteristic of many of Haushofer's fellow strugglers..." and also "one of the chief reasons for the collapse of the German resistance movement...." The attitude, he says, is typical of a generation who seem to think themselves "fighters at forgotten posts...."¹ Blankenagel also uses the same word to characterize the collection when he says that they contain "no self-pity, no wild recrimination, no vitriolic condemnation of brutal, degraded tyrants, but rather a note of melancholy resignation and acceptance of inexorable destiny."²

Wassermann seems to think that Haushofer's resignation and pessimism stem chiefly from the fact that intellectuals find it hard to cope with utter brutality; or, as he puts it,

It is the tragedy of one who thinks and delves into things and wants at the same time to be a man of action, and like the others of his ilk, considers, plans, and thinks matters out too

much, and finally fails, because moral and cultural refinement make it impossible for him to deal effectively with the uncomplicated and brutal men of action.

Haushofer himself admits this in Sonnet 68, "wissen," when he says that he has tried his entire life to collect knowledge and experiences which are now useless—"Das wissen liegt gebunden vor dem Streit..."

B. The contradictory definition: historical necessity

Hoffmann, however, finds this explanation too facile. True, it was not easy for men who were unwilling to match methods with the Nazis to fight this brutal regime; indeed, he sees this as "the basic problem faced by the opposition." But we will see that this problem was overcome by the men who were actually to carry out Hitler's near-assassination, though perhaps not by those who were not actively involved in the attempts.

And this was not Haushofer's prime predicament either. Hoffmann considers his dilemma to stem not from "impotent refinement" as much as from the fact that Nazism was seen by Haushofer in two contradictory ways. It was, to Haushofer the historian and politician, merely another "political phenomenon," simply an evil creation of evil men. Hitlerism, seen from the standpoint of a realistic politician, was then a "doctrineless movement which received no impulse save from

1Wassermann, op. cit., p. 308.
2Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 61.  
3Ibid.
the will of its insane ruler, which based its every act on momentary expediency, and which must logically lead to destruction." But there was yet another view of Nazism possible. Haushofer's belief in historical necessity led him to view the movement as an agent of destruction, sent to end a historical epoch so that divine justice would be satisfied and the inevitable march of history in its "divine" direction could continue. He cites the following sonnet, "Das Erbe," as proof of the fact that Haushofer believed his age to be one in which a complete historical turnabout was to take place:¹

In Schutt und Staub ist Babylon versunken,
   ein Tempel blieb vom alten Theben fest,
   von Ktesiphon zeugt einer Halle Rest,
   das grosse Angkor ist im Wald ertrunken ---
   auch unser ganzes Erbe sind Ruinen.
   Noch kurze Weile zwischen toten Mauern
   wird kümmerlicher Menschen Sorge dauern ---
   danach wird alles nur dem Efeu dienen.
   Der Efeu des Vergessens wird sich ranken
   um ein Jahrtausend hoher Blutezeit,
   um dreissig Jahre moerderischen Streit.
   (Sonett 57)

The necessity for this "catalyst" is assigned to "modern man's loss of faith in the forces of Good and his resultant willingness to turn to Evil when the solutions to his problems were no longer readily forthcoming ('wenn sich zur Hilfe nicht die Goetter regen,' p. 33)."² Also important is the element of selfishness and unwillingness to serve, which destroy the foundation for good government. This viewpoint is expounded upon in several sonnets, notably

¹Ibid., p. 64.  
²Ibid., pp. 64-5.
in "Die Gefahrtener," p. 31, in which he speaks of the men of the 20th of July plot, holding them up as rare examples to those who have rejected responsibility and refused to accept the consequences of their actions.\footnote{Ibid., p. 65.}
1. A corrupt era

A look at the situation inside Germany at the time the resistance was trying to remove Hitler lends considerable weight to the idea that the age was a corrupt one and deserved annihilation. This is not completely invalid because of special conditions existing only within Germany and peculiar only to the German people. In Sonett 37, Hausbofer refers to the species homo sapiens as "Tiger-Apes," implying a general condemnation of his era rather than a narrow brand of finger-pointing that singled out his own nation; and the viewpoint that the world in general must take part of the blame for Nazism can be found both in Roepke, a German, and Dulles, an American, to use representative authors. Roepke feels that if Nazism had merely been ostracized in its early days, instead of being allowed to carry on so successfully its "courting of world favour," it might have died out.¹ Unfortunately, the movement found many supporters in England, France, and the United States, and elsewhere in the world. In 1935, for instance, Churchill, in his book Great Contemporaries, was admiring Hitler's "courage...perseverance, and...vital force which enabled him to challenge, defy, conciliate, or overcome, all the authorities or resistance which barred

¹Wilhelm Roepke, The German Question, p. 32.
his path."¹ Many foreigners were much impressed by the closed nightclubs, the outlawed lipstick, and other evidences of specious morality on the part of the Nazis. By the time they let themselves realize that this outward Puritanism was only masking a greater immorality, the movement was too strong to oust.²

Still, even those freest with their condemnation of the world outside Germany do not leave Germany herself free from blame; on the contrary, Roepke carries Germany's failure down into the roots of the German national character. He does not view this character as any mystical thing which is born into anyone of "German blood" but as a result of the course of German history.³ The greatest character-influencing factor in German history, in the sense we are interested in here, was the Reformation, which left the German with a strong respect for ruler and state⁴ and made the idea of a superstate quite tolerable.⁵ Lutheranism taught him that he could consider political and private life in two quite different lights—the former follows a ruthless law of its own and the latter is bound by different moral laws, thus making a dual life ruled by two entirely different sets of moral principles quite possible.⁶ Then since Bismarck, the German character has undergone an alteration in favor of the

Prussian model, which is something rather different.\textsuperscript{1}

Prussianism added, among other factors, the arrogance which sabotaged every liberal advance made by the Western Germans in the 19th century\textsuperscript{2} and also exaggerated the normal (and dangerous) German tendency to exaggerate trends and movements perhaps thought up elsewhere.\textsuperscript{3} Thus one could not call Germany a nation of criminals in an innocent world, because a trend would have to exist before it could be exaggerated.

What sort of people then were produced by this historical heritage? Heidenheimer gives a concise statement of the results as follows:

...large numbers of 'average' Germans who held positions in the party and its affiliated organizations had come to adapt themselves to the regime's excesses, rationalizing acceptance with the argument that they were inevitable or that they were more than balanced off by the regime's positive achievements.\textsuperscript{4}

Roepke suggests, in addition, several other factors that worked to keep people from opposing the state. Many, he said, simply wanted to remain active in public life to retain status and escape boredom, and that aside from a sense of "duty," many had deluded themselves into thinking that if they kept their jobs, they would at least be run by non-Nazis who would not take advantage of the position to commit atrocities.\textsuperscript{5} In short, the German anti-Nazis were "a minority

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 144. \textsuperscript{2}Ibid., p. 146. \textsuperscript{3}Ibid., p. 149. \textsuperscript{4}Arnold J. Heidenheimer, The Governments of Germany, p. 30. \textsuperscript{5}Op. cit., pp. 53-4.
opposed to something their compatriots either supported or tolerated.¹

As was previously stated, German character is not something as much born in as trained in. Therefore the attitude of the majority of Germans could logically be traced to the country's intellectuals and its clergy, which Roepke calls the two groups that give a nation its conscience. In Germany, these groups failed.² The universities not only failed to resist Nazism, they were among its most enthusiastic supporters. And if university professors were influenced by Nazi ideas, what then of secondary teachers, judges, and all who might be classed as the intelligentsia?³

And what of the churches? Dulles says "In view of the numerical strength and ancient traditions of the German churches...and Hitler's failure to complete his domination of them, it is surprising that they were not a greater danger to him than they proved to be." But unfortunately they regarded Nazism at first as merely a new form of government, not realizing how basically anti-Christian it was. Then too, the church was accustomed to being neutral concerning temporal affairs, which was a factor, as well as their "self-deception" and "Hitler's cunning."⁴ Rothfels mentions the fact that Protestant Christians were used to church-state intermingling, which they accepted not so much with the attitude that whatever

¹Dulles, op. cit., p. 21.
²Op. cit., p. 64. Haushofer's view is similar. See "Wissen."
³Ibid., p. 75.                  ⁴Dulles, op. cit., pp. 110-111.
is, is right, but more or less just whatever is, is, and there's an end to it. ¹ Although the Catholic Church was more apt to think in terms of evil forces roaming the world and therefore to class the Nazis among them,² oppression of the Church was softened somewhat by the Concordat with the Vatican, in which Hitler promised to respect Church rights.³ Rothfels, who is a German defending Germans and doesn't always seem quite objective, does, however, support an idea found elsewhere in American sources that German Christians were willing to allow the Nazification of the country if the church were allowed to continue relatively unhampered. He quotes Pastor Niemoeller of the Confessional Church as having said that the churches did not act until absolutely forced to.⁴ In fact, Niemoeller, one of the leaders of resistance in the church (no church as an institution was involved actively in the opposition⁵), also an ex-U-boat commander, told Allied reporters that he reported to the submarine command because he thought he had a duty to Germany. He was later jailed for resistance to the Nazi policy toward churches, but if they had been left alone, most German Confessional Churches would have remained loyal.⁶

In only one poem does the idea of Nazism as "the embodiment of historical necessity" become the main theme, that is "Der Vater":\(^1\)

Ein tiefes Märchen aus dem Morgenland erzählt uns, dass die Geister böser Macht gefangen sitzen in des Meeres Nacht, versiegelt von besorgter Gotteshand, bis einmal im Jahrtausend wohl das Glücks den einen Fischer die Entscheidung gönne, der die Gefesselten entsiegeln könne, wirft er den Fund nicht gleich ins Meer zurück.

Für meinen Vater war das Los gesprochen. Es lag einmal in seines Willens Kraft, den Daemon heimzustossen in die Haft.

Mein Vater hat das Siegel aufgebrochen. Den Hauch des Bösen hat er nicht gesehn. Den Daemon liess er in die Welt entwehn.

(Sonett 47)

It may appear that there is no sense of necessity to be found in the poem, but Hoffmann insists that the action of the father merely proves that the time was ripe for the catalytic agent of destruction, that it is symbolic of the fact that the world had morally deteriorated. A force Haushofer calls "Glück" and Hoffmann calls "Fortuna" had given the fisherman the choice of releasing the evil or throwing it immediately back into the sea it came from -- evil is always there, to be chosen in its worst form at the time when man has sunken low enough to do it. Here, and in

\(^1\)Hoffmann, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 66.
another poem, "Acheron," (p. 33), the impression is given that it is enough to countenance evil, or to close one's eyes to it ("Den Hauch des Boesen hat er nicht gesehn." and "Mein Vater war noch blind vom Traum der Macht,"); it is not exactly necessary to commit an evil act to be guilty and worthy of destruction. This willingness to overlook allowed Evil to become powerful,\(^1\) the choice of symbol itself strongly suggesting that it is superhumanly so.\(^2\)

The father, then, is seen somewhat as a symbol of the times, one of many who reacted the same way toward Nazism. Wassermann considers the sonnets dealing with Karl Haushofer to be of special importance, because the poet's father "had long been his model, even in the initial collaboration with the nationalist regime."\(^3\) Blankenagel too says that the younger Haushofer collaborated out of sympathy with his father,\(^4\) and Dulles speaks of the time before 1938 as "the days when he was a Nazi",\(^5\) although Hoffmann seems to think that he was not;\(^6\) and in the sonnet "Olympisches Fest," (p. 34), Haushofer does say "Mich taeuschte dieser helle Zauber nicht...Ich kannte wie die Maske das Gesicht."

At any rate, Albrecht Haushofer, it must be remembered, was daily losing any sympathy he might have had with the Nazi movement, while his father, for one reason or another, was enmeshed in the system along with millions of other Germans

like him. Therefore the father merely brought the situation of Germany and the world home with more clarity and force.

Karl Haushofer, a former army general who became a geographer and professor later in his life, is called by Walsh "the master genius of an organized movement designed to justify, by scientific argument, the Nazi gamble for total power." Wassermann, who is a little kinder to him generally, says that although he was a brilliant man, "his emotional romanticism, part of his German heritage, gave him a certain preference for the strong man and the strong state in history and politics." Thus the elder Haushofer saw power as the "basic element of political reality" and thought the way to power was the possession of important territory.

But was he really a Nazi? He had been the teacher of Rudolf Hess, it is true, who was a go-between of ideas to Hitler, had visited them both in Landsberg during the writing of Mein Kampf, and was later consulted on political affairs by the party to the extent that he was on the suspect list for possible trial at Nuremberg. Haushofer said in his own defense that much of what he wrote was "under compulsion," but he did admit to having brought much of his "military mentality" with him from his earlier army days.

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6Ibid., p. 110.
In answer to the charge that he had written pro-Nazi articles even before he was forced to do so, Haushofer claimed that his teachings had been used by the Nazis as they had seen fit and that Hess, not the brightest of his pupils, had passed on faulty information to Hitler, who was "half-educated" himself. Walsh's reply was that Haushofer had never repudiated a thing—if anything, he had praised the Nazis. However Wassermann seems to think that Haushofer's Journal of Geopolitics "rarely went beyond the minimum of lip service to the political philosophy of the government without which a continued publication under a totalitarian regime would have been impossible." He does criticize Haushofer and other intellectuals who saw Hitler as a strong anti-Communist force for failing to remember that when conservative brains and revolutionary brawn ally, the former is historically certain to lose out.

\[\text{1Ibid., pp. 110-112. 2Ibid., p. 110. 3Ibid., p. 112. 4"Karl Haushofer," pp. 364-65. 5Ibid., p. 367.}\]
3. Impersonal destruction

The same idea as in "Der Vater" appears under a different image in "Lawinen," where "historical law" is seen as being "as unescapable as...natural law."

\[\text{Wem je die hohen Berge Heimat waren,}\]
\[\text{der weiss, wie man die Haenge meiden muss,}\]
\[\text{an denen, in zermalmend-jaehem Schuss,}\]
\[\text{Lawinen donnernd in die Tiefe fahren.}\]
\[\text{Da mag ein ganzer Berg in Stille lauern,}\]
\[\text{der kleinste Schneeball reisst die Huellen auf,}\]
\[\text{und weisse Lasten tosen ihren Lauf.}\]
\[\text{Begraben Taler unter Todesmauern.}\]

\((\text{Sonett 22})\)

In the sonnets "Dem Ende zu" (p. 61), and "Die grossen Toten" (p. 56), containing the line "'enn sich das deutsche Schicksal ganz erfuellt," the concept of Nazism's historical role is seen again, and the "irrepressible press toward annihilation" gives a new feeling to the sonnets "Rattenzue" (p. 50), in which the Nazis are compared to a host of rats which are ravaging the land, tearing along with them everything that is not fast and stable (presumably those of no firm belief) and savagely destroying anything that stands in their way, and "Die grosse Flut" (p. 51), in which he describes country inundated by a flooded river; what could, fled, and what could not, died.\(^1\) The rats and the water are inorganic, or at least non-human, indestructible forces which are carrying off or destroying all that stands in

\(^1\)Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 68.
their path,\(^1\) which suggests the horrible necessity of the destruction and the futility of standing against it. As Haushofer says in the last stanza of "Lawinen:"

\[
\text{Vermessenheit im Guten oder Boesen -- ich buesse den Versuch sie aufzuhalten.}
\text{Ein Stoss - ein Wirbel - toedliches Erkalten...}
\]

\(^{1}\text{Ibid.}, p. 60.\)
4. **An article of faith**

It can be seen that as long as Haushofer is describing the crisis of his time, he is quite objective; however, when he begins to speculate about the end of the era and the means through which this will be brought about, he is entering the realm of pure faith. He felt that Nazism was "so perfect a symbol of the combined evils of his age" that it must have been sent by a higher power to hasten the destruction of an age that had burned itself out, or rather had rotted itself away.\(^1\) Rainer Hildebrandt says of Haus­hofer that his belief in the "forming powers of history" seemed to be independent of his political knowledge, that he had a "strong feeling of a logic of fate" which stood "in an almost uncanny contradiction to his political activity...."\(^2\)

Where does this tenet of faith stem from? It can be logically suggested, perhaps, that, just as one might seek to understand what is behind modern socialism by turning to look at Karl Marx, perhaps a short detour into Hegel will help explain this deviation into emotional conviction rather than logic. Findlay states that "Hegel's native Germany has at no time been free from his influence...."\(^3\) and Aiken

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\(^1\)Ibid., p. 66.  
\(^2\)Sonette, commentary.  
\(^3\)J.N. Findlay, *Hegel: A Re-Examination*, p. 17.
elaborates to the effect that Hegel's philosophy is "unquestionably one of the most influential systems of thought in the nineteenth century" and one which "has had many other far-reaching effects upon modern thought, including not only philosophy itself...."¹ Thus, when one finds, in an educated German with strong idealistic tendencies, evidence of a pronounced belief in historical necessity or the view that historical happenings are the somehow planned steps in a divine plan, in light of these statements (and perhaps also looking back to "assermann's statement about the "German heritage" which influenced the thought of Haushofer's father), perhaps it would not be an exaggeration to say that Haushofer was faced with the problem of "Wissen" versus (Hegelian) "Glauben," these forces being "fed" by the operation of entirely different faculties, and the latter being the stronger--a state of affairs not uncommon to the human condition.

The French Revolution inspired Hegel's philosophical system, along with that of many another German philosopher. These men deplored the violence associated with the revolution but saw that it was based upon an ideal of freedom.² Hegel's predecessor Kant went only so far as to say that reason was important but could not fathom that which it was not equipped to understand; that is, it could not go beyond experience without becoming involved in contradictions. But

²Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory, p. 3.
Hegel, on the other hand, accepted contradictions as "themselves indicative of the nature of things."¹ Whereas Kant had allowed it to be true that every "thesis" produced an "antithesis" which directly contradicted it, he did not proceed to the next step, as Hegel did, and consider both true when considered as "imperfect expressions of a higher, more inclusive proposition which contains what is significant in both of them....called a 'synthesis.'"²

Reyburn explains the admittedly self-contradictory problem of Hegelianism as follows:

Hegel's contention is that if we are in earnest with our thought and carry it as far as it will go, such a category changes in our hands and shows a meaning which we try to exclude from it. This state of things can be mended only when we adopt a more concrete principle which includes both aspects as part of itself.... When we force reality, as it were, into one of these primitive categories and try to take it abstractly, it avenges itself by turning into another form. The neglected aspects appear in spite of us, and the despised unity of the system as a whole³ reveals itself by forcing a half idea to turn into its opposite.⁴

Evidently we are to assume that it is hard to categorize any part of reality as "good" or "bad" because a "real" thing will by its nature not be completely one or the other.

Two levels of thought are necessary in dialectic: Understanding and Reason. The former can sense contradiction

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¹Aiken, op. cit., p. 73. ²Ibid., p. 74. ³The unity of the universe is a point found in the Sonette which will be mentioned later. ⁴The Ethical Theory of Hegel: A Study of the Philosophy of Right, p. 12.
and dissimilarity, but it takes the operation of the latter to make harmony out of the resulting confusion.\(^1\) whereas the Understanding can weigh two propositions and find one to be true and the other false, or one "good" and the other "bad," the Reason recognizes that no element can be rejected as false, because the "overcoming" of one of the antithetical ideas involves its perpetuation in the larger scale.\(^2\) This is reminiscent of Robert Frost's couplet about good and bad managing to have lasted because they stood so long contrasted. In other words, one could say truthfully enough that neither three nor one is four, because they can never be four separately; but still it is impossible to add up to four without having units that can be broken down into three and one, or two and two. (This is considering integral numbers as rather "basic" quantities which are by their nature antithetical to each other.) Perhaps the basic difference in Hegel's interpretation of the Absolute (which might be called by one adhering to another philosophy God or Truth, etc.) is that he does not stress its faculty to level inequalities as much as he does the fact that it includes them.\(^3\) The two abstractions must be seen, when merged, not as a new "thing" but as parts of a whole.

These generalities fit into a theory of history in this way. Initially, one must assume that God could not create an evil world. However, a look into the pages of history finds people acting, for the most part, only toward

\(^1\)Findlay, op. cit., p. 66. \(^2\)Ibid., p. 67. \(^3\)Ibid.
the satisfaction of their own passions and needs. Hegel himself asks how to reconcile these two contradictory notions:

When we look at this display of passions, and the consequences of their violence; the unreason which is associated...with them...since this decay is...the work...of the Human will—a moral embitterment...may well be the result of our reflections... [this scene] excites emotions of the profoundest and most hopeless sadness, counterbalanced by no consolatory result. We endure in beholding it a mental torture, allowing no defense or escape but the consideration that what has happened could not be otherwise; that it is a fatality which no intervention could alter. And at last we draw back from the intolerable disgust with which these sorrowful reflections threaten us, into the more agreeable environment of our individual life.... But even regarding History as the slaughter-bench at which the happiness of peoples, the wisdom of States, and the virtue of individuals have been victimized—the question involuntarily arises—to what principle, to what final aim, these enormous sacrifices have been offered.

And he answers himself by the assertion that

those manifestations of vitality on the part of individuals and peoples, in which they seek and satisfy their own purposes, are, at the same time, the means and instruments of a higher and broader purpose of which they know nothing—which they realize unconsciously....

Thus it is not "impossible" or "presumptuous" to know what at least a part of God's plan is. This charge is levelled, presumably, by those who look beyond the facts that Hegel looks directly at, by those who see evil as a deviation from, rather than a part of the plan.

History is two things to Hegel, as the Nazi movement

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1See "Wissen" -- composure is all that is left to you when your ideals seem to have failed.
2Aiken, op. cit., p. 92. 3Ibid., p. 96. 4Ibid., p. 85.
is two things to Haushofer: it is the record of what ambitious and active people have done to better the world, but it is also the record of intermittent bad times, which must be overcome in order to climb to new heights. It is possible for such an ambitious person to act both for personal gain and for the progress of the world, because while he is assailing the foundations of the old order, he is at the same time creating something new that has "ripened within the existing system." Still, such people are only "victims of a higher necessity... instruments for historical progress," a mysterious force which "operates behind the backs and over the heads of individuals, in the form of an irresistible anonymous power...." But despite his idea that history is the working out of a divine plan, Hegel realized that the historical process was not fixed only along lines of progress -- not straight lines, at any rate. He says that "the history of man is the history of his estrangement from his true interest and, by the same token, the history of its realization." If the above paragraphs have seemed slightly contradictory it is because they are; the justification for this confusion is found in Hegel himself, who regards contradiction as "the motive force of the world" and disallows as misunderstanding the popular notion that the contradictory-seeming convolutions in his philosophy stem from his own misunderstanding of basic concepts.

Therefore the meeting of the two propositions of thesis-antithesis-synthesis and historical necessity comes about in this way: history is

a great waltz-like movement, from thesis through antithesis to synthesis....Each historical moment, in negating its antecedent, at the same time 'takes up' whatever is significant in it and preserves it as the aspect of a richer, more comprehensive, social reality. Thus, from Hegel's standpoint, each successive generation may regard itself as at once the destroyer, preserver, and improver of the culture which it has inherited from its predecessor.¹

The inheritance is always "whatever was vital."²

¹Aiken, op. cit., p. 76. ²Ibid.
C. The contradictory definition: a political evil

It is only when it becomes necessary to decide what course of action to take in the future that Haushofer's two ways of looking at Nazism become contradictory. The movement seen as historical vengeance for loss of morality is indestructible, but the political organization of the Nazi party and state was still something that could be overthrown by people with enough courage and a little luck. Several of the sonnets tell of his fight against the Nazis, but still the entire work is permeated with resignation, mainly for two reasons. First, none of the many attempts to assassinate Hitler or to remove him from office had ever had more than temporary success. Since Haushofer the political scientist believed that the movement could be effectively sabotaged by eliminating its leader in one way or another, he supported every move to arrest or kill Hitler. But Hoffmann thinks he had given up hope even before the final disastrous attempt of July 20, 1944. At any rate, he says, in "Kassandro:"

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{In letzter Not} \\
\text{versuchter Griff zum Steuer ist misslungen. --} \\
\text{Jetzt warten wir, bis uns die See verschlungen.} \\
\text{(Sonett 69)}
\end{align*}
\]

Second, he believed that Germany was gradually withering away, losing its vitality and ability to resist evil--it had not done so in 1933, and the situation had gradually
worsened, helped on by the Nazis' extermination of everyone who could effectively withstand them and help Germany out of its condition, as can be seen in the sonnets "Gefaehrten" (p. 31), in which he thinks back on Helmuth von Moltke, Peter Yorck von Wartenburg, Gen. von Hassell, and others, the country's best,¹ who had been dead a year by the time the Sonette were discovered, and "Verhaengnis" (p. 49), in which he compares the two-front war to being caught between a storm from the ocean and a fire from the steppes, with no one to protect Germany from destruction.²

Let us look at the resistance movement Haushofer was connected with to investigate these claims. We will see that, for the most part, the opposition was working under the worst conditions it could tolerate and still survive: little popular support, internal disagreement, recalcitrance, and vacillation of high-ranking officers, the counter-resistance conducted by the machinery of the police state, and other factors. The miracle is not that there was so little resistance but that what resistance there was had as much success as it did. The story deserves to be told in some detail, because the record of its failure seems to bear out Haushofer's theory that the Nazi movement was destined to roll over Germany and crush it, remaining itself unharmed until it had performed its task. (Several sources refer to the movement as a "catalyst," which implies the ability to remain unchanged while causing change in something

¹Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 69. ²Ibid., p. 70.
else.) According to Rainer Hildebrandt, it was Haushofer's conviction that every attempt to destroy Hitler in the three-year period between the invasion of Russia and the invasion of Normandy had failed by a "Haaresbreite" not because of "coincidence" or "misfirings" but because Hitler was "the incarnation of evil" who would not fall until he had "followed his way completely to the end."¹ The story of the conservative resistance also gives evidence in support of Haushofer's theory of Germany's moral weakening which reflects the times and the need for retribution by a divine hand (or, if you will, by the historical process).

¹Sonette, commentary.
The resistance might be spoken of as having had two facets, as there were two distinct groups, each in contact with the other through mutual members and each having a distinct function. The more obvious is the group of army officers in the field and at the Bendlerstrasse in Berlin who were responsible for the actual preparations for the revolt. The other side of the picture is the group known as the Kreisau Circle, so named because their meeting place was the Silesian estate of Count Helmuth von Moltke.  

Actually only a few of the people known as the "Kreisau Kreis" were involved with the active opposition. Their main offense was their conspiratorial meetings and discussions. They were, in a sense, an odd group—they were "never in any way a political party or even a conspiracy," and were composed of "a cross-section of what should have been the German ruling class." 

Their leader was an extremely idealistic, liberal-minded landowner who had divided his estate and parcelled a good deal of it out to peasants (Moltke), and the group was comprised not only of young aristocrats and nationalists but also several Catholic and Protestant clergymen. Most

1Constantine FitzGibbon, 20 July, p. 85. 
2Ibid., p. 84. 
3Ibid., p. 85. 
4Ibid., pp. 88-90.
of the group, which FitzGibbon considers to have been "as much a religious movement...as a political one," shared the opinion that the real problem they faced was "the alienation of man from the society in which he lived through the destruction of his fundamental beliefs,"¹ and that Christianity was a necessary ingredient for a state based upon law and order and individual dignity.² However, their Christianity did not produce unanimity of opinion about what their relationship to the plotters or to the government should be.³ Some members, for instance, held beliefs close to Quietism, a philosophy very influential in Germany since the 1700's, which advocated passive suffering; it considered that even good ends could not be served by immoral means, that one's political opinions had to be kept personal, and that one's responsibility to his nation superseded all others. Therefore assassination was not permissible, nor any of the violence usually associated with revolution—sabotage, information leakage, desertion, or working in any way against the country's youth serving in the army. Moltke himself seemed to be of this opinion.⁴ Others, intending to fight tough and claw against the Nazis, respected this point of view while not sharing it.⁵

The general picture one gets of the Kreisau men is that they were the intellectual half of the conspiracy, the

¹Ibid., p. 92. ²Ibid., p. 94. This first idea was probably held by Haushofer, whether or not the second was. ³Ibid., pp. 94-5. ⁴Ibid., p. 95. ⁵Ibid., p. 96.
men who would plan the new Germany after Stauffenberg, the working head of the active opposition, and his friends had done the more unpleasant parts of the work. However they were subject to all the danger and oppressive circumstances the active half of the opposition was. Moltke said they were under constant pressure and endangered at all times: telephones were tapped, mail was censored, and the Gestapo might torture names and information out of anyone at any time.\(^1\) They also used code names in correspondence and conversation, had only a few conferences for safety's sake, and organized into "cells" as the movement grew, with each man knowing the names of only a few others.\(^2\) Even with these precautions, however, perhaps too many were involved for proper secrecy, and, too, preparations may have dragged out too long due to the illness of Beck, the proposed head of state of the new government.\(^3\)

Even the heads of the proposed new government seem to reflect somewhat the dual nature of the opposition. Chancellor would have been Carl Goerdeler, one-time mayor of Leipzig,\(^4\) a "rigidly right wing" nationalist who had been led at first to cooperate with the Nazis to an extent because of their strong anti-Communist stand. He became obsessed to the point of absurdity with the idea of saving Germany so Germany could save Europe from Communism. He is described

\(^1\)Ibid., pp. 97-8.  \(^2\)Dulles, op. cit., p. 33.  
\(^3\)Friedrich Meinecke, *The German Catastrophe: Reflections and Recollections*, p. 103.  
\(^4\)Dulles, op. cit., p. 32.
by Fitzibbon as having had a tendency to "talk wildly" and "to exaggerate his own importance,"¹ and by Dulles as a romantic and optimistic man who was "often led to believe that plans were realities and that good intentions were facts...."² General Guderian called him indecisive, unpopular, relatively unknown, and not at all practical (he kept a list of names of his co-conspirators—a lunatic thing to have done, under the circumstances). Fitzibbon's conclusion that he was "sadly lacking in discrimination" seems rather a weak thing to say about him.³

General Beck, proposed president, had advocated negotiated peace in both wars. He hated both the idea of revolt and that of losing the war, but he saw that the Nazis would never negotiate, nor would the Allies negotiate with them.⁴ He balked at drawing up various campaign plans, thinking they would lead to war, but allowed himself to be influenced not to resign in protest until 1938, when he was succeeded by the anti-Nazi Halder. Beck and others had planned a coup if Hitler had started a war, but the Allies' acceptance of the situation at Munich gave them no excuse to act.⁵ Later when the conspirators tried to convince field commanders that war on France meant inevitable disaster, the best result they could get was when someone "listened politely."⁶ Then Beck advocated a "generals' strike," a protest gesture to

force Hitler to remove himself from personal conduct of the war, ¹ but Von Paulus, Kluge, and Manstein, who were supposed to refuse to cooperate with Hitler, failed instead to cooperate with Beck. Manstein is credited with two motives for his refusal to act: he could not support such a move because soldiers were traditionally non-political, ² and, according to Dulles, he also wanted to wait until he had captured Sebastopol because it was an interesting field exercise and one for which he might easily be decorated. ³

2. 20 July - The Prelude

WitzGibbon, like Haushofer, considers the July 20 plot against Hitler's life the action of a group of men who had broken out of the general pattern of "the individual's negation of responsibility in favour of the party, the movement, the ideology..." which "in past ages...would have been accurately described as the selling of souls."¹

The man who actually carried out the assassination attempt was a young staff officer, Colonel Count Claus von Stauffenberg.² He had never been a Nazi or even a Nazi sympathizer, but he had at first thought the new regime to be better than the ineffective Weimar Republic or Communism, a view quite common to army officers.³ In 1938, while still hoping for some sort of sensible action from Hitler, he was assigned to the Panzer division of General Hoepner, who had been planning to arrest Hitler and all the top Nazis if war had come after the Czech crisis.⁴ Then, disillusioned by the failure of the "generals' strike," he asked to be sent to the front and was seriously wounded in Tunisia. At this time, he did not know that another general, von Tresckow, had already decided to assassinate Hitler.⁵ Recuperating

¹Ibid., p. xii. ²Ibid., p. 2. ³Ibid., pp. 25-6. ⁴Ibid., pp. 30-2. ⁵Ibid., p. 37.
in hospitals, Stauffenberg made up his mind that he had a
duty to his country of a different type than that of "the
generals."¹

Tresckow served under General Beck, the Chief of
Staff, and after Munich influenced him to become an anti-
Nazi even though he could not persuade his superior to
resign in protest or hardly even to protest. By 1941,
Tresckow's headquarters on the Russian front had become a
seething mass of anti-Nazi sentiment, and by 1942 he had
decided that Hitler must die.²

A good account of this facet of the resistance is
given in the book Offiziere gegen Hitler by Fabian von
Schlabrendorff, the contact between Tresckow and his friends
Olbricht of the Home Army and Oster, Deputy Chief of the
Abwehr. Tresckow never met Oster and rarely saw Olbricht.
Those two worked the Berlin end of the conspiracy, whereas
Tresckow was to carry off the actual assassination. The
Berlin men worked under circumstances unbelievable to one
who has never lived in a police state,³ but they were aided
by the fact that the Abwehr was the ideal organization within
which to plan and carry out such activity.⁴

The Tresckow-Oster-Olbricht trio tried to lure Hitler
to the front where they, knowing the territory better, would
be at a considerable advantage. But this was not easy, as

¹Ibid., p. 33. ²Ibid., pp. 40-41. ³Ibid., p. 42.
⁴Dulles, op. cit., p. 70.
Hitler was extremely suspicious and rarely ventured out. After changing his mind several times, he came, but the attempt was ruined by General von Kluge, of whom we will hear more later, who refused to act. No one would understand, he said, and assassination was not yet necessary.¹

Schlabrendorff and Tresckow then decided to carry out their plans anyway and hope that Kluge would follow if he didn't have to make the decision to do it himself.² After having failed to slip a bomb into Hitler's closely-guarded car and later to assassinate him during the tour of an exhibit at the Berlin Arsenal,³ they planned to plant a bomb in Hitler's plane and make it appear somehow to be an accidental crash. The bombs were placed in brandy bottles and put on the plane with the fuses lit. Since Hitler's plane was partly armored, enough explosive had been put on board to blow up the entire plane. Oddly enough, nothing happened. Then the bottles had to be retrieved, because they had been in a package addressed to someone not a member of the plot. Much to everyone's relief, a simple phone call effected the return of the package on the pretense that there had been a shipping error.⁴

Two failures in March of 1943 and gradually worsening conditions decided the conspirators to take the bomb into Hitler's headquarters. Any account of the German underground

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¹FitzGibbon, op. cit., p. 43.  
²Ibid., p. 45.  
³Ibid., pp. 48-49.  
⁴Ibid., pp. 44-47.
is filled with periodic references to arrests, executions, and dismissals. This time it was Oster who was dismissed with no proof and watched by the Gestapo. Then his superior Admiral Canaris fell under suspicion and the Abwehr was assumed into the Sicherheitsdienst, the party security force. Oster's place in the movement was filled when Stauffenberg became Olbricht's Chief of Staff.¹

One of the biggest problems the opposition had to face at home was the securing of a force that could overcome the loyal SS troops, but it was difficult to get anyone to say he would assume the responsibility for this task. Gen. Hoepner, commanding a Panzer Corps in 1941, said he would use his troops if the Commander-in-Chief of the army would support his action, but his condition made it certain that no action would be taken.² This was a shadow cast before a coming event—his similar decision at a time crucial to the plot's success.

While Germany was winning in the west, the generals had no use for the opposition; but when Russia was attacked, the situation changed. Since the army would be effectively tied up on the eastern front, someone could invade from the west without having to contend with an opposing force made up of fellow Germans. General von Witzleben volunteered to make this move, but he too was retired before he could act. Rundstedt, his successor, vetoed the proposal.³

¹Ibid., p. 6.    ²Ibid., p. 57.    ³Ibid., pp. 57-8.
At home the situation was little better. The Home Army was scattered, outnumbered by the SS, and ill-equipped and trained. Furthermore, Fromm, its commander, while not a Nazi, was not much of an anti-Nazi either. And the co-operation of the Home Army was essential to the plot, since it had a good communications network with units all over the country. Olbricht, Fromm's immediate subordinate, was of course in on the plot, but he could not get Fromm to agree to any more than simply to deal with Hitler's successors if the Fuehrer were killed. If any of the early attempts had succeeded, Olbricht was prepared for action with an organization he had built up within the Home Army, plus Fromm's half-promise of assistance after the putsch.¹

The complicated business of getting troops to where they would be needed was known as "Operation Valkyrie." Home Army troops were all over the country and would have to be moved to the large centers of population with as little difficulty as possible. The task of planning all these movements was Stauffenberg's. The rearrangement of troops was justified to Hitler on an unlikely pretense which he believed: he thought the plan was brilliant. The main drawback was that Fromm's name would have to be on orders, since he was technically in charge of these troops. To set the plan in motion, two sets of orders were issued, one of which was sealed and only to be opened when the code word "Valkyrie" was received. Then there would have to be an instant communications

¹Ibid., pp. 58-9.
shut-down and the SS would have to be neutralized by Count Helldorf's Berlin police.¹

The entire plot hinged on Hitler's death—the soldiers would obey their generals if he were only gone. But because of the time factor involved, it would have been necessary to issue some orders before the actual assassination. In order to be ready instantly, the plotters had had many of the necessary documents typed and signed nearly a year before the final attempt and locked in Olbricht's office.²

At least one sympathetic officer would be needed at each major city. Where the commanders were Nazis, alternates were ready to take over.³ Where possible, these loyal officers had been given furloughs or special missions just for the occasions.⁴ Many officers would obey orders from the Bendlerstrasse (the administrative headquarters in Berlin) without question, but Fromm was still a big question mark. If he gave any trouble, Hoepner was to take over for him.⁵

The opposition was not inactive through the winter of 1943-44—-attempts were made whenever feasible—but Hitler was virtually inaccessible and made use of the most complex security arrangements, often having briefcases searched. This attitude on Hitler's part was behind the calling off of one proposed attempt which was to have taken place at a conference in October of 1943. General Stieff, who had been

¹Ibid., pp. 63-5. ²Ibid., pp. 66-8. ³Ibid., p. 67.
contemplating performing the assassination, backed down because of the security problem—and his own attitude—which was common to many of the high-ranking officers whose cooperation could have facilitated the opposition's work a great deal. It may seem strange to think of intelligent, competent, experienced field commanders being stricken with instant indecision in this most important undertaking, but such was the case with many whose aid would have been invaluable.

The wavering warriors proved to be one of the major drawbacks to the plotters. FitzGibbon explains this by saying that although Hitler and the generals despised each other mutually, there were two things that kept many from revolt. The first of these was that some of them could be swayed by Hitler's personality. Of the second, and most important, he has this to say:

He [Hitler] was the Chief of the State, the heir, no matter how debased and vile, of the German Emperor, of the King of Prussia, of those feudal monarchs whom generations of German soldiers had served loyally and unquestioningly unto death....For the great majority of German officers, to whom politics was an obscure and rather sordid occupation, treason was almost unthinkable....

These men, it must be remembered, had taken a personal oath to Hitler, which was a genuine problem to some although it was undoubtedly used by others as an excuse for cowardice.

However, men were always found to do the less savory parts of the necessary work. At one point, it looked as though the attempt would mean suicide for the assassin.4

1Ibid., p. 68. 2Ibid., pp. 69-70. 3Ibid., p. 70. 4Ibid.
A volunteer was called from the eastern front to demonstrate a new type of uniform more suited to the Russian climate—but his pack was to be filled with high explosives. Since their men would be re-outfitted also, heads of the SS and Luftwaffe would be present, presenting a rare opportunity to eliminate a group of undesirables, who were seldom found together, at one blow. However, Hitler postponed the demonstration several times, the new equipment was destroyed in an air raid, and the volunteer was recalled to the front, where he was seriously wounded. His place was taken by another young officer and the demonstration was then set for February 11; but the attempt was called off because Himmler would not be present. Evidently the plotters were, at this stage, going to be satisfied by nothing less than a clean sweep of the major Nazi leadership. Shortly afterwards this second volunteer was arrested. There may have been yet another attempt made with this special equipment, but Hitler's caution sabotaged it if it occurred at all.¹

On July 1, 1944, Colonel Stauffenberg was made Chief of Staff to Fromm, a situation having good and bad sides. Now Stauffenberg would have access to Hitler and would be able to issue orders in Fromm's name—but now he would almost have to make the attempt himself, because he would be the only one who could get close to Hitler, and that would put him out of touch with Berlin when he would be needed.²

¹Ibid., pp. 71-4. ²Ibid., p. 137.
this time Fromm was cautiously sounded out and seemed agreeable.¹

The military situation was becoming worse and worse—both fronts were collapsing—which meant they would have to act while the army was still intact; a government with nothing to govern was useless. The coup would have to be able to be interpreted as "more than the twitch of a moribund organism...."² Some would have been content to wait for inevitable defeat, but Stauffenberg said no. Many still felt that a plot would at least be an object lesson and would let people know that a resistance existed.³

Von Trott, the group "expert" on foreign affairs, thought the Allies would negotiate if the war were halted on both fronts, so the plotters decided to continue as planned, despite the "unconditional surrender" maxim.⁴ Some attention should be paid to the situation caused by this particular piece of Allied so-called strategy, because not only was it "a first-class excuse for....continued refusal to act against Hitler,"⁵ it was forcing the German people to side with the Nazis out of fear that the Allies were plotting to destroy Germany forever.⁶ It was also forcing the plotters to consider dealing with Russia, which they had no desire to do.⁷

Von Trott had tried to get the Allies to reassure German independence after the war, to send confidential assurances to the resistance leaders, and to bomb "military and industrial targets" rather than "civilian objectives" because outstanding opposition leaders were being killed in raids and meeting places were being destroyed. But there was no answer, so Trott tried for the first time to contact the German Communists. These contacts resulted in many arrests, because someone in the Communist ranks was an informer for either the Nazis or Communists. The United States seemed to have a horrible fear of one-sided negotiations without Russia, whereas Russia was carefully doing just the opposite in her propaganda. Fortunately, even though they did believe that Russia would develop Germany better as a satellite, most of the plotters had been reared in western traditions and favored a Western connection. Be that as it may, FitzGibbon suggests that if the Allies had landed paratroops in Berlin on July 20 or had let Rommel come across the lines to discuss surrender terms, the war might have ended a year sooner, with the Russian army still in Russia, Germany not yet bombed to ruins, and the atom bomb still on the drawing board. At this point, the world seems to be

sharing Germany's guilt in prolonging the war just as earlier it was suggested that the non-German world in general aided the Nazi rise to power.

General Rommel's part in the plot is worth mention, though not for the usual reasons (it has been overpublicized). However his very failure--especially his having been incapacitated at such a critical time only a few days before the final attempt as though he were being removed before he could alter the course of history--seems to bolster the theory that the entire resistance seemed foredoomed to failure. He became attached to the plot somewhat late, but at the time he was perhaps the most popular military figure of the period and commanded the largest army on the western front. Every time Rommel tried to reason with Hitler he was shouted down, but he had the support of his subordinates, who agreed to follow him if he tried a revolt. After Rommel and Rundstedt both tried to convince Hitler once more, again unsuccessfully, they returned to the front to find that deaths and the usual arrests and replacements were weakening their position. Then Rundstedt himself was dismissed to be replaced by the indecisive Kluge. When a ceasefire was arranged for a prisoner exchange, the western generals wanted to use this as an excuse to talk to the Allies. But Rommel was severely wounded en route to a bad sector of the front and his place was taken by Kluge, who then commanded Rommel's forces personally as well as the entire front. This made Kluge undoubtedly the most important man in the west.

\[1\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 130-32.} \quad \text{2Ibid.}, \text{pp. 134-5.}\]
later discovered and forced to commit suicide before he could be of real harm.\footnote{Dulles, op. cit., p. 176.}

On July 11 it was decided to discard as impractical the condition of having to be able to kill both Hitler and Himmler, and shortly thereafter, on the 15th, another abortive attempt was made. Unfortunately, the first set of orders had been issued to the troops. They were quickly countermanded,\footnote{Ibid., p. 154.} but since the preliminary orders had already been given on the 15th, none were given on the 20th. The plot was somewhat left hanging—not even all the conspirators knew exactly when the next attempt would be.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 7-8.} Apparently there were two such attempts made in the 10 days before the final one. Stauffenberg had been chosen as assassin both because he had access to Hitler and because his physical mutilation, giving the impression that he was more or less harmless, would allay suspicion. Each time an assistant had also carried a spare bomb, perhaps on the theory that if it became absolutely necessary, Stauffenberg could have gone out and returned with the other. If by any chance the assistant had been allowed inside the conference room, the explosion would have killed everyone present.\footnote{Ibid., pp. 147-8.} The weapon that had been selected was an explosive frequently used by saboteurs—small, destructive and unhampered by a noisy or
visible fuse. When it exploded it would throw no fragments because it was in no casing, but the force of the blast would be terrific. One kilogram of this explosive was the maximum concealable amount, but in an enclosed space the small bomb would wreak havoc.¹

¹Ibid., pp. 4-7.
3. "Walkuere!"

Stauffenberg flew in a private plane to Hitler's headquarters in Rastenburg, where he expected to attend a conference in the usual location, a reinforced hut near the center of a camp whose SS-managed security measures included check points, barbed wire, minefields, and gun emplacements. Upon arrival, however, he learned that this conference was to be in a bunker inside the inner sanctum of the camp instead of the usual one slightly outside the enclosure. This lighter (!) bunker had been reinforced by 18 inches of concrete when the camp had been rebuilt for security, but it was a hot, muggy day and all the windows were wide open, which defrayed some of the force of the blast.

When Stauffenberg entered the bunker, he put his briefcase full of explosives against one of the large oak supports of the table. When the conference got underway, he slipped out. While he was gone, another officer stumbled on the briefcase and kicked it behind the support, so that the blast was somewhat muffled when the explosion occurred. From outside, however, it appeared fatal. Stauffenberg left and General Fellgiebel, head of the Signal Corps, set his wheels in motion. Fellgiebel was to order his men to

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1Ibid., pp. 11-12. 2Ibid., pp. 15-17. 3Ibid., pp. 18-19.
pass on no orders, since the communications network was too big to be destroyed; but one way or another, Rastenburg had to be isolated. Then orders would be sent to all parts of the Reich by the new government.\(^1\) By lying, bluffing, and remaining calm, Stauffenberg got past all the check points and to an airport. As no one had alerted airstrips to take security measures, he was allowed to take off, but since there was no wireless in the plane, he was out of contact with Berlin for three precious hours en route.\(^2\)

The result of the bomb was that four men were killed— but Hitler, leaning over the table top and shielded by a support, suffered only relatively minor damages. At first everyone at Rastenburg thought the damage had been done by a dive plane or by something planted by foreign workers who had been remodeling the camp. No one thought of Stauffenberg for more than an hour and even then they did not connect his isolated attempt with a sizeable, organized movement.\(^3\)

When Olbricht and Hoepner in Berlin were told of the attempt and its failure, they decided to issue no orders until confirmation of this or a firm statement of success came through. With Stauffenberg gone, the entire operation slowed down to the unhealthy crawl that was to prove fatal to it.\(^4\)

It is often said that failure to deprive Rastenburg

\(^{1}\)Ibid., p. 13. \(^{2}\)Ibid., pp. 21-22. \(^{3}\)Ibid., pp. 157-8. \(^{4}\)Ibid., pp. 155-56.
of a means of communication was one of the chief causes of the attempt's failure. However, since Fellgiebel could not, because of their construction, blow up the communications centers, he had to keep them neutralized only by his personal authority, which he did for the extraordinarily long period of 2½ hours. In fact, Fellgiebel's very thoroughness kept the generals in Berlin from being informed of the true situation! This particular development seems to be as good or better proof that something was working against the plotters than Hitler's argument that it was divine providence that led him to switch bunkers that day.

Everyone was slow in setting the Berlin wheels rolling. The take-over might have been effected with Hitler alive if Stauffenberg's subordinates and his immediate superiors—in fact, practically everyone but Stauffenberg himself—had just had enough initiative to act and start the movement out of its inertia. It might have picked up speed on its own and been functioning when the man who was for all practical purposes its leader arrived.

When Stauffenberg landed, the communications block was just lifting; but he told his people that Hitler must be dead, and had Valkyrie orders issued. Fromm, who didn't believe this, called Keitel in the east and was told the opposite. Stauffenberg, in turn, thinking the Commander-in-Chief was stalling for time, didn't believe Keitel and

\[1\text{Ibid., pp. 156-7.} \quad 2\text{Ibid., pp. 163-4.} \quad 3\text{Ibid., p. 165.}\]
ordered the plans to go ahead. Then he called Paris, where the strongest and best-organized resistance outside Berlin was located, and ordered the SS arrested. Because Fromm's subordinates would probably obey his orders quicker than Hoepner's just from habit and duty, a last effort was made to win him over, in which Stauffenberg lied about Hitler's death and said he had seen the body carried out. Fromm, furious that a putsch was being carried out over his head, tried to arrest everyone in the room, whereupon Olbricht, with some difficulty, arrested him. At this time some changes were being rapidly made in the structure of the military hierarchy. Hitler made Himmler head of the Home Army and told him to crush the revolt, and at the same time the opposition was trying to make a few changes of its own in the Nazi system of command by sending a Major Remer to arrest Goebbels. When Remer said that Hitler was dead and that he was acting on new orders, Goebbels stayed calm, called Hitler, and let Remer talk to him. Having recognized Hitler's voice, Remer switched sides and helped stop troop movements and keep the necessary forces out of Berlin.

The operation wasn't going much better in Paris, where a key man had disappeared and could not be located to begin arresting SS troops. When he was finally found, he postponed

1Ibid., pp. 169-70.  
2Ibid., pp. 171-3.  
3Ibid., p. 180.  
4Ibid., p. 178.  
5Ibid., pp. 183-4.
the operation until after dark so the Parisians would not have to witness the spectacle of Germans arresting Germans. Then Kluge heard a radio report by Goebbels telling that Hitler was alive and refused a promise of loyalty to Beck.¹

However, the people at the Bendlerstrasse thought Hitler's being alive was inconsequential and went ahead as planned, albeit late. But things were not going so well in the outlying provinces: news of the Fuehrer's escape coming over the radio had slowed down their action considerably. Only in Munich did all go perfectly. Elsewhere either no one acted or else they were prevented from doing so by arrests and counterattacks by the Nazis.² In fact, many district commanders asked confirmation of their orders from the Gau-leiters whom they were to arrest.³

Confusion swept Berlin: no one knew whom to believe or obey. The commander of the best troops in the area, having not been informed of the date of the putsch, was out of town, some of the troops were out on maneuvers, and Beck had not been able to broadcast due to a communications delay.⁴ Such a broadcast and a past positive offer from the western Allies might have encouraged the vacillating Kluge to move, but instead he was completely on his own. He tried to call east upon receiving a message signed by Keitel saying that Hitler was alive, but all the top generals were elsewhere. This

caused Kluge to think that perhaps Beck had been right and that the reason he could contact no one was the confusion at Rastenburg resulting from Hitler's death. At last Kluge called Stieff in the east and was told the truth. That marked the end of his wavering: as long as Hitler was alive, Kluge was taking no chances. When he heard of the attempts to arrest Nazi troops he was furious. However this measure was carried out with moderation and success, and "by midnight 12,000 of the most unpleasant people in France were safely under lock and key." But it was only in Paris that the orders of the Bendlerstrasse were being carried out. What was perhaps the climax to all the activity occurred when it was announced that Hitler would speak over the radio. Stauffenberg tried to keep things moving, but the announcement had a great effect.

Then everything collapsed at the Bendlerstrasse. The first incident was caused by Fromm, who managed to sneak out information which alerted loyal troops. Then an officer who served under Olbricht decided that the putsch had failed and arrested everyone he could find at the Bendlerstrasse, wounding Stauffenberg in the process. Beck, bungling two suicide attempts, was finally dispatched by a sympathetic N.C.O. Olbricht, Stauffenberg, and two others were shot outside in

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1Stieff, mentioned earlier as having changed his mind at the last minute before he was to have attempted an assassination, had been in on this plot too but did not carry out orders when he learned that the bomb had failed.

2FitzGibbon, op. cit., pp. 198-200. 3Ibid., pp. 204-7.
a courtyard, but Hoepner, who had actually asked for written orders before he would take over for Fromm—an action suspiciously like those of Fromm himself—was only arrested. The next day, Fromm too was arrested to be court-martialed for his part in the revolt.

In Paris, after Hitler spoke, the Luftwaffe and remaining SS were ready to fight the army, so General Steulpmagel, who had arrested the Nazi troops, released them, and then tried to anticipate Nazi "justice" by killing himself. His attempt failed also, and he was led to the gallows blind.

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1 Ibid., pp. 207-11.  
2 Dulles, op. cit., p. 184.  
3 FitzGibbon, op. cit., pp. 211-12.  
4 Ibid., p. 213.
4. Aftereffects

The aftermath of the attempted revolt was horrible in conception and scope. Seven thousand were arrested, of whom five thousand were killed, in an attempt to eliminate every anti-Nazi in the country. Resistance members already under arrest or in prison were shot. Moltke, who had been arrested on a comparatively minor charge and was to have been released, was executed after certain documents were discovered. Albrecht Haushofer and most of the others imprisoned at this time were shot by the SS in 1945. Hitler, in his fury to take revenge on the aristocracy and officer caste, persecuted anyone with the name of Goerdeler or Stauffenberg to the extent that babies of those families had to be given to others and renamed in order to save their lives. Goerdeler himself, in hiding, was betrayed and shot. Only a bare fraction of the people involved to any extent in the plot escaped, and that as much by accident as anything else.

All sorts of factors seemed to be working against the resistance: pure chance, or, if you will, "historical necessity;" the character of the men involved, which led them to turn away from the resistance movement completely, waver about the edges of it now-in-now-out, or get into the

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1Ibid., p. 214. 2Ibid., p. 102. 3Ibid., pp. 214-16.
middle of the plot and then let it fall apart while waiting for someone else to give the order to act;\(^1\) and the fact that the world was willing to let Hitler triumph over those who would have destroyed him if they could.

Most of the authors consulted show hardly-concealed disgust at the attitude of the Allies. Washington and London had known ahead of time of the attempt,\(^2\) yet they were gratified by the failure because now the German army could be wiped out.\(^3\) In addition to this, the conspirators were too far right in political belief for comfort: Rothfels says the American press called the attempt gangsterish and showed a dislike of the officers and aristocrats which completely overshadowed the men's motives, one paper wishing that "the Corporal" and "the Generals" would exterminate each other. America in general, he says, misunderstood the conservative Germans; they didn't understand how anyone but a so-called liberal could oppose Hitlerism and looked for ulterior motives.\(^4\)

But FitzGibbon—and Haushofer would probably have agreed with him—blames the Allies' attitude on the fact that in this age of shifted-off responsibility and the mass mind, no one could understand the true motives of an idealistic and responsible few, who represented a "startling departure

\(^1\)Quoted from the von Hassell Diaries: "These generals seem to want the Hitler government itself to order them to overthrow it." (Dulles, op. cit., p. 57.)


from the principles and practice of the century." He characterizes these men as

unmilitaristic soldiers...trade unionists and socialists who saw far beyond a class or a doctrine...great landowners who were prepared and willing to see their estates divided...men of God who after what must have been acute spiritual anguish were prepared to countenance murder...

In short, this was a new breed of man who was willing "to act politically with neither doctrine nor party but only his conscience behind him," which FitzGibbon thinks, at least for this century, is "paradoxical, indeed almost unknown..." but which proves that "in the most atrocious situations...it is still possible for men to stand up and act as men are intended to act." 

\[1\] FitzGibbon, op. cit., p. 219. \[2\] Ibid., p. 222. \[3\] Ibid.
III. CONCLUSION

Haushofer's second definition of Nazism, surprisingly enough, provides more hope for the future than does the first and perhaps more rational one: if Hitler were playing a historical role, then someone must have assigned it to him.1 The only logical reason for ending one epoch would have to be to let another begin, one which would re-establish man on his path toward progress; for Haushofer did believe that history was working toward an eventual good end. "The sonnet 'Kosmos' (p. 79)," says Hoffmann, "contains the extreme affirmation of an ultimate world order far above and beyond the sphere of human action and control,"2 and Wassermann sees in this particular sonnet the most hopeful note in the book in its stressing of the unity of all creation:3

Ob sich in Klaengen wie zu freier wahl,
im Keplerschen Gesetz ihr Sinn enthueilt,
es muss wohl sein, dass diese "elt erfueilt
geheimnisvolle Harmonie der zahl.

In Strahl und Schwingung zu gemessnem Spiel
umwebt sich aller,Stoff und loest sich wieder,
und alle Formen sind gewollte glieder
in einem "eltgesetz, vor einem ziel.--

Wer je den grossen Bau der "elt bedacht
und fuehlte nicht, wie Gottes hoher Geist
noch ueber den Gesetzen wacht und kreist---

Wie blind erscheint, wer Schoepfertum verlacht!

1Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 70. 2Ibid., p. 71.
3"Ein Denkmal des ewigen Deutschlands," p. 312.
Wir kennen kaum den kleinsten Teil davon:
Gesetz ist Wunder, Zahl ist Welteneton.

(Sonett 79)

Wassermann also cites sonnet 27, "Die Mücke," in which appear the lines ""Wir sind ja beide, Mensch und Mücke nichts/ als kleine Schatten eines grossen Lichts."1 This idea appears in enough sonnets to suppose that the collection is not exclusively pessimistic, e.g. the following:
"Tibetisches Geheimnis" (p. 13) says that a man within a cell can find freedom, since he is a part of eternity—he has transformed "ins grosse Du hinein das kleine Ich;" and in "Om Mani Padme Hum" (p. 25) appears the idea that if you immerse yourself in the unity of the universe you will feel no pain or sorrow.

This "optimism" can be found also in one of the rare poems in which Haushofer makes a direct allusion to Christianity, "Qui Resurrexit" (p. 24), in which he speaks of a preference for a painting in which "dach nicht der Fähle, der zum Tod sich neigt—/ der Lichtumflossene: dieser ist der Christ." This does not necessarily have to be interpreted as proof of Haushofer's conversion to Christianity. It can be interpreted as meaning that one should look beyond the death—of a man, of a god, of a movement; all had their times of life and their hours of death, but one should look to the good that came from the bad. This is both good Christian and good Hegelian philosophy, since both deal in

1Ibid.
contradiction—that is, the substitution of the unlikely for the obvious, the "impossible" for the prosaic.

This brings us back to Hegel and the philosophical germs from which Haushofer's convictions grew. Rather illuminating at this point is Hegel's theory of tragedy, of which Reyburn has the following to say:

The devotion to any abstract ideal, good in itself but imperfect when set against the rest of life, brings the agent into collision with other factors and with the whole; and in the conflict the tragic hero is overthrown. The final note of tragedy, however, is not loss. Over and above the confusion and destruction of that which is imperfect and by the nature of things transitory there is the assertion of the full and rounded character of reality. The positive side, of course, is not fully developed in tragedy...but behind the sympathy with the fallen there must be a feeling of the greater good which the agent himself was unable to grasp, and his fall is a vindication of the deeper truth.  

For "protagonist" it is possible to substitute Hitler, as the proponent of national pride, strength, and action—ideals which would be good in their place (note that Haushofer calls the Nazis "Die Herren ohne Mass" in "Die grossen Toten," p. 56)—or perhaps Haushofer himself, as representative of those who perhaps followed a nobler ideal but were somehow incapable of translating thought effectively into action. Though there might be little "sympathy with the fallen" when Hitler is substituted, there would be, for someone with Haushofer's convictions, a vision of the other side, the unity, the necessity of the holocaust to return balance to

the world by letting the evil burn itself out.

But is there contradiction implied in saying that although there is hope in many of the sonnets the greater part of the work seems to be written in a minor key? Not necessarily. Haushofer's vision of the other side mentioned above would not necessarily exclude pessimism, since Haushofer was watching his era go up in smoke from a viewpoint in the very middle of it and not on some high peak safely outside. One must remember that Haushofer's era was coming to a close, and although the world—a better one, he hoped—would live on, he would not, nor would many of the traditions he grew up in. He felt a sort of identification with the age that was ending: it and he would die together. It was, to paraphrase Hildebrandt, the struggle of a never-returning age against demons, one of which was sure to kill him in its death agonies.

There is a note of hopefulness in certain of the sonnets which cannot be denied, e.g. the following lines from "Asti spumante" (p. 38): "Im Aschegrund von allen Weltenfeuern/ sind immer Seelen, die das Glück erneuern."

However these lines cannot be read without those that immediately precede them: "Ich werde keinen Asti mehr geniessen.../ Max edler Wein fuer junge Herzen fliessen..."

Although there is always something left—the world will never burn itself out completely—that is a far-off dream, a sort of unreal speculation for the man who is viewing the

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1Hoffmann, op. cit., p. 73. 2Sonette, commentary.
world from behind prison walls. "Glauben" may very well take a back seat to "Wissen" in this case—the future has not yet arrived, but the bars are very real. The final cause of resignation is the Hegel-like contradiction of hope on top of hopelessness, the very hope itself bearing the seed of its own extinction. That contradictory feeling gives these lines the sense of absorption which is both renewal and annihilation by the next generation:

Wir sind die Letzten. Unsere Gedanken sind morgen tote Spreu, vom Wind verjagt, und ohne Wert, wo jung der Morgen tagt.

("Das Erbe," p. 57)
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